

The return of United States migrants to Mexico: Impacts and challenges for Zacatecas

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Introduction

In Mexico, international migration has been viewed, for more than 30 years, as a unidirectional flow northward, thus diminishing the importance of migrants who return. However, aspects such as the severe economic crisis in the United States (U.S.) (2007-2013) and its repercussions on unemployment, the long process of militarization of the northern border since the 1990s, and the anti-immigrant legal reforms throughout the country over the past 15 years have resulted in the return of more than two-million Mexican migrants to their homeland just in the past five years (Gallegos, 2014). This poses new challenges for research and the design of public policies to address the impacts of that homecoming, in order to help with the reincorporation of those migrants and to support their families.

The return of migrants has had important effects upon Mexico's social and economic life. This chapter examines the principal impacts faced by returning migrants to the state of Zacatecas in terms of their health and education. Thus, through an analysis of the impacts in those areas, it is possible to formulate a proposal for a 'Support Program for the Comprehensive Reintegration of Migrants and their Families' to be implemented by the Federal and State government, in collaboration with the Federations of Zacatecan Hometown Associations.

Studies on the Return of Migrants

Studies on the topic of return migration in Mexico are rather scarce, compared to the great quantity of work on international migration. The existing literature centres on the return brought about by the economic crisis of 1929-33 and that which occurred with the end of the *Bracero* Program (1942-65), which was created as a macro program of guest workers resulting from the labour force needs of the U.S. brought about by the Second World War. In this way, generally, return migration has been seen as an option for migrants once they have achieved certain goals in the U.S., such as obtaining capital to open a business in their homeland, as well as an individual decision taken for personal, family or cultural reasons.

Jorge Durand (2005) suggests that return migration calls into question the unidirectional or the definitive character of migration, at least in the case of Mexico and the U.S., since the

decision to return implies reinitiating the migratory process, but in reverse. Returning can be distinguished, according to Duran, as being of three characteristics: 1) temporary migration, that is tied to guest worker programs, in which the labour contract explicitly mandates the obligation to return; 2) the migrant's own decision to return, made consciously and voluntarily after a long residency (an example being the return of retirees with a pension); and 3) transgenerational return, which constitutes the return not of the migrant, but rather that of their descendants (children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren).

According to Salvador Cobo et al. (2008), an analysis of return migration must include the migratory experience in terms of the well-being of the migrant and their family, which is tied to their working experience at the destination country, their migratory legal situation and their integration (or not) into the external context. Another dimension has to do with the impacts of their return on the economic and social development of the origin and destination countries. Specifically, it is important to consider the dual perspective of the new labour abilities the returning migrant possesses, their skills and savings potential that affect local development and the structural capacities of the places of origin and return to reincorporate returning migrants. These points indicate the necessity of recognizing the diversity of experiences of returning migrants as defined by their gender, age, migratory situation, work history, etc.

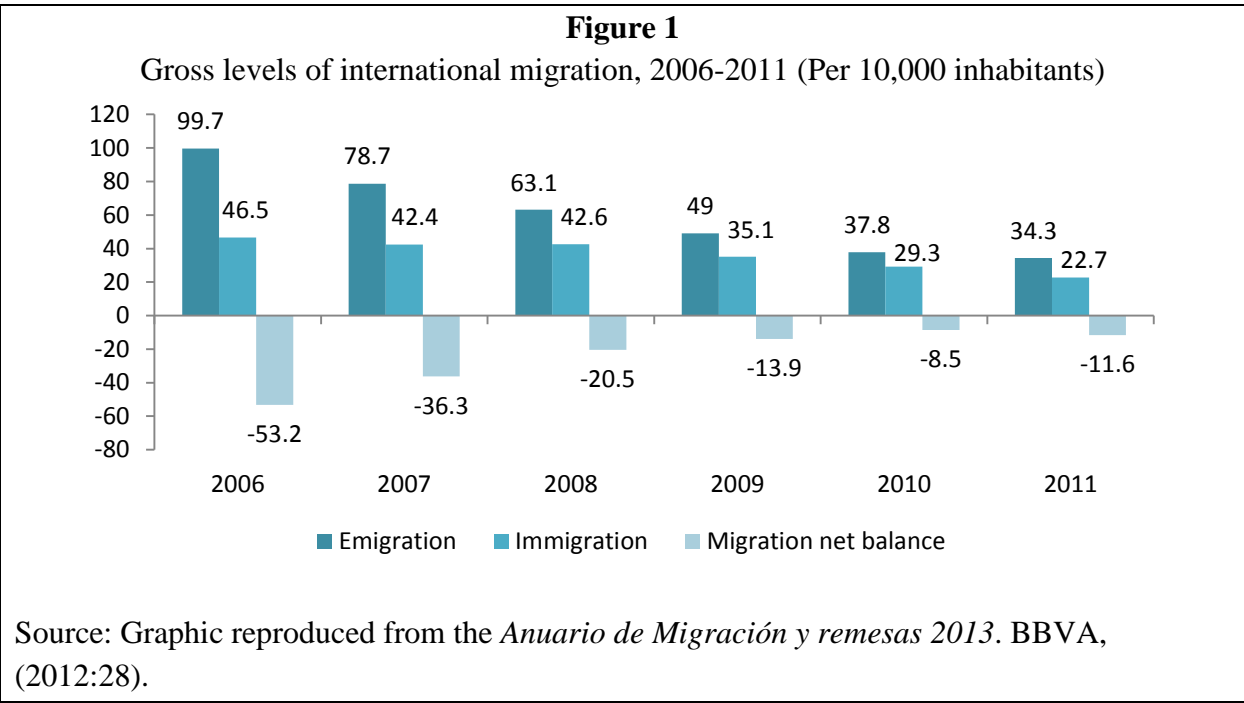
Meanwhile, Francis Mestris (2013) suggests considering the objective and subjective factors of return migration. Among the objective factors are those tied to migrants, such as age; work history; stage of life, etc.; and environmental factors, such as distance between origin and destination; migratory situation; settlement pattern and the economic situation at the destination. Among the subjective factors are human capital (i.e. new abilities and capabilities acquired abroad); social capital; transnational emigration social support networks; settlement and return; and community identity (such as the sense of belonging and participation in community organizations in the origin and destination). Other factors are tied to the migratory project: fulfilling the objective of migration (earning money, purchase of land, animals, house or other investments in the community of origin) or failure in those objectives leading to a forced return; factors of family and loved ones; pressure from the spouse, children and parents; nostalgia and inability to adapt to the place of destination; and lastly, factors of attraction drawing one away from the community of destination and to places in the country of origin, which can consist of the existence of previous investments, job opportunities, and offers of positions of community representation in city government or local councils.

Recent tendencies in return migration at the national level

The five years from 2005-2010 have been very important for the migratory phenomenon in Mexico. A new migration pattern has been observed during this period: Mexican migration has departed from its cyclical character to become permanent and there is a greater presence of return migration where migrants and their families return to the communities of origin or to other places which have greater appeal. As we have noted above, the triggering factors for

return migration are the growing militarization of the northern border, the increase in anti-immigrant policies in the U.S., and the negative effects upon the labor market brought by the ongoing economic crisis.

Among the more apparent indicators of the current situation is the reduction in remittances received in the country, whose historic heights reached US\$26.059 billion in 2007 according to the Bank of Mexico (BANXICO, 2013), an amount that corresponds to 2.53% of the GDP for that year, and which later fell by 12% in 2008. These figures are also explained by the increase in unemployment among Hispanics who work in the U.S., which according to the U.S. Office of Labour Statistics rose by 8.8% in 2008, 2.3% more than the average national rate (Alarcón et al. 2009). This is partly due to the fact that the sectors most affected by the crisis were those that employ Mexican migrants: manufacturing and construction. Finally, this is also explained by the temporary fall in the number of Mexican migrants in the U.S. Between 2006 and 2007 Mexican migration to the U.S. reached its highest level with 12.5 million migrants. But due to the economic recession this was followed by a significant drop between 2007 and 2009, only recovering in 2012 (BBVA, 2012). Figure 1 shows the gross levels of international migration, which correspond to the information provided above:



Data from Mexico’s National Population Council (CONAPO, 2010) shows that between 1995-2000 there were 267,150 returned migrants at the national level and 1,469,801 migrants to the U.S.; while the five-year period 2005-2010 registered 131,400 return migrants and 990,477 departures. We see, then, a drop as much in the number of departures as in the numbers of returns nationally.

These figures lend support to the controversy around *zero migration*, which began when Damien Cave, in a letter published in the New York Times, suggested that the drop in migration could be explained by improving economic and social conditions in Mexico. Authors such as Douglas Massey, Jorge Durand and René Zenteno (Cave, Damien, 2011) were proponents of this position, which signalled a drop in migration due to factors such as: a drop in the birth rate, lowered unemployment in Mexico, increased legal migration, democratic progress and less poverty. In contrast to this, elsewhere we have argued that the amount of undocumented migrants and the number of deportees and returnees reached equilibrium due mainly to rising unemployment in the U.S. resulting from the economic crisis (García, 2012).

The thesis held by Alejandro Canales (2012), indicated that the impact of the financial crisis is not clearly seen in a massive return of migrants, but rather in a reduction in the flow of Mexicans to the U.S. Further, he noted that return migration did not show a different tendency during the crisis. In an analysis of migration tendencies one can see null migration, not as an end of migration, but rather as a virtual and temporal equilibrium between the return and the entrance of Mexicans to the U.S.

Given the high correlation that exists between migratory flows and the economic cycles of both countries, one can expect a recovery of the migratory flows to the U.S. once the economy of that country restarts. Other factors that could influence the migratory phenomenon, and in particular return migration, are the eventual migratory reforms and security policies that the U.S. implements along its border with Mexico.

Manifestation of return migration in Zacatecas

The state of Zacatecas has more than a hundred years of experience of international migration to the U.S., This explains the fact that currently 1.5 million Zacatecas live in Zacatecas while 650 thousand live in the U.S. In fact, over the past 70 years, international migration and family remittances have been very important in the economic and social life of the state's various regions and social sectors. Therefore, the economic crisis in the U.S., the drop in migration and remittances had significant repercussions for this state. In the context of recent Zacatecas-U.S. migration, the return of migrants to their communities has grown significantly, leading to growing economic, social, cultural and community problems regarding their reintegration and reunion with their families.

Between 1995 and 2000 the state received 10,824 returning migrants and sent 61,969 migrants to the U.S.; whereas during the five-year period 2005-2010 return migrants numbered 27,324 with 30,498 departures. On this point, it is important to keep in mind that this return is not observed equally across all of the states, rather, it is concentrated in 5 states, principally Jalisco, Sonora, Guanajuato, Michoacán and Oaxaca; the general tendency is for reduced levels of departure, which has to do with the increasing cost of migration, greater risks,

militarization of the border, the U.S. economic crisis and other factors. These figures reflect the tendency toward less migration to the U.S. and a rise in the number of returnees. In Figure 2, we can see the evolution of the migratory indicators for the state of Zacatecas, which are themselves a reflection of the impacts of the economic crisis and the decrease in the percentage of households that receive remittances.

Figure No. 2
Household Migratory Indicators for 2000 and 2010

	2000				2010			
	% Remittances recipient s	% emigran ts to the United States 5-year period	% circula r migran ts 5- year period	% with return 5-year period	% receive remittan ces	% emigran ts to the United States 5-year period	% circular 5-year period	% return migrant s 5-year period
Zacatecas	13.03	12.18	3.31	2.55	11.04	4.50	2.33	5.56

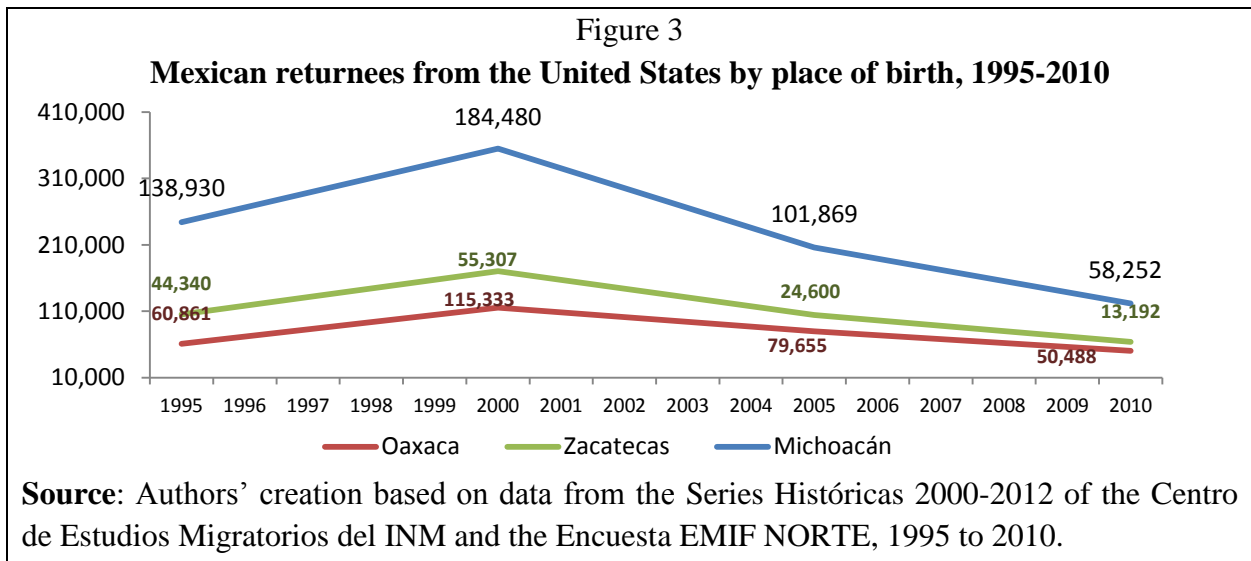
Source: Authors' calculation based on data from Mexico's National Institute of Migration (INAMI), 2000 & 2010.

In 2000, there were 306,882 residences in the state, of which 13.03% received remittances; the percentage of households with emigrants to the U.S. in the previous 5-year period was 12.18%; and the percentage of circular migrants was 3.31%. The percentage of residences with return migrants during the previous 5-year period was 2.55%. Municipalities that had the greatest percentage of households with return migrants in the 2000-2005 period were: Trinidad García de la Cadena, El Plateado de Joaquín Amaro, Momax, Chalchihuites, Atolinga, Monte Escobedo, Juan Aldama, Huanusco, Juchipila and Jerez; concentrated in the municipalities in the State of Zacatecas with a longer tradition of international migration here the percentage varied between 7.47% and 5.86%.

In 2010 there were 377,293 residences in the state, of which 11.04% received remittances, a reduction with regard to the previous decade; the migratory intensity index in the region reached 2.35%, in terms of the relationship between international migration and the total population. At the same time, the percentage of residences with return migrants practically doubled in the state in comparison to the 2000-2005 period, reaching 5.56% in 2010. The municipalities with the highest number of returnees were Francisco R. Murguía, Susticacán, Apozol, Sain Alto, Trinidad García de la Cadena, Apulco, Tepechitlán, Rio Grande, Nochistlán and Villa González Ortega, with a percentage ranging between 9.0% and 14.61%. It is important to note that the six leading municipalities are those that have experienced

higher levels of depopulation, aging and feminization prior to the crisis in the U.S. due to their greater degree of international migratory intensity.

The importance of the existence or lack of social networks can be shown in the volume of returnees who come from the emerging areas of international migration, while in the case of traditional areas, the trend is declining, as 2010 figures were approximately a third of those from the year 2000. In the case of Zacatecan migrants, we see that the number of returnees to their place of birth between 1995 and 2000 fell from 44,340 persons to only 13,192, which we can see in the below Figure 3 comparing it to the cases of Oaxaca and Michoacán, which are also known for their high degree of migratory intensity:



Governmental response to returnees

At the national level, programs relating to migration are the responsibility of the Secretary of Foreign Relations (SRE), but the human resources of the SRE have proven to be insufficient for the great number of people deported to Mexico, who arrive without belongings and in the majority of cases without identification. This is in addition to the difficult situation of family separation. Added to this is the serious problem of unaccompanied deported minors, reaching 72% in 2010 of the deportee children, where 24% of these were under the age of 12 years. In this context arises the need to protect the human rights of repatriated migrants, and expand the coverage of measures to address their needs. In the face of this scenario, the Mexican government has been criticized for its limited work in defending the human rights of Mexicans in the U.S. in general, and those of Mexicans deported or returned from that country. In particular, the government has not met the standards identified by the National Migration Institute (INAMI). According to INAMI, essential elements of public policy must 'contribute to national development, through an appropriate management of migration based on a legal framework that facilitates migratory flows with respect to human dignity' and must

‘guarantee the protection and defence of migrants’ human rights, such as their physical well-being and protection of property, independent of their nationality and their status as documented or undocumented in which the three levels of government share responsibility’ (INM, 2011:18).

Mexican policies regarding migration have traditionally been limited to providing and defending the rights and physical well-being of migrants on national territory. The *Paisano Program* was ‘created with the aim of guaranteeing a safe, orderly and dignified migratory flow to those Mexicans who enter, transit or depart from Mexico’ (INM, 2011: 19). In this context, *Grupo Beta* is also charged with assisting those migrants in situations where they may be at risk or abused by authorities, individuals or organized crime, providing direction and information about the dangers along the way. These programs are designed, primarily, for recurring migrants or those who return as tourists, but not for those who are deported, nor those who return voluntarily, but for economic and family reasons. Therefore, at the moment there is no program in Mexico oriented toward supporting return migrants.

In the context of a large number of Mexican returnees from the U.S., the Federal Mexican Congress approved the Migrant Support Fund (FAM) in 2009 with the goal of assisting the economic reintegration of returned migrants through self-employment projects. This involves the provision of financial assistance in the form of a grant valued up to \$12,500 MXN pesos. This program is administered by the Secretary of Finance and Public Credit (SHCP) and is intended to support returned migrant workers and families that receive remittances so that they might find a job in the formal labour market; find self-employment possibilities; create incomes; improve their human capital and their residence conditions; support the operation of shelters that care for them; and depending on the individual cases, assist their return home.

The FAM had a national budget of 300 million pesos in 2012, which was reduced by 100 million pesos in 2013 and will lose another 50 million pesos in 2014 – this at a time when the past 5 years has seen a considerable number of returning migrants, leading to the highest unemployment levels that exist in the country. Furthermore, the reduced allotment to this fund highlights the absence of state programs and a comprehensive national support program for the reintegration of returned migrants and their families that encompasses economic, labour, food, health, education, community reintegration and family reintegration factors.

In theory, the FAM should support returnees and those who receive remittances, but that support is given without training or adequate follow-up, making this program, like many others, little more than a hand-out. Thus, there are no real prospects beyond the hope that the supported projects might prosper in the future. The results have not been promising, due to the lack of project planning, which should have been accompanied by a serious process that included training and technical support.

In addition to the above, there is a broad discretion on the part of state and municipal governments to give support to people who are neither migrants nor returnees, with preference given to members of political parties. This leads to the siphoning of scarce resources to other sectors or the population that already have some form of institutional support via other programs. These financial and institutional shortcomings in their operation add weight to the

need to design and establish a comprehensive support program for the reintegration of returnee migrants and their families. However, designing a program of this kind requires the political will of the Mexican government and the various political powers in the nation's Congress to come up with an appropriate budget. It will be due to the organization and pressure of the migrants' home communities, of their families and various allies in civil society that make any advancement possible toward the design of this kind of Program.

Of particular concern is the need for bi-national collaboration in the processes of repatriation, given the complex processes involved and the vulnerability of migrants and their families who require support in areas such as education and health. In the face of the problematic outlined above, questions arise about whether the various areas of government are capable of safeguarding the fundamental rights of the population who are returning to their places of origin.

Impacts of return migration on health services

The phenomenon of return migrant flows are putting Mexican migrants in situations of increased vulnerability. Upon their return, their medical needs should be addressed and assistance should be provided in their search for economic and social opportunities that will lead to a successful reintegration.

In most cases, when those who are now returnees first departed, they did not enjoy formal employment and thus were not offered social protection and access to health services. This condition of vulnerability continues during their stay in the U.S. According to Castañeda and Ojeda (2008), migrants in that country are 2.5 times less likely to be covered by medical insurance than those born within its borders. Thus 45% of immigrants who are not U.S. citizens lack medical coverage. This implies that they are not able to freely exercise their right to health care nor take advantage of public health programs. Instead they take other measures such as self-medication, private expenditure, trips to Mexico for medical attention and medications, etc.

Once migrants have successfully returned to Mexico, they ideally would be offered an institutional support so that their fundamental right to health could be fulfilled. Given that current return migration occurs within an adverse labour scenario which limits their ability to find formal work that provides health services, the *Seguro Popular de Salud* (Public Health Insurance) program becomes the only medical alternative offered by the state in contemporary Mexico, which implies that they have sufficient income to pay for access. Even when the cost of this insurance is minimal, compared to private services, this coverage is the bare minimum and may not include chronic, degenerative illnesses.

Return migration has a significant impact on the emotional health of young children, both in deportees as well as those who come to Mexico accompanied by their parents, since the change in lifestyle and the lack of opportunities found in Mexico lead to depression of these young children, while this age group in general is in an overall good state of health. This is not

the situation of those who live and work on farms under precarious labour and health conditions such as international indigenous labourers from Oaxaca, Guerrero and other states in Mexico. The vulnerability of international migrant returnees of advanced age is notable because of the lack of social security and access to health services in both countries. Particularly those who are beyond 65 years of old face high costs when they have chronic degenerative illnesses and complications. The pressure applied by returnees on the health system in Mexico calls into question the *Seguro Popular* strategy that is based on a universal service offering to the population, which is facing ever-increasing enrolment while having the same physical and economic resources. This weighs on the quality and efficiency of service delivery, as the system copes with infrastructure and human resource deficiencies while attending to the health care needs of communities. If one adds the weight of returnees to the context, the consequences manifest mainly in the saturation of services and insufficient availability of medications.

Limitations of migrant health policies

Although various policies and responses exist to address migrant health, they are diffuse and unconnected; their common denominator has been the lack of political will and commitment, not only with the specific segment of migrants and their families, but with that which underpins them: their fundamental rights and the constitutional mandate. The experiences of *IMSS Migrante* (1990), the *Americas Health Initiative* (2001), *Windows of Health* (2003) and *Go Healthy, Return Healthy* (Vete Sano Regresa Sano) were attempts to bring medical attention and preventive services to migrants and their families; however, factors such as administrative problems, lack of clarity in insurance funding and other have lead these strategies to be under-utilized.

The *Migrant Health* (Salud Migrante) initiative analysed, but never implemented, by the National Institute of Public Health was intended to operate as bi-national medical insurance with the aim of addressing the problem of delayed seeking of medical attention, complications of chronic illnesses, the return or repatriation of seriously ill individuals, as well as catastrophic expenses. This initiative was made part of the National Health Plan 2007-2012 to coordinate efforts and frame the development of a comprehensive health policy. Nonetheless, this initiative was never crystalized and was abandoned, exposing a lack of real commitment to the right of health care for the migrant population and their families.

Another initiative is the *Bi-national Health Week* (SBS), observed annually in the Mexican Consulates across the U.S. and in the states of Mexico that experience the greatest amount of international migration. The SBS seeks to bring health services to migrants and their families for the duration of the activity in both countries. According to the *Outcomes of the Bi-national Health Week 2012*, it is estimated that some 4,216 activities benefitting a total of 466,770 people were carried out (SBS, 2012). Moreover, campaigns were undertaken to raise awareness among the Latin population on topics such as women's health, mental health, adolescent health, occupational health, infectious diseases, chronic illnesses and access

to/reform of health services. The core limitation of this initiative is that it appears as a short-term promotion with a high degree of propaganda on the part of the Mexican government.

Health initiatives at the state level

The *Zacatecan Bi-national Health Initiative (IBIZA)* is a successful pilot program in community health promotion for Zacatecan migrants in California that operates in coordination with different actors in international migration: the State Government, the Americas Health Initiative, the University of California-Berkeley and the Federation of Zacatecan Clubs of Southern California. The goal of this initiative is to improve the health and quality of life of the Zacatecan population and their families who live in the U.S., mainly in California. To achieve that goal, the coordination, development and implementation of activities are shared under the premises of service provision and the prevention of illness.

Like the limitations of the Bi-national Health Week effort, the IBIZA Program is a pilot program, which has not been institutionally formalized. It neither guarantees bi-national access to health for all Zacatecan migrants and their families. It is more likely to succeed, if it can be promoted through the large network of Zacatecan Clubs in the U.S., which exceed some 300 transnational community organizations.

IBIZA does not include the returnees, rather, it is a program that attempts to improve health indicators in destination and origin communities through improved personnel training and repeated visits; but it is not intended to provide specific attention to returning migrants.

Impacts of return migration on educational services

The training of human capital is one of the alternatives for economic development of a country. The lack of employment opportunities is frequently due to the low level of education across a population, which is one of the principal causes of migration to other countries. In education, the needs are urgent, faced with an increasing return of migrants and their families since more often we have seen unaccompanied minors, since in 2007 there was a 49% of unaccompanied minors amount that increased in 2010 to 67%. Undoubtedly, this constitutes a significant challenge for the education and health systems in Mexico.

The percentages of repatriated minors in 2012 are expressed in the following: from 12-17 years of age, 85% were male and 15% were female; from 0-11 years of age, 60% were male and 40% were female. Among accompanied minors, 57% were male and 43% were female; unaccompanied minors were 65% male and 35% were female.

Figure 4									
Incidents of repatriation of Mexican minor migrants from the United States by state of origin, age group, classification of arrival and sex, 2012									
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Total

		y							
Total general	1,505	1,606	2,223	1,766	1,362	1,110	1,125	1,352	12,049
Zacatecas	49	29	53	42	18	23	24	24	262
12-17 years	31	17	53	42	18	23	24	24	242
Accompanied	-	10	11	7	5	9	1	6	49
Unaccompanied	31	17	42	35	13	14	23	18	193
0-11 years	18	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	20

Source: Center of Migratory Studies, Migration Policy Unit, based on official repatriation data from the INAMI.

Increasingly, minors need education programs that address their needs so that adapting to the Mexican educational system is not so difficult for them. For this, teacher training is proposed, but not implemented, in order to offer bilingual services. According to the Mexican Secretariat of Public Education (SEP, 2012), the average years of schooling among the Mexican population was 8.8; in the state of Michoacán it was 7.5; in Oaxaca, 7; and in Zacatecas it was 8. For the 2011-2012 school year, the total enrolment of students at the national level was 34,821,326 students, of which 74% were in basic education, 12.5% in secondary, and 9.1% in higher education.

Figure 5 shows the amount of educational infrastructure in the state of Zacatecas, compared to national numbers. Here we can infer that being one of the states with a greater number of minor returnees with transnational educative needs calls for the implementation of special measures for the appropriate integration of these minors.

Figure 5
Educative infrastructure in the State of Zacatecas, 2011-2012

States	Students in higher education	Researchers	Teachers	Schools
Country total	2,705,19	19,747	556,635	20,728
Zacatecas	37,401	177	6,088	279

Source: National System of Researchers (SNI), CONACyT

It is extremely important that the governments become directly involved in the needs of the growing minor returnee population. States such as Zacatecas with a high degree of migratory intensity and high indices of returnees should respond with the changes in educational investment since –as the Figure 6 shows– there is a complete lack of teachers and bachelor’s programs in bilingual, cross-cultural primary education in the face of a growing population of minor returnees with transnational educational needs.

Figure 6
Students, teachers and bachelor degree programs in bilingual primary

education, in the states of Michoacán, Oaxaca and Zacatecas, 2011-2012 school year							
States	Total	Sex		Programs	1st Registration	Graduates	Degrees
		Male	Female				
National Total	2,602	1,052	1,550	19	755	601	596
Michoacán	117	79	38	1	30	30	30
Oaxaca	227	93	134	1	60	54	49
Zacatecas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

In matters of education, the Institute of Mexicans Abroad, a consulting body to the Secretary of Foreign Relations made up of 130 Mexican migrant leaders, has proposed small measures that –while they do not address the entirety of the demand for educational topics– such programs could be expanded and be offered to the rest of the migrant population. Within these initiatives are teacher exchange programs, the donation of books to schools, libraries and community centres in the U.S., literacy programs for adults and education programs offered through the more than 360 community centres, and the *IME-Becas* joint program with the University of California that began in 2005 with the goal of supporting via donations the community centres and the institutions that offer educational programs to Mexican students (Délano, 2010).

In this sense, the outcomes sought via these programs are that students acquire educational tools that allow them to have a better connection with U.S. institutions: *“Almost all the students enrolled feel motivated by the idea that an education in their own language not only facilitates learning to read and write, but permits them to quickly learn English, and in some cases obtain their diploma (GED) and attend university in the United States”* (Délano, n/d, p. 86). This impetus in the education of migrants should be seen in advancements in their access to better jobs and improved quality of life.

The Bi-national Migrant Education Program (PROBEM) has the core objective of supporting children and youth as they pursue their studies, with one part of the school year pursued in Mexico and the other in the U.S. It assures the quality and continuity of their education for an improved quality of life of these children and youth.

According to Tinajero (2007) PROBEM has four thematic axes: information and distribution, teacher exchange, document transfer and the development of educational material. Only the teacher exchange has received any real direction while the other three axes have seen little advancement. The most limiting factor faced by the program implementers is the very small budget of no more than 303,000 pesos. Furthermore, the core of the program and teacher exchanges does not address a more significant educational problem: school dropouts.

Two central problems among the population of child returnees is represented by the lack of documentation and the lack of Spanish ability in contexts where the lack of documents restricts one's recognition as Mexican citizens and in those where there are no teachers with training at the didactic and pedagogical levels nor with English speaking capability.

Limitations of migrant educational policies

While federal programs around educational materials for migrants exist, the needs are growing and it remains necessary to extend them geographically and financially. In Zacatecas, the 2012-2013 school year has around 8,000 children enrolled in PROBEM with bilingual educational needs. However, as we saw in the Figure 6, there are no teachers capable of meeting these kinds of needs. The teachers that face these challenges do not speak English and many of these minors speak little to no Spanish. One of the options that this program proposes is a diploma in English for the teachers who have to support these students.

Other problems faced by students are the recognition of birth certificates and the lack of school documents, a situation more often confronted by youth who finish high school, since return is not planned, people go back without the necessary documentation. Of the 58 municipalities in the State of Zacatecas, all have at least one 'bi-national' student – a total of 9,256 minors. The top five in terms of the number of these students are the municipalities of Fresnillo (1,081), Sombrerete (582), Jerez (525), Guadalupe (519) and Río Grande (471) (These rates are the result of the author's research in the archives of the Secretary of Public Education at the state level) The efforts made under PROBEM in Zacatecas are limited and have only achieved minimal progress in the face of the larger challenge posed by the plethora of municipalities with returnee minors.

Proposals

Given that the sources of information are widespread, it is important to undertake municipal censuses of returnee migrants and their families, to obtain reliable data on the problematic, impacts and proposals, and from these elaborate regional public policies for the same transnational social actors. It is also vital to bring support for migrant transfer from the border to the area of origin, avoiding in this way the risks that returnee and deportee migrants face, such as theft, extortion, kidnapping, assault and murder.

Support is needed for the reintegration of the migrants and their families to their communities of origin through programmes of job creation and timely training, as well as psychological support and the provision of job training and microcredit financing. It is likewise necessary to develop inter-institutional coordination with migrant clubs and federations and with municipal and state governments in areas of origin, and with other official institutions in education, health, employment and human security.

On the matter of education, the Bi-national Education Program (PROBEM) must be strengthened and state educational budgets must be increased to permit the comprehensive training of 500 teachers that will allow them to adequately meet the needs of returnee migrant children and youth. This is an estimated number drawn from the quantity of returning students and their dispersion across 9 municipalities.

In regard to health care, a specific health support program for returnee migrants and their families must be established, taking advantage of the wide network of health centres that exist in the state. It is important for both countries to develop solutions to the health problems of transnational migrants. To that end, the IBIZA pilot program should be strengthened, expanded and institutionalized between both countries with an appropriate budget and serve as the basis for its development and reproduction in other parts of the country. From a strategic point of view, it is of great importance to advocate the establishment, with the 18 Zacatecan Club Federations in the U.S. and the State government of Zacatecas, a low-cost health, education and life insurance policy in the vein of that promoted by other Mexican states such as Oaxaca in cooperation with credit unions and non-governmental organisations.

Conclusions

In the face of the growing number of deportees and returnees to Mexico, particularly to the State of Zacatecas, the Mexican government must exercise a better defence of the human rights of its countrymen and women in the U.S. in general and in particular among the returnee and deportee migrants. The Mexican government must establish public policies to support the delivery of returnees and deportees from the northern border region to their places of origin, with personalized attention that allows them the basic security to return and avoid the violation of their rights. This could form part of a more comprehensive reintegration support program for migrants and their families on the part of the federal government that takes into consideration economic factors, training, microfinance and access to health and education for the entire family.

With regard to the health programs, it is important to improve the existing initiatives and ensure access of all migrant families to this service. It is also urgent that health services in Zacatecas adequately extend to reach the areas of greater migratory and returnee intensity in a way that guarantees access to health services by the migrant, their family and in particular all senior returnees. On the matter of health care, the IBIZA Program is essential, as a reference campaign for the entire country, in the promotion of a culture of preventive health care among Zacatecan migrants in the U.S., where the challenge lies in its propagation across that country through an alliance with the Zacatecan migrant clubs that reach across the United States.

However, there remains much to be done on the matter of return migration. As we have shown, the infrastructure and financing of *Seguro Popular* are limited and are faced with an additional burden from returnees who will only add to the deficit of services. For all of these reasons, access and enrolment in the *Seguro Popular* must be guaranteed, as well as effective

coverage, with availability of medicines, timely testing to prevent further suffering, and psychological support for the reintegration of migrants to their families.

With regard to educational programs, existing mechanism must be improved and broadened in scope so that the increasing number of youth with these kinds of needs have access to those services. Regarding the available educational services, it is necessary to formulate a strategy to increase the cadre of bilingual teachers along with the pedagogical, psychological and social training of teachers and staff capable of supporting the 9,500 children returnees that currently reside in the state.

In the context of Zacatecas in particular, greater state government coordination is needed with the Federations of Zacatecan Hometown Associations in order to design a state support program for returned migrants and deportees that takes into consideration the joint responsibility under the “Planned and Assisted Return” program of the federal government, the consulates, Mexican border governments, origin state governments, municipalities, NGOs, international bodies, the Superior Education Institutes (IES), churches, etc. It is increasingly urgent that the three levels of government, migrant organizations, communities of origin, NGOs, educational institutions and international organizations such as UNESCO, IMO, ILO, IDB and others articulate a comprehensive policy to support the reintegration of returnee migrants and their families.

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