

# **STOPPING THE REVOLVING DOOR**

## Reception and Reintegration Services for Central American Deportees

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## Executive Summary

Hundreds of thousands of Central Americans, deported from Mexico and the United States, have arrived back in the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras in the past five years. Returning to worse conditions than they tried to escape in the first place, this rapidly growing population of deportees—including tens of thousands of children—is in danger of entering a revolving door of migration, deportation, and remigration.

Without comprehensive reception and reintegration services, deportees struggle to anchor themselves again in their countries of origin. Yet there is little research on current services and their successes and limitations. This report surveys reception and reintegration services in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras; analyzes the challenges they encounter; and highlights elements conducive to successful reintegration strategies. The report concludes with a survey of existing programs, including information on their funding sources and levels, numbers of beneficiaries, and other observations.

What do services receiving and reintegrating migrants entail? Four types of services dominate the landscape in the Northern Triangle: reception services for adults, covering a snack and medical needs upon arrival; reception services for children, which include help reunifying with family members; reintegration services for adults, such as skills training or vocational and technical education, and employment and entrepreneurship initiatives to channel deportees into jobs or help them create small-scale enterprises; and reintegration programs for children that include support in school enrollment or psychological counseling.

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All three countries offer these types of services, but programs vary considerably in terms of organization, funding sources, capacity, and the numbers of deportees served. In all cases, the federal government coordinates a large-scale reception program that civil society or international organizations help implement.

Today's reception and reintegration services in Central America face five common challenges:

1. While all deportees arriving by air have access to basic reception services, such services are limited for adults arriving by land.
2. Long-term comprehensive reintegration services remain very limited, in part because few resources are available, and only reach a fraction of returnees—dozens or hundreds, compared to tens of thousands arriving each year.
3. Few long-term services connect with workforce development agencies or private-sector employers and succeed in creating jobs matched to the skill levels of deportees.
4. Monitoring and evaluation of most programs is poor, and limited data are available on the numbers of beneficiaries served.
5. Coordination of service providers across programs and borders varies widely.

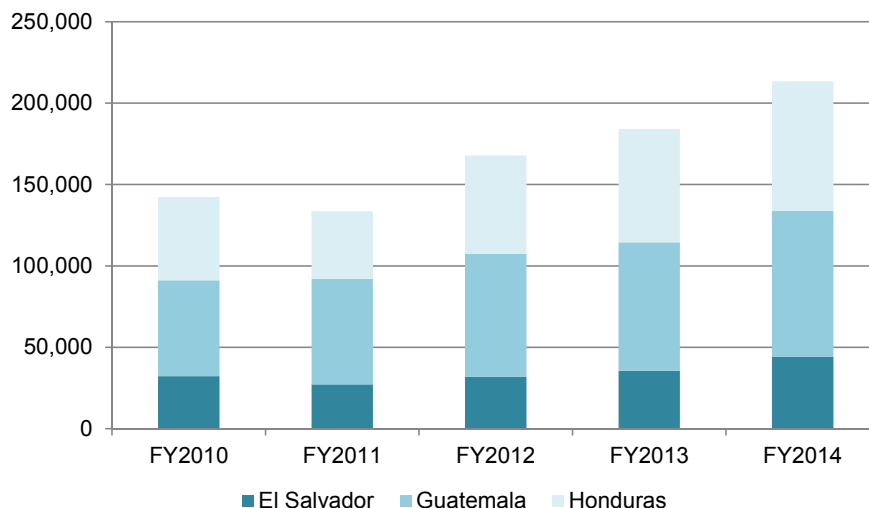


Addressing these challenges is a shared responsibility of Central America, Mexico, and the United States. As a growing share of migrants are deported from Mexico, the country’s role and responsibility in deciding deportees’ fate increases. Well-designed reception and reintegration programs hinge on consistent investment and service provision; collaboration with local partners and networks of former deportees; true buy-in by employers and the private sector to train deportees toward a job, not just a certificate; greatly improved monitoring and evaluation mechanisms; and consistent long-term follow-up, especially with child deportees, to help them build a new life in their home country and leave the revolving door behind.

## I. Introduction

The increasingly robust enforcement strategies of Mexico and the United States have resulted in a significant increase in deportations to the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. As Figure 1 illustrates, deportations to the Northern Triangle from the United States and Mexico grew from less than 150,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2010 to more than 200,000 in FY 2014.<sup>1</sup>

**Figure 1. Deportations from the United States and Mexico to the Northern Triangle, FY 2010-14**



*Note:* Data on deportations from the United States in 2014 includes only removals.

*Sources:* Data for the United States for fiscal years (FY) 2010-13: Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Immigration Statistics, *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2013* (Washington, DC: DHS, Office of Immigration Statistics, 2014), [www.dhs.gov/yearbook-immigration-statistics](http://www.dhs.gov/yearbook-immigration-statistics); for FY 2014 data: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), “FY 2014 ICE Immigration Removals,” accessed November 11, 2015, [www.ice.gov/removal-statistics](http://www.ice.gov/removal-statistics); data for Mexico, Instituto Nacional de Migración (INM), *Boletín Mensual de Estadísticas Migratorias*, 2009-14 (Mexico City: INM, 2015), [www.gobernacion.gob.mx/es\\_mx/SEGOB/Boletines\\_Estadisticos](http://www.gobernacion.gob.mx/es_mx/SEGOB/Boletines_Estadisticos).

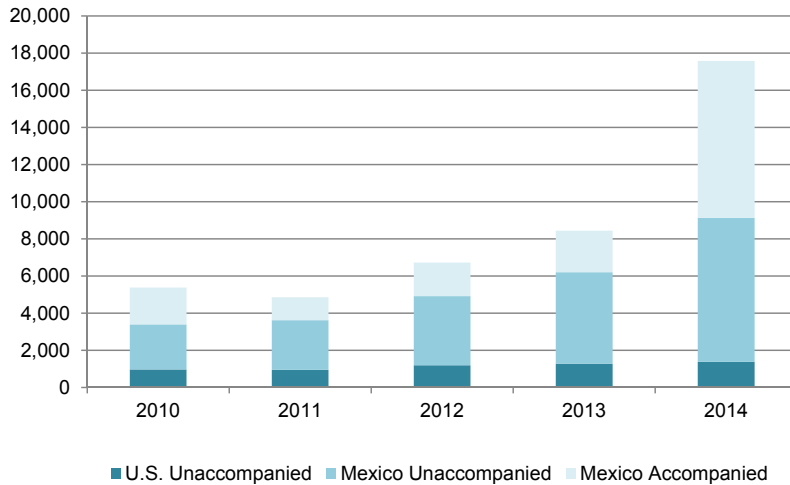
The number of children deported from Mexico and the United States to these three countries has grown consistently since 2011 (see Figure 2). It doubled in one year alone—from 8,500 in 2013 to more than 17,000 in 2014—and was on pace to grow further in 2015. The vast majority of Central American children arriving in their home countries are deported by Mexico. While the United States has

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed overview of deportation trends in North and Central America, see Rodrigo Dominguez Villegas and Victoria Rietig, *Migrants Deported from the United States and Mexico to the Northern Triangle: A Statistical and Socioeconomic Profile* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2015), [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/migrants-deported-united-states-and-mexico-northern-triangle-statistical-and-socioeconomic](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/migrants-deported-united-states-and-mexico-northern-triangle-statistical-and-socioeconomic).



deported 1,000 to 2,000 unaccompanied children (UACs) per year since 2010, Mexican deportations of unaccompanied minors to the Northern Triangle have tripled, from 2,400 in 2010 to 7,800 in 2014, and removals of accompanied children have quadrupled in the same period, from 2,000 to 8,400. Mexico was on track to deport more than 25,000 children, accompanied and unaccompanied, by the end of 2015.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 2. Minors Deported to the Northern Triangle, by Country of Deportation and Accompaniment Status, 2010-14**



Sources: U.S. data for FY 2010-13: Data provided to the Congressional Research Service (CRS) from ICE Legislative Affairs in testimony of William Kandel, Analyst in Immigration Policy, Congressional Research Service, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, “Securing the Border: Understanding and Addressing the Root Causes of Central American Migration to the United States,” 114th Cong., 1st sess., March 25, 2015, [www.hsgac.senate.gov/download/?id=dd88040a-b1e6-405f-a71b-1a86c6ba2599](http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/download/?id=dd88040a-b1e6-405f-a71b-1a86c6ba2599); for FY 2014 data: unpublished ICE data obtained by MPI; for Mexico data: INM, *Boletín Mensual de Estadísticas Migratorias*, arranged by FY 2009-14.

Central America therefore faces an urgent problem: many deportees arrive in their country of origin only to find themselves in worse circumstances than before they left. They and their families may be in crippling debt after having paid between \$4,000 and \$7,000 to smugglers, they have few skills that might help them find employment, and many are returned to unsafe neighborhoods and schools controlled by the gangs they tried to flee in the first place. A significant number see little choice but to turn around and try again.<sup>3</sup>

Efforts to disrupt this revolving-door phenomenon center on providing more and better opportunities for Central America’s people, especially its youth—an effort that includes reception programs and reintegration services.

<sup>2</sup> Migration Policy Institute (MPI) calculations based on Instituto Nacional de Migración (INM) data for the first eight months of 2015 from INM, *Boletín Mensual de Estadísticas Migratorias* (Mexico City: INM, 2015), [www.gobernacion.gob.mx/es\\_mx/SEGOB/Boletines\\_Estadisticos](http://www.gobernacion.gob.mx/es_mx/SEGOB/Boletines_Estadisticos).

<sup>3</sup> Data on the revolving-door phenomenon are limited, because most data sources on deportees do not identify individuals, making it difficult to track them over time and calculate rates of attempted remigration. Interviews with providers of reception services, however, reveal that immediate remigration may not be an uncommon phenomenon, as demonstrated by the presence of smugglers at bus stations and airports where deportees arrive. According to the Mexican Migration Southern Border Survey (EMIF Sur, for its Spanish acronym), more than 55 percent of Guatemalans, 45 percent of Hondurans, and 44 percent of Salvadorans deported from the United States in 2013 intended to remigrate. See Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF) and Consejo Nacional de Población (CONAPO), *Encuesta Sobre Migración en la Frontera Sur de México, Emif Sur. Informe Anual de Resultados 2013* (Tijuana: Colegio de la Frontera Norte, 2014), 50, [www.conapo.gob.mx/work/models/CONAPO/Resource/2402/1/images/EMIF-ANUAL-SUR-v15.pdf](http://www.conapo.gob.mx/work/models/CONAPO/Resource/2402/1/images/EMIF-ANUAL-SUR-v15.pdf). U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) reports that at least 19.7 percent of all removals in 2014 were of repeat immigration violators; see ICE, *ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations Report Fiscal Year 2014* (Washington, DC: ICE, 2014), 8–10, [www.ice.gov/doclib/about/offices/ero/pdf/2014-ice-immigration-removals.pdf](http://www.ice.gov/doclib/about/offices/ero/pdf/2014-ice-immigration-removals.pdf).



Governments of Central America acknowledge the need for comprehensive policies and programs to help their deported citizens anchor themselves again upon return. In the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle, presented in November 2014, Central American governments committed to “receive and care for returning children and adolescents,” and pledged to give priority to including returned migrants in job training and job placement programs.<sup>4</sup> It is still unclear to what extent the U.S. Congress will take up the White House’s request for \$1 billion to invest in Central America’s Alliance for Prosperity—Senate and House proposals as of November 2015 called for \$675 million and \$296 million, respectively—yet past funding requests are a sign of U.S. support for reintegration measures. For instance, at the height of the child migrant crisis in June 2014, the White House announced \$9.6 million in additional support for Central American governments for reception and reintegration of deportees.<sup>5</sup> Shortly after, the Obama administration sought \$295 million from Congress in a supplementary budget request for reintegration of Central American deportees—although as of November 2015, no bills to this effect had been passed.<sup>6</sup>

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The rationale for these investments is clear: strengthening the capacity of Central American governments to reintegrate the growing population of returned migrants and create better economic opportunities through reintegration services may help convert future regional migration into a genuine choice rather than a matter of sheer economic survival.

While the relevance of reintegration programs is largely unquestioned, knowledge is limited about what services are already in place, and how existing programs—which reach only a fraction of those in need—can be leveraged effectively. What kinds of services are provided to the growing number of returning children and adults? Who leads and funds them? Who is held accountable for their impact? What are their limitations, and how can successful models be expanded across the region? Given the potential for reception and reintegration programs to improve long-term migration dynamics within the region, regional governments and policymakers require answers to these questions. Yet information about reintegration services in the Northern Triangle is limited, and transparent evaluations are absent or difficult to access.

This report attempts to fill this gap. It examines existing reception and reintegration programs in Central America in an effort to compare the services available in each country, illustrate shared challenges, and inform policies to improve services for returned migrants—encouraging them to leave the revolving door behind. This report is divided into three parts. The first section describes the types of reception and reintegration services commonly observed in the Northern Triangle; the second provides an overview of existing services; and the third analyzes five common challenges to building successful reception and reintegration efforts in the region. The Appendix provides details on the programs surveyed, including

- 4 Inter-American Development Bank, “Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle: Regional Plan Prepared by El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras,” 1, accessed July 1, 2015, <http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=39224238>.
- 5 White House, “Unaccompanied Children from Central America” (fact sheet, June 20, 2014), [www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/06/20/fact-sheet-unaccompanied-children-central-america](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/06/20/fact-sheet-unaccompanied-children-central-america).
- 6 White House, “Emergency Supplemental Request to Address the Increase in Child and Adult Migration from Central America in the Rio Grande Valley Areas of the Southwest Border” (fact sheet, July 8, 2014), [www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/07/08/fact-sheet-emergency-supplemental-request-address-increase-child-and-adu](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/07/08/fact-sheet-emergency-supplemental-request-address-increase-child-and-adu). White House, “Unaccompanied Children from Central America” (fact sheet, June 20, 2014), [www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/06/20/fact-sheet-unaccompanied-children-central-america](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/06/20/fact-sheet-unaccompanied-children-central-america). White House, “Emergency Supplemental Request to Address the Increase in Child and Adult Migration from Central America.”





relevant actors, organizations, budgets, evaluations, numbers of beneficiaries, and challenges.

## II. Types of Reception and Reintegration Services

Services for deportees can be classified in four categories, based on two criteria: the duration of the services, and their target population. The term “reception” generally refers to short-term efforts to welcome returning nationals back to their country of origin, while “reintegration” denotes the long-term work necessary to anchor deportees in their societies and communities, including their insertion into local labor markets, schools, or employment training programs. The other basic division is between services targeting adults and those for children.

- **Reception of adults.** In each of the three countries, the federal government runs a basic reception service for deportees arriving at the capital’s airport. The programs of El Salvador and Guatemala share a name—Bienvenido a Casa (Welcome Home)—though they operate independent of each other. In Honduras, the equivalent program is the Center for Care for the Returned Migrant (Centro de Atención al Migrante Retornado, or CAMR). Deportees stepping off the plane are greeted and are given water and a small snack by program representatives that typically include both government employees and civil-society representatives. Deportees are registered and may also receive basic medical checkups, free phone calls, and transportation subsidies home. Meanwhile, systematic reception services for adult deportees arriving by land (i.e. most adults deported from Mexico) are more limited, especially in Guatemala where deportees are dropped off in El Carmen, a small border city without reception infrastructure beyond a few Red Cross services.
- **Reception of children.** Special reception services for children were created or expanded in response to the surge of unaccompanied child migrants in 2014. The vast majority of children returning to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras arrive by land from Mexico.<sup>7</sup> They are greeted by representatives of child protection government agencies in shelters in San Salvador, El Salvador; Quetzaltenango and Guatemala City, Guatemala; and San Pedro Sula, Honduras, respectively. Children receive hygiene kits, food, water, medical checkups, and in some cases psychological counselling before they are released to relatives. Children whose family cannot be contacted, or whose family context is not deemed safe by child protection agencies, stay in shelters until they are reunified with a relative or some other long-term solution is found.
- **Reintegration of adults.** Returned migrants often lack the skills required to find employment. Reintegration services aim to build skills, particularly ones that reflect employers’ needs, through training programs or vocational education. Most focus on training adults and youth for low- and middle-skilled jobs such as in carpentry, hairdressing, and mechanics. Some transition programs try to bridge the gap between the low education levels of many deportees and the minimum skill level needed to enter a vocational training program. Others provide access to job boards that connect returnees to potential employers, offer training in business management, or provide small loans to start a business.
- **Reintegration of children.** These services are designed to assure the long-term reintegration of children into their families and communities. Areas of focus include children’s school matriculation and overall well-being. Medical checkups are in some cases accompanied by psychological services such as trauma counseling. The associated efforts of municipal governments and local actors vary substantially depending on the financial and human

<sup>7</sup> Mexico deported 7,800 unaccompanied children to the Northern Triangle in fiscal year (FY) 2014, about six times as many as the 1,400 deported by the United States in the same period. For more, see Dominguez Villegas and Rietig, *Migrants Deported from the United States and Mexico to the Northern Triangle*.



resources of particular communities. Given that most juvenile deportees are teenagers, child reintegration programs also include skills training and the facilitation of deportees' entry into the labor market.

These four types of services are provided by a multitude of programs, spearheaded and funded by a variety of actors. As described above, national governments usually run large-scale reception programs that aim to serve the most immediate needs of deportees, while some civil-society organizations (CSOs) provide follow-up services, some of them funded by the U.S. government via the State Department. International organizations such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) play active roles both as funders and implementers, while the private sector helps get deportees into jobs. The number of beneficiaries of each program can range from a few dozen (as in the case of some in-depth workforce development schemes) to tens of thousands (for one-time services, such as phone calls to deportees' families).

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*Services for returnees differ somewhat between land and air arrivals, and between children and adults, but are similar overall in all three countries.*

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### **III. An Overview of Reception and Reintegration Services by Country**

El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras all feature long-standing reception and reintegration programs shaped by many years sending emigrants and receiving deportees. In the wake of the 2014 child migration crisis, attention and investments in such programs surged. This section provides an overview of the existing reception and reintegration services available to returning migrants in the three countries.<sup>8</sup>

Services for returnees differ somewhat between land and air arrivals, and between children and adults, but are similar overall in all three countries. Adult deportees arriving by air in the capital or another major city are greeted by government and CSO representatives and provided with basic services that usually include water, a snack, a phone call, the chance to exchange money, and support to arrange travel to the end destination, often in the form of a bus ticket. Meanwhile, reception centers for land deportees at the border are not operating in all countries. Honduras only recently, in September 2015, started operations at a reception center in Omoa, at the country's northern coast, while Guatemala still lacks such a facility. El Salvador's land deportee center was undergoing renovations as of October 2015, but it is operating. Where shelters are functioning, adults arriving by land from Mexico typically receive first aid and a phone call, as offered by international and civil-society organizations, and returnees receive hygiene kits or transfer to a shelter to spend the night before taking a bus back to their community. It is unclear what share of deportees receiving bus tickets for the trip home actually makes use of them. Anecdotally, smugglers wait for returnees at bus stations and offer to help them migrate again, especially in Guatemala due to the absence of a government-run center.<sup>9</sup>

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8 For a detailed description of the services offered, actors involved, funding sources, number of beneficiaries, and main challenges for each program, see the Appendix, which provides in-depth profiles of each program and service named in this report.

9 Author interview with Andres Kruesi, Chief of Mission, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Guatemala, October 8, 2015; author interview with Jorge Mauricio Paredes, Red Cross Honduras, October 4, 2015.



The process for children is different in two respects. First, most children arriving by land make only a brief stop at the border before being transported to a major city with shelters equipped to house them. In Guatemala, these shelters are located in Guatemala City and in Quetzaltenango, the main hub in the Western Highlands; in Honduras, in San Pedro Sula in the country's north; and in El Salvador, in the city of San Salvador. Thus, the gap in services for adults arriving by land and air does not exist for children. Second, shelter staffers help children reunify with their families. Social workers and psychologists conduct interviews to assess a course of action deemed to be in the best interests of the child. Before handing the child over to a parent or other relative, they investigate whether there is any trauma or abuse in the family. (In practice, however, interviews are short amid capacity constraints and the limited time the children spend at shelters.) Family members must provide appropriate documentation establishing their relationship to the minor. If no family member is found, or if interview findings suggest that it is not in the best interests of the child to be reunited with a family member, children are usually transferred to longer-term shelters until a more sustainable solution is found.

All three countries have adopted a whole-of-government approach to the challenges posed by the growing numbers of returnees. Government agencies most commonly involved include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through its consular officers and services; the agency in charge of migration affairs; the Attorney General's Office (Procuraduría General), which plays a central role in releasing children to their families; child protection agencies in charge of interviewing the children and determining their best interests; and the Ministry of Health, whose personnel provide medical services. Other agencies such as the Chancellery and a multitude of state and local level actors may also be involved.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast to the somewhat streamlined, short-term reception services in the three countries, the availability, type, and duration of long-term reintegration services for adults and children differ fundamentally by individual program. In all three countries only a small share of returnees, both children and adults, receive long-term services. The following is an overview of existing short- and long-term services in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, including, where available, the numbers served by each program.

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## A. El Salvador

El Salvador boasts the longest-running large-scale reception program for deportees, and one of the few entrepreneurial networks identified in the region that is run by returned migrants and offers reintegration services.

The Bienvenido a Casa program in El Salvador (BAC-SLV), funded and implemented by the National Directorate for Migration (Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería, DGME), was started in 1998

<sup>10</sup> For more information on El Salvador's whole-of-government approach to child reception and reintegration, see Consejo Nacional de la Niñez y de la Adolescencia (CONNA), *Cartilla de Ruta de Atención y Protección para la Niñez y la Adolescencia Migrante* (San Salvador: CONNA, 2014), [http://publica.gobiernoabierto.gob.sv/system/institution\\_service\\_attachments/attachments/000/000/008/original/CARTILLA\\_DE\\_RUTA\\_DE\\_ATENCI%C3%93N\\_Y\\_PROTECCI%C3%93N\\_A\\_NI%C3%91EZ\\_Y\\_ADOLESCENCIA\\_MIGRANTE.pdf?1441292253](http://publica.gobiernoabierto.gob.sv/system/institution_service_attachments/attachments/000/000/008/original/CARTILLA_DE_RUTA_DE_ATENCI%C3%93N_Y_PROTECCI%C3%93N_A_NI%C3%91EZ_Y_ADOLESCENCIA_MIGRANTE.pdf?1441292253). For more information on child reception and reintegration services in Guatemala, see Alejandra Argueta, Nathan Hesse, Michael Johnson, and Warren Newton, *The Realities of Returning Home: Youth Repatriation in Guatemala* (Washington, DC: Wilson Center, 2015), [www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/Guatemalan-youth-repatriation](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/Guatemalan-youth-repatriation).



by Catholic Relief Services, making it the oldest reception program in the region that is still active.<sup>11</sup> In its early years, the program provided reception services such as food, medical checkups, phone calls, and transportation. Today, its services for returned migrants also include some connections to adult education and skills training, and employment and entrepreneurship support. Deported migrants can, for instance, enroll in EDUCAME (Instituto de Modalidades Flexibles de Educación), an adult education program that aims to raise the educational level of those who have not finished elementary or secondary school, as well as in skills training courses with subjects that include the English language, cosmetology, information technology (IT), and electrical work. Deportees can also enroll in the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare's national job exchange to facilitate job placement in the private sector.<sup>12</sup> Most recently, in the summer of 2015, the Foreign Ministry created an office in charge of follow-up services for returnees (Oficina de Atención y Seguimiento a Personas Retornadas). Its tasks include connecting deportees with enterprises and Chambers of Commerce, teaching skills to encourage small start-ups, and facilitating access to high school or continuing education.<sup>13</sup>

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### *Children in need of long-term services are referred to Protection Councils.*

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Child reception services are coordinated by the National Council for Children and Adolescents (Consejo Nacional de la Niñez y de la Adolescencia, CONNA). Through the recently created Route for the Care and Protection for Migrant Children and Adolescents (Ruta de Atención y Protección a Niñez y Adolescencia Migrante), CONNA lays out coordination guidelines for all government entities involved in the reception of returned children. Professional staffers directed by CONNA evaluate the psychological and social conditions of returned children. Children in need of long-term services are referred to Protection Councils. Those whose family members cannot be immediately located are sent to Centers for Immediate Care (Centros de Acogida Inmediata), run by the Salvadoran Institute for the Comprehensive Development of Childhood and Adolescence (Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo Integral de la Niñez y la Adolescencia, ISNA).<sup>14</sup> At these centers, children receive food, clothing, and medical care while their family is contacted or a more durable solution is found.<sup>15</sup> ISNA also provides reintegration services for children. In June 2015, ISNA opened the first of its Centers for Child, Adolescent, and Family Care (Centros de Atención a Niñez, Adolescencia y Familia, CANAF), which provide psychological, education, and economic reintegration support to deported children and their families.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the limited employment support provided by BAC-SLV, a recently created diaspora project run by the Salvadoran Institute of the Migrant (Instituto Salvadoreño del Migrante, INSAMI) trains adult deportees to start a business. The National Network of Returned Entrepreneurs of El Salvador (Red Nacional de Emprendedores Retornados de El Salvador, RENACERES), created in 2014, promotes employment for returned migrants and provides training and start-up capital for businesses run by returned migrants.<sup>17</sup>

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11 Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería (DGME), "Programa de Atención a los Migrantes Salvadoreños Bienvenido a Casa El Salvador," accessed June 29, 2015, 5–6, [www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/microsites/IDM/workshops/return\\_migration\\_development\\_070708/pres\\_alvarez.pdf](http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/microsites/IDM/workshops/return_migration_development_070708/pres_alvarez.pdf).

12 Author interview and e-mail communication with Ana Solórzano, Head of the Department for Migrant Care, DGME, March 20, 2015.

13 Author interview with Daniel Ortiz Tobar, Director, Office for Attention and Follow-up of Returnees (Oficina de Atención y Seguimiento a Personas Retornadas), Foreign Ministry of El Salvador, October 6, 2015.

14 CONNA, *Cartilla de Ruta de Atención*, 15; author interview with Vanesa Martínez, Deputy Director for the Defense of Individual Rights, Consejo Nacional de la Niñez y de la Adolescencia (CONNA), March 19, 2015.

15 Author interview with Samuel Carias, Deputy Director for Rights Restitution, Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo Integral de la Niñez y la Adolescencia (ISNA), April 13, 2015.

16 Author interview and e-mail communication with Cecilia de la Rosa, Head of the Department for Care in Family Environment, ISNA, May 17, 2015.

17 Author interviews with Cesar Ríos, Executive Director, Instituto Salvadoreño del Migrante (INSAMI), March 9, 2015 and October 6, 2015.

**Table 1. Selected Reception and Reintegration Services in El Salvador**

Program	Services Provided	Lead Agency	Funding	Number Served	Observations
Welcome Home	Reception and reintegration of adults and children	Government (DGME)	National government Budget n/a	Not available	Large government-led reception program, targeting all deportees
Office for Attention and Follow-up of Returnees	Reintegration of adults	Government – (SRE)	National government Budget n/a	4,000 contacted, less than 100 connected to trainings and jobs	Impact unclear due to recent founding (June 2015)
Route for Care and Protection of Child Migrants	Reception of children	Government (CONNA)	National government Budget n/a	2,771 served by CONNA (July 2014 – April 2015)	Coordination of all government agencies involved in child-migrant reception
Centers for Child, Adolescent, and Family Care (CANAF)	Reintegration of children	Government (ISNA)	National government, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) \$685,000 for 2015	Not available	The first CANAF in Usulután opened in June 2015
National Network of Returned Entrepreneurs of El Salvador (RENACERES)	Reintegration of adults	Civil society (INSAMI)	Inter-American Foundation Budget \$80,000	20 people received training in 2015 to start their own business. Only one business opened	Diaspora-led initiative, future unclear
Return and Reintegration of Unaccompanied Minors in El Salvador	Reception and reintegration of children	International organization (IOM)	U.S. Department of State Budget \$55,000	63 between 2009-11	Discontinued in 2011

Source: MPI analysis of programs, based on interviews with program leads, news reporting, and information provided on programs' webpages. For details and links, see Appendix.

## B. Guatemala

Guatemala launched its large-scale reception program for air deportees in 2013 and strengthened private-sector engagement to provide employment reintegration services. A few particularly noteworthy civil-society programs and a recently established program at the Secretariat for Social Welfare provide long-term reintegration services for children. As of October 2015, Guatemala lacked a government-run reception center for land deportees.

As the overwhelming majority of deported Guatemalan minors and adults hail from the Western Highlands, where an indigenous majority suffers high rates of poverty and malnutrition, many reception and reintegration services focus on the rural Western Highlands and the capital, Guatemala City.

Similar to El Salvador, Guatemala's most visible reception and reintegration program is the Bienvenido



a Casa program (BAC-G). Started in November 2013, the program is overseen by the National Council for Guatemalan Migrants (Consejo Nacional para el Migrante Guatemalteco, CONAMIGUA), and its multistakeholder approach involves several actors from the government, civil society, and private sector.<sup>18</sup> For instance, after Foreign Ministry representatives welcome and register air deportees at the reception center at Guatemala City's Air Force Base (Fuerza Aérea), volunteers for the Association for Comprehensive Aid to Migrants (Asociación de Apoyo Integral al Migrante, AIM), a nongovernmental organization (NGO), enable returnees to make phone calls to family members, and provide psychological assessments and support.<sup>19</sup> One of the declared goals of BAC-G is the creation of special programs for the employability of returnees, including the certification of the skills and competencies they bring.<sup>20</sup>

The centerpiece of BAC-G's reintegration efforts is its private-sector engagement. The Center for Corporate Social Responsibility in Guatemala (Centro para la Acción de la Responsabilidad Social Empresarial en Guatemala, CENTRARSE), an umbrella organization of employers that includes more than 100 companies, collaborates in matching returnees with possible employers. In December 2013, the lead agency CONAMIGUA signed an agreement with Guatemala's Technical Institute for Training and Productivity (Instituto Técnico de Capacitación y Productividad, INTECAP), which aims to give returnees access to INTECAP training courses in fields such as mechanics, tailoring, carpentry, and construction.<sup>21</sup> INTECAP signed a similar agreement with the Secretariat of Social Welfare (Secretaría de Bienestar Social, SBS) to work with the secretariat's program for child migrants and provide skills training sessions to deported youth in the training center Quédate, which opened in early 2015 in the Nahualá in the Western Highlands. SBS also runs two shelters for deported minors, one in Quetzaltenango and the second in Guatemala City, called House Our Roots (Casa Nuestras Raíces).

The civil-society-driven Guatemalan Child Return and Reintegration Project (GCRRP) provides comprehensive reintegration services to Guatemalan minors deported from the United States. Launched in 2010 by the U.S.-based NGO Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), its program staff conduct assessment interviews with children in U.S. government shelters prior to their deportation and develop a return plan tailored to the needs of each child, including immediate services upon arrival such as temporary shelter, help with family reunification, medical and psychological services, as well as longer-term assistance with education or job training. The program is run in partnership with Colectivo Vida Digna, an organization located in the Western Highlands and grounded in Mayan culture—an important qualification given that most deported Guatemalan minors hail from indigenous backgrounds.<sup>22</sup> KIND's program monitoring and evaluation is comprehensive, especially when compared with the attention received by most other programs in the region. The project plans to expand its services to Guatemalan children deported from Mexico.<sup>23</sup>

Another civil-society initiative is run by the deportee organization Desarrollo Sostenible para Guatemala (DESGUA). The project, among other services, offers vocational culinary training to deported youth at its restaurant la Red KAT (formerly Café RED), with the goal to show returnees they can work toward the "Guatemalan Dream."<sup>24</sup>

18 For a full list of participating actors and contact persons, see the official implementation agreement of the Bienvenido a Casa program, Consejo Nacional para el Migrante Guatemalteco (CONAMIGUA), "Convenios Interinstitucionales," accessed June 23, 2015, [www.conamigua.gob.gt/convenios-interinstitucionales](http://www.conamigua.gob.gt/convenios-interinstitucionales); Rosemary Recinos, "Comisión del migrante impulsa proyecto 'Bienvenido a Casa,'" Congress of the Guatemalan Republic, November 27, 2013, [www.congreso.gob.gt/noticias.php?id=5006](http://www.congreso.gob.gt/noticias.php?id=5006).

19 Author interview with Mario Hernández, Representative, Asociación de Apoyo Integral al Migrante (AIM), February 19, 2015; Alejandro Pérez, "El círculo incesante de las deportaciones: La agridulce bienvenida," February 3, 2014, [www.plaza-publica.com.gt/content/la-agridulce-bienvenida](http://www.plaza-publica.com.gt/content/la-agridulce-bienvenida).

20 CONAMIGUA, "Convenios Interinstitucionales."

21 For details, see the official agreement between CONAMIGUA and Instituto Técnico de Capacitación y Productividad (INTECAP), available at CONAMIGUA, "Convenios Interinstitucionales;" Pérez, "El círculo incesante de las deportaciones."

22 Eva Miller, "Finding a Dignified Life: A Guatemalan Grantee Partner Offers Hope to Returned Migrant Youth," The Global Fund for Children, October 8, 2014, [www.globalfundforchildren.org/finding-a-dignified-life-a-guatemalan-grantee-partner-offers-hope-to-returned-migrant-youth](http://www.globalfundforchildren.org/finding-a-dignified-life-a-guatemalan-grantee-partner-offers-hope-to-returned-migrant-youth).

23 Author interview with Wendy Ramírez, Director, Guatemalan Child Return and Reintegration Project (GCRRP), Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), February 26, 2015.

24 Author interview with Willy Barreno, co-founder, Desarrollo Sostenible para Guatemala (DESGUA), October 10, 2015;

**Table 2. Selected Reception and Reintegration Services in Guatemala**

Program	Services Provided	Lead Agency	Funding	Number Served	Observations
Reception center at Air Force base (Fuerza Aérea)	Reception of adults	Government (MINEX)	MINEX Budget n/a	n/a	Large government-led reception program for air deportees; Collaboration with BAC-G
Welcome Home (BAC-G)	Reception and reintegration of adults	Government (CONAMIGUA)	CONAMIGUA Budget \$63,000 in 2013	2,500 served (November 2013 to April 2014)	Large multi-stakeholder reception program for air deportees
Child Migrant Program and House our Roots (Casa Nuestras Raíces)	Reception of children	Government (SBS)	National government Budget \$105,000 in 2014	5,000 children (January to October 2015)	Comprehensive reception services
Vocational training center Quédate (“Stay”)	Reintegration of children	Government (SBS)	Donations No funds from national government	106 graduates as of October 2015	Collaboration with Instituto Técnico de Capacitación y Productividad (INTECAP); unclear impact
Guatemalan Child Return and Reintegration Project (GCRRP)	Reception and reintegration of children	Civil society (KIND)	Global Fund for Children, Howard G. Buffett Foundation Budget n/a	124 (October 2010 to January 2015)	Comprehensive long-term services; local partner organizations; extensive and transparent evaluation
La Red KAT (formerly Café RED)	Reintegration of children	Civil society (DESGUA)	DESGUA Budget n/a	n/a	Vocational training program (cooking)
Guatemalan Repatriates Project (GRP)	Reception of adults and children Reintegration of adults	International organization (IOM)	United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Budget n/a	2,000 short-term, 85 long-term support between 2011-13	Discontinued in 2013
Job Fair for Deportees	Reintegration of adults	Civil society (Migrant Peacebuilding and Reconciliation Project)	Colby College / Davis Projects for Peace Budget \$10,000	150 in 2013	Student-led initiative engaging the private sector; one-off activity Discontinued in 2013

Source: MPI analysis of programs, based on interviews with program leads, news reporting, and information provided on programs' webpages. For details and links, see Appendix.

DESGUA, “Café RED,” accessed June 25, 2015, <http://desgua.org/initiatives/cafe-r-e-d>.



### C. Honduras

The Honduran government runs large-scale reception programs, similar in both scope and functioning to those in Guatemala and El Salvador, and recently opened a new reception center for land deportees at the country's northern coast. In addition, smaller programs run by Casa Alianza, UNICEF, UNDP, and Tegucigalpa's Chamber of Commerce (Cámara de Comercio e Industria de Tegucigalpa, CCIT) have elements worth highlighting.

The large-scale government-run Center for Care for the Returned Migrant (Centro de Atención al Migrante Retornado, CAMR) at San Pedro Sula's airport has provided reception services for Honduran air repatriates since 2000, while the center for land repatriations in Omoa opened in September 2015. The centers are a joint effort of the Honduran Foreign Ministry and civil society, with support from international organizations; their main mission is to provide immediate reception services. Representatives from the National Institute of Vocational Training (Instituto Nacional de Formación Profesional, INFOP) are available onsite to inform deportees about training opportunities to transition into occupations such as hairdressing and carpentry, and sectors such as the tourism industry.<sup>25</sup>

The agency in charge of receiving child deportees is the newly founded National Directorate for Childhood and Families (Dirección Nacional de la Niñez y la Familia, DINAF). Created in 2014, DINAF replaced a predecessor agency that had been abolished by presidential decree due to large-scale corruption.<sup>26</sup> Similar to CONNA in El Salvador, DINAF coordinates the repatriation, protection, and reinsertion of all unaccompanied migrant children to Honduras.<sup>27</sup> It is also in charge of running the "El Edén" Migrant Reception Center in San Pedro Sula, mirroring the implementation function of El Salvador's ISNA.

The CSO Casa Alianza Honduras has been running a program for the reintegration of returned migrant children since 2015. An estimated 80 children have received long-term services that include educational support, medical examinations, dental treatment, counseling for parents, and monitoring of the children's well-being. The program's evaluation is more comprehensive than that of most other Honduran programs.<sup>28</sup>

More recent initiatives to provide services beyond the immediate needs of children include two pilot programs by UNDP and UNICEF. In partnership with the Municipalities Association of Honduras (Asociación de Municipios de Honduras, AMHON), the objective of the UNDP program is to facilitate children's return to school, and improve access to health services, food security, public safety, and opportunities for income in three pilot municipalities.<sup>29</sup> UNICEF's Return to Happiness (Retorno a la Alegría) program works in coordination with CAMR, DINAF, municipal governments, and community-based organizations to enroll children in recreational therapy that addresses psychological damage caused by the migration experience.<sup>30</sup> In contrast to most other programs, these two programs are arranging an external evaluation of their successes and challenges.<sup>31</sup>

Tegucigalpa's Chamber of Commerce CCIT implements one of the few private-sector-driven pilot initiatives to provide employment and entrepreneurship services for adult deportees. Opportunities for

25 Author interview with Aracely Romero, Spokesperson, Centro de Atención al Migrante Retornado (CAMR), June 18, 2014.

26 Presidencia de Honduras, "Decreto Ejecutivo Pcm 26-2014," June 4, 2014, [www.presidencia.gob.hn/transparencia/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Decreto-Ejecutivo-PCM-26-2014.pdf](http://www.presidencia.gob.hn/transparencia/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Decreto-Ejecutivo-PCM-26-2014.pdf).

27 Presidencia de Honduras, "Decreto Ejecutivo Pcm 33-2014," June 11, 2014, [www.presidencia.gob.hn/transparencia/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Decreto-Ejecutivo-PCM-033-2014.pdf](http://www.presidencia.gob.hn/transparencia/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Decreto-Ejecutivo-PCM-033-2014.pdf). See also Consortium Centro America Abogados, "Newsletter Consortium: Laws Passed in Honduras," (news release, July 2014), 5, [www.consortiumlegal.com/images/news/agosto2014/en/notas/laws-hond.pdf](http://www.consortiumlegal.com/images/news/agosto2014/en/notas/laws-hond.pdf).

28 Author interview with José Ruelas, Director of Casa Alianza Honduras, February 24, 2015; author interview with Ubaldo Herrera, Director of Programs of Casa Alianza Honduras, October 2, 2015.

29 Nicole López, "AMHON y PNUD Acuerdan Impulsar Proyectos de Atención a Niñez Migrante," *Hondudiario*, January 16, 2015, [www.hondudiario.com/?q=node/16301](http://www.hondudiario.com/?q=node/16301).

30 Author interview with Hector Espinal, Communications Specialist, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), February 18, 2014.

31 Author interview with Edo Stork, Deputy Resident Representative for Honduras, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), February 23, 2015; Espinal, February 18, 2015.





Self Employment (Oportunidades de Autoempleo), a program run in partnership with INFOP, provides training and start-up capital to encourage the creation of 300 businesses run by returned migrants. Program implementation during the pilot phase in 2014 and 2015 was slowed down by the coordination of funding releases between INFOP and CCIT.<sup>32</sup>

**Table 3. Selected Reception and Reintegration Services in Honduras**

Program	Services Provided	Lead Agency	Funding	Number Served	Observations
Centers for Care of the Returned Migrant (CAMR)	Reception of adults and children Reintegration of adults	Government (SRE, and DGME)	National government Budget \$231,000 in 2013	40,000 in reception services in 2013 and 60 in education programs	Large government-led reception program, targeting air and land deportees; collaboration with civil society, IOM, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
El Edén Reception Center	Reception of children	Government (DINAF)	Government Budget \$94,000 in second half of 2014	10,000 in El Edén shelter in 2014	Recent founding of DINAF (June 2014)
Attention Program for Unaccompanied Child Migrants	Reception and reintegration of children	Civil society (Casa Alianza)	U.S. Department of State Budget \$400,000/year	80	Follow-up services for children; external evaluation
Assistance for Community Reintegration of Returning Migrant Children and Adolescents	Reintegration of children	International organization (UNDP)	UNDP and Asociación de Municipalidades de Honduras (AMHON) Budget \$120,000	400 by September 2015	Pilot until September 2015; collaboration with municipal governments; external evaluation planned
Return to Happiness	Reintegration of children	International organization (UNICEF)	UNICEF Budget n/a	3,000 in 2014	Psychological services to help children overcome trauma; ongoing external evaluation
Opportunities for Self-Employment (Oportunidades de Autoempleo)	Reintegration of adults	Private sector (CCIT)	Instituto Nacional de Formación Profesional (INFOP) Budget \$330,000 total	300 (September 2014 - September 2015)	Private-sector driven, in collaboration with INFOP; future unclear

Source: MPI analysis of programs, based on interviews with program leads, news reporting, and information provided on programs' webpages. For details and links, see Appendix.

<sup>32</sup> Author interviews with Fabricio Hernández, Self-Employment Programs, Cámara de Comercio e Industria de Tegucigalpa (CCIT), February 16, 2015 and October 2, 2015.



## D. *Regionwide Programs*

Governments of the Northern Triangle also receive support through some regionwide initiatives that complement individual countries' services. ICRC and the Red Cross Societies of Guatemala and Honduras provide numerous reception services to migrants deported by land to the border cities of El Carmen in Guatemala (on the border with Mexico) and, until recently, in Corinto in Honduras (on the border with Guatemala). At so-called Migrant Attention Posts (Puestos de Atención al Migrante), the Red Cross provides basic medical care and phone services to help migrants reconnect with their families. These services are provided by volunteers of the National Chapters of the Red Cross, and are supported by technical advice and funds from ICRC. The attention posts fill a gap in reception services for arrivals by land.<sup>33</sup>

Meanwhile, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) supports the reception of deportees at the three countries' large-scale reception centers by providing hygiene kits and funding the centers' renovations and expansions. In addition, IOM staff trained youth in Guatemala's training center Quédade, aiding the implementation of reintegration services by other actors.<sup>34</sup>

**Table 4. Selected Regionwide Services for Deported Adults and Children**

Program Name	Services Provided	Lead Agency	Funding	Number Served	Observations
Migrant Attention Posts	Reception of adults	International organization and civil society (ICRC and Red Cross chapters in Guatemala and Honduras)	ICRC Budget \$80,000	3,700 in Guatemala; 17,000 in Honduras (January to August 2014)	Lack of reception infrastructure beyond the attention posts
Comprehensive Assistance to Returning Families and Unaccompanied Children in the Northern Triangle of Central America	Reception and reintegration of adults and children	International organization (IOM)	IOM Budget n/a	n/a	Hygiene kits at reception centers; renovation of reception centers; limited reintegration services

*Source:* MPI analysis of programs, based on interviews with program leads, news reporting, and information provided on program's webpages. For details and links, see Appendix.

## IV. Findings: Five Common Challenges

An analysis of the content, funding structures, and evaluation mechanisms of existing reception and reintegration services in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras reveals five common challenges.

### A. *Few Reception Services for Land Arrivals*

A look at existing programs reveals an imbalance in reception services for adult deportees arriving by air and land. Deportees arriving at major air hubs from Mexico or the United States have the best access

<sup>33</sup> Author interview and email exchanges with Marie-Astrid Blondiaux, Migration Delegate, ICRC, Regional Delegation for Mexico, Central America, and Cuba, March 4, 2015.

<sup>34</sup> Author interview with José Diego Cardenas, Coordinator of Regional Projects, International Organization for Migration (IOM) Guatemala, October 8, 2015.



to well-established services. Those arriving by land from Mexico to Guatemala (around 40 percent of all deportees to Guatemala in 2014) currently rely on support provided by the Red Cross at the border crossing of El Carmen.<sup>35</sup> This imbalance is not found for child deportees who, after filing immigration papers at border crossings, are transported to reception centers and shelters in major cities.

In light of Mexico's growing enforcement role in the region, governments of the Northern Triangle should improve the limited services they currently provide to adults deported via land from Mexico. For instance, Guatemala should consider starting to operate a newly created reception center in Tecún Umán, especially since service providers maintain that the opening of the Omoa reception center in Honduras improved the protection of deportees and at the same time helped decrease the number of migrants who turn around immediately to remigrate.<sup>36</sup> While financial limitations may curb governments' ability to reach all land deportees, deepening collaboration with current service providers such as the National Red Cross chapters and ICRC would increase the reach of services provided at land border crossings. As the number of deportees from Mexico continues to grow, building the infrastructure to receive them will become increasingly urgent.

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*A look at existing programs reveals an imbalance in reception services for adult deportees arriving by air and land.*

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## **B. Long-Term Reintegration Services Are Limited**

Reception programs for both adults and children increasingly attempt to go beyond meeting basic needs at the point of arrival, and to connect deportees with longer-term employment and training services. Guatemala's BAC-G and the recently opened training center for deported youth in the Western Highlands are promising, if nascent, examples of this trend. But long-term support is hampered by many challenges. Funding for programs is limited and often depends on international aid. Even in cases where government funds are pledged, programs sometimes struggle when funds are delayed or not released. Many programs would falter without the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UNDP, UNICEF, and other international donors.

National governments should consider developing national reintegration policies that direct efforts and resources to the expansion of reintegration services. They could improve the coordination of existing education, vocational training, social development, and employment programs to specifically target the deportee population and expand the coverage of long-term services. In a context where basic education, health, and employment services are scarce, allocating large budgets to services targeted at the returning population may raise valid criticism. However, the reintegration of deported migrants should be seen as a fundamental aspect of a social development policy that affects not just those who return, but their families and communities—and, in aggregate, entire municipalities. Comprehensive programs—such as those run by UNDP and UNICEF in Honduras—that target not only deportees but their families and, by extension, their communities, might serve as models. National governments should place particular emphasis on collaborations with municipal governments, civil society, UN organizations, and local businesses to amplify both the geographic reach and societal support of reintegration measures.

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<sup>35</sup> In 2014, approximately 35,000 deportations to Guatemala originated from Mexico, or around 39 percent of total deportations to Guatemala that year. As the majority of deportees from Mexico are apprehended in the southern part of Mexico, most are deported by land. For details on the growth of Mexico's share of deportees, see Dominguez Villegas and Rietig, *Migrants Deported from the United States and Mexico to the Northern Triangle*.

<sup>36</sup> Author interview with Jorge Mauricio Paredes, Red Cross Honduras, October 4, 2015.



### C. *Difficulty Finding Jobs for Deportees*

Workforce development agencies provide access to skills training and vocational education, meeting a significant need of returning migrants. The three countries have agencies tasked by the government to coordinate and provide vocational and technical trainings: INTECAP in Guatemala, the Salvadoran Institute for Professional Training (INSAFORP) in El Salvador, and INFOP in Honduras. Beyond these agencies, private training and education institutions offer courses to prepare students for vocational degrees.

Functioning connections between workforce agencies and the private sector that effectively target deportees and channel graduates into employment are still limited. But the first promising steps have been made in Guatemala and Honduras. Guatemala's INTECAP has been collaborating with the country's BAC-G program and the Secretary of Social Welfare to offer training to young deportees in the Quédate training center in the Western Highlands. In Honduras, INFOP is newly involved in a pilot partnership with the Chamber of Commerce of Tegucigalpa to increase entrepreneurship and self-employment. While these projects' impacts have yet to be assessed—and should be carefully—their concepts show great potential. The private sector plays an important role in curricula development for the vocational training and eventual job placement of deportees. Curricula developed jointly by local employers and vocational schools, along with practical work experience gained in local industries, can give students the opportunity to learn an in-demand trade that culminates in a job, not just a certificate.

Newly created or expanding reintegration programs may want to consider the involvement of workforce development agencies and/or private-sector companies in the design and provision of these training sessions. Finding employers willing to work with deportees before they receive training might prevent instances in which deportees are trained but cannot find employment afterwards. Efforts to generate private sector buy-in will likely require a much-needed paradigm change in the region that emphasizes deportees' potential contributions to the labor market and society and addresses existing prejudices against the deportee population.

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*Functioning connections between workforce agencies and the private sector that effectively target deportees and channel graduates into employment are still limited.*

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### D. *Limited Data, and Poor Monitoring and Evaluation*

Nearly all the programs reviewed lack consistent monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Exact numbers of beneficiaries are often not available, and estimates reported in press reports vary substantially and often do not link to official documentation. Frequently, information on budgets is opaque or not public, complicating external assessments of spending efficiency, as ratios of dollars invested to beneficiaries served are based on ambiguous baselines. While a number of programs have conducted or are conducting internal evaluations, few involve an external evaluator, and evaluation results are rarely made accessible to the public.

When programs are discontinued, as often happens, the lessons remain unclear. In both Guatemala and El Salvador, several reintegration programs were discontinued after a few years and for a variety of reasons, some of them hazy. Given that many of the reintegration programs in the region are pilot projects, stakeholders find it difficult to ensure that programs survive beyond their initial funding period.

The vast majority of programs presented in this report would benefit from substantially increased monitoring and evaluation. Collecting data on programs' target populations, outcomes, and impacts



would allow for the better evaluation and comparison of programs and services. Potential funders could consider making basic data collection (including on beneficiaries' age, gender, place of origin, education, employment, and detailed contact information) a precondition for the disbursement of funds. Through collaborations with academic or research institutions, governments could use detailed surveys (which are administered to all deportees upon return, and expanded through follow-up after a few weeks or months) to design longitudinal studies that monitor improvement in the socioeconomic outcomes of deportees and provide necessary data on remigration rates.

### **E. Wide Variation in the Coordination of Service Providers across Programs and Borders**

Reintegration programs often involve a patchwork of government agencies, NGOs, and international organizations. Ineffective coordination among implementing partners and funding agencies is widespread, and collaboration among service providers across borders is scant. In addition, collaboration between service providers and Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Migración (National Migration Institute, INM) rarely goes beyond basic communication upon the return of children.

Involving local partners and former deportees in service provision gives programs increased credibility, and expands the geographic reach of programs into rural and remote areas. For example, KIND's collaboration with Colectivo Vida Digna in Guatemala's Highlands, La Red KAT in Quetzaltenango, and the RENACERES program in San Salvador provide services for deportees by deportees, thereby strengthening the support network of returned migrants. Receiving advice from former deportees who have found their footing in their country of origin can motivate recent arrivals and inspire them to conceive of a new vision for their lives.

Service providers would benefit from increasing their exchanges with other programs in the same country, or with equivalent programs and actors across borders. Limited financial and human resources hamper exchange—and the realization of its potential benefits, which include the creation of synergies between programs, the adoption of best practices through information sharing, a sense of shared purpose among service providers, and the avoidance of repetitive efforts directed at the same populations. More exchanges between service providers would also better their understanding of shared challenges and open the door to advocating for common interests together.

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*Programs that provide long-term reintegration services remain unavailable for the majority of deportees in the Northern Triangle.*

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## **V. Conclusion**

The rising numbers of deportees to the Northern Triangle of Central America highlight the need to strengthen reception and reintegration programs in the region. The governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have launched and expanded programs that provide deportees with basic necessities upon their return: basic food, primary medical services, and transportation to their communities of origin. Yet programs that provide long-term reintegration services remain unavailable for the majority of deportees in the Northern Triangle. And without substantial financial support by international donors, opportunities to reach more deportees and provide an alternative to remigration are slim.



A host of government agencies and international and civil-society organizations are currently trying to fill the gap in the provision of reintegration services. But most of the programs surveyed for this study struggle with a wide range of challenges: the monitoring and evaluation of programs is poor; coordination among funding and implementing agencies and organizations is often ineffective; channeling a largely low-skilled deportee population into employment is a sluggish process, especially where the private sector has little buy-in; and services for Guatemalan adults returning by land from Mexico are inadequate.

A small set of promising programs shed light on elements that may promote successful reintegration. The involvement of local actors and former deportees in the provision of services brings credibility and a long-term perspective that internationally led initiatives would find hard to create through other channels. A structured cycle of implementation, evaluation, and adaptation can lead to improved service quality. Successful programs utilize a comprehensive approach, providing integration support over a long period of time. This may be especially important for children: a comprehensive plan for deported children starts with deportation proceedings in the United States or Mexico and reaches all the way to the child's community, school, and home.

Improving reception and reintegration programs will take time, the consistent dedication of financial resources, and political will. Stopping the revolving door completely is a long-term aspiration; given the historical migration dynamics of North and Central America, some deportees will continue to seek a better life beyond the borders of their home countries. But policymakers of all countries involved share a responsibility to give those deportees who are willing to reintegrate back into their communities the tools to ease this long and daunting process.

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*The rising numbers of deportees to the Northern Triangle of Central America highlight the need to strengthen reception and reintegration programs in the region.*

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## Appendix: Detailed Profiles of Reception and Reintegration Programs by Country

This Appendix provides detailed information on each of the reception and reintegration programs surveyed for this report. Based on interviews with program leads and an in-depth review of news sources and official public information, it presents profiles of each program that include information on the services offered, actors involved, funding sources, number of beneficiaries, and main challenges. It is difficult to assess the quality of services, as many programs are still in their pilot phase, and comprehensive external program evaluations are not available for most programs. Funding sources, budgets, and number of beneficiaries for each service provided are frequently unavailable or found to be inconsistent after comparing several information sources. This Appendix presents the most complete and reliable information available for each program.

### A. El Salvador

#### I. Bienvenido a Casa El Salvador—DGME

The Bienvenido a Casa program in El Salvador (BAC-SLV) is the largest reception and reintegration program in El Salvador. It provides Salvadoran returnees with medical and transportation services at the moment of reception as well as the possibility to enroll in training and job placement services. The program started in November 1998 under the supervision of the Catholic Relief Services and with funding from the U.S. government.<sup>37</sup> The program was coordinated by the Catholic Relief Services between 1999 and 2004 and by the local nongovernmental organization (NGO) Fundi between 2004 and 2007. It was institutionalized by El Salvador's National Directorate for Migration (Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería, DGME) in 2007.<sup>38</sup>

BAC-SLV convenes several government agencies, international organizations, and universities. These include the Ministry of Public Security and Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, the Ministry of Tourism, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the National Institute for the Comprehensive Development of Childhood and Adolescence, University Dr. José Matías Delgado, and the Central American University José Simeón Cañas.<sup>39</sup>

BAC-SLV was initially designed to provide immediate emergency care—in the form of food, shelter, transportation, and basic medical services—to all deportees upon arrival from the United States.<sup>40</sup> The program expanded to provide training and job placement services in 2002.<sup>41</sup> It is currently divided into two stages: in the first stage, returned migrants get registered and receive emergency services such as food, medical checkups, and transportation subsidies.<sup>42</sup> In the second stage, returned migrants can register with the Center for Assistance for Repatriates (Centro de Asistencia a Repatriados) to receive medical and psychological assistance as well as education and job placement services.<sup>43</sup> Repatriates that need a medical checkup are referred to a public hospital and given priority. Two psychologists see returned migrants that require psychological assistance upon arrival and follow up with each case. To help finish their elementary education or get a technical diploma, the Center for Assistance for Repatriates refers people to the EDUCAME (Instituto de Modalidades Flexibles de Educación)

37 DGME, "Programa de Atención a los Migrantes," 5–6.

38 *Ibid.*, 6.

39 *Ibid.*, 26.

40 *Ibid.*, 8.

41 Jodi Berger Cardoso, Erin Randle Hamilton, Nestor Rodriguez, Karl Eschbach, and Jacqueline Hagan, "Deporting Fathers: Involuntary Transnational Families and Intent to Remigrate among Salvadoran Deportees," *International Migration Review* (2014): 12.

42 DGME, "Servicio de Atención a Repatriados," updated January 24, 2013, [www.migracion.gob.sv/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=90&Itemid=113](http://www.migracion.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=90&Itemid=113).

43 *Ibid.*



program directed by the Ministry of Education.<sup>44</sup> Migrants also receive vocational training programs in cosmetology, IT, electrical work, and the English language.<sup>45</sup> Returned migrants are able to enroll in the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare’s national job exchange (*bolsa de empleo*),<sup>46</sup> and some have been placed in call centers.<sup>47</sup>

DGME does not publish the numbers of beneficiaries of its programs, and requests for statistics on the program’s reach and beneficiaries were not answered. It is therefore difficult to evaluate the success of the program beyond the information available, which indicates that every returned migrant can enroll in both stages of the program.<sup>48</sup>

## 2. Office for Attention and Follow-up of Returnees—SRE

A new office in charge of reintegration of adults, established in June 2015 within the Directorate for Salvadorans Abroad in the Foreign Ministry (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, SRE), focuses on three reintegration areas: Labor integration through a job platform (*bolsa de trabajo*) and building up contacts with businesses and Chambers of Commerce; an entrepreneurship project in collaboration with the National Council for Small and Medium Enterprises (Consejo Nacional de la Micro y Pequeña Empresa, CONAMYPE) to invest \$420,000 to provide training and seed capital to 100 microenterprises; and educational integration through access to secondary school, universities, and continuing education opportunities. While the strategy of the office seems comprehensive, impact assessment is difficult due to its recent founding.<sup>49</sup>

## 3. Route for the Care and Protection for Migrant Children and Adolescents—CONNA

In El Salvador, the reception of deported minors is coordinated by the National Council for Children and Adolescents (Consejo Nacional de la Niñez y de la Adolescencia, CONNA) through the “Route for the Care and Protection for Migrant Children and Adolescents” (Ruta de Atención y Protección a Niñez y Adolescencia Migrante), which provides guidelines for the coordination of reception services for children.<sup>50</sup>

The Route for Care and Protection, established in July 2014, coordinates the multitude of government agencies that take part in the repatriation process for children before, during, and after arrival in El Salvador.<sup>51</sup> Before deportation, the Foreign Ministry (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, MINEX) provides legal counsel to the child through El Salvador’s consular representations abroad and coordinates the repatriation process with DGME, CONNA, and the Salvadoran Institute for the Comprehensive Development of Childhood and Adolescence (Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo Integral de la Niñez y la Adolescencia, ISNA).<sup>52</sup> DGME identifies and registers returned children and provides CONNA with the necessary information to reunite deported children with their family members in El Salvador.<sup>53</sup> The Health Ministry (Ministerio de Salud, MINSAL), provides medical checkups and vaccinations to all deported children.<sup>54</sup> The National Police (Policía Nacional Civil, PNC) accompany and protect children at the DGME reception centers as well as at the shelters run by CONNA and ISNA.<sup>55</sup> Finally, the Attorney

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44 The Instituto de Modalidades Flexibles (EDUCAME) program provides adolescents and adults with flexible options to finish grades 7–12, and also offers technical diplomas in auto mechanics, cosmetology, hairstyling, and cooking, among others. For more information on EDUCAME, see EDUCAME, “Servicios,” accessed June 30, 2015, [www.educame.edu.sv](http://www.educame.edu.sv).

45 Author interview with Solórzano, March 20, 2015.

46 DGME, “Servicio de Atención a Repatriados.”

47 Author interview with Solórzano, March 20, 2015.

48 Ibid.

49 Author interview with Daniel Ortiz Tobar, Director, Office for Attention and Follow-up of Returnees (Oficina de Atención y Seguimiento a Personas Retornadas), Foreign Ministry El Salvador, October 6, 2015.

50 CONNA, *Cartilla de Ruta de Atención*, 6.

51 Ibid., 11–12.

52 Ibid., 7.

53 Ibid., 7.

54 Ibid., 7–8.

55 Ibid., 9.





General's office (Procuraduría General de la República, PGR) provides legal support to and defines the legal situation of orphaned children without a family to care for them.<sup>56</sup>

CONNA receives all deported children at the Centro Integral de Atención al Migrante (CAIM) in San Salvador, where personnel from CONNA and ISNA evaluate the psychological well-being of each child. Children with unsafe family contexts and severe psychological trauma are referred to one of the 15 Protection Councils for Childhood and Adolescence (Juntas de Protección de la Niñez y de la Adolescencia, JDPs) run by CONNA.<sup>57</sup> CONNA's staff at CAIM and the 12 staff at each of their JDPs offer mostly reception services, following up only with those children who are flagged as being in danger either in their family or in their community. The JDP closest to the child's community of origin opens a personal file for each child that is deemed in need of protection, and is in charge of following up with that child to assure his or her safety. The Route for Care and Protection does not include a procedure to reenroll children in school. Children who are not picked up by a family member on the day of arrival are referred to one of ISNA's Centers for Immediate Care (Centros de Acogida Inmediata), where ISNA has a maximum of 15 days to find a suitable family member to reunify with the child. After this period, ISNA is required to send the child's file to a judge at the PGR to determine the child's legal situation.<sup>58</sup>

CONNA provided reception services to 2,771 children between July 1, 2014, and April 3, 2015.<sup>59</sup> For about one-third of these (1,085 cases), CONNA opened files at one of its 15 JDPs. Numbers of children referred to ISNA's Centers for Immediate Care in the same period are not available. CONNA's total annual budget amounts to \$6 million and ISNA's to \$17 million.<sup>60</sup> Yet as CONNA and ISNA are the institutions in charge of designing, overseeing, and implementing policies for the protection of all children in El Salvador, only an undefined portion of these budgets get directed toward services for deported migrant children.<sup>61</sup> ISNA has received additional small grants and donations to help in the reception of unaccompanied children, such as a \$15,000 donation from the government of Taiwan,<sup>62</sup> and in-kind donations of hygiene kits and transportation from Save the Children and the IOM.<sup>63</sup>

The program lacks the resources to follow up on individual cases after children are released to an ISNA shelter, leaving no information on the number of children who successfully reintegrate into schools or enter the labor market.<sup>64</sup>

#### 4. Centers for Child, Adolescent, and Family Care (CANAF)—ISNA

ISNA runs a Center for Child, Adolescent and Family Care (Centros de Atención a Niñez, Adolescencia y Familia, CANAF) to provide long-term reintegration services for returned children. The first center was opened in Usulután in June 2015, and centers in Santa Ana and San Miguel are planned. They are funded by the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) and IOM, and had a budget of just over \$685,000 for 2015.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>57</sup> Author interview with Martínez, March 19, 2015.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> CONNA, *Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes que Retornan al País Debido a la Migración Irregular* (San Salvador: Unidad de Información y Análisis, Subdirección de Políticas, CONNA, 2014), 2; CONNA, *Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes que Retornan al País Debido a la Migración Irregular* (San Salvador: Unidad de Información y Análisis, Subdirección de Políticas, CONNA, 2015), 2.

<sup>60</sup> Author interview with Martínez, March 19, 2015.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> ISNA, "ISNA recibe donativo de \$15 mil del Gobierno de China (Taiwán) para la atención integral a la niñez migrante," September 4, 2014, [www.isna.gob.sv/ISNA/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=422:isna-recibe-donativo-de-15-mil-del-gobierno-de-china-taiwan-para-la-atencion-integral-a-la-ninez-migrante&catid=1:noticias-ciudadano&Itemid=77](http://www.isna.gob.sv/ISNA/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=422:isna-recibe-donativo-de-15-mil-del-gobierno-de-china-taiwan-para-la-atencion-integral-a-la-ninez-migrante&catid=1:noticias-ciudadano&Itemid=77).

<sup>63</sup> Lilian Martínez, "Falta atención psicosocial para los niños retornados," *El Salvador.com*, August 14, 2014, [www.elsalvador.com/mwedh/nota/nota\\_completa.asp?idCat=47673&idArt=9016427](http://www.elsalvador.com/mwedh/nota/nota_completa.asp?idCat=47673&idArt=9016427); and Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores del Salvador, "Gobierno salvadoreño recibe donación a favor de migrantes retornados," April 21, 2015, [www.rree.gob.sv/index.php/noticias-ciudadano/item/4117-gobierno-salvadoreno-recibe-donacion-a-favor-de-migrantes-retornados](http://www.rree.gob.sv/index.php/noticias-ciudadano/item/4117-gobierno-salvadoreno-recibe-donacion-a-favor-de-migrantes-retornados).

<sup>64</sup> Author interview with Martínez, March 19, 2015.

<sup>65</sup> Author interview with de la Rosa, May 17, 2015; Elda Gladis Tobar Ortiz, Executive Director, ISNA, October 6, 2015.



The goal of the centers is to provide mental health, education, and family economic support services. Mental health services include psychological care for children and families, art therapy, crisis intervention, and vocational career counseling. Education services include incorporation into the educational system, remedial schooling, interactive classrooms, and reading spaces. Family economic support services include a socioeconomic diagnostic, family strengthening plans, and job workshops and training.<sup>66</sup> Due to the recent opening of the first center, their impact remains to be seen.

## 5. Red Nacional de Emprendedores Retornados de El Salvador (RENACERES)—INSAMI

Since January 2015, the Salvadoran Institute for Migrants (Instituto Salvadoreño del Migrante, INSAMI) has been building the National Network of Returned Entrepreneurs of El Salvador (Red Nacional de Emprendedores Retornados de El Salvador, RENACERES), which provides Salvadoran deportees with job training and information about grants to start a business.<sup>67</sup>

RENACERES is a network of Salvadoran migrants who lived in the United States for more than five years and were deported recently. In addition to providing technical and financial support for returnee entrepreneurs, RENACERES aims to promote deportees' rights, decrease the stigma of deportation through awareness campaigns, and advocate for the creation of programs directed at deportees.<sup>68</sup> INSAMI and RENACERES work to provide technical and entrepreneurial training for migrants who want to start their own business.<sup>69</sup> The network is funded by the Inter-American Foundation, an independent agency of the U.S. government. RENACERES was created with a budget of around \$80,000, which included the financing of awareness campaigns, training sessions, and some financial support for business start-ups.<sup>70</sup>

RENACERES is an initiative driven by former deportees who know the challenges of deportees firsthand. The number of beneficiaries to date is small—around 20 people received training. Twelve received technical and financial support to start independent microbusinesses, but only one managed to receive a loan to start a business.<sup>71</sup> One year into the program's existence challenges to its future include securing long-term funding, as well as developing a long-term monitoring and evaluation strategy that allows the program to support small businesses in the long term.<sup>72</sup>

## 6. Return and Reintegration of Unaccompanied Minors—IOM (discontinued)

Funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population Refugees and Migration, IOM implemented the Return and Reintegration of Unaccompanied Minors program in El Salvador. The project was divided into two phases: in Phase I, 52 minors received assistance to return to their communities of origin, connect to their families, and reintegrate into society.<sup>73</sup> Starting in 2010, the main goal of Phase II was to prepare the Salvadoran government to take over the services provided by IOM. During Phase II, IOM led workshops for local school teachers on human trafficking, and provided vocational training to returned minors in English and computing.<sup>74</sup> In Phase II, the program benefited 10 minors.<sup>75</sup> In 2011, the IOM reported a budget of \$55,500.<sup>76</sup>

66 Ibid.

67 Author interviews with Ríos, March 9, 2015 and October 6, 2015.

68 INSAMI, "Retornados El Salvador," accessed June 30, 2015, <http://insami.wix.com/retornados>.

69 DGME, "Migración Apoyará Proyectos de la Red de RENACERES," last updated February 23, 2015, [www.migracion.gob.sv/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=303:migraci%C3%B3n-apoyar%C3%A1-proyectos-de-la-red-de-renaceres&Itemid=168](http://www.migracion.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=303:migraci%C3%B3n-apoyar%C3%A1-proyectos-de-la-red-de-renaceres&Itemid=168).

70 Author interviews with Ríos, March 9, 2015 and October 6, 2015.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid.

73 IOM, "General Information: El Salvador," accessed June 30, 2015, [www.iom.int/countries/el-salvador/general-information](http://www.iom.int/countries/el-salvador/general-information).

74 IOM, "Inicia segunda fase de Proyecto de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes retornados," *Migraciones* 4 (October-November 2010), [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/el\\_salvador/documents/press\\_corner/20101122\\_es.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/el_salvador/documents/press_corner/20101122_es.pdf).

75 IOM, "General Information: El Salvador."

76 IOM, "Programme and Budget for 2011," October 7, 2010, accessed June 30, 2015, 105, [www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/about\\_iom/en/council/99/MC\\_2297.pdf](http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/about_iom/en/council/99/MC_2297.pdf).



## B. Guatemala

### I. Center for Care of the Returned Migrant —MINEX

Guatemala's Foreign Ministry (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, MINEX) welcomes all air deportees at Guatemala City's Air Force Base (Fuerza Aérea). Ministry representatives conduct an intake interview, and deportees are provided with drinks and a snack, medical support, and a currency exchange service. They also have the opportunity to make a local phone call, and are given a bus ticket and transported to the bus station. In contrast to government-run reception facilities in Honduras and El Salvador, where other service providers and civil-society organizations have access to the reception facility, Guatemala does not allow these organizations inside the building, excluding, for instance, most of the members of the Bienvenido a Casa program from the actual facility.<sup>77</sup>

### 2. Bienvenido a Casa

Started in November 2013, the Bienvenido a Casa program in Guatemala (BAC-G) is that country's most visible reception and reintegration program. It aims to facilitate the reentry of adult returnees into Guatemalan society and the labor market. One of the declared goals of BAC-G is the creation of special programs for the employability of returnees, including certification of the skills and competencies they bring home.

The program's multi-stakeholder approach involves several actors from government agencies, CSOs, and the private sector.<sup>78</sup> The program is supervised by the National Council for Guatemalan Migrants (Consejo Nacional para el Migrante Guatemalteco, CONAMIGUA), a government entity created to coordinate and monitor migration-related activities conducted by the Guatemalan government.<sup>79</sup> Replacing the discontinued Guatemalan Repatriates Project (GRP), which was led by IOM and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID; see details below), BAC-G was created as a follow-up program through the efforts of former IOM employees working in the Association for Comprehensive Aid to Migrants (Asociación de Apoyo Integral al Migrante, AIM) to provide social and psychological services to adult returnees.<sup>80</sup> Concretely, they enable phone calls to family members, and provide psychological assessment and support. AIM's staff of five are volunteers, and the services they provide are made possible by donations.<sup>81</sup>

The centerpiece of the program's efforts is its extensive private sector engagement. The Center for Corporate Social Responsibility in Guatemala (Centro para la Acción de la Responsabilidad Social Empresarial en Guatemala, CENTRARSE), an umbrella organization of employers that counts more than 100 member companies, collaborates in matching returnees with possible employers. For instance, Transactel (recently renamed Pelus), an international provider of business-process outsourcing, places deportees who speak good English in their call centers.<sup>82</sup> According to Transactel's president, around 40 percent of its employees are returnees, and they aim to provide up to 200 placements per month for returnees with sufficient English skills.<sup>83</sup> Banrural, a local rural development bank, provides microloans for the development of rural businesses run by returned migrants. Technical assistance and knowledge is provided by the Migrant Commission of Guatemala's Congress. In December 2013, CONAMIGUA signed an agreement with Guatemala's Technical Institute for Training and Productivity (Instituto Técnico de Capacitación y Productividad, INTECAP), which aims to channel groups of between 20 and 30 returned

77 Author interview with Miriam Sosa, Consular Affairs, Foreign Ministry, and Oscar Hernández, AIM, October 8, 2015.

78 For a full list of all participating actors and each organization's contact person, see the official implementation agreement of the Bienvenido a Casa program signed on November 27, 2013: CONAMIGUA, "Convenios Interinstitucionales."

79 CONAMIGUA, "Acerca de CONAMIGUA," accessed June 24, 2015, [www.conamigua.gob.gt/acerca-de-conamigua](http://www.conamigua.gob.gt/acerca-de-conamigua).

80 Pérez, "El círculo incansante de las deportaciones;" Recinos, "Comisión del migrante." Note that AIM does not have a functioning webpage, but regularly provides updates via its Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/Apoyointegralalmigrante/info?tab=page\\_info](https://www.facebook.com/Apoyointegralalmigrante/info?tab=page_info).

81 Author interview with Mario Hernández, February 19, 2015.

82 *Prensa Libre*, "Profesionales auxilian a migrantes devueltos al país," *Prensa Libre*, March 2, 2014, [www.prensalibre.com/noticias/migrantes/AYUDAN\\_0\\_1094290578.html](http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/migrantes/AYUDAN_0_1094290578.html).

83 Recinos, "Comisión del migrante."



migrants each into workforce development training. Previously screened by CONAMIGUA, returnees can access training courses (e.g., mechanical jobs, clothes tailoring, carpentry, or construction) provided by INTECAP at a discounted fee paid by CONAMIGUA.<sup>84</sup>

Challenges to the program's implementation include funding insecurity. According to CONAMIGUA'S director, Alejandra Gordillo, the program had a budget of 500,000 quetzales (Q) (\$63,000) in 2013.<sup>85</sup> However, journalistic reports cite budget constraints for this and other programs run by CONAMIGUA.<sup>86</sup>

Other challenges are a lack of transparency and impact evaluation. The director of CONAMIGUA estimated that between November 2013 and April 2014, the program benefited 2,500 people.<sup>87</sup> Yet the exact number of returned migrants that received the services provided through BAC-G could not be verified by official documents. There seem to be no comprehensive program evaluations available to the public, and program stakeholders report differing estimates of the returnees served.<sup>88</sup> It is also unclear how many migrants were referred by CONAMIGUA to INTECAP for training, or to what extent this training has helped returnees find employment.

The future of BAC-G remains unclear: AIM reports commitment to continuing the reception services at arrival, but the official agreement between the partnering organizations—scheduled to last for two years—expired in November 2015.<sup>89</sup> It is unclear to what extent the stakeholders will continue to collaborate, and whether the funding situation is likely to improve.

### 3. Programa Niñez Migrante (Casas Nuestras Raíces)—SBS

Guatemala's Secretariat of Social Welfare (Secretaría de Bienestar Social, SBS) houses the program Niñez Migrante (Migrant Childhood), whose mission is to provide support and protection to child migrants. Among other tasks, the program is in charge of providing immediate reception services at two shelters for returned minors called Casa Nuestras Raíces (Our Roots House). The first shelter, located in Quetzaltenango, a main hub in the Western Highlands, has been in operation since 2005. Under the leadership of the First Lady, the second shelter in Guatemala City was opened in summer 2013 to attend to increasing numbers of deported minors.<sup>90</sup>

Children are housed at Casa Nuestras Raíces for a maximum of 72 hours before they either reunite with a family member (often a grandparent, uncle, or aunt), or are placed in a long-term shelter in collaboration with the Attorney General's Office (Procuraduría General de la Nación, PGN).

Services provided in the shelter include food, clothes, and basic hygiene products. A psychologist or social worker from the shelter accompanies the children as they are transferred from the airport, together with two PGN monitoring officials. Shelter staff conduct interviews to assess if children have suffered trauma

84 CONAMIGUA, "Convenios Interinstitucionales."

85 Agencia Guatemalteca de Noticias, "Bienvenido a Casa: Apoyo a migrantes guatemaltecos deportados de EE.UU.," accessed November 20, 2014, [www.agn.com.gt/index.php/world/travel/item/10690-%E2%80%9Cbienvenido-a-casa%E2%80%9D-dar%C3%A1-apoyo-a-migrantes-guatemaltecos-deportados-de-ee-uu](http://www.agn.com.gt/index.php/world/travel/item/10690-%E2%80%9Cbienvenido-a-casa%E2%80%9D-dar%C3%A1-apoyo-a-migrantes-guatemaltecos-deportados-de-ee-uu).

86 Alejandro Pérez, "Un compromiso en el discurso pero no en el presupuesto," Plaza Pública, March 17, 2014, [www.plazapublica.com.gt/conamigua-un-compromiso-en-el-discurso-pero-no-presupuesto](http://www.plazapublica.com.gt/conamigua-un-compromiso-en-el-discurso-pero-no-presupuesto).

87 Osvaldo Calderon, "Drástico incremento de guatemaltecos deportados desde EE.UU. en este 2014," CB24, April 14, 2014, <http://cb24.tv/drastico-incremento-de-guatemaltecos-deportados-desde-ee-uu-en-este-2014>.

88 For instance, news reports point out that CONAMIGUA reports 500 returnees had entered into INTECAP training by February 2014, while AIM reported only 125, and INTECAP refused to confirm either number. See Pérez, "El círculo incesante de las deportaciones."

89 Author interview with Mario Hernández, February 19, 2015.

90 Author interview with Golba Ibarra, Director, Programa de niñez y adolescencia migrante no acompañada, Secretaría de Bienestar Social (SBS), March 20, 2015. For more information on SBS and Casa Nuestras Raíces, see Gobierno de Guatemala, "Programa Niñez Migrante," accessed June 13, 2014, [www.sbs.gob.gt/nmigrante.html](http://www.sbs.gob.gt/nmigrante.html); SBS, *Memoria de Labores 2013*, Dirección de Planificación de la Secretaría de Bienestar Social de la Presidencia, 24, [www.sbs.gob.gt/archivos/ml2013.pdf](http://www.sbs.gob.gt/archivos/ml2013.pdf); Celeste Alvarado y Gustavo Villagrán, "Un Cobijo Para Menores Deportados Sin Compañía," *Diario de Centroamerica* September 14, 2013, [www.deguate.com/artman/publish/noticias-guatemala/un-cobijo-para-menores-deportados-sin-compania.shtml#U5eEiCjRKmE](http://www.deguate.com/artman/publish/noticias-guatemala/un-cobijo-para-menores-deportados-sin-compania.shtml#U5eEiCjRKmE).



or breaches of their human rights while in transit.<sup>91</sup>

Reports on the number of children served by the shelters vary. According to a program official, statistics about beneficiaries were not kept consistently prior to 2014; as of March 2015, both shelters combined served about 100 minors each week (80 in Quetzaltenango and 20 in Guatemala City).<sup>92</sup> Press reports suggest that more than 2,000 children benefited from the services at Nuestras Raíces in 2008 alone.<sup>93</sup> According to SBS, around 2,700 unaccompanied deported children received reunification services at the shelters in 2013.<sup>94</sup> More than 5,000 children had been served at the Quetzaltenango shelter in the first ten months of 2015.<sup>95</sup> Information about the budget to provide these services is also difficult to come by. Press reports quote an SBS official estimating the budget for unaccompanied children-related issues to be around Q800,000 (\$105,000).<sup>96</sup>

#### 4. Vocational Training Center Quédate—SBS

Since February 2015, the program Niñez Migrante has been branching out to offer workforce development training at a special training center named Quédate (Stay). In collaboration with Guatemala's workforce development agency INTECAP, which provides the training free of charge, the centers aim to provide vocational education (e.g. for mechanics) to raise the skills and knowledge of returning youth and increase their employability. The center opened in the western city of Nahualá, and two more planned to open close by—one in Huehuetenango, and one in Quetzaltenango—were shelved due to funding constraints. Initially, the goal of the program had been to train 600 youth per year, which will likely not be reached, given that only 106 youth had graduated from the center as of October 2015.<sup>97</sup> The continuation of the center remains a challenge for the program, especially as all operations are based on donations, and uncertainty about future funding levels persist.

#### 5. Guatemalan Child Return and Reintegration Project (GCRRP)—KIND

The Guatemalan Child Return and Reintegration Project (GCRRP) is an initiative to provide comprehensive reintegration services to Guatemalan minors deported from the United States. Kids In Need of Defense (KIND) launched GCRRP in October 2010. Supported by funds from the Howard Buffett Foundation and the Global Fund for Children (GFC), KIND has been cooperating with shelters of the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and local Guatemalan NGOs to provide children deported from the United States with comprehensive reception and reintegration support. Children awaiting deportation in ORR custody are referred to KIND through a pro-bono network of legal service providers. If a child decides to participate in the program, KIND conducts an assessment interview and develops a comprehensive return plan tailored to the needs of that child, including immediate services upon arrival such as temporary shelter, help with family reunification, medical and psychological services, as well as longer-term assistance with education or job training.<sup>98</sup>

Between October 2010 and January 2015, GCRRP received 170 case referrals and helped 124 Guatemalan boys and girls return home safely.<sup>99</sup> Among the services most commonly provided to the children were contacting families, facilitating their reunification, and providing emergency meals or overnight shelter for parents and their children in Guatemala City. Follow-up services, provided to around two-thirds

91 Author interview with Ibarra, March 20, 2015; Brenda Larios, "Casa Nuestras Raíces Guatemala: El Segundo Hogar Para Niños Migrantes," Agencia Guatemalteca de Noticias, August 15, 2013, [www.agn.com.gt/index.php/component/k2/item/7514-casa-nuestras-ra%C3%ADces-guatemala-el-segundo-hogar-para-ni%C3%B1os-migrantes](http://www.agn.com.gt/index.php/component/k2/item/7514-casa-nuestras-ra%C3%ADces-guatemala-el-segundo-hogar-para-ni%C3%B1os-migrantes).

92 Author interview with Ibarra, March 20, 2015.

93 UNICEF Guatemala, *Camino al Norte: Reseña sobre la niñez migrante en Guatemala* (Guatemala City: UNICEF Guatemala, 2009), 16, [www.grupocerca.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Camino-al-Norte.pdf](http://www.grupocerca.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Camino-al-Norte.pdf).

94 SBS, *Memoria de Labores 2013*, 24.

95 Author interview with Maripaz Lopez, Director, Casa Nuestras Raíces, October 9, 2015.

96 *Prensa Libre*, "Retorno masivo de niños migrantes, crearía problemas," October 17, 2014, [www.prensalibre.com/noticias/migrantes/Nacionales-retorno-masivo-crearia-problemas-ninos-migrantes\\_0\\_1231676822.html](http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/migrantes/Nacionales-retorno-masivo-crearia-problemas-ninos-migrantes_0_1231676822.html).

97 Author interview with Ibarra, March 20, 2015; author interview with Ixtamer, October 9, 2015.

98 Author interview with Ramírez, February 26, 2015; KIND, "Innovation at Work: the Guatemalan Child Return and Reintegration Project," document provided by Wendy Ramírez, November 8, 2014.

99 KIND, *KIND Evaluation Report*, 2, document provided by Wendy Ramírez, November 8, 2014.



of program participants by local partner NGOs, included home visits, community assessments, and psychosocial support. In a more limited number of cases, the program helped with school enrollment, supplies, scholarship searches, and financial assistance for books, uniforms, and enrollment fees. A small number of children received skill training (such as computer classes and skill-building workshops) and information about vocational training.<sup>100</sup>

KIND's monitoring and evaluation of the program is in-depth, especially compared with most other programs analyzed in this study. KIND commissioned a comprehensive evaluation of GCRRP in 2012, which was conducted by an independent consultant. The resulting evaluation report identified several strengths of the program, including the care model that accompanies children at every step from the ORR shelter to the child's home community, alleviating fears of children throughout the process; the involvement of local partners with cultural competency and geographic access to children in their rural home communities in the Western Highlands; and children's access to psychosocial support through follow-up home visits, calls, and organized group activities. The program also successfully worked with family units of deported minors to address family dynamics, and increased children's access both to school and vocational and employment opportunities.

A challenge the program has faced is finding the right on-the-ground local NGO partners to provide the comprehensive services the program's success hinges on. Originally working with four partner NGOs, the program is currently working with only one partner, *Colectivo Vida Digna*, an organization located in the Western Highlands and grounded in Mayan culture—an important qualification, given that most deported Guatemalan minors hail from indigenous backgrounds.<sup>101</sup> Other challenges are the ebb and flow of deportation numbers, which complicate program planning, the need for greater capacity to increase the geographic reach of the project, greater access to scholarships to ease children's return to school, and more vocational training opportunities in geographic proximity to the children.<sup>102</sup> A potential challenge might also be connected to a new funding structure, in place since early 2015, by which KIND directly funds the work of its local partner NGO.

In a recent and promising development, KIND is planning to expand its services beyond the United States into Mexico, aiming to provide its service model to Guatemalan children deported from Mexico. While these plans are in the early stages and KIND is in the process of exploring partnerships with organizations in Mexico, the geographic expansion of a comprehensive service model to Mexico is a welcome step, given the rapidly increasing numbers of Central American children the country deports. Similarly welcome are KIND's efforts toward international collaboration with civil-society partners in Honduras and El Salvador, which may help the expansion of its care model beyond Guatemala's borders into neighboring countries.

## 6. La Red KAT (formerly Café RED)—DESGUA

La Red KAT (formerly Café RED), part of the CSO *Desarrollo Sostenible para Guatemala* (DESGUA) and founded in 2008 in New York, is a network of deportees that leads a social enterprise restaurant and cultural center in Quetzaltenango that offers a mix of services. Members of the organization run a café catering to tourists and expats, offer cooking classes to deportees and at-risk youth, and have created a home base for deportees, some of whom arrived in Guatemala without speaking Spanish and without family connections. Cofounder Willy Barreno, who returned voluntarily from the United States after more than a decade, pursues the goal of showing Guatemalan youth they can live the “Guatemalan Dream” and do not need to leave to create a life for themselves. Maya culture is a central ideal for La Red KAT, which prides itself on its independence from foreign government aid. La Red KAT / Café RED's services include the restaurant (hence the letter R) that sources from local food vendors, school-type services (the letter E, for *escuela*), and a store selling fair-trade products (D for *despacho*). Both the budget and the numbers of deported youth receiving training at the store are unclear.<sup>103</sup>

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100 KIND, “GCRRP Services Overview, October 2010 to July 2013,” document provided by Wendy Ramírez, November 8, 2014.

101 Miller, “Finding a Dignified Life.”

102 KIND, *KIND Evaluation Report*; author interview with Ramírez, February 26, 2015.

103 Interview with Willy Barreno, Quetzaltenango, October 10, 2015; DESGUA, “Café RED;” Argueta, Hesse, Johnson, and Newton, *The Realities of Returning Home*.



## 7. Guatemalan Repatriates Project (GRP)—IOM/USAID (discontinued)

A discontinued program worth mentioning is the Guatemalan Repatriates Program (GRP), the predecessor of today's BAC-G, and active in Guatemala between 2011 and 2013.<sup>104</sup> Funded by USAID, IOM managed the program that provided basic services to people returning by air at the airports in Guatemala City and Quetzaltenango, and to those repatriated by land from Mexico in San Marcos. Assistance included the provision of hygiene kits, psychosocial support, legal advice, transportation to communities of origin, and reintegration through vocational training and job placement by a so-called Referral and Opportunities Centre (CRO) in the capital, Guatemala City.<sup>105</sup> Additional activities in the program included training of teachers for workshops on human trafficking, as well as research on the conditions of returned migrants in Guatemala.<sup>106</sup>

The number of people that benefited from this program is unclear. IOM reported an estimated 2,000 people had benefited from this program as of January 2013.<sup>107</sup> However, according to press reports, only 85 returnees managed to find permanent employment during the three years of the IOM/USAID program, as most employers required higher English skills than the returnees could offer.<sup>108</sup> No comprehensive evaluation for the program was found.<sup>109</sup>

## 8. Job Fairs for Guatemalan Returnees—Migrant Peacebuilding Project (discontinued)

Another small-scale effort worth mentioning is a job fair for Guatemalan deportees in August 2013, organized by the Migrant Peacebuilding Project, a student initiative of Colby College. Financed by a grant from the David Project for Peace, the students brought together enterprises and other relevant organizations (including INTECAP, Grupo Brilla, Conexión Laboral, and Transactel) for a job fair attended by 150 deported Guatemalans. In addition to the matching of employers and potential employees at the fair, the organizers offered workshops on interview skills and resume writing.<sup>110</sup>

## C. Honduras

### I. Centro de Atención a Migrantes Retornados (CAMR)

Founded in 2000, the Center for Care for the Returned Migrant (Centro de Atención al Migrante Retornado, CAMR) provides reception services for Honduran repatriates arriving by air in the northern

<sup>104</sup> IOM, "IOM Provides Reception and Reintegration Assistance to 10,000 Guatemalan Migrants Returned from the United States and Mexico," (news release, September 15, 2011), [www.iom.int/cms/es/sites/iom/home/news-and-views/press-briefing-notes/pbn-2011/pbn-listing/iom-provides-reception-and-reintegration.html](http://www.iom.int/cms/es/sites/iom/home/news-and-views/press-briefing-notes/pbn-2011/pbn-listing/iom-provides-reception-and-reintegration.html).

<sup>105</sup> U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), "Proyecto de USAID ejecutado por OIM proporciona asistencia a los migrantes guatemaltecos repatriados desde Estados Unidos y México," (news release, June 3, 2011), [www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/events/docs/Press\\_release\\_Guatemala.pdf](http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/events/docs/Press_release_Guatemala.pdf).

<sup>106</sup> IOM, *Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration: Annual Report of Activities 2011* (Geneva: IOM, 2011), 68-74, [www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/partnerships/docs/2012-IOM-CSOconsultations/Additional\\_Resources/AVRR\\_Report\\_2011.pdf](http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/partnerships/docs/2012-IOM-CSOconsultations/Additional_Resources/AVRR_Report_2011.pdf). For details on the trafficking awareness activities, see IOM, "Guatemalan Teachers to Raise Student Awareness of Human Trafficking," (news release, May 24, 2013), [www.iom.int/news/guatemalan-teachers-raise-student-awareness-human-trafficking](http://www.iom.int/news/guatemalan-teachers-raise-student-awareness-human-trafficking).

<sup>107</sup> IOM, "Guatemalan Returnees Develop Their Computer Skills and Improve Their Employment Opportunities," (news release, January 25, 2013), [www.iom.int/news/guatemalan-returnees-develop-their-computer-skills-and-improve-their-employment-opportunities](http://www.iom.int/news/guatemalan-returnees-develop-their-computer-skills-and-improve-their-employment-opportunities).

<sup>108</sup> Pérez, "El círculo incesante de las deportaciones."

<sup>109</sup> However, a June 2013 job opening for a director of an external evaluation for the project suggests that some effort was put in evaluating the program. For more information, see NAOMBAKAZI International Jobs, "Consultancy for Final Project Evaluation and Documentation of Best Practices—Guatemalan Repatriates Project (GRP)," June 8, 2013, <http://naombakazi.blogspot.com/2013/06/consultancy-for-final-project.html>.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Javier Monterroso, Founder, Migrant Peacebuilding Project, August 15, 2014. For more information about the project, see The Migrant Peacebuilding Project, "Our Mission," accessed June 25, 2015, [www.migrantpeacebuilding.org/mision](http://www.migrantpeacebuilding.org/mision). For the project's funding proposal and final report, see Davis Projects for Peace, "The Migrant Peacebuilding Project," accessed June 25, 2015, [www.davisprojectsforpeace.org/projects/projects/node/2679](http://www.davisprojectsforpeace.org/projects/projects/node/2679).



city of San Pedro Sula.<sup>111</sup> CAMR is a joint effort of the Honduran government and civil society, supported by IOM. The Honduran government's General Directorate for Migration and Foreigners (Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería, DGME-H) coordinates all the projects and programs, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, SRE-H) formulates international agreements and memoranda of cooperation with foreign governments and institutions.<sup>112</sup> The civil-society partner Hermanas Misioneras San Carlos Borromeo Scalabrinianas executes all the projects and programs on the ground, supported by IOM.

CAMR's main mission is to provide immediate reception services that include the documentation of returnees, transportation to communities of origin, one free phone call, and medical and dental checkups. The program also includes limited long-term educational reintegration initiatives coordinated by the National Institute of Vocational Training (Instituto Nacional de Formación Profesional, INFOP). These initiatives train young repatriates in skills needed for occupations like hairdressing and carpentry, as well as jobs in the tourism industry.<sup>113</sup> CAMR received close to 40,000 returnees in 2014, and the largest education reintegration program had 60 participants.<sup>114</sup> CAMR had a budget of 6 million lempiras (L) in 2013 (approximately \$231,000).<sup>115</sup>

## 2. El Edén Reception Center—Dirección Nacional de la Niñez y la Familia (DINAF)

The National Directorate for Childhood and Families (Dirección Nacional de la Niñez y la Familia, DINAF) coordinates the repatriation, protection, and reinsertion of all unaccompanied migrant children and their families.<sup>116</sup> DINAF was created after the Honduran Institute for Childhood and Families (Instituto Hondureño de la Niñez y la Familia, IHNFA) was liquidated amid claims of corruption and inefficiency.<sup>117</sup>

DINAF runs 'El Edén' Migrant Reception Center in San Pedro Sula which receives unaccompanied children and families. Following cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and World Vision to renovate the shelter, El Edén was still housed in a temporary facility as of October 2015, with the opening of the renovated shelter planned for early 2016.<sup>118</sup> El Edén works closely with various international organizations, among them IOM, UNICEF, and UNDP to assist in the Retorno a la Alegría and the Assistance for Community Reintegration of Returning Migrant Children and Adolescents (CRRMCA) programs detailed in this report.<sup>119</sup> Data on the budget and specific numbers of beneficiaries from DINAF's services are not publicly available.

## 3. Attention Program for Unaccompanied Child Migrants and Border Program for the Victims of Trafficking and Illegal Migration—Casa Alianza

Casa Alianza Honduras provides both short- and long-term services with the objective of reintegrating returned migrant children.<sup>120</sup> A member of Covenant House, an international NGO that provides services to homeless youth worldwide, Casa Alianza Honduras has run a special program for the reintegration of returned migrant children since 2009, called Border Program for the Victims of Trafficking and Illegal

111 Author interview with Romero, June 18, 2014.

112 Ibid.

113 Ibid.

114 Ibid.

115 *El Heraldo*, "CAMR demanda apoyo a nuevo gobierno," *El Heraldo*, January 21, 2014, [www.elheraldo.hn/csp/mediapool/sites/ElHeraldo/Pais/story.csp?cid=702358&sid=299&fid=214](http://www.elheraldo.hn/csp/mediapool/sites/ElHeraldo/Pais/story.csp?cid=702358&sid=299&fid=214).

116 Presidencia de Honduras, "Decreto Ejecutivo Pcm 33-2014." See also Consortium Centro America Abogados, "Newsletter Consortium," 5.

117 Presidencia de Honduras, "Decreto Ejecutivo Pcm 26-2014."

118 Author interview with Oscar Ortega, Director El Edén, DINAF, October 5, 2015; World Vision, "World Vision, firma Acuerdo de Gestión para la remodelación de Centro de Recepción de Migrantes 'El Edén' en San Pedro Sula," accessed June 30, 2015, [www.wvi.org/es/honduras/article/world-vision-firma-acuerdo-de-gesti%C3%B3n-para-la-remodelaci%C3%B3n-de-centro-de-recepci%C3%B3n-0](http://www.wvi.org/es/honduras/article/world-vision-firma-acuerdo-de-gesti%C3%B3n-para-la-remodelaci%C3%B3n-de-centro-de-recepci%C3%B3n-0).

119 Author interview with Espinal, February 18, 2015; author interview with Stork, February 23, 2015.

120 Casa Alianza, "Casa Alianza Honduras: Border Program for the Victims of Trafficking and Illegal Migration," accessed November 12, 2014, [www.casa-alianza.org/casas/honduras#BP](http://www.casa-alianza.org/casas/honduras#BP); author interview with Ruelas, February 24, 2015; author interview with Herrera, October 2, 2015.





Migration. The program provides immediate reception services to all children arriving at the El Edén shelter, which amounted to more than 10,000 children in 2014.<sup>121</sup> These services include counseling, food, and phone calls to relatives. Only a small fraction of children, an estimated 80 in 2015, receive long-term services through the Attention Program for Unaccompanied Child Migrants, which includes educational support, technical education support, medical examinations, dental treatment, counseling for parents, and the comprehensive monitoring of their overall well-being.<sup>122</sup>

Casa Alianza leads the program with funding support from the U.S. Department of State, which provided \$750,000 to run antitrafficking activities of the Border Program from 2013 to 2015. In addition, IOM and UNHCR provided \$32,000 and \$35,000, respectively, to this program in 2015.<sup>123</sup> Close collaboration with DINAF ensures that Casa Alianza staff has access to El Edén to provide their services. While the program successfully empowers a small number of children, the Director of Casa Alianza Honduras points to funding as the main challenge to expanding the program both in size and scope.<sup>124</sup> One next step would be to offer entrepreneurship initiatives for returned teens and parents.<sup>125</sup>

#### 4. Assistance for Community Reintegration of Returning Migrant Children and Adolescents — UNDP and AMHON

Led by UNDP Honduras and executed by local governments, the Assistance for Community Reintegration of Returning Migrant Children (CRRMCA) program provides basic social services to returned minors. In partnership with the Municipalities Association of Honduras (Asociación de Municipios de Honduras, AMHON), the program's objective is to resolve five issues: food security, return to school, access to health services, public safety, and opportunities for income.<sup>126</sup> All services are provided by the municipal governments and are funded with approximately \$120,000 by UNDP. The pilot program in the municipalities of San Pedro Sula, El Progreso, and Catacamas was ongoing as of October 2015.<sup>127</sup>

A total of 400 children—200 in San Pedro Sula and 100 each in El Progreso and Catacamas—were expected to benefit. The program is still in its starting phase, but it is being closely monitored and will have an external final evaluation at the end of the pilot phase. CRRMCA is part of an existing long-term collaboration between UNDP and the Honduran national and local governments to strengthen services for returned minors. UNDP, the national government of Honduras, DINAF, and CAMR have already worked to develop a new population registration system that allows several government agencies to share information on returned migrant children with the aim of better targeting services.<sup>128</sup>

The program's main strengths derive from UNDP's extensive experience in development programs and vast networks with other organizations, both inside and outside the UN system. Expanding the program's offerings hinges on persuading local governments to direct more resources to the provision of services to children, and to closely monitor the effects on their reintegration and, ultimately, on overall migration trends. Additionally, the program would need a substantial increase in funding to expand to other regions in the country.

#### 5. Retorno a la Alegría—UNICEF

Targeting the thousands of children returned by air and land from Mexico and the United States, “Return to Happiness” (Retorno a la Alegría) is a comprehensive program that involves UNICEF, local governments, community volunteers, and mass media to create a welcoming atmosphere that facilitates

121 Author interview with Ruelas, February 24, 2015.

122 Ibid.

123 Author interview with José Ruelas, Director, Casa Alianza, May 19, 2015; author interview with Ubaldo Herrera, Director of Programs, Casa Alianza, October 2, 2015.

124 Author interview with Ruelas, February 24, 2015.

125 Ibid.

126 Lopez, “AMHON y PNUD Acuerdan Impulsar Proyectos.”

127 Author interview with Stork, February 23, 2015; author interview with Gradiz, October 2, 2015.

128 Ibid.



the reintegration of returned children.<sup>129</sup>

The program is a joint initiative of UNICEF Honduras; the Municipal Programs for Children, Adolescents and Youth (Programas Municipales de Infancia, Adolescencia y Juventud, PMIAJ); and the First Lady's Office.<sup>130</sup> Since the program launch, efforts have focused on two activities. First, UNICEF has trained around 1,000 young volunteers to visit the homes of returned children and evaluate the psychosocial environment to which each child is returning. In coordination with the municipal governments and local community organizations, the volunteers facilitate workshops using UNICEF's "Retorno a la Alegría" methodology, a community-based recreational therapy that uses games, songs, short stories, and puppet shows to address the main psychological effects caused by migration at such a young age.<sup>131</sup> Volunteers were selected from a network of youth who work in community radio stations, called Communicators Network for Children and Youth (Red de Comunicadores Infantiles y Juveniles, RCIJ). In November and December 2014, 3,000 children received these services, and by the end of February 2015, around 7,000 children were estimated to have benefited from the program.<sup>132</sup> A second component of the program is a mass media campaign to inform the general public about the dangers of migrating, the rights of migrant children, and the responsibility of the government to design comprehensive programs to reintegrate returned children. The campaign is run on the radio, on national TV, and billboards.<sup>133</sup>

In addition to UNICEF, which trains volunteers and produces educational materials for the workshops, and the municipal governments that provide support for the volunteers in the communities, other stakeholders play an important role in the comprehensive program. DINAF receives the children deported from Mexico at the El Edén reception center in San Pedro Sula and coordinates the documentation of the returned children with the National Population Registry (Registro Nacional de las Personas, RNP). The newly created DINAF and UNICEF work closely to develop best practices for the reception and reintegration of returned children. And UNICEF has worked with CAMR to adapt the reception center facilities, which receive mostly adults, to provide select child-friendly reception services.<sup>134</sup>

Volunteers working in the communities are required to file progress reports every week. The program is being monitored and evaluated by a team of Colombian and Ecuadorian experts. The program's greatest challenge is to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation system to measure the children's progress. It is currently planned to continue for at least two more years.<sup>135</sup>

## 6. Oportunidades de Autoempleo: Una Segunda Oportunidad para los Migrantes Retornados

Started in August 2014, the program Oportunidades de Autoempleo: Una Segunda Oportunidad para los Migrantes Retornados (Self-Employment Opportunities: A Second Chance for Returned Migrants) trains returned migrants in entrepreneurship and business management and provides them with start-up capital for microbusinesses.<sup>136</sup>

The pilot program is directed by Tegucigalpa's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Cámara de Comercio e Industrias de Tegucigalpa, CCIT) and funded by the Honduran national government through the National Institute of Vocational Training (Instituto Nacional de Formación Profesional, INFOP).<sup>137</sup> It

129 Author interview with Espinal, February 18, 2014.

130 Proceso Honduras, "A través del programa Retorno a la Alegría buscan prevenir migración infantil en Honduras," February 8, 2015, [www.proceso.hn/component/k2/item/96336-a-trav%2Fdel-programa-retorno-a-la-alegr%2Fbuscan-prevenir-migraci%2FB3n-infantil-en-honduras.html](http://www.proceso.hn/component/k2/item/96336-a-trav%2Fdel-programa-retorno-a-la-alegr%2Fbuscan-prevenir-migraci%2FB3n-infantil-en-honduras.html).

131 UNICEF, "Estrategia de Comunicación Niñez Migrante Honduras," 2014, 30; author interview with Espinal, February 18, 2014.

132 Author interview with Espinal, February 18, 2014.

133 Ibid.

134 Ibid.

135 Ibid.

136 Instituto Nacional de Formación Profesional (INFOP), "Proyecto Piloto: Una Segunda Oportunidad Para Migrantes Retornados," October 20, 2014, <http://infop.hn/proyecto-piloto-una-segunda-oportunidad-para-migrantes-retornados>; Presidencia de Honduras, "Infop y CCIT invertirán siete millones de lempiras en capital semilla para 300 migrantes retornados," July 27, 2014, [www.presidencia.gob.hn/?p=2390](http://www.presidencia.gob.hn/?p=2390).

137 Author interview with Fabricio Hernández, February 16, 2015



only operates in the Francisco Morazán department (which includes the capital Tegucigalpa). CCIT's training unit provides motivational workshops to empower participants and address the negative feelings associated with deportation. An 80-hour entrepreneurship training session concludes with participants creating a simple business plan. CCIT examines business plans based on migrant skills and business demand in their communities of origin.<sup>138</sup> Approved businesses receive up to L25,000 (\$1,100) to cover start-up costs like raw materials and machinery.<sup>139</sup>

Between August 2014 and May 2015, returned migrants started 106 new businesses through the program. Another 184 businesses will be granted start-up capital, to reach a total of 300 businesses.<sup>140</sup> The government of Honduras has assigned a budget of L 7 million (\$330,000) to this pilot program.<sup>141</sup>

The program's main challenge is to extend its services beyond the pilot phase and to provide follow-up services, such as business advice, technical assistance, and further training to migrants who have opened businesses. In its current form, the program lacks a monitoring and evaluation strategy to assess business success rates and maximize its impact. Funding uncertainty is a concern, as is the future of the program overall, given its start as a pilot. The first stage of the program, originally scheduled to end in December, had been delayed due to the slow release of funds by INFOP.<sup>142</sup>

#### D. **Regionwide Programs**

Governments of the Northern Triangle receive support through some regionwide initiatives that complement their reception and reintegration services. The Red Cross plays a vital role in helping migrants both in transit and upon their return, and IOM supports the building of reception infrastructure and the provision of some reception and reintegration services.

##### I. **Puestos de atención al migrante (Migrant Attention Posts)—ICRC and Red Cross National Chapters**

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Red Cross Societies of Guatemala and Honduras provide numerous reception services to migrants deported by land to the border cities of El Carmen in Guatemala (on the border with Mexico) and Omoa in Honduras (on the border with Guatemala). The main services the Red Cross provides to returnees at the *puestos* are basic medical care and phone services. Volunteers of the National Chapters of the Red Cross provide the services, supported by technical advice from ICRC, which also funds the program.

The *puestos* fill a gap in reception services for arrivals by land. To date, Guatemala's government provide reception services for deportees arriving by air from the United States and Mexico, yet there is no government-run reception center close to the border that serves the many deportees arriving by bus from Mexico. In contrast, the government of Honduras opened a reception center for land deportees at the country's northern coast in Omoa in September 2015. Red Cross first aid services (prior to the opening provided at a *puesto* at the border with Guatemala in Corinto) remain an integral part of the new center, but are complemented by services of the Foreign Ministry, Labor Ministry, Health Ministry, UNHCR, and others.

The *puestos* serve thousands of deportees stepping off buses from Mexico each year. Over the course of eight months (between January and August 2014), more than 3,700 repatriated migrants received aid in El Carmen, Guatemala, and more than 17,000 migrants in Corinto, Honduras. The Red Cross distributes hygiene kits and food, provides first aid, and occasionally assists with transport to CSO-run migrant shelters in bigger cities (e.g., in Tecún Umán) where migrants can rely on more extensive reception

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> INFOP, "Proyecto Piloto," Fabricio Hernández, February 16, 2015.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Presidencia de Honduras, "Infop y CCIT invertirán siete millones."

<sup>142</sup> Author interview with Fabricio Hernández, February 16, 2015.



infrastructure. For instance, more than 70 families of unaccompanied minors repatriated to Guatemala's *Nuestras Raíces* shelters received financial support to pick up their children and return to their places of residence.

A core element of the Red Cross services at the *puestos* is the Restoring Family Links (RFL) Program, a free phone service for deportees upon arrival. More than 3,500 returnees had the chance to call their families through this program in El Carmen, and more than 4,800 in Corinto. Since July 2014, a group of Honduran Red Cross volunteers has also been offering this free phone-call service to migrants at the El Edén shelter in San Pedro Sula.

A challenge for the *puesto* in Guatemala is its location; El Carmen has limited reception infrastructure. Receiving returnees in a city with better reception infrastructure would ease reintegration. A model for this is in place: Buses carrying Guatemalan unaccompanied children and family units continue on to Quetzaltenango, which has a shelter and an existing reception infrastructure. The *puesto* in El Carmen is just a short stop on their way. If Guatemala opened a reception center closer to the border, the *puesto* could support existing government services instead of replacing them.

The Red Cross also launched a small-scale reintegration program in Honduras targeting deportees with disabilities. An estimated 30 beneficiaries of the program took part in a workshop where they received training to identify business opportunities, to elaborate a business plan, and to fund their own microeconomic initiatives.<sup>143</sup>

## 2. Comprehensive Assistance to Returning Families and Unaccompanied Children in the Northern Triangle of Central America—IOM

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is active in both reception and reintegration of children and adults in the Northern Triangle. Within the framework of a comprehensive assistance program to returning families and children, IOM aims to support government and civil-society actors in their immediate postarrival assistance; infrastructure renovations of points of entry and shelters; creation of operating procedures and interinstitutional protocols; awareness-raising activities; and improvement of data collection.

Concretely, IOM provides hygiene kits (little bags filled with shampoo, tooth brushes, soap, bath tissue, and deodorant) at reception centers, and has supported the renovation and expansion of reception centers in the Northern Triangle. In addition, IOM staff trained youth in Guatemala's training center Quédate.<sup>144</sup>

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143 Author interview with Blondiaux, March 4, 2015; author interview with Kruesi, October 8, 2015.

144 Author interview with Cárdenas, October 8, 2015; "IOM – USAID Project Update Guatemala: Comprehensive Assistance to Returning Families and Unaccompanied Children in the Northern Triangle of Central America," document provided by José Diego Cárdenas, Project Coordinator, IOM Guatemala.



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**Victoria Rietig** is a Policy Analyst at the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), where she works for the Regional Migration Study Group and the Transatlantic Council on Migration. She is also a Nonresident Fellow with Migration Policy Institute Europe.

Her research expertise includes forced migration, human trafficking, labor migration, and international development. She conducted field research on forced migration in Mexico, analyzing the impact of organized crime and violence on human trafficking. Her research results were published in the *International Migration Journal* and the *Oxford Monitor of Forced Migration*.

Prior to joining MPI, Ms. Rietig worked for the United Nations, NGOs, and the U.S. government. At the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), she developed and implemented conferences and trainings for high-level officials in the Migration and Development Seminar Series at UN headquarters in New York. After that, she worked as a project leader for Fairfood International, where she was in charge of establishing the NGO's Berlin office. Most recently, she consulted for the U.S. government, and developed strategic recommendations for the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center (HSTC), an interagency center of the Departments of State, Justice, and Homeland Security.

Ms. Rietig received her master's in public policy from Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, where she worked on forced migration, negotiations, and international development. She also holds an M.A. in American studies, history, and psychology from Freie Universität Berlin, with a focus on Latin American migration to the United States. She also studied and conducted research at Universidad Nacional de Córdoba (Argentina), New York University, and El Colegio de México (COLMEX).



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Previously, Mr. Dominguez Villegas worked with the Mariposa Foundation in the Dominican Republic, where he conducted socioeconomic and demographic research reports in four rural communities and designed a model English program used at the Mariposa Girls Leadership Program. He also interned at the Australian Trade Commission in Madrid, providing market advice to Australian companies entering the Spanish market.

Mr. Dominguez Villegas is a doctoral student of sociology at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. His dissertation work focuses on the effects of stigma on socioeconomic outcomes of return migrants in Mexico. He holds a B.A. in economics and geography from Middlebury College.



