

## Concept Note

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III Regional Congress on Women in the Context of Migration  
**“Women In Movement: Gender Equality, Human Rights and Autonomy”**  
with the support of IOM and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg  
Mexico  
23 and 24 September 2021

### BACKGROUND

Member Countries of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) have recognized the relevance and increasing engagement, and new patterns of women, associated to the feminization of migration. It is for this reason that the realities of migrant women have a very significant impact in the region, requiring an effective approach from a regional and domestic perspective in RCM Member Countries.

Since 2017, under the leadership of El Salvador as the Presidency Pro-Tempore of the RCM, a reflection on “migrant women” was advanced. The effort to position this at the regional level was due to the dynamic characteristics of migration in the region, while simultaneously seeking to position the RCM as a regional reference process for the protection and attention of migrant women throughout the different stages of the migration process.

The **I Regional Congress: Women in the context of Migration**, was held in 2018 in El Salvador and had the objective of opening a space to broaden the knowledge on the intrinsic link between women, migration and development; and under this context the *Guidelines for the Attention and Protection of Women in the Context of Migration*<sup>1</sup> were presented.

The **II Regional Congress: Women in the Context of Migration: “Women in Migration: Gender, Human Rights and Empowerment. Challenges and Perspectives”**, was held in 2019 in Costa Rica. This Congress followed up on the application of the *Guidelines for the Attention and Protection of Women in the Context of Migration*. Working groups, panels and discussion sessions were established to address Women and Work, Gender-based Data, Migrant Children and Adolescents, Role and Prominence of Women in the 2030 Agenda, Women and the Global Compact for a Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Violence Against Women and Public Policies, Migrant Trafficking and Smuggling, among others.

In addition to such efforts, and at the request of Member Countries to turn the Regional Congress into an annual space of reflection, the **III Regional Congress on Women in the Context of Migration: “Women in Movement: Gender Equality, Human Rights and Autonomy”** will be held.

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<sup>1</sup> [Guidelines for the Attention and Protection of Women in the Context of Migration | Regional Office for Central America, North America and the Caribbean \(iom.int\)](https://www.iom.int/guidelines-for-the-attention-and-protection-of-women-in-the-context-of-migration)

## JUSTIFICATION

According to information from the International Organization for Migrations (IOM), an estimated 281 million people have crossed international borders globally; for this particular region this represents 52% girls, adolescents and women.<sup>2</sup> Women and girls leave their place of origin seeking new alternatives for survival due to the pressures inflicted by organized crime, poverty, lack of opportunities, environmental deterioration, natural disasters, persecution and job insecurity, among other factors. Also, an important number of women and girls flee their place of origin due to structural cultural factors that spur expressions of violence against the most vulnerable segments of society, such as gender-based violence, homicide, family abuse, trafficking, forced marriage; or several forms of discrimination, including those related to sexual orientation or gender identity.

Based on this, the III Regional Congress will highlight the importance of recognizing that:

a) Migrant women provide critical social and financial contributions to countries of origin, transit and destination. In certain cases, migration offers opportunities for economic and social development. The experiences from migration - when positive- help to empower women and girls by boosting their self-confidence, autonomy and control of their own lives; and the exposure to different gender norms can contribute in attaining gender equality in the communities of origin.<sup>3</sup>

Migrant women can maintain a greater level of autonomy, and benefit from the new norms, competences and specialized skills that are taken when returning and reintegrating back into their communities of origin. The acquisition of assets when returning, also improves their developing situation. A high percentage of women that return to their country of origin, start their own business while others become independent workers, this suggests a higher financial capital. Migration enables women to become agents of change and of development, including their families and communities. The predominant role that women play in reactivating a post-COVID19 pandemic economy is reaffirmed, and therefore, it is critical to establish adequate conditions to ensure this occurs.

b) This pandemic has caused many women to abandon their work activities in order to respond to the demands of home care, which rearranges the chains of home care and support that were provided by other female family members, thus, increasing their vulnerability. It is crucial to highlight the importance of having access to security, protection and basic social services, particularly access to health, and the challenges that this implies to Member Countries in providing such services to women and girls in a context of mobility.

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<sup>2</sup> IOM in Regional Conference on Migration (2019). *Guidelines for the Attention and Protection of Women in the Context of Migration*. Available at:

[https://rosanjose.iom.int/site/sites/default/files/lineamientos\\_para\\_la\\_atencion\\_y\\_proteccion\\_de\\_mujeres\\_en\\_contexto\\_de\\_migracion.pdf](https://rosanjose.iom.int/site/sites/default/files/lineamientos_para_la_atencion_y_proteccion_de_mujeres_en_contexto_de_migracion.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> The effects of migration in migrant women and girls: a gender perspective, Report by the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants, A/HRC/41/38, 15 April 2019.

c) Migrant women may be disproportionately affected by intersectional discrimination that occurs when several categories of exclusion converge, as well as from the design of programs that lack a gender focus.

According to the *Guidelines for the Attention and Protection of Women in the Context of Migration*, “intersectionality is a tool for analysis, advocacy and policy making that addresses multiple types of discrimination and helps us to understand how different identities influence the access to rights and opportunities”. Another critical tool when analyzing the approach of several adverse and structural factors of migration is precisely a focus on gender. Its incorporation allows questioning traditional roles and the responsibilities that are associated to gender, creating a process that reassesses the implications of the actions of public policies on men and women.

In this particular context, it is crucial to continue advancing the agenda on Gender Equality and Human Rights of women and girls, as well as continuing with the contribution and commitments from prior Congresses. Particularly, following up on the implementation of the *Guidelines for the Attention and Protection of Women in the Context of Migration* by Member States, strengthening gender mainstreaming in public policies aimed at migrants, and channeled through RCM’s leadership, as well as encouraging Member States to intensify the institutionality of gender-based migration policies.

## OBJECTIVES

### General Objective

To advance the exchange of experiences and best practices, disseminating knowledge and generating a dialogue aimed at delivering proposals for the attention of women and girls in conditions of mobility, and developing their autonomy and empowerment from a perspective on gender, intersectionality, human rights and inclusion.

### Specific Objectives

- To generate a dialogue that allows broadening the knowledge regarding the situation of migrant women and girls in the region, particularly in the context of this pandemic; sharing best practices and experiences regarding the measures taken by countries in order to protect their rights, as well as developing their autonomy.
- To transcend the dominant vision of assistance towards migrant women and girls and begin referring their importance in terms of real (re)integration and substantial equality in the different spheres of life, and not just in the productive fabric, by recognizing their capacity as agents and diverse contributions in the countries of origin, transit, destination and return.

- To encourage an exchange between Member Countries in identifying areas of opportunities in order to strengthen gender-based public policies aimed at migrants, according to the application of the *Guidelines for the Attention and Protection of Women in the Context of Migration* by each of the Member States and recommendations issued by the working groups.

## METHODOLOGY

The III Congress will be held in a bimodal format (face-to-face and virtual) on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> 2021; it will be organized by the RCM Presidency Pro-Témpore, the National Institute for Women (INMUJERES) and the National Institute for Migration (INM) on behalf of the Government of Mexico, in coordination and with the technical and financial support of the IOM and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

The methodology will be centered on continuous exchange, engagement and collective building, so several activities will be developed:

- **Panel of Experts.** Specialists from Member Countries and Organizations that will focus on specific themes, encouraging exchange, dialogue and learning.
- **Thematic Roundtables.** Their intention is to provide a platform for the horizontal exchange and collective reflection between representatives of countries, international bodies and organizations from civil society. Two work roundtables will be held daily.
- **Closing Plenary.** This space will showcase the outcomes obtained by each thematic roundtable and will facilitate establishing agreements on a line of action.
- **Rapporteurs.** Two people will assist in drafting a report regarding the development of the Congress and will help identify the advances made by the themes in the region and areas of opportunity.
- **Artistic and Cultural Activities.** Different activities will be developed to help strengthen a positive image, free from stereotypes and discrimination; including a Photograph Contest on Women and Girls in Mobility “Women in the context of migration, Eliminating Discrimination” that will showcase all photographs received, and present contest winners, and the overall winner of the contest. Also, the activities will be presented in such a way that they promote the integration of migrant women in the country of destination or return; narratives and testimonies that reflect the contributions made by women in mobility, as well as guided tour of Los Pinos Cultural Complex, the main venue of the Congress.

## PARTICIPANT'S PROFILE

At least two participants from each Member Country are expected to attend, with the following profile:

- National Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women (Ministries, Directorates and National Institutes for Women) and/or,
- Institutes/ Directorates of Migration and other agencies related to migration, and/or,
- Ministries of Foreign Affairs, areas related to the subject matter.

A varied participation of organizations from civil society is also expected; particularly the Regional Network for Civil Organizations on Migration (RNCOM) and RCM Observer Organizations, national and international subject matter experts, and migrant women who will share their personal experience and/or success story.

## THEMATIC AGENDA

The Congress will address the following central thematic axis:

- Economic empowerment of migrant, refugee and returned women under an intersectional perspective.
- Challenges to ensure Human Rights of women and girls in the context of mobility in times of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Equality and non-discrimination towards migrant women and girls. Stereotypes and intersectional discrimination
- Review of the progress made with regards to the *Guidelines for the Attention and Protection of Women in the Context of Migration*, as well as follow-ups and monitoring.

## PRELIMINARY AGENDA

**III Regional Congress on Women in the Context of Migration  
“Women In Movement: Gender Equality, Human Rights and Autonomy”**Los Pinos Cultural Complex  
Mexico City**Day 1  
Thursday 23 September 2021  
10:00 hours (Mexico City)****OPENING CEREMONY**  
*Adolfo López Mateos Hall***10:00 – 10:35 hrs.****Moderator:** *Luis Alonso Serrano Echeverría, Executive Secretary, Regional Conference on Migration.*

- **Marcelo Luis Ebrard Casaubon**  
Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Mexico
- **Alejandro Encinas Rodríguez (PPT Mexico)**  
Deputy Secretary of Human Rights, Population and Migration  
Secretariat of the Interior
- **Nadine Gasman Zylberman (Mexico)**  
Chairperson, National Institute for Women, Mexico
- **Alejandra Frausto Guerrero (Mexico)**  
Secretary of Culture
- **Michele Klein-Solomon**  
IOM Regional Director for Central America, North America and the Caribbean
- **Joe Geisbusch**  
Chargé d'affaires, a.i. Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
- **Martha Delgado Peralta (Mexico) (TBC)**  
Deputy Secretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, Mexico

**10:35-10:55****Official Photograph Session located at the Miguel Alemán Hall Staircase**

**PLENARY SESSION****Presentation of study: “Women, Territory and Migration  
in the Northern Triangle of Central America”***Adolfo López Mateos Hall*

10:55 – 11:55

- **Opening Remarks** (10 minutes)
  - **María Noel Vaeza**, Regional Director, UN Women, Latin America and the Caribbean
  - **Edoardo Pucci**, Ambassador of Italy in El Salvador
  - Government representatives of the Central American Region (TBC)
- **Presentation of Study: Latin American Center for Rural Development (RIMISP)**. Chiara Cazzuffi and Celeste Molina (30 minutes)
- **Comments** (20 minutes)

11:55 – 12:15

**Coffee Break.****THEMATIC ROUNDTABLE 1:****Challenges and recommendations for the  
economic autonomy of migrant and refugee women***Adolfo López Mateos Hall*

12:15 – 13:30

**Moderator: INMUJERES**

- **CEDAW Committee’s work in favor of the rights of women migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.**  
**Gladys Acosta or Leticia Bonifaz**, CEDAW Committee Experts (15 minutes)
- **Economic Contribution of Women.**  
**Ana Güzmes García**, Director of the Division for Gender Affairs of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (15 minutes)
- **Presentation of Women’s Entrepreneurial Model**  
**Mrs. Ada Méndez**, Center for the Promotion of Micro and Small Businesses in Central America (CEMPROMYPE), Central American Integration System (SICA) (15 minutes)
- **Presentation of recommendations from the social dialogue on the implementation of labor rights policies of migrant women in domestic work and homecare.**  
**Selma Cienfuegos**, Labour Migration Group Coordination, PPT-Mexico (Mexico) (10 minutes)



- **Economic Autonomy and Justice for Migrant Women.**  
**Alexandra Haas**, Oxfam Mexico Executive Director (15 minutes)
- **Space for dialogue among participants.** (20 minutes)

**THEMATIC ROUNDTABLE 2:**  
**Challenges in ensuring Human Rights for Women and Girls in the  
context of mobility during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

*Venustiano Carranza Hall*

**12:15–13:30**

**Moderator:** *Institute for Women in Migration, AC.*

- **Rights of Migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic.**  
Special UN Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants or  
Committee for the protection of rights of Migrant Workers  
**Edgar Corzo Sosa**, Member of the UN Committee on the rights of  
Migrant Workers (10 minutes)
- **Health Actions in Mexico aimed at the population in the context  
of mobility.** (Mexico)  
Representative from the Health Secretariat, Mexico  
**Dr. Ricardo Cortés Alcalá**, General Director for the Promotion of  
Health (SSA) (15 minutes)
- **Presentation of Study “Attention Needs of Migrant Women”.**  
**Laura Mora**, Inter American Commission for Women, Organization of  
American States (OAS) (15 minutes)
- **Challenges for Women and Girls in mobility during the COVID-19  
pandemic.**  
Red Cross (TBC) (15 minutes)
- **Psychosocial Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Women and  
Girls**  
Doctors of the World (15 minutes)
- **Space for dialogue among participants.** (20 minutes)

**13:30-15:00**

**Lunch.**



**THEMATIC ROUNDTABLE**  
**Experiences of Repatriated, Migrant and Refugee Women.**  
**Success Stories.**

*Adolfo López Mateos Hall*

**15:00 – 16:30**

- **Ana Laura López Betanzo**, Deported women and Founder of the Migrant Collective “Deported people united in the fight” (20 minutes)
- **Refugee Woman.**  
(TBC) (20 minutes)
- **Migrant Woman.**  
(TBC) (20 minutes)
- **Space for dialogue among participants.**  
(30 minutes)

**16:30 - 17:30**

**Fair / Expo “Autonomy of Migrant Women.”**

**17:30 - 18:30**

**Guided Tour to Los Pinos Cultural Complex.**

**18:30-19:00**

**Shuttle back to Hotel.**

**20:00 – 21:30**

**Dinner.**

**Day 2**  
**Friday 24 September 2021**  
**10:00 (Mexico City)**

**PLENARY SESSION**

**Risks of Irregular Migration and the Rights of Migrant Women.**

*Adolfo López Mateos Hall*

**Moderator:** *Ana Leticia Aguilar Theissen, Presidency Pro-Tempore, Council of Ministers of Women of Central America and the Dominican Republic (COMMCA)*

**10:00-11:35**

- Topic to be confirmed  
**Master Rocío González Higuera (PPT-Mexico)**  
Head, Unit on Migration Policy, Registration and Identity of Persons.  
SEGOB (10 minutes)
- Topic to be confirmed  
**Dr. Ruth Villanueva Castilleja**  
General Director, Protection of Migrants and Linkage, National Institute for Migration (Mexico) (10 minutes)
- **Border Contexts and Ways to Inhabit a Transit Space from a Feminist Perspective.**  
Las Vanders Organization (15 minutes)

- **Presentation of Findings from the Multisectoral Spotlight Initiative Study**  
**Mr. Sebastian Essayag**, UNPD Representative (15 minutes)
- Topic to be confirmed  
**Aimée Vega Montiel**,  
Counselor at INMUJERES (15 minutes)
- **Q&A.** (30 minutes)

11:35-11:55

Coffee Break.

**THEMATIC ROUNDTABLE****Migrant Women from an Intersectional Discrimination Perspective***Adolfo López Mateos Hall**Moderator: CONAPRED Representative*

11:55-13:25

- **Links between Security, Migration and Gender.**  
**Mr. Hefer Morataya**, Director of Democratic Security, SICA (15 minutes)
- **Experiences of Migrant Women and Asylum Seekers from Haiti: specific and intersectional challenges.**  
Institute for Women in Migration, A.C.  
TBD (15 minutes)
- **Afro-descendant Migrant Women, structural discrimination throughout the migration experience.**  
**Petra Alejandra Alvarez de la Cruz**, Afro-mexican woman, Co-Founder of Collective “Indigenous and Afro-Mexican Youth in Connection” (15 minutes)
- **Experiences of Adult and Adolescents Indigenous Women.**  
**Silvia Raquéc**, Organization from Civil Society in Guatemala “Pop No’j” (15 minutes)
- **Q&A.** (30 minutes)

13:25-15:00

Lunch.

**THEMATIC ROUNDTABLE****Implementation of “Guidelines on Assistance and Protection of Women in the Context of Migration”.***Venustiano Carranza Hall*

15:00-16:30

*Moderator: Representatives of Costa Rica and IOM*

- **Introduction to Protection Gaps of Migrant Women**  
Paola Zepeda, IOM. (5 minutes)
- **Exchange of Experiences (challenges and progress) from Member Countries in the implementation of the guidelines.**

- **Next Steps** (10 minutes)
- **Q&A.** (20 minutes)

## CLOSING SEGMENT

***Moderator:** Luis Alonso Serrano Echeverría, Executive Secretary, Regional Conference on Migration*

- 16:30-17:15**
- **Photograph Contest Award “Women in the context of migration. Eliminating Discrimination” (TBC)**  
**Luis Gutiérrez Reyes**, Head, Institute of Mexicans Abroad. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Mexico)
  - **Nadine Gasman Zylberman (Mexico)**  
Chairperson, National Institute for Women, Mexico.
  - **Presentation of a Video on the Congress. IOM**
  - **Preliminary Outcomes and Follow Up Agreements. IOM**
  - **Master Martin Alonso Borrego Llorente**  
Director General for Latin America and the Caribbean, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Mexico)
  - **Master Rocío González Higuera**  
Head, Unit of Migration Policy, Registration and Identity of Persons. SEGOB (PPT-Mexico)
  - **Congress Statement (read by the PPT)**
- 17:10-18:30** Cultural Activity
- 18:30-19:00** Shuttle back to Hotel
- 19:30-21:00** Dinner.