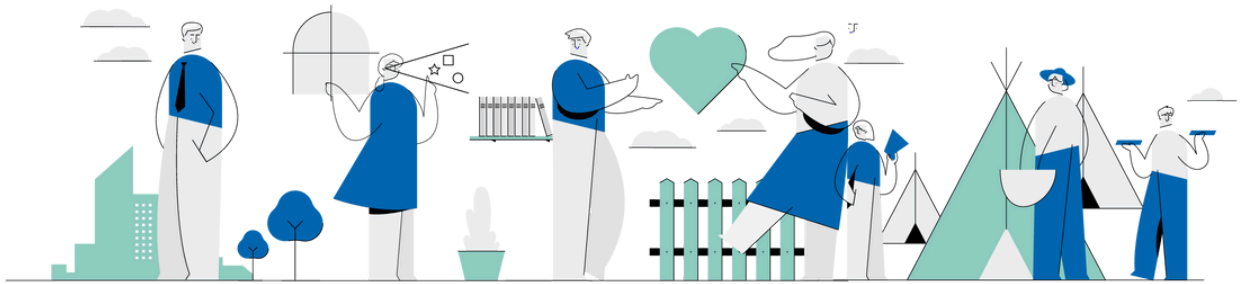




# GDL MEXICO LAB



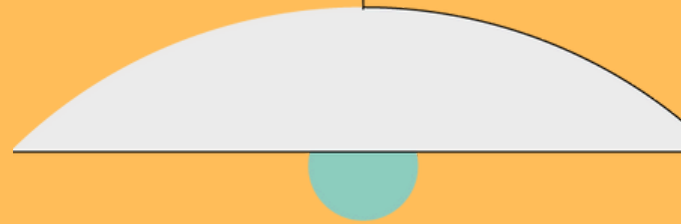
## Social innovation to address the migration and development nexus in México

CREATIVE COLLABORATION TO APPROACH SYSTEMIC CHANGE  
A JOINT EFFORT OF GDL & UNDP MEXICO

COMPLETE REPORT 2022

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# Concept of the LAB

This concept note discusses the nexus between migration and development in northern Central America and the south southeast of Mexico. The mixed flow of migrants is composed of individuals seeking better economic opportunities and others seeking humanitarian protection. The lack of economic inclusion often forces young people to migrate. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) set up a common understanding regarding migration, making it work for all, and promoting economic and social inclusion is the pathway.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) sponsored a Comprehensive Development Plan for El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and south and southeast Mexico, advocating to create a space for sustainable development by stimulating economic growth, promoting universal access to social rights, fostering resilience to climate change, and guaranteeing rights throughout the entire migratory cycle. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the importance of migration as one of the defining features of the 21st century, which significantly contributes to economic and social development everywhere.

International Development Cooperation is essential to tackle the structural causes of international migration. At the same time, transnational cooperation between non-governmental actors is crucial to effectively solve cross-border problems. Public diplomacy, understood as policy efforts to communicate the national priorities to foreign publics, can promote public dialogues around common regional challenges, setting the stage for stakeholders of neighbor countries to craft new venues of joint action.

The objective of the 2020-2021 Global Diplomacy Lab in Mexico is to convene national and local governments, international organizations, academia, civil society, and the private sector to discuss public diplomacy strategies and collaboration frameworks to address the human mobility and development nexus in northern Central America and the south southeast of Mexico. The challenges involve effective multi-stakeholder partnerships building, collaboration between different regional organizations, unleashing the full potential of public diplomacy, catalyzing innovative development cooperation based on public diplomacy, and improving the practice of the nexus between migration and development based on the GCM, the UN Migration Network, and the Global Forum on Migration and Development.

# Global scenario

The Northern Triangle Crisis and migrant caravans face a range of challenges, including restrictive migration policies in destination countries, rejection in transit/host communities, and higher risk for social isolation and exclusion. These factors are compounded by poverty, unemployment, lack of services, limited opportunities, chronic violence, political instability, and natural disasters. Local governments in places like Mexicali, Tijuana, and Chihuahua are working to respond to the influx of migrant populations, but the poor visibility of migrants and negative or alarming portrayals reported by the media and disinformation on social media continue to raise public concern.

The visibility of migrants is often poor, and negative or alarming portrayals reported by the media and disinformation on social media can raise public concern. As a result, the migrant crisis has had several milestones over the years, including the formation of large caravans that gain international attention and prompt policy changes in destination countries.

Efforts to address the root causes of the crisis and provide solutions for those affected are ongoing, but progress is slow. The crisis is complex, and solutions require coordinated efforts from multiple stakeholders, including governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

## Northern Triangle Crisis

### Drivers

- Poverty and unemployment
- Lack of services and limited opportunities
- Chronic violence and political instability
- Natural disasters

### Transit

- Increasingly restrictive migration policies in destination countries
- Growing rejection in transit/host communities
- Higher risk for social isolation and exclusion.

### Visibility

- Poor visibility of Migrants.
- Raising public concern, in part by:
  - Negative or alarming portrayals reported by the media
  - Disinformation in social media

# Hosts

## Edna Martínez

Sustainable Consultant

For over a decade, Edna has worked in designing, developing and implementing public policies focused on sustainability. She has adapted international agendas to the Mexican context, such as sustainable production and consumption, waste management, eco-labeling and, the the Sustainable Development Goals and most recently circular economy.



## Carolina Sheinfeld

Migration Expert

Carolina has a passion for humanitarian assistance and social justice and for the past two decades has built strong connections and strategic partnerships across the immigrant and refugee rights ecosystem.

In June 2022, she was appointed to be the Chief of the Office of Immigrant Youth at the California Department of Social Services.

# Challenge holder

## Daniel Gamboa

International Development Cooperation

Daniel Gamboa has worked as Executive Coordinator of the Observatory for International Development Cooperation - in Mexico - and as an Associate Researcher at AidData - in the United States. Daniel has twelve years of experience in international development cooperation, with a focus on multi-stakeholder perspectives and capacity strengthening.



# Creative Designer

## Myrián Martínez

Strategic Design & Innovation Consulting

Multidisciplinary Designer based in México City with 10 years of experience. She has worked as an industrial and digital designer with a human-centered approach, designing the future of products, services, and user experiences across a wide range of industries like finance, TTH, and retail.





## Challenge holder

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is the lead United Nations agency dedicated to ending the injustice of poverty, inequality and climate change. We work with our extensive network of experts and partners in 170 countries to help nations build lasting, integrated solutions for people and the planet.

In Mexico, they work with the three powers of the State and with all sectors of society to help countries build their own development solutions to overcome

environmental, economic and social crises, while promoting sustained growth that improves the quality of life of all people.

UNDP is present in some 170 countries and territories, our initiatives have the global perspective necessary to offer action alternatives effectively adapted to the priorities of each local context.



# Methodology

How we approached the challenge: Design thinking for social innovation

## Incubator LAB

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### DEFINE

Determined project scope and challenge statement focus

- Aligned on challenge statement
- Surfaced hypothesis

### DISCOVER

Identified unmet user need and aligned around opportunities for innovation

- Planned research
- People research
- Identified opportunities
- Synthetized learnings

## Impact LAB

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### DARE

Challenged orthodoxies and inspired teams to co-create solutions

- Planned + run workshop
- Designed concept or value proposition
- Iterated with feedback

### DO

Bringing solutions to life

- Create a vision
- Build momentum for change

# México LAB by numbers

6

## Workshops

- Discovery sessions
- Fishbowl sessions
- Site visit
- Impact Lab

36

## Participants

- GDL members
- UNDP stakeholders
- Leaders in migration from Mexico

9

## Interviews

- 2 expert practitioners
- 2 journalists
- 2 scholars
- 4 grassroots leaders

13

## Countries

- Mexico
- Germany
- United States

26

## GDL Members

11

## Days

# Moments of Engagement (2021)



# CHALLENGE STATEMENT

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# Human mobility in Mexico

Northern triangle crisis & migrant caravans

## DRIVERS

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- Poverty and unemployment
- Lack of services and limited opportunities
- Chronic violence and political instability
- Natural disasters
- Health as Human Right
- Change of Government in US

## TRANSIT

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- Increase in restrictive migration policies in destination countries
- Growing rejection in transit/host communities
- Higher risk for social isolation and exclusion
- Local governments like, Mexicali, Tijuana and Chihuahua are responding to influx of migrants population

## VISIBILITY

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- Negative perception
- Raising public concern in part by
  - Negative or alarming portray reported by the media
  - Disinformation in social media

An open social dialogue and learning from another (online) platform or by creating (public) spaces for exchange.

How might we...

foster new ways of collaboration by

bringing together the relevant actors to

leverage local solutions

for the integration of people on the move

both migrants and local community, as well as local government, private sector and civil society

Initiatives, projects, policies for social and economic integration of migrants and fostering of local development in general

# INITIAL EXPECTATIONS

Multi Stakeholder  
engagement

GDL members  
involved in the  
process are heard and  
their contributions  
taken into  
consideration

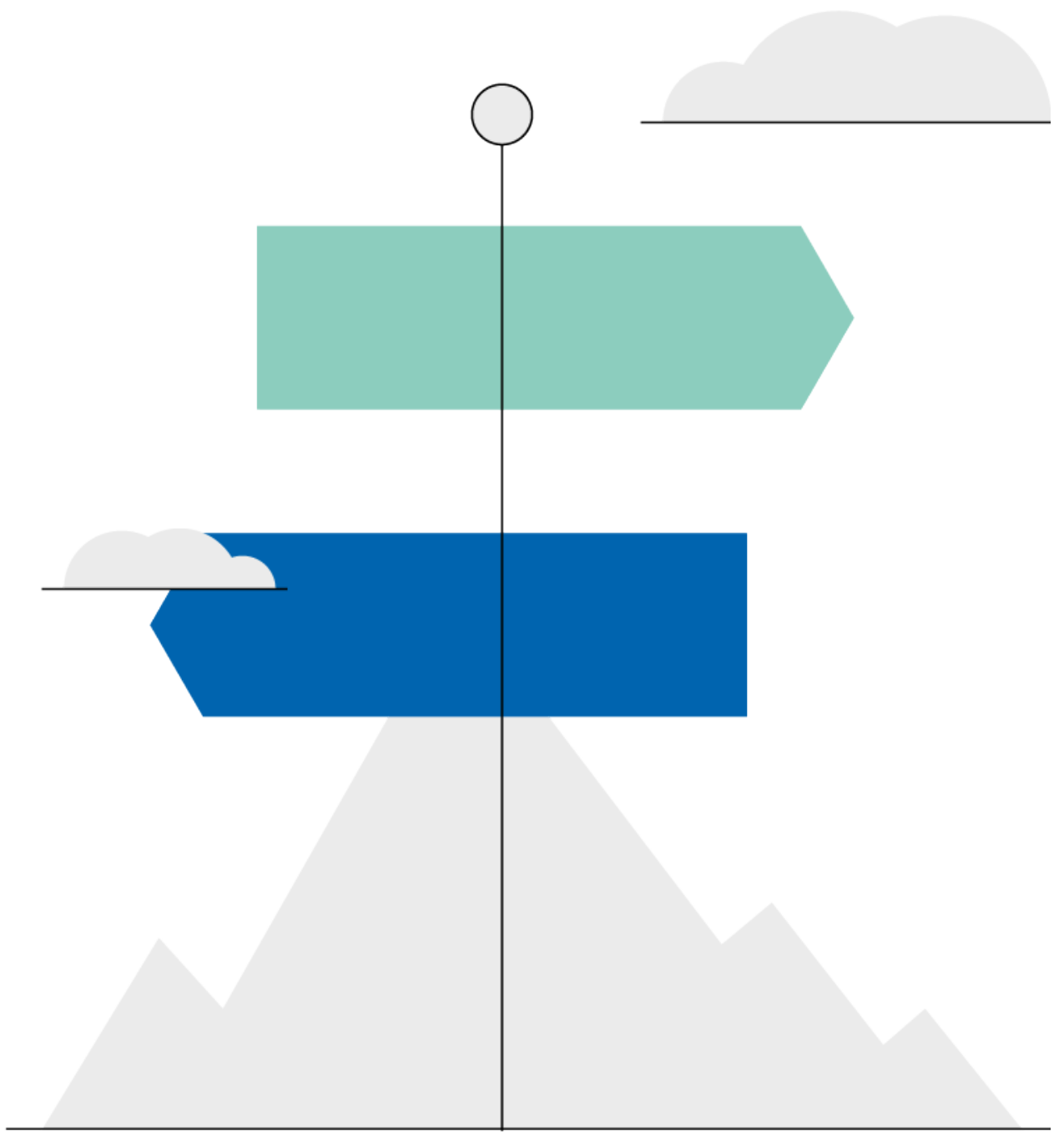
To create inclusive  
spaces for open  
dialogue and  
exchange of  
experiences that give  
value to participants

Partnership

Multidimensional  
dialogues that are non  
traditional and can  
break artificial  
barriers

To provide or find and  
share evidence of the  
contributions of host  
communities &  
migrants

# DEFINE





# Define Workshop

DEFINE in Design Thinking is the process that involves determining the project scope and challenge statement focus. In this phase, the team needs to agree on the challenge statement that will guide the rest of the project.

The challenge statement is a clear and concise statement of the problem that needs to be solved. The team can use techniques like brainstorming to identify potential challenge statements and then narrow them down to the most relevant and impactful one.

Once the challenge statement has been agreed upon, the team can start to surface hypothesis or assumptions about the problem. This involves identifying the underlying beliefs and assumptions that the team has about the challenge statement. These assumptions may be based on past experiences, data, or beliefs about the user group. By surfacing these assumptions, the team can start to validate them through research and testing.

The DEFINE phase also involves creating a user profile or persona. This persona represents the ideal user group for the challenge statement. It includes information about the user's needs, motivations, and pain points. This persona helps the team to empathize with the user and design solutions that meet their needs.

Finally, the team needs to identify the criteria for success for the project. This involves defining the metrics or outcomes that will be used to determine if the project has been successful.

## Designers of Define

**GDL Hosts**

**UNDP team**

**GDL EAC members**

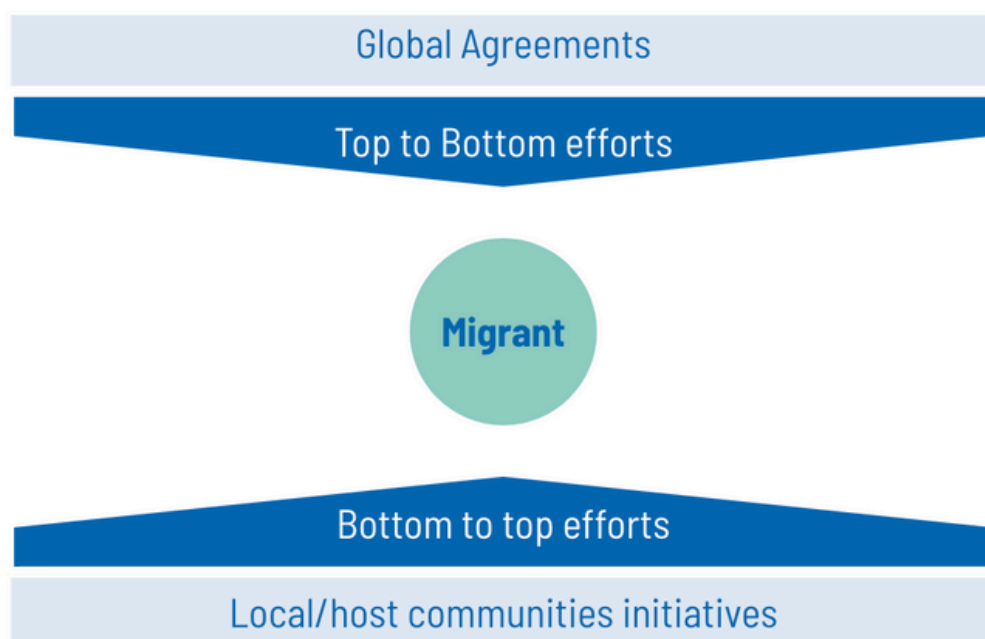
**Creative Designer**

# Define Workshop

Defining a meaningful challenge

There are global agreements (Global Compact on Migrants & Refugees, 2030 Agenda / SDGs) and local initiatives for the integration of migrants in host communities.

However, **lack of effective coordination and communication** between actors at global and local level often lead to isolated responses and duplicating efforts.



# Define Workshop Synthesis

Pains that resonated the most through our stakeholders

"Nothing about us,  
without us" (trying to  
solve without the  
affected parties in the  
room)

How will we move to  
tangible action with  
virtual engagements?

Awareness, education  
and transparency about  
migrants and other  
stakeholders.  
Understanding  
institutions, processes

Guarantee  
engagement from all  
stakeholders,  
meaning including  
migrants in the  
process, giving them  
a voice

How do we offer a  
platform, methods  
and formats of the  
Lab to migrants to  
self organize

Changing the  
perception of  
migrants; reducing  
tensions. Reframing  
migration as a reality  
and not a problem.

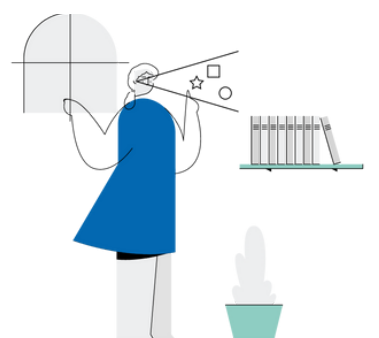
# Define Workshop

4 emerging themes were identified



## Involving the Private Sector

Integrating the private sector into the solution-making process is crucial. By leveraging their expertise and resources, we can achieve greater impact in addressing the issue at hand.



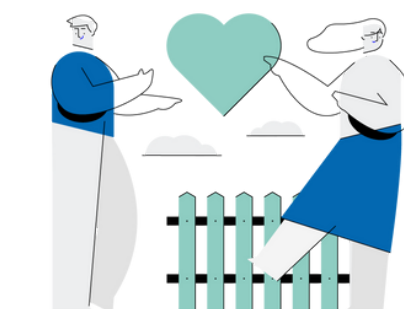
## Changing Perception Towards Migrants

The social sector can play a key role in shifting the narrative and promoting a more positive perception of migrants.



## Gender Inclusion

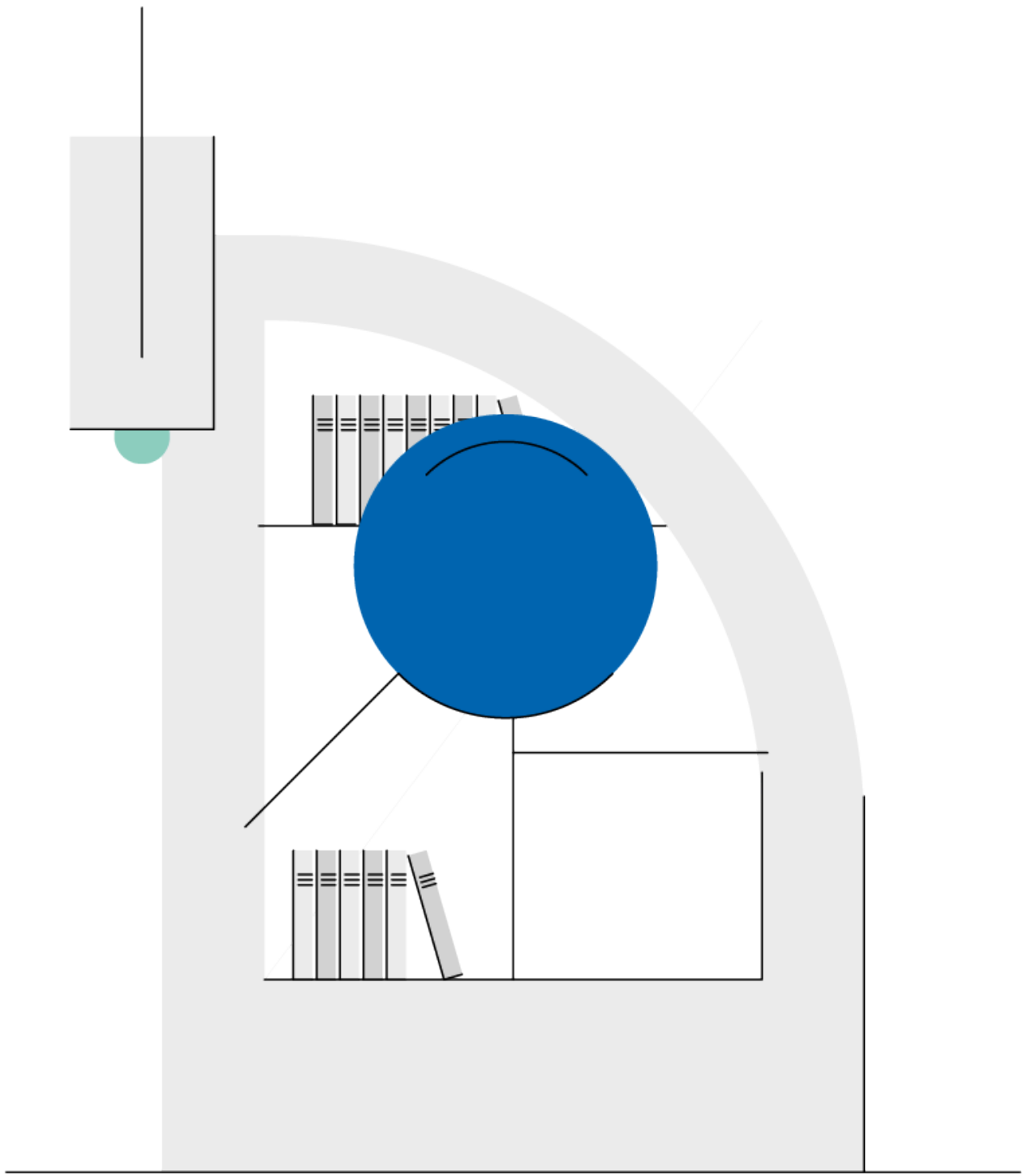
To promote gender inclusion in the migration discourse, there are several steps that can be taken. One of the most important is to ensure that LGBTIQ+ migrants are able to obtain identity documents that reflect their preferred gender identity.



## Refugee / Migrant Encampments

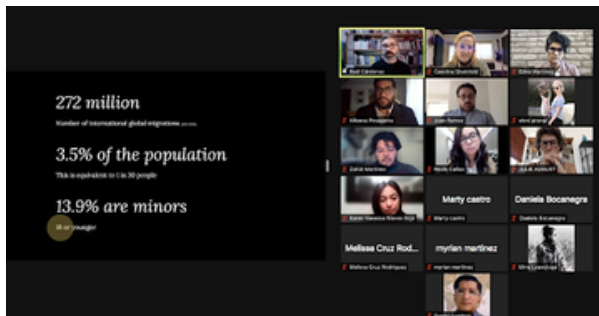
Refugee and migrant encampments are a growing concern, and there is a need for resources and helpers to assist those living in these areas. Demographic information is crucial to understanding the needs of those living in encampments.

# DISCOVER



# Discover Approach

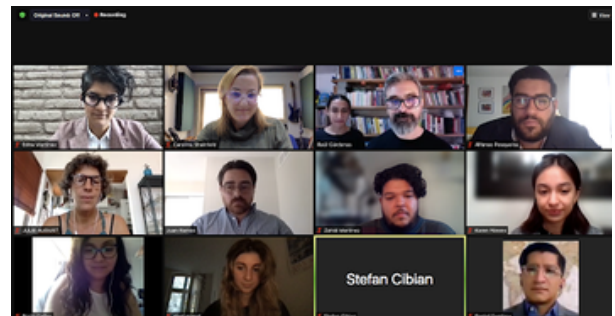
Discover our Digital Approach



DISCOVER is a process of identifying unmet user needs and aligning leaders around opportunities for innovation. It involves planning research, conducting people research, identifying opportunities, and synthesizing learnings.

During the planning stage, the team identifies the research questions and selects the appropriate research methods. People research involves understanding the user's behaviors, motivations, and needs through methods such as interviews, observations, and surveys.

Identifying opportunities involves analyzing the research findings to identify patterns, trends, and insights that can inform the development of new products or services.



Synthesizing learnings involves creating actionable insights and recommendations for the organization to use in developing new products or services.

The DISCOVER process is a critical first step in the design thinking approach to innovation and is essential for developing products and services that meet the needs of users and drive business success.

# Whom we talked to



## MEDIA

Encarni Pindado, Madrid-born photographer who received her education in London. Encarni has been working as a photojournalist for international media outlets for over two decades, specializing in migration and related issues such as violence and its various forms.

## NGOS

Among the institutions that participated was Albergue del Desierto a Mexicali-based organization that provides temporary housing, food, clothing, medical and psychological care to migrants who have been deported in their attempt to cross the US border. Another institution that participated was Casa Arcoíris and PILA Global.



**GOBIERNO DE  
MÉXICO**

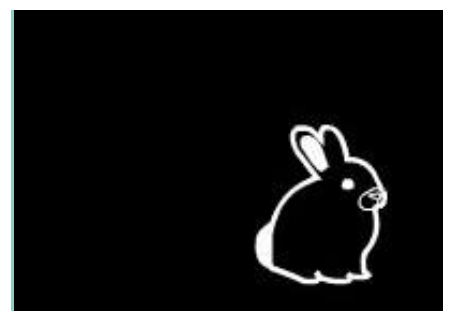


## GOVERNMENT

Different government levels are involved in addressing migration. The federal government oversees immigration policies, while state and local governments, including Zapopan and Ciudad de Mexico, have their own services for immigrants and refugees.

## EXPERTS

Tijuana-based migration experts, including Torolab with over a decade of experience, contribute valuable knowledge and expertise to address migration issues.



# Experiences



## Virtual Site Visit: La Espera

Collaborating in diversity

An artist, a journalist, and a chef come together to shed light on the realities faced by hundreds of thousands of immigrants and their families who are living in distress and anguish at the border of Tijuana. Raúl Cárdenas, Ana Martínez, Journalist Yolanda Morales, and Chef David Venegas, embarked on an amazing and thorough journey to document the current situation at the border and the challenges that the immigrant population faces.

Despite their different professional backgrounds, the four collaborators share a common goal of using their skills and platforms to bring attention to the experiences of the immigrant population.

## Highlights

- Mindset of what immigrants live through days before the session
- Insights from El Chaparral the biggest migrant encampment in the north of Mexico.



# Insights



## Rocío Cañas

+ 10 years of experience working as a policy analyst and development specialist, both in the public administration and local NGOs.

Areas: Social interventions to overcome poverty and vulnerability; International Cooperation projects in Latin America; Human rights; Gender and Migration and Rural Development.

## Highlights

- Analyzing a complex topic from a human centered, interdisciplinary and innovative approach with the conduction and methodology design of the hosts.
- Balanced, rigorous, and evidence-based analyses, at a time where the public discourse on migration has increasingly become more polarized.

*"The virtual setting did not stop our immersive deep dive into the critical situation lived in some of the refugee and migrant camps in Mexico, for me "La Espera" virtual visit along with the "Discovery Session with Encarni Pindado", were absolutely essential to go beyond the numbers and the theory of migrations and focus on the human experience; bringing the face, the voice and the story behind their journey."*

# Insights



## Julie August

She works as a graphic designer for publishing houses and architects, as well as cultural and social projects, and also organises exhibitions.

Before moving to Buenos Aires, she lived in Berlin for 15 years. As art director at the small left-wing publishing house Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, she converted part of her home into a project space for contemporary artists

## Highlights

- I was struck by the commitment of the people who are militating in Chaparral, trying to give back to the migrants in that camp some dignity and hope.
- In the lab, I had the opportunity to exchange with people with another reality, another background, another perspective - which already enriches each discussion. Even more so if it is a discussion about migration, a human right that is often not recognized as such.
- It is not easy to develop strategies such as dealing with contempt and sometimes I hate that people who made the decision to migrate have to confront. In the lab, many proposals emerged from the human point of view, not from the administration.

# Insights



## Rodrigo Terán

Professional in International Business, with a great passion for challenges, always looking to learn something new every day.

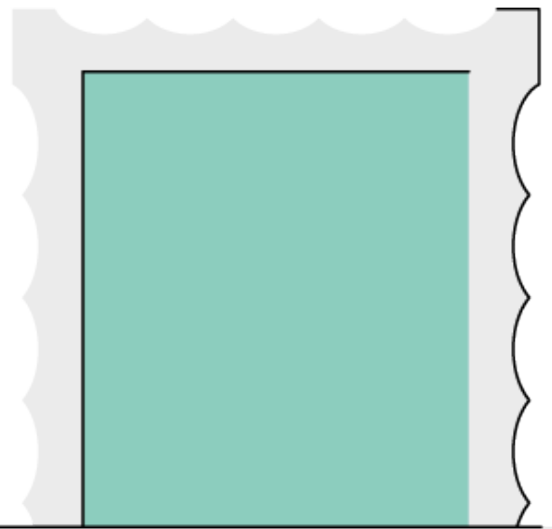
Rodrigo Terán, president of jóvenes CANIRAC Mexicali, has a mission to support restaurant entrepreneurs with tools to endure longer. In addition to this, he has also made efforts to include migrants in the sector by providing employment opportunities.

Through his work, Terán has shown a dedication to not only supporting the local economy but also to creating a more inclusive and diverse community.

## Highlights

- The chance to listen and exchange perspectives with people around the world.
- An opportunity to knowledge transfer, skills, and resources, leading to innovative solutions to address local challenges.

# DARE & DO



A grey rectangular area containing three white boxes with various colored shapes and a circular icon of a person's face. The first box contains a blue rectangle, a blue square, a green square, and a blue square, with a green triangle below them. The second box contains a blue rectangle and a blue triangle below it. The third box contains a blue rectangle and a green triangle below it. A circular icon of a person's face is located to the right of the third box. A green circle is located to the left of the first box.

# Dare and Do Workshop

Changing Perception Towards Migrants

Changing Perception Towards Migrants	Migrants want to be visible			Migrant by choice or required by force			Language differences barrier		
	How might we challenge the status of migrant? (visibility)	How might we protect the migrant's privacy?	How might we use social media?	How might we encourage to have migrant's input?	How might we use social media to protect migrant's privacy?	Como podemos...?	How might we encourage migrant to be more visible?	How might we encourage migrant to be more visible?	
Gobierno local	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gobierno federal	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sector privado	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
NGOs	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Academia	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Design thinking as a human-centered approach to problem-solving involves as mention previously several stages, including empathizing with the user, defining the problem, ideating potential solutions, and prototyping and testing those solutions.

The DARE (Discover, Articulate, Realize, and Evaluate) framework is a popular design thinking method that emphasizes the importance of empathy and user-centricity in the problem-solving process.

The Do phase of design thinking involves implementing and iterating on the proposed solution, based on feedback and insights gathered during testing.

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# Dare & Do Workshop

The joint effort between the GDL (Global Diplomacy Lab) and UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) is an example of the power of creative collaboration to approach systemic change. The GDL is a global network of professionals from various fields who work together to create innovative solutions to global challenges, while the UNDP is a UN agency that aims to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality, and build resilience to crises.

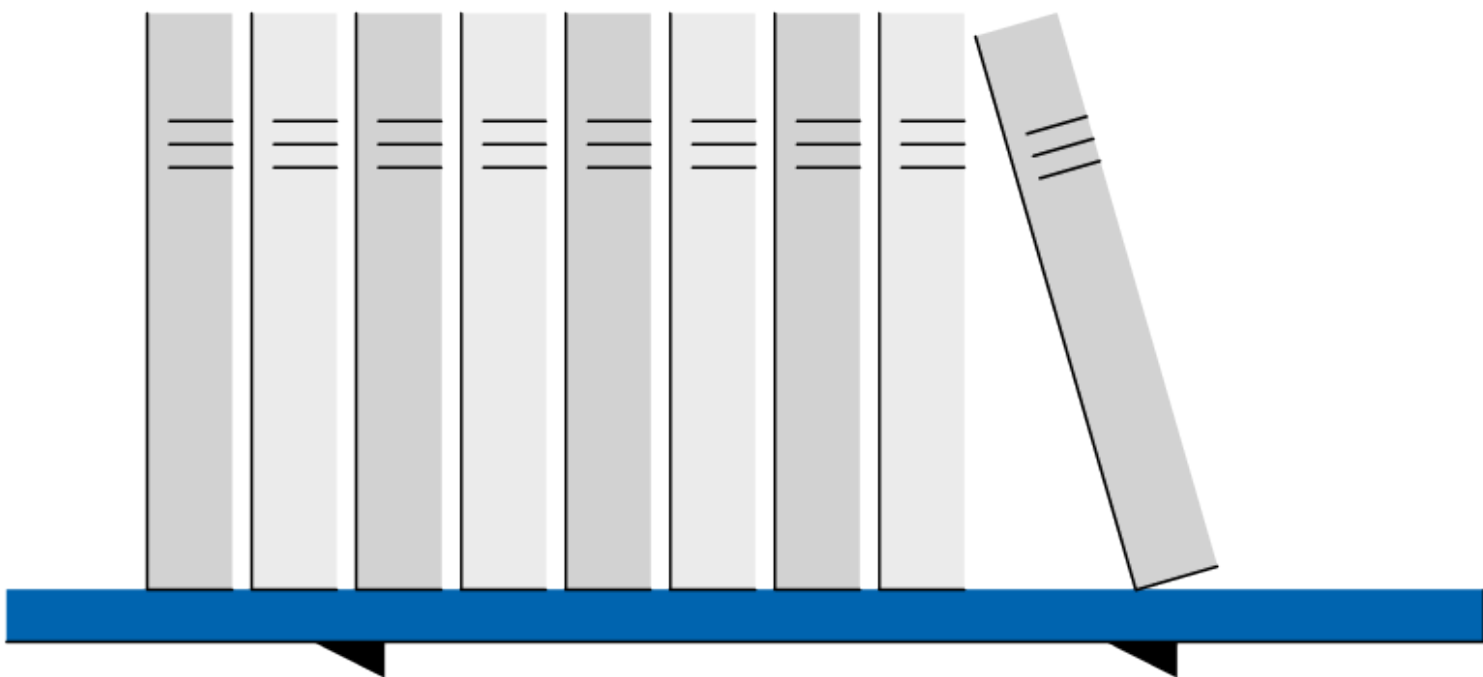
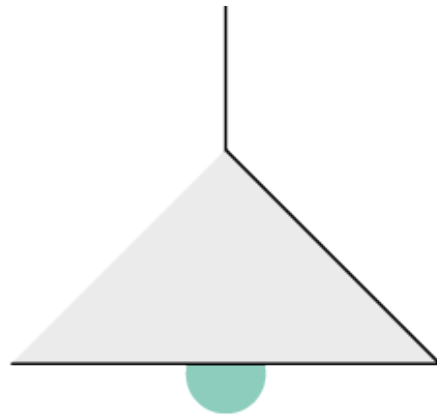
By combining their expertise and resources, the GDL and UNDP can leverage design thinking and social innovation to address the complex issues surrounding migration and development in Mexico and beyond. Through this collaboration, we have the opportunity to create sustainable solutions that have a positive impact on the lives of migrants and the wider community.

Due to time constraints, we were only able to ideate the Dare and Do phases, but the solutions generated through co-creative collaboration between participants and community partners were amazing.

Over two years, we worked together to develop solutions in four areas: Refugee Camps, Gender Inclusion, Changing Perceptions Towards Migrants (a topic that UNDP was particularly passionate about), and Private Sector Involvement, which was brought by private sector partners who were also involved in the community.

These solutions will now be put into action, and we look forward to seeing the positive impact they will have in addressing the complex issues surrounding migration and nexus development in Mexico.

# LEARNINGS



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## Insights from Engaging Communities engaging in Digital Collaboration

The pandemic highlighted the crucial importance of maintaining an effective digital presence. This scenario forced the project actors to collaborate exclusively through digital channels, which was achieved successfully. However, it is clear that we cannot remain solely in the field of digital interactions and collaborations. True transformation requires a hybrid and more holistic approach.

Carrying out a project focused on solving social problems demands a strategic and carefully designed approach. This approach must consider all stakeholders and use all available channels to maximize the value that each one brings to the process. It's not just about implementing solutions; it is about optimizing the impact of each actor involved.

Likewise, it is essential to understand what really drives people and organizations to adopt change. It is necessary to deepen the understanding of the ideal balance between digital and in-person interactions. This balance is key to generating a significant commitment that leads to tangible results aligned with the central objectives of the project.

Doing a project focused on social problems requires a designed approach that includes all stakeholders and channels in order to optimize the value that each one brings to the exercise.

Likewise, we must consider what truly impacts people and organizations to take action for change and we must delve into understanding in more detail what the mix between digital and in-person interactions is ideal for generating engagement that generates real results for the project focus



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## **Myrian Martínez**

Miri your dedication to this project for over three years as our creative designer has been nothing short of remarkable. Your real cool attitude and proactive approach have been truly inspiring. Your unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional work and attention to detail is evident in every moment of the Lab. Your ability to communicate effectively and imagine creative solutions has been an asset to the team.

Your vision, creativity, and passion have been instrumental in making this Lab and this publication a success. It has been an absolute pleasure working with you, and I feel incredibly grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with such a talented and dedicated professional.

## **Senta Hofer**

Thank you for their unwavering dedication and constant support. Your commitment to the Mexiko Lab has been invaluable, and the hard work and perseverance have been truly inspiring. Throughout our journey, [you were an incredible asset to our team, consistently going above and beyond to ensure our success. It is a privilege to have such a dedicated and supportive person in our community, and we are truly grateful for everything they have done.

## **Tina Holth**

Tina we would like to express our sincere gratitude for their brief but invaluable contribution to the Mexiko Lab. Even though your involvement was short, you managed to bring fresh insights and ideas that significantly impacted the project's success. Your dedication, hard work, and positive attitude were evident from the beginning, and it was truly inspiring to witness your commitment to our shared goals. Your professionalism and willingness to go above and beyond to support the team are deeply appreciated and did not go unnoticed.

## **Sue Lyn, Corrina Fischer, Lea Schindler & Philipp Breer**

Your contributions and commitment have helped us to achieve our goals and objectives, we are truly grateful for all of the effort and time that you have put into this project. Your expertise and willingness to work collaboratively have been instrumental in bringing the project to fruition, and we cannot thank you enough for your contributions. Thank you for your time, your creativity, and your passion for this project. It has been a pleasure to work with you, and we look forward to future opportunities to collaborate with you again.

# LAB PARTICIPANTS

- Virginie Arslan
- Julie August
- Anya Margaret Baum
- Rocío Cañas
- Martin Raymond Castro
- Elif Çavuşlu
- Stefan Cibian
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- Sonja Peteranderl
- Trinidad Saona
- Ines Silva
- Vivian Valencia
- Beatriz Guillen
- Ruprecht R. Polenz
- Wiebke Koenig
- Teresa Spancken
- Renata Farias
- Melissa Cruz Rodríguez
- Ulises Pineda Miranda
- Rodrigo Terán
- Glenda Linares
- Claudia Espinosa
- Jimena Cardenas



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The sole responsible for the content is Edna Martínez Quintanilla & Caro Sheinfeld