

Connected through the globalization of forced migration and hospitality

Global Ignatian Migration Network (GIAN Migration)



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Connected through the globalization of migration and hospitality

Global Ignatian Migration Network (GIAN Migration)¹

We share a world and a history in motion. Its diversity is reflected in its countries, borders, and people. Nevertheless, we identify common traits in the context of migration, reinforced in these times marked by the COVID-19 global pandemic. The pandemic has not stopped the world, situations such as Afghanistan or the earthquake in Haiti explain very clearly the close connection between the causes of injustice and forced migration.

Considering these common elements, we raise some general alerts and recommendations that we believe should guide our apostolate of forced migration in the Society of Jesus, as we are asked to do in the Universal Apostolic Preferences, and in the calls of Pope Francis to welcome, promote, protect and integrate migrants. It is not only about migrants, it is about the whole of humanity, therefore, our mission must be a mission for all, with a horizon of reconciliation and justice from paths of hospitality.

Hospitality was one specific way of rising to the challenge and the gift present in an encounter with those outside one's own circle. The monks realized that the values they sought to cultivate had to be accompanied by a readiness to move beyond themselves in openness to others. Pope Francis. Fratelli Tutti (n. 90).

The Global Ignatian Migration Network (GIAN Migration) is a global network of Jesuit organizations and social centers that accompany refugees, forced migrants and internally displaced persons through humanitarian and spiritual care, advocacy for migrants' rights, and promotion of a culture of hospitality, in response to the Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus.

See more at: <https://www.sjesjesuits.global/networks/migration/>

**Common features within
the context of forced migration
and general recommendations**

1.

EVERY MIGRATORY FLOW CONTAINS A THOUSAND FACES OF MIGRATION (MULTIPLE CAUSES OF MIGRATION)

Armed conflict, widespread violence, human rights violations, economic insecurity, poverty and inequality, an unjust economic model, climate change and damage to the Common Home, for which we are responsible, are identified as the main causes of migration. It is increasingly common to find that several reasons or causes for migration converge in the same person. Therefore, we understand that migration is forced when it is not possible to continue a personal or family life project in one's country of origin, and migrating (internally or abroad) becomes the only and last option to live with dignity.



Mauricio decided to leave his hometown in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, in search of economic opportunities. As in many villages, Covid-19 coupled with last year's hurricanes decimated the local economy. People around him were struggling to survive, let alone make ends meet. Finally, he decided to take a chance on the United States and try to build a life there. When he arrived in northwest Mexico, he was placed with a group of thirty-five other migrants and several guides who would take them across the Sonoran Desert ²

Recommendations:

- Understand and analyze the complex causes and the driving forces behind forced migration in order to provide a comprehensive response to the reality faced by migrants, displaced persons and refugees.
- Plan intervention strategies to address the causes of migration.
- Influence appropriate migration policies that address migration comprehensively and with a differential approach.
- Develop best practices that respond to the flows, as organizations of the Society of Jesus walking with migrants.

2 Read the full story "Mauricio's Story: Hardship and Humanity In The Desert".
<https://www.kinoborderinitiative.org/migrant-story-mauricio/>

2.

COMPLEX AND DYNAMIC FLOWS IN EVER GREATER UNCERTAINTY

Migratory trends reveal journeys that are increasingly characterized by uncertainty, criminality, and dehumanization. From individuals to mass movements of migrants, such as the Central American caravans trying to reach the United States or the Venezuelan and African “walkers” who, given the lack of economic support and protection, continue to make their way on foot. Before crossing international borders, they suffer forced internal displacement and are exposed to insecurity.

The seas have become migrant's graves and borders are impassable walls that generate waiting in new camps, which are incompatible with human dignity.



"They started fighting next to our house, [Christians] and Muslims were fighting each other. Nobody picked up the dead; they left them on the road... They chased us with cars and guns. Many died. We came out barefoot and I was in shock." ³

Recommendations:

- Provide comprehensive responses in humanitarian action and integration.
- Accompany forced migrants, not only in places of expulsion and reception, but also during transit.
- Review and update the profiles of migrants exposed to greater risks and prioritize them in our responses.

³ Read the full story "Chad: Drawing a better future for refugee girls".
<https://jrs.net/en/story/chad-drawing-a-better-future-for-refugee-girls/>

3.

RESTRICTIVE MIGRATION POLICIES THAT SIGNIFY DEATH

The closure of borders to contain the pandemic combined with the externalization of borders, as observed in the European Union and the United States, have forced migrants to take increasingly unsafe and dangerous routes. Restrictive migration policies have major negative humanitarian effects.

In addition to migration policies, lockdown policies by COVID-19 have affected migrants. For example, in India there was a massive internal migration of ten million migrant workers who traveled as far as 2000 km to reach their homes.

Policy makers must become aware that their political actions all too often result in not only various violations of human rights, but also the death of those fleeing in search of protection and rights.



*"My name is Morteza. My family comes from Afghanistan, but I was born and raised in Iran, as my parents had moved there long before I was born (...) In Iran I was detained for not having documents and kept for a week in a refugee expulsion center. The Iranian authorities left me without food and water. After my release, they put me on a bus and sent me back to Afghanistan.... They said it was my country, but I had never been there; not even once during my 15-year life. Although I eventually managed to return illegally to Iran, I understood almost immediately that I couldn't stay there any longer."*⁴

Recommendations:

- Urge policy reforms in line with the migratory reality.
- Insist on strengthening asylum systems. What happens at the borders deserves special attention, particularly for those who seek international protection but cannot apply for it.

⁴ Read the full story "The story of thousands: Morteza".
<https://jrseurope.org/en/story/the-story-of-thousands-morteza/>

4.

COVID-19

AND FORCED MIGRATION

There are at least two circumstances common to all territories. First, COVID-19 has increased existing inequalities, so that those who already lived on the margins, such as forced migrants, have more acutely suffered the negative impacts of the pandemic. Difficulty accessing health and education systems and the loss of livelihood due to COVID-19 has increased the vulnerability of migrants. Second, many migrants have now come to be recognized as essential workers who, without even a guarantee of their own rights, have, especially in cities, preserved the well-being of our societies as well as critical supply chains during periods of restriction and isolation.



Migrant women are also at increased risk of gender-based violence, particularly intimate partner violence, aggravated by confinement and lockdown measures. Migrant and refugee women often face obstacles in accessing police, justice or gender-based violence services, especially when undocumented, for fear of reprisals, stigma, detention and possible deportation.⁵

Recommendations:

- Open spaces for the participation of migrants in the collective development of recovery and exit plans within the context of a “new normal” (which should definitely be different from the one we came from). Let us learn from and with them.
- Follow the series of recommendations to address the emergency in different contexts published by the GIAN network.⁶
- Promote the Society of Jesus call for justice in the global allocation of COVID-19 vaccines.⁷

5 Read the full article. “Rethinking Human Mobility in the Lockdown” by Cecilie Kern. Pax Lumina 1(3) / sep 2020 / pp 50-55. https://jcsaweb.org/jcsa_publications/PAX_LUMINA/2020/September.pdf

6 Solidarity with Refugees and Migrants in the Era of COVID-19. Position Paper of the Global Ignatian Advocacy Network on Migration. Link: https://21475655-932b-4f16-93c9-e4289a9616ac.filesusr.com/ugd/526227_e1b1905bdff14983a041aa52d4c7c6be.pdf

7 The Society of Jesus calls for justice in the global allocation of COVID-19 vaccines. Link: https://21475655-932b-4f16-93c9-e4289a9616ac.filesusr.com/ugd/526227_2751a3aa684240bc8f9e4103689331d3.pdf

5.

HOSPITALITY AS A RESPONSE

In the face of restrictive policies, discrimination and criminalization, full integration of migrants is contingent upon a reception that is rooted in hospitality. Hospitality renews our communities and institutions, helping us to grow in commitment and generosity. Hospitality opens new ways of revitalizing welcome and life in common as a sign of the proclamation of the Gospel. It presents itself as an invitation to grow in solidarity and as a breath of fresh air within the Church.

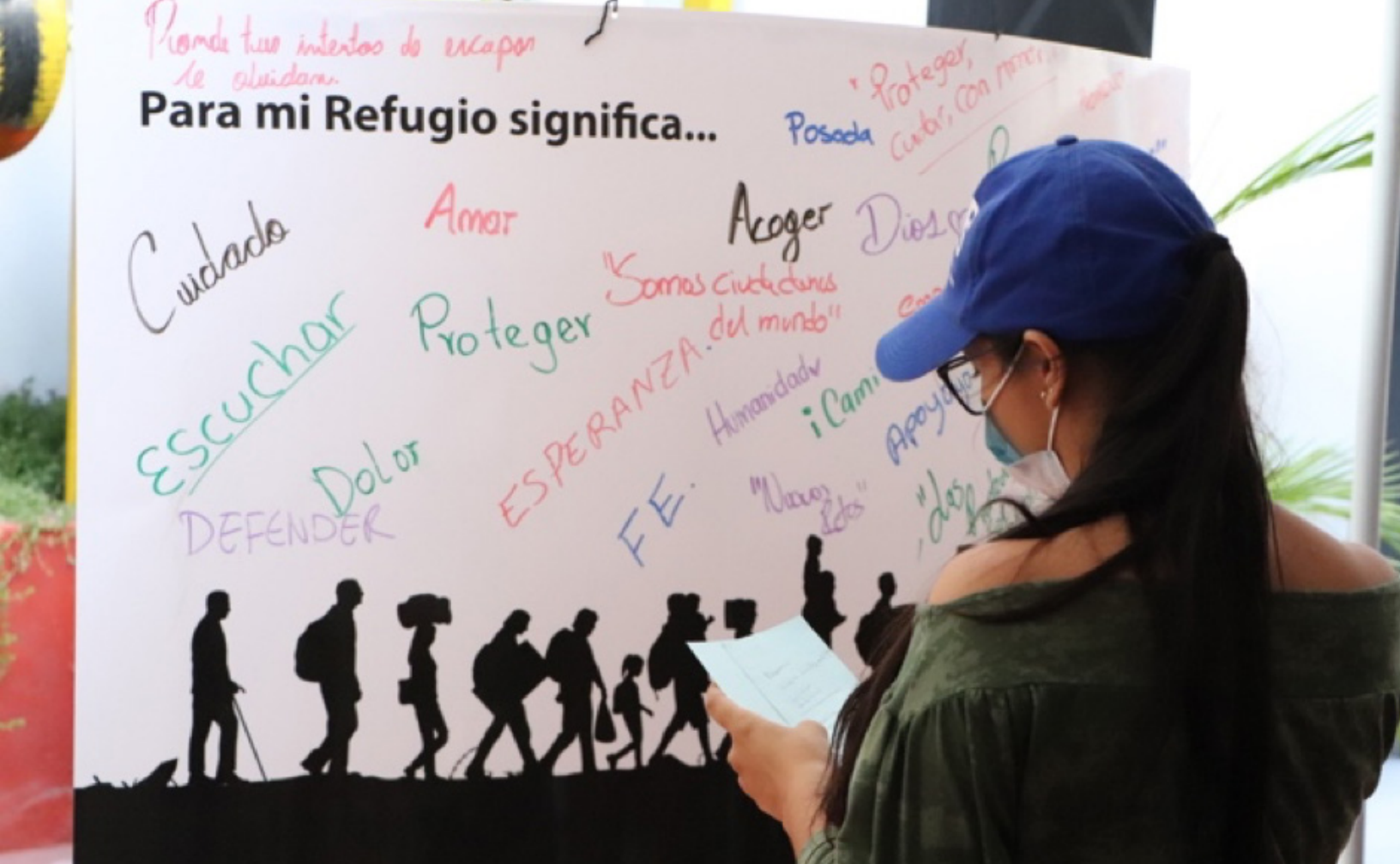


"We who come from Nicaragua are rejected because they say that we bring the pandemic to Costa Rica... I ask a favor, that they treat us well, we are not bad people, we are working people, I am a migrant... Let us have faith in God that this will pass. Let us support each other."⁸

Recommendations:

- Hospitality proposes fair policies with a basis of shared humanity. Through our experience as Church and as the People of God, we find authentic resistance in the form of Popular Hospitality. Faced with the growth of xenophobia driven by misguided fears, let us focus our gaze on the immense number of arms open to the other, to the foreigner, to the one who is different, to the one who arrives, and to the one who departs. It is not enough to build technically well-defined humanitarian or integration proposals; our proposal of welcome must have a foundation built upon moral values.

8 <https://www.redjesuitaconmigranteslac.org/solidaridadsinfronteras>



Conclusions

The reality of migration, internal displacement, and refuge, exacerbated by unjust structural causes, presents us with a real challenge to collaborate. **We are aware that we cannot do it alone.** Within the Society of Jesus, we must animate apostolic networks, platforms, and all sectors to collaborate in a common mission. In the Church, we must humbly and generously join the call to synodality led by Pope Francis. In society, we must seek alliances that will help us achieve greater transformation. And in all three spheres, we must promote the centrality of forced migrants.

Walking together is a proposal that seems simple, but it is in fact radical and necessary to nourish our hope that through paths of hospitality, we may discover a different future characterized by human rights, fraternity and sisterhood, justice, and reconciliation.

September 2021,



GIAN
MIGRATION