El Salvador

The Migration Mosaic

CDC

Centro para la Defensa del Consumidor

OXFAM
El Salvador: The Migration Mosaic

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Executive Summary

In 1949, the United Nations (UN) adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which enshrines a series of rights pertaining to migrants. Article 13 of the declaration recognizes that everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. Along these same lines, El Salvador declared its adherence to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration in December 2018. This compact recognizes the need for a holistic and comprehensive approach to human mobility and enhanced cooperation to facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration.

The World Migration Report, produced by the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2010), indicates that migration is an essential characteristic of the modern world, and one which requires improved capacity, knowledge, aptitudes, resources, structures, and procedures with which states and other stakeholders can respond to the new challenges through effective and sustainable planning efforts.

Migration has been a recurring phenomenon in El Salvador over the course of several decades. Multiple facets and drivers have led to an exodus of approximately one-third of the Salvadoran population. Most recently, irregular migration flows that have been called "caravans" are one of the more popular formats used by individuals who have decided to emigrate. This strategy emerged out of the belief that traveling in a group could somehow provide greater protection to migrants along their journey. Over time, this has become an attractive mechanism for migration, which entails less exposure to crime and abuse, and greater access to protection and aid from agencies and institutions. There is also a cost reduction that comes from migrating as a group, the members of which no longer feel the need to hire human smugglers or "coyotes" (IOM, 2018).

According to data from the United Nations Agency for Refugees (UNHCR), El Salvador is among the top seven countries in the world whose citizens submit asylum requests (119,300 requests for asylum, 116,500 of which are in the United States).

Who are the Salvadorans who are migrating?

The majority of Salvadoran migrants are adults; the average age is 39 years old. In the case of children, the average age is 6.5 years old. Adolescents and youth migrants have an average age of 14.5 years old (14.3 for young women and 14.8 for young men) (BCR, 2017). In the particular case of women, the age range of women migrants falls between 18 and 35 (Vice-Ministry for Salvadorans Abroad, 2017).

The average academic attainment of adult migrants is 9.2 years of formal education, with women at 9.6 years and men at 8.8 years. Academic attainment mostly sits at the level of secondary and high school, although there is a portion of the emigrating Salvadoran population that does have higher education: 31.2% of migrants had a middle-school education (secondary school); 31.7% had attended high school, 3.8% held technical or university degrees, and 3% with advanced university degrees (U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2013).

With regard to the employment situation for people migrating, the majority of women migrants did not have a job when they were living in their country of origin. This trend contrasts with men, the majority of whom did have jobs prior to migrating (60.6% of women responded "no", compared to 63.8% of men responding "yes"). (U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2013). The main occupations reported by migrants prior to traveling were: agriculture (14.8%), bricklaying (6.6%), construction (3.6%), and drivers (3.6%) (U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2013).
According to data from the National Policy for Protection and Development of Migrants and their Families (Vice-Ministry for Salvadorans Abroad, 2017), an estimated 3.1 million Salvadorans live outside the country. Of this total, 50.9% are men and 49.1% are women. 93.5% of the Salvadoran diaspora lives in the United States (51.2% men and 48.8% women), representing the second-largest immigrant population in that country, only behind Mexicans.

The National Survey on Migration and Remittances, produced by the Central Reserve Bank (BCR, 2017), reports that 60.2% of the Salvadorans living in the United States do not have regular permanent migratory status (that is, citizenship or permanent residency); 11.4% have Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and 48.8% have irregular or undocumented status. In absolute terms, 195,000 people hold TPS, and 22% of this population now have spouses or children who are U.S. citizens. Only 11% of TPS holders report that they are not taking any steps to prepare for the end of their temporary status, set to finalize in January 2020.

What motivates people to migrate?
Migration is a complex human decision made individually, as a family, and socially. The IOM recognizes that there are multiple causes behind the reasons for migration, and people may be motivated by more than one driver. The National Survey on Migration and Remittances (BCR, 2017) identifies the three leading structural causes of migration: 1) search for job opportunities (73.8%), 2) desire for better living conditions (42.8%); and 3) sending remittances home (22.3%). These three causes are all related to opportunities to earn a better income. The second block of factors includes: 4) insecurity, reported by 16.3%; 5) desire for family reunification at 9.2%; and 6) other motives such as education, paying debts, and others, reported by 3.2% of migrants.

What are the determining factors for migration in El Salvador?
All of the studies reviewed cited economic factors such as better job opportunities and earning potential as the main driver of migration for the Salvadoran population. According to the Multi-Purpose Household Study (EHPM-DIGESTYC, 2018) and calculations performed for this document, 62% of the Salvadoran population is in a condition of labor underutilization. In 2018, the rate of decent employment sat at 21.9%, meaning that only 2 out of 10 workers held decent work. This rate is linked to the fact that 42% of the working population is in the informal sector of the economy.

The average monthly salary is $326.87 ($352.64 for men and $293.05 for women). As an example, the Center for Consumer Defense (CDC) reports that the Monthly Basic Household Expenses (MBHE, associated with cost of living) amounts to $320.43, compared to the minimum wage in the commerce sector of $300 per month, leaving a gap of $20.00 even before taking housing expenses into account in the calculation. The same trend can be seen in the case of the agriculture sector, where MBHE is estimated at $253.38 and the minimum agricultural wage is $200.00 per month. This difference leaves a gap of $50.00. In both examples, the minimum wage is insufficient to cover household expenses. Similarly, the multidimensional poverty index (Central Reserve Bank, 2018), reveals that 28.8% of households (17.1% urban and 48.9% rural) are facing multidimensional poverty. This rate is equivalent to 537,826 households, or 2,247,165 people.

The multidimensional poverty outlook gives several indications of the severity of the main causes of irregular migration. These drivers include lack of job stability or underemployment (61.9%), which to underemployment as well as lack of access to social security services.

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1 The labor underutilization rate for 2018 is the sum of the 55.7% unemployment rate for the urban and rural areas, plus the national unemployment rate of 6.3%.
Violence and insecurity
Violence and insecurity in recent years is the driver of migration for 16.5% of the adult population and 31% of migrant youth and adolescents. El Salvador continues to rank among the most violent countries in Latin America. In 2018, the murder rate reached 50.3 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, with a total of 3,340 killings according to National Civilian Police (PNC) reports (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2018). The Profiling Study on Internal Mobility Due to Violence in El Salvador (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2018) reported that the 41,650 families, accounting for nearly 160,000 people, migrated within the country. Of this total, 95% of the families report violence as the reason for their move.

Gender-based violence
Women continue to be a group that is highly vulnerable to violence. Women bear the impacts of a sexist and violent society; it should come as no surprise that 23% of women decide to flee the country to escape from this violence. This migrant population includes women heads of households, transgender persons, and women of all age ranges (Vice-Ministry for Salvadorans Abroad, 2017).

The National Survey on Violence Against Women (ENVCM) (DIGESTYC, 2018) reports that in 1,790,440 women in El Salvador have suffered some sort of violence over the course of their lives (67 of every 100 women). For 2017, a total of 899,434 women reported having suffered a violent incident at some point in the previous 12 months (34 out of every 100 women). Marital status is a determining factor that influences whether women have been assaulted at some point over the course of their lives. According to data from the Report on Drivers of Migration for Women and Girls in El Salvador (Vice-Ministry for Salvadorans Abroad, 2017), domestic and family violence is one of the main factors driving the migration of Salvadoran women. As described in the "Gender and Migration in One Minute" informational video, women and girls are not only fleeing their communities, rather they are fleeing their homes and using migration as an avenue to escape from violence (IOM, 2018).

Climate change and migration
The effects of climate change have a particular impact on people’s lives, a phenomenon that the IOM has described with the term "climate migrants". From 2014 to 2016, the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) conducted Emergency Food Security Assessments (EFSAs) for households in the Central American Dry Corridor as a result of the "El Niño" phenomenon. The population surveyed in this emergency identified the six main causes of migration that came to mind, reporting "not having food" (57%), "not having money" (17%), and "crop losses" (7%) (IDB/IFAD/IOM/OAS/WFP, 2017). In El Salvador, data on drought and hunger from the Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment (conducted by a consortium of international humanitarian NGOs: Oxfam, World Vision, Save the Children, and Catholic Relief Services, 2019) revealed that 82% of people were affected to some extent by the drought, and an average of 4 out of 10 people in the study area were facing food insecurity (sample of 18 municipalities from 5 departments of the country, four of which are located in the Dry Corridor). On the hunger scale, 51% of respondents reported that they had insufficient food at some point; 36% reported that a member of the household went to bed hungry, and 17% asserted that a household member had gone one day and one night without eating. This same study identifies individuals’ priorities: 81% of people report that food is the highest priority, followed by agriculture inputs at 33%, and water at 32%. Some Salvadoran farmers go into debt to be able to plant their crops each season. Climate volatility leaves these farmers vulnerable to crop losses and a growing burden of debt, which become additional factors driving migration. In El Salvador, 61% of

2 https://rosanjose.iom.int/site/es/mujeres-migrantes-1-minuto-sobre-migraciones
the corn harvest and 55% of the bean harvest was lost in June and July 2019.

**Macroeconomic causes linked to migration**
The Comprehensive Development Plan for El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, presented by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, May 2019), identifies four structural causes of migration in those countries, with violence first among them. The ECLAC plan also describes other causes that have been discussed in this study, such as the lack of economic opportunities in countries of origin, low wages, and precarious labor conditions. The plan outlines significant macroeconomic challenges linked to migration for the Northern Triangle of Central America and Mexico, including insufficient economic growth, inequality, demographic growth of urban areas and rural areas falling behind, wage gaps, patterns of flooding and prolonged drought, and the exodus of people of productive age, among others.

**What are the risks associated with the migration routes?**
From the moment a person decides to embark on a journey of irregular migration, he or she is exposed to the risks associated with migratory transit through the Northern Triangle of Central America, Mexico, and the United States' southern border. These risks include a series of human rights violations that range from physical and sexual violence, kidnapping, extortion, and sexual and domestic exploitation, up to the right to life in extreme cases. The implications are different for different groups, but these risks are especially severe for women, children and adolescents, LGBTIQ+ individuals, and people with disabilities. Despite these risks, people continue to migrate on their own, with their families, or in groups.

**What are the causes triggering forced migration of the population groups?**

**Women migrants:** Gender-based violence is one of the main causes leading women to flee their countries. There are cases in which women reporting their experience and aggressors are persecuted or even killed.

"Salvadoran justice system authorities do not always protect women victims of violence, especially when the aggressor does not have a criminal record." Testimony from one of the members of the Los Quebrachos Youth Arts Group, JAQ, department of Morazán.

The risks that women face during their migratory journey include:

"Women migrants are exposed to many risks along the way: rape, risk of getting lost or separated from their families or traveling party along the way, disease, deteriorating health due to lack of food, or falling behind without the strength to continue." (Remarks from a participant in the urban and rural women's focus group held for this study, July 2019).

**Youth migrants:** In El Salvador, youth is a risk factor in and of itself. Homicides trend male and young: in 2014, a young man between the ages of 15 and 29 was at twice the risk of death due to homicide than the rest of the population (United Nations Population Fund, 2017).

Violent deaths of women between the ages of 15 and 29 accounted for 41% of the total of 469 feminicides recorded in the country (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, DIGESTYC, 2017).

Migrants are generally youth who have been unable to find opportunities in the country. This sense of exclusion comes not only from the lack of job opportunities, but as a result of the suffocating environment of violence in many low-income neighborhoods and rural areas. These young people are not fleeing out of a desire to live the American dream, nor out of any lack of love for their own country. In the great majority of cases, these youth are leaving because they have no alternative." (Central American University, UCA, 2015).
"A solitary life can be hard, but that’s what awaits us in the United States. Sometimes you get depressed. At Christmas time, the only thing I could think about was what it would be like to be back in El Salvador, eating chicken and lighting firecrackers. I was sitting there, listening to Salvadoran music and feeling sad." Testimony from a returned migrant youth, originally from northern Morazán.

**LGBTIQ+ persons:** The migratory route itself is already a dangerous journey due to human smuggling, and the LGBTIQ+ population is not exempt from the risks that any other migrant would face. Quite to the contrary, this group is especially vulnerable. And the situation for gay men or lesbians is still different than the experience for a transgender woman.3

"Transgender women are the most exposed to commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking in persons, organ trafficking, sexual slavery in brothels, and once again being victims of persecution or even death. Transgender women are victims of discrimination at the hands of other migrants and homophobic or intolerant people."4

**Migrant children:** According to statements from the Department for Child Protection at the Salvadoran Institute for Children and Adolescents (ISNA), from the moment a child or adolescent is submitted to irregular migration conditions, his or her rights are being violated, and the child is exposed to a series of risk factors that may include human trafficking, sexual exploitation and violence, psychological and physical abuse, health risks, and humiliation in migratory transit. These risks can have lifelong impacts.

"A four-year-old boy returning to the country who had been kidnapped, along with his mother, has not been able to recover. Any time a man approaches his mother, the child begins to scream", reported ISNA in once case shared for this study.

Children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable: whether they are accompanied by adults or not, they will always bear the impacts of the voyage. If they are able to reach the destination country, they will face immediate barriers to adaptation, including language differences, discrimination, and separation from their friends and family. If they return, they will continue to face exclusion and discrimination: they will have fallen behind in school, and experience frustration and fear, especially if they have undergone experiences of vulnerability or violence.5

"One day we came to an event and there were some children there who were playing after the theater presentation, pretending to be the police firing off weapons. We asked them what game they were playing, and they shared that they had seen a shoot-out at the border." Testimony from one of the members of the Los Quebrachos Youth Arts Group, JAQ, department of Morazán.

**Missing persons in transit:** El Salvador does not keep a record of missing persons or deaths in transit for migration. There is likely significant under-reporting in the data that do exist. There is a report of 1,368 people missing in transit through 2015.6

Since the year 2010, the Adjunct Ombudsman for the Rights of Migrants and Citizen Security, together with the Committee of Family Members of Killed or Missing Migrants in El Salvador (COFAMIDE), the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have worked to create a genetic database of missing persons and their families. This database serves as part of a mechanism to search for and locate missing migrants. Thus far, the mechanism has received approximately 300 reports, and in 70 of these cases the migrants have

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3 Interview with Karla Martínez, COMCAVIS TRANS legal advisor

4 Interview with a LGBTIQ+ human rights activist, COMCAVIS TRANS.

5 Interview with a representative from the Salvadoran Institute for Comprehensive Development of Children and Adolescents, ISNA.

been identified and their remains repatriated to El Salvador. The Adjunct Ombudsman’s Office provides group psychological support to family members prior to their entry into the DNA database, to help people understand the process and its implications. This psychological support is often required for families to accept that their relatives may have died in their attempt to emigrate.

**Returning migrants:** The term "returning migrants" is considered more appropriate than the term "deportees", which is charged with a stigma that can limit a person's social reintegration. A total of 287,732 people have been returned to El Salvador from 2012 to 2019: 79% men and 19% women (IOM, 2019).

One of the main challenges for the Salvadoran state is to build its capacity and scale a service model that allows it to provide a holistic response to the needs and protection requirements for people returning to the country. Thus far in 2019, a total of 18,161 returns have been reported, including over 3,000 children and adolescents. These individuals will require support and services commensurate with their ages and needs. In this sense, it is important to ask whether the public and private ecosystem in the country is prepared to respond to the plans for migrants and their families to return. It is evident that the availability of social reinsertion programs for returning migrants is insufficient compared to the flow of return produced by the more restrictive migratory measures being applied at the southern borders of Mexico and the United States. With their hopes for migration cut short, returning migrants may find themselves worse off than when they began their trip. They will have needs for employment, education, and healthcare; if these rights are not addressed, they are at risk of another attempt at irregular migration.

The findings from this study are part of an inclusive consultation, analysis, and reflection process with diverse stakeholders from public and private institutions, civil society organizations, groups of Salvadorans organized abroad, women's collectives and youth organizations, and human rights defenders for migrants, returnees, and missing persons. Stories of migration and direct and indirect return were shared by the protagonists themselves who were brave enough to share their first-hand experiences.

This study attempts to identify the underlying causes and needs driving the migration or intention to migrate of women, children, adolescents, youth, LGBTIQ+ persons, and people with disabilities. The review covers the risks and consequences of migration as a basis to offer a series of conclusions and recommendations, described below.

**CONCLUSIONS**

It is clear in the case of El Salvador that to a large extent migration is a forced decision rather than a voluntary action. Nonetheless, the issues of migration have not been systematically addressed in the national agenda, even though it is hardly a new phenomenon. Forced migration movements have occurred on multiple occasions throughout the history of El Salvador as a consequence of the implementation of certain economic models and political and social changes that the country has experienced over the last 70 years.

The status of "forced migration" has been recognized explicitly in the foreign policy framework described in the "Plan Cuscatlán" government plan. This recognition has lent greater visibility to the phenomenon, but the approach and working priorities for this topic for the coming years have yet to be fully revealed.

El Salvador is a signatory to multiple treaties and international agreements for the protection of migrants. El Salvador is a country of origin, but it is also a transit and destination country for migrants.
and their families from other Global South countries under a principle of reciprocity.

The migrant flows in the Northern Triangle countries of Central America in late 2018 are not voluntary actions; they are the reflection of systematic violations of the population's fundamental rights in their countries of origin. Unstable and low-paid employment, limited access to social security and a social safety net, citizen insecurity, gender-based violence, food security, and other issues all trigger human movement.

These trends reveal some of the important challenges El Salvador faces in addressing the drivers behind the exodus of its citizens.

The economic model implemented over the past decades has been insufficient and unequal, producing economic and social exclusion that drives the population to continue to resort to irregular migration, despite the risks associated. The structural causes of migration align with the failure of the economic model, which has not produced significant growth. In fact, the model has expanded the gap of inequality, to the detriment of a large part of the population that sees migration as their own chance at survival.

Nearly 30% of households in El Salvador in 2018 (540,000 families) were living in multidimensional poverty (2.2 million people). This figure describes low academic attainment levels for adults, underemployment and job instability, lack of access to social security, and restrictions related to insecurity.

In effect, the wage-earning potential for households is out of balance with the baseline poverty measurements. This ratio is even more disproportionate if other expenses such as the expanded food basket, basic household cost of living expenses, housing, public services, and other essential expenditures are also included.

Over 60% of people who decide to emigrate do so in search of better economic conditions. Nearly 50% of the working population is unemployed or working under precarious labor conditions. These conditions help to explain why 44% of the people who decided to emigrate did so despite holding a job in El Salvador, one which proved insufficient to make a living.

National production is concentrated in low-profit sectors of the economy, and 42% of the working population is in the informal sector, characterized by low-paying jobs with limited access to social security and benefits.

Over 20% of migrants hope to send family remittances home. For women and youth, their motivation is often to "build a home" and help to support their families. As a result, nearly 50% of Salvadoran households receive family remittances. Remittances account for a flow of over 5 billion dollars that keep the economy afloat, and even contribute to the tax base through spending by recipient families.

Over 15% of migrants are "fleeing the country" due to violence and insecurity in their communities. Over 160,000 people were forced to leave their homes in 2018: 95% of them as a result of the insecurity and violence in their territories. Women flee from gender-based and domestic violence. LGBTIQ+ individuals face harassment from the gangs as well as from the national police authorities themselves.

The desire for family reunification is another decisive factor for the decision to migrate: 10% of migrants report this motivation, which may also be linked to the need to protect family members, especially children and youth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study reveal situations that require urgent action in the country of origin. The
findings describe a phenomenon with multiple causes, including forced migration, which demand sophisticated solutions through a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach. In the short term, El Salvador must adopt a systematic agenda and identify the measures to build its capacity to address this phenomenon. National and regional stakeholders must come together and demonstrate their willingness to work for the joint development and implementation of public policies and plans for human development that may stem the flow of migrants who wish to leave. These actors will also have to consider the need for social and economic reinsertion of returning migrants. A consensus must be reached among the countries of the Northern Triangle and Mexico to protect asylum-seekers, refugees, and migrants awaiting other administrative processes in transit or destination countries, among other actions.

This study identifies some clues of where efforts may be focused to respond to the issue of forced migration and address the risks that it entails. Specific recommendations for different stakeholders are described below.

FOR EXECUTIVE BRANCH AGENCIES:
Public policies and a migration agenda
→ Urgently establish a nationwide agenda that prioritizes the topic of forced migration. Such an agenda includes an analysis of the scope of the phenomenon, including its multiple, complex, and structural causes, and improving country management capacity as part of a holistic strategy.
→ Include vulnerable populations in debate and planning processes to ensure that their voices are heard in the definition of public policies, and national plans, programs, and projects.
→ Include the topic of climate change within the agenda on migration and forced displacement, to address this factor as a trigger for forced migration and orient greater efforts toward climate change adaptation.
→ Review the existing international agreements and domestic public policies on migration, identifying potential adjustments to adapt to the current migratory context in the Northern Triangle of Central America.
→ Establish follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms for existing public policies and programs for migrants, to look beyond the simple statistical impact of these policies.
→ Strengthen the civil protection system to enable appropriate action in accordance with international humanitarian standards, and develop a comprehensive humanitarian crisis response to migration, strengthening the shelter system and providing the needed resources to provide more holistic care for the migrant and returning population.
→ Work together with the authorities in El Salvador and human rights agencies to identify strategies to negotiate and promote the regulation of migrants holding TPS, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), or Deferred Enforced Departure (DED), among other temporary agreements.
→ Advocate in the United States House of Representatives and border states to improve the conditions for migrants, considering the protection needs of asylum and refugee-seekers, along with other forms of protection in the United States, Mexico, and Guatemala.
→ Build consensus and cooperation with transit countries such as Mexico and Guatemala, advocating in favor of the 62% of Salvadorans who reside in the United States with irregular migration status and send remittances home to alleviate some of the economic burden on families in the country.
→ Design policies and strategies to improve water management in the dry corridor municipalities, involving the public entities responsible to assess mechanisms such as crop substitution, improved irrigation infrastructure and water harvesting, financial mechanisms for people affected by crop losses, and other strategic actions.

Inclusive growth policy
→ Build a consensus proposal on future aspirations for economic growth in the country, including mechanisms to attract investment,
cost-benefit analyses of tax exemptions and exoneration, defining expected outcomes in for variables such as employment, salary, and social security coverage, the environment, and others. This includes identifying the human capital needs for improving competitiveness in the labor market and job opportunities for Salvadoran workers.

→ Build consensus proposals on the human development model that should guide the country for the next decade, considering substantial elements such as improving public investment in children, adolescents, and youth, and taking advantage of the demographic bonus.

→ Promote an adjustment in minimum wages according to more realistic indicators such as average monthly household expenditure, social security, decent work, informal employment, and others.

→ Promote the creation of a national public policy framework for decent work in El Salvador, with a view toward generating better labor conditions and income so that migration is not the only alternative for poverty alleviation, to avoid the brain drain of Salvadoran talent of productive age.

→ Prioritize social investment and protection for families living in multidimensional poverty, so that migration is not the only option for them to improve their living conditions. In terms of revenue, prioritize mechanisms to strengthen the public tax base and international cooperation to address the needs identified in the systematic agenda on migration.

→ Develop financial inclusion programs through development banks or other mechanisms for resources generated by Salvadorans living abroad to have a multiplier effect in the local economy. For example, this may include investment in infrastructure projects in exchange for economic performance for the use of the funds.

→ Promote mechanisms to progressively incorporate workers in the informal economy into social security and pension systems, providing opportunities to pay into and receive a basic pension in the future, evaluating the most appropriate options.

Holistic consular services

→ Improve coordination among the consular network abroad and in migrant service centers in transit and destination countries, with the objective of ensuring respect for the human rights of migrants seeking asylum, refugee status or other means of protection abroad.

→ Promote agreements and alliances with countries in the Northern Triangle and Mexico (as a waiting territory) to ensure protection of the human rights of migrants and those seeking asylum, refugee status or other forms of protection, considering the principle of reciprocity.

→ Develop information networks to monitor migrants in transit using disaggregated data (children, adolescents, youth, women, men, LGBTIQ+ individuals, people with disability), and identify humanitarian needs, causes and factors driving migration, risks in transit, support networks, expectations for return, and other relevant information for decision-makers in countries of origin, transit, and destination.

→ Map and establish inter-sector alliances with different stakeholders such as the Salvadoran diaspora, academic sector, private sector, international cooperation, and civil society, defining points in common on their agendas and priorities to stem the flow of migrants intending to migrate and provide services to migrants returning to the country.

Citizen security and violence prevention

→ Strengthen measurement systems and indicators to incorporate statistical information to assess gender-based violence and other forms of violence, reflecting the particular needs of women and the LGBTIQ+ population who decide to migrate.

→ Assess the existing mechanisms for access to justice and protection in cases of gender-based violence to identify improvements in the process, such that "fleeing" is not the only choice for survival for victims.
→ Ensure that the Citizen Security Strategy implemented by the state incorporates a violence-prevention approach that prioritizes youth, women, and the LGBTIQ+ community. This strategy should also incorporate components to recover the trust of the population in the police and justice authorities in the country.8

**Comprehensive support for migrants and their families**

→ Design educational reinsertion programs using flexible continuing education formats, connected to the real needs of the labor market as measures to engage with individuals who intend to migrate or are returning to the country.

→ Promotion and support for temporary employment programs for the population intending to emigrate, promoting their job placement abroad in accordance with their skills, and reducing the risks associated with irregular migration. For example, the Temporary Employment Program in Canada for individuals with job skills in animal slaughter and butchering.

→ Scale-up experiences in productive job placement models for returning migrants, evaluating program outcomes and impacts and including a gender lens in program design to improve job access for women and youth.

→ Scale-up efforts launched by programs and strategies for holistic support for families of disappeared migrants, including service promotion, accompaniment for claims and case resolution, economic support to repatriate remains, legal aid, comprehensive care for the family members of victims, whether the migrants or found or not, among other services.

→ Design inter-sector national strategies for youth and women's employment, including the LGBTIQ+ community, generating dialogue with different stakeholders: employers, training institutions, the academic sector, and donors.

→ Focus efforts with public and private institutions in support of children, adolescents, and youth to promote information and outreach to raise the awareness of parents around the risks associated with irregular migration and the human rights violations to which minors may be exposed, whether they are accompanied by adults or not.

→ Scale-up the dimensions of temporary humanitarian aid directed toward returning migrants and families in the areas of temporary housing, food stipends, legal aid, psychological and social support, job placement, and others.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF EL SALVADOR:**

→ In the legislative committees on foreign affairs, women, children, and youth, work together with human rights defense groups and other organizations to foster legislation for the protection of migrants and their families, considering the needs of different population groups.

→ Review existing legislation for the protection of migrants and their families, given the current context of forced migration. Establish the validity and functionality of existing legislation according to the need for reforms to respond to the scope of migration and human mobility, and the implications of these trends in the medium and long term in the country.

→ In the Legislative Committee on Foreign Affairs, direct efforts for information management to provide data and analysis for the legislative agenda on migration, its challenges, and its impacts. Congruent with the information and analysis, propose revisions and reforms to regulations and public policies focused on retaining individuals intending to migrate.

→ Promote mechanisms to improve per capita social investment in children and adolescents, in keeping with the promotion of economic, social, cultural rights. Additionally, these mechanisms can take advantage of the demographic bonus that concludes in 2030 to slow the brain drain of

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8 Only 24% of the population in 2014 reported confidence in the justice system and courts, down from 37% in 2016 (OECD/CAF/ECLAC, 2018).
young talent as a result of the limited opportunities in the country and the attraction of migration as an avenue to improve their living conditions.

→ Identify mechanisms and reforms to the existing legislation for the eradication of violence and discrimination, including against the LGBTIQ+ community, given that these are among the main drivers of migration for these collectives as they flee violence in their communities and homes, despite the risks involved.

→ In specific cases of LGBTIQ+ individuals, the Legislative Assembly and state must recognize their right to an identity (Identity Law) to enable them to access fundamental human rights such as the rights to education, health, decent work, and others. These rights help to ensure alternatives to sex work as an income-generating activity, which put LGBTIQ+ individuals at risk of being victims of criminal groups, and to make sure that migration is not the only choice to escape from poverty, violence and daily insecurity.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCIES, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP:

→ Build alliances and establish a dialogue to work together with the state to build a systemic approach to the structural causes, challenges, and needs related to migration to join efforts and enable timely action to respond to the increasingly restrictive migration policies in the United States and Mexico.

→ Ensure that funds or investments on forced migration issues are linked to transparency and social accountability mechanisms.

→ Strengthen human rights organizations and groups working to protect the victims of forced displacement as they define contingency plans to better respond to the humanitarian emergencies related to mass migration. Contribute to ensuring that the migrant population receives humanitarian aid, psychosocial support and protection in transit, in migrant shelters, and in origin, destination, and return countries.

→ Scale-up the consensus agenda to a national and regional level with other migrants' rights defense organizations, the diaspora and civil society.

→ Contribute to knowledge management on the phenomenon of forced migration and its impact for the families of migrants who disappeared in transit, people with disabilities and the LGBTIQ+ population, along with other data to position the needs of these collectives with national and regional authorities.

→ Develop information and communication mechanisms to explore the phenomenon of women's migration driven mainly by domestic violence. This phenomenon must be adequately examined and understood, to identify holistic intervention strategies to serve girls, young women, and adults who have migrated for these reasons.

→ Identify mechanisms for information and communication around the context of migration: asylum and refugee conditions, and other forms of protection for migrants and displaced persons. This communication can help people to understand the implications of each process and get a sense of what they would face in transit and destination countries.

→ Position the need for greater climate change adaptation efforts on the national agenda for decision-makers.

→ On an institutional level, develop research and information systems on climate impacts that are leading people to leave their land, sell their assets, and migrate; contribute to identifying resilience and climate change adaptation strategies.

→ Design programs to improve water management in the dry corridor, through mechanisms for crop substitution, irrigation infrastructures, and water management. Additionally, evaluate potential financing mechanisms for people affected by crop losses as a consequence of prolonged drought, flooding, and hurricanes.

→ Provide technical accompaniment to the state and review the design of public policies and
strategies to ensure respect for the rights of migrants and their families.

→ Support the development of a holistic service program for families of migrants who have disappeared in transit.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

→ Reinforce the role of municipal governments in the reporting and referral network to share information, together with the Vice-Ministry for Salvadorans Abroad and the Human Rights Ombudsman, among other agencies.

→ Promote the creation of new municipal windows for prospective and returning migrants, to share information on the risks, impacts, and consequences of irregular migration. These windows will require support in the form of municipal policies and economic resources, and personnel to provide a holistic response to the population's need for information and services, according to their age range and identity (youth, adolescents, women victims of violence, etc.).

→ Identify and design strategies to take advantage of local development potential and improve the standard of living in the territories, with specific actions for the rural and urban areas (working with the Salvadoran diaspora).

→ Work with municipal transparency and accountability approaches to promote local investment and employment programs, in partnership with organizations of Salvadorans living abroad. For example, the 3x1 Program has been launched in selected municipalities with the Salvadoran population living in the United States.9

→ Include the topic of irregular migration on the municipal agenda, working toward strategies for prevention and awareness-raising with offices on youth, children, and women. These efforts should include engaging with other spaces such as schools and recreational centers to raise awareness among prospective migrants about the risks of the journey.

→ Search for initiatives or programs to facilitate the social and productive reinsertion of migrants returning to the municipality after their deportation process. These individuals often return to worse economic and social conditions than when they initially decided to migrate, and need support to re-adapt to the community and productive life.

THE SALVADORAN DIASPORA:

→ Work with the state, municipal governments, and civil society associations to attract productive and social investment.

→ Support the Salvadoran state to identify opportunities for temporary employment programs for migrants in the United States.

→ Work with networks of Salvadorans living in the United States to help make sure that migrants reaching the destination country receive holistic support including legal advice to access special protection measures, if needed, as well as support for their humanitarian needs, social and emotional support, and other aid.

→ Contribute to evaluating the humanitarian conditions of Salvadorans with irregular migration status in holding and detention centers in the United States, Mexico, and Guatemala.

9 3x1 programs are initiatives that seek to stimulate civil society participation as a mechanism to promote, fund, and oversee projects with funding for public works, to enhance community resources at a rate of 3:1, involving three separate stakeholders: the central government, local government, and the diaspora. Resources can be tripled by equal contributions from each stakeholder (FLACSO, Guatemala, 2019).