

DOCUMENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

REGIONAL

STRATEGIC DATA ON RETURNED MIGRANTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA

(RG-T4848)

PROJECT DOCUMENT

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Operation Type:	Technical Cooperation
Sector:	SOCIAL INVESTMENT
Subsector:	MIGRATION & MIGRANTS
TC Taxonomy:	Research and Dissemination
Project Number under the Operational Support Taxonomy:	N/A
Technical Responsible Unit:	SCL/MIG-Migration Unit
Unit with Disbursement Responsibility (UDR):	SCL/MIG-Migration Unit
Executing Agency:	Inter-American Development Bank

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

This Technical Cooperation (TC) will generate strategic data to advance the understanding of the socioeconomic reintegration of returned migrants. The TC will: i) Design of a multi-topic questionnaire covering employment, use and quality of public services, access to education and training, health status (ii) Implement a longitudinal panel survey of returned migrants and their households, conducted over time to understand the reintegration trajectories. (ii) Data analysis: generate a peer-reviewed working paper presenting key findings and recommendations and a policy brief summarizing the key implications for reintegration of migrants.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Financing Type	Fund	Amount in US\$
TCN - Nonreimbursable	W2E - OC SDP Window 2 - Social Development	200,000
Total IDB Financing		200,000
Counterpart Financing		0
Total Project Budget		200,000
Donors:	N/A	
Disbursement Period: 36	months	
Execution Period: 36	months	

ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION

N/A

I. JUSTIFICATION AND OBJECTIVE

- 1.1. **In the last decade, countries of the North of Central America (NCA) have experienced significant return migrant flows.** Between 2016 and 2024, Honduras received approximately 436,000 returnees (3.3% of its population), El Salvador 155,000 (2.3%), and Guatemala around 531,000 (2.9%). Since 2001, the region has received an estimated 2.1 million returnees. Despite the scale of these flows, limited data exists on how returnees reintegrate into communities, labor markets, and public service systems.
- 1.2. **Efforts to collect information on returnees remain fragmented.** In the best cases, returnees complete an intake form at the point of entry, capturing details such as migration history, household composition, and future plans. However, implementation is inconsistent, and follow-up mechanisms remain at the pilot stage. National household surveys also lack variables identifying prior migration, making it difficult to assess reintegration outcomes at scale.
- 1.3. **As a result, little is known about returnees' needs and opportunities—not just the barriers they face, but also the skills, experiences, and transnational networks they bring.** Filling this gap is essential to designing effective, evidence-based policies and ensuring public programs are better equipped to support successful reintegration and long-term development outcomes.
- 1.4. **This Technical Cooperation seeks to address a critical knowledge gap around the reintegration of returned migrants in NCA,** countries that have experienced significant return flows. It aims to generate strategic, policy-relevant data to inform and strengthen evidence-based policies that support the socioeconomic reintegration of returned migrants in NCA. Through a combination of enhanced administrative data collection and a longitudinal panel survey, the initiative will fill critical knowledge gaps on the labor market, education, and health trajectories of returnees and their families, providing data and evidence that directly informs the design, implementation, and evaluation of current and future operations across multiple sectors.
- 1.5. **The project will produce high-quality evidence to inform future policy design,** academic research and development programming, focusing on producing public goods that can be used by key stakeholders.
- 1.6. **Given the scarcity of data on return migration in the region, this initiative presents a strategic opportunity to position the IDB as a key knowledge producer on returnee reintegration.** The analytical work will identify settlement patterns and systematically document reintegration trajectories across geographic and demographic profiles. This includes collecting data on access to services, employment, education, health, and social inclusion. The resulting evidence base will support in-depth analysis of the impact of return migration on economic growth, poverty, productivity, and the allocation of fiscal resources. Should future activities require access to administrative data or engagement with public entities, the responsibility for securing non-objection letters lies with the team leader and will be obtained before any activity is initiated in the country.

- 1.7. **Objective:** This Technical Cooperation (TC) will generate strategic data to advance the understanding of the socioeconomic reintegration of returned migrants. The TC will: i) Design of a multi-topic questionnaire covering employment, use and quality of public services, access to education and training, health status; (ii) Implement a longitudinal panel survey of returned migrants and their households, conducted over time to understand the reintegration trajectories; (iii) Data analysis: generate a peer-reviewed working paper presenting key findings and recommendations and a policy brief summarizing the key implications for reintegration of migrants.
- 1.8. **Alignment with the Institutional Strategy. This Technical Cooperation (TC) supports the IDB Group’s Transform in Scale and Impact (CA-631) strategy by generating critical evidence to reduce poverty and inequality, thereby improving the quality of life for migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean.** It is closely aligned with key operational priorities: (i) Institutional capacity and the rule of law – The TC will strengthen government capacities to collect, process, and use administrative data on returnees to monitor reintegration outcomes, foster social cohesion, and promote migrant integration. These improvements will enable more informed engagement with migrant populations and support the delivery of inclusive and responsive public services; ii) Social protection and human capital development – The TC will design indicators and monitoring tools to guide decision-making by public servants working with migrant populations. By enabling data-driven service delivery, the initiative will help shape social protection mechanisms that enhance migrants’ well-being. Additionally, the TC will contribute to the strategic focus on education by providing quality information to operations aimed at improving educational trajectories and supporting educational interventions that facilitate reintegration.
- 1.9. **TC complements the Migration Unit’s Sector Framework by strengthening the evidence base for policymaking on migrant socioeconomic integration,** thereby enhancing the quality and relevance of information available to decision-makers.
- 1.10. This project also contributes to the implementation of the *America en el Centro* program, under the strategic activity “Provision of sector-specific skills for private sector development”, as it generates strategic information on returnees to design more effective, inclusive, and sustainable reintegration programs, with emphasis on employability, education, and access to quality public services.
- 1.11. **Finally, this project has been selected for the Development Effectiveness Intelligence Initiative (DEIF) under a rigorous competitive process involving VPS, VPC, and SPD.** The DEIF initiative supports projects that generate knowledge and address strategic gaps in development effectiveness through impact evaluations, analysis of execution factors, and effective enhancement initiatives. Following the OC-SDP framework, this initiative aligns with Window 2, Social Development Fund, under the priority area 'Contribute to the creation of sustainable, innovative data products for assessing project impact'. The lack of systematic information on returned migrants has long limited the ability to develop evidence-based policies and assess the effectiveness of reintegration programs. By generating longitudinal data linked to administrative systems, this project will directly contribute to addressing that gap. The data produced will support the design of current and future operations—such as HO-L1237 in employment services and upcoming education investments—by identifying

needs, service gaps, and effective points of intervention. It will also lay the foundation for rigorous evaluations, helping to measure the outcomes of Bank-financed programs over time. In doing so, the TC complements ongoing reforms to strengthen the use of evidence across the project cycle and promote adaptive, results-driven development in the region.

II. COMPONENTS

- 2.1 **Component 1 (US\$200,000). Strengthen data generation for monitoring the reintegration of returned migrants.** This component will finance a consulting firm to carry out the following activities to generate strategic data to advance the understanding of the socioeconomic reintegration of returned migrants. Activities under this component will include: (i) Design of a multi-topic questionnaire covering employment, use and quality of public services, access to education and training, health status (ii) Implement a longitudinal panel survey of returned migrants and their households, conducted over time to understand the reintegration trajectories. (ii) Data analysis: generate a peer-reviewed working paper presenting key findings and recommendations and a policy brief summarizing the key implications for reintegration of migrants.
- 2.2 **Expected Results.** The expected results of this project include: (i) a consolidated dataset with appropriate sampling weights to account for differences in coverage and representativeness; (ii) a peer-reviewed working paper presenting key analytical findings; and (iii) a policy brief with operational recommendations tailored to relevant ministries and stakeholders, providing inputs to improve the design, implementation, and evaluation of reintegration programs.
- 2.3 **Beneficiaries.** The knowledge, activities, and products generated by this project will equip decision-makers and government agencies in NCA countries with the evidence needed to design more effective migration and reintegration policies. The findings from data collection and analysis will also inform the development of innovative initiatives and scalable public policies to support the successful reintegration of returnees. The final or indirect beneficiaries are returned migrants, who are expected to benefit from improved programs and policies tailored to their needs.

III. BUDGET

- 3.1 The total cost of the TC will be US\$200,000 financed with resources from the W2E – OC SPD – Window 2 – Social Development Fund with no local counterpart funding. The expected execution period is 36 months.

Components	W2E	Total
Component 1:	200,000	200,000
Total	200,000	200,000

IV. EXECUTION STRUCTURE

- 4.1 This Technical Cooperation (TC) will be executed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in accordance with the Bank's Technical Cooperation Policy (GN-2470-2) and the Procedures for the Processing of Technical Cooperation Operations and Related Matters (OP-619-4), through the Migration Unit (SCL/MIG). The Migration Unit has a rapidly developing and robust track record in areas pertinent to this TC. As the executing agency of the TC, the Bank will be responsible for (i) coordinating the actors involved in the activities; (ii) identifying the studies and technical work necessary to carry out the TC; (iii) selecting and contracting consultants and firms to provide the necessary services; (iv) supervising the consulting services to which the beneficiary provides technical inputs; (v) managing the execution and provision of consulting services and (vi) any knowledge products generated within the framework of this technical cooperation will be the property of the Bank and may be made available to the public under a creative commons license
- 4.2 **Procurement.** All procurement to be executed under this Technical Cooperation have been included in the Procurement Plan (Annex IV) and will be hired in compliance with the applicable Bank policies and regulations as follows: (a) Hiring of individual consultants, as established in the regulation on Complementary Workforce (AM-650) and (b) Contracting of services provided by consulting firms in accordance with the Corporate procurement Policy (GN-2303-33) and its Guidelines.
- 4.3 **Execution and Disbursement Period.** Execution and disbursement periods for this TC will last up to 36 months.
- 4.4 **Supervision.** In terms of the supervision of this TC, under the direction of both the team leader and the alternate team leader, the project team will be responsible for guiding and overseeing the execution of the operation. The project will be monitored and evaluated in accordance with Bank requirements and through the Results Matrix.
- 4.5 **Monitoring.** The project team will be responsible for monitoring and facilitating the activities required to achieve the expected results. The TC will be monitored and evaluated in accordance with Bank requirements and through the Results Matrix. Annual and final reports will be prepared in Convergence, as established in OP-1385.

V. POTENTIAL RISKS

- 5.1 The risks identified in this TC include: (i) Coordination with key stakeholders in the field. This could delay the project due to limited institutional capacity or shifting political priorities. To mitigate this, the project will initiate early engagement with said stakeholders, secure buy-in at both technical and managerial levels and actively involve them in the co-design of instruments to foster ownership and ensure continuity; (ii) Longitudinal data collection may be challenging by human mobility, or attrition over time. To address this, the project will enhance intake protocols to collect high-quality data; (iii) Data management – Maintaining high data quality and participant engagement over time is essential for the success of the research. To mitigate this, the project will implement robust data protection protocols, provide culturally sensitive enumerator training, and, where feasible, recruit return migrants as enumerators to strengthen rapport and encourage participation through shared lived experience. Also, regarding data privacy, the project will primarily handle anonymized information. In cases where personal data needs to be processed, security measures such as data encryption, multi-factor authentication, and the definition of clear data access levels will be implemented, together with privacy policies that comply with national and international data protection regulations, as well as the Bank’s and the entity’s guidelines.

VI. EXCEPTIONS TO BANK POLICIES

- 6.1 This TC will not finance feasibility or pre-feasibility studies of investment projects or associated environmental and social studies and, therefore, does not comply with the applicable requirements of the Bank’s Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF).
- 6.2 No exceptions to bank policies are contemplated.

VII. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS

- 7.1 This Technical Cooperation is not intended to finance pre-feasibility or feasibility studies of specific investment projects or environmental and social studies associated with them; therefore, this TC does not have applicable requirements of the Bank’s Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF).

REQUIRED ANNEXES:

- Annex I: Request from Client
- Annex II: Results Matrix
- Annex III: Terms of Reference
- Annex IV: Procurement Plan