

REBUILDING LIFE AT THE BORDER:

ASSISTANCE AND ATTENTION TO MIGRANTS ON THE NORTHERN BORDER OF MEXICO

RESEARCH REPORT



Centro Scalabriniano de Estudos Migratórios (Org.)

REBUILDING LIFE AT THE BORDER: ASSISTANCE AND ATTENTION TO MIGRANTS ON THE NORTHERN BORDER OF MEXICO

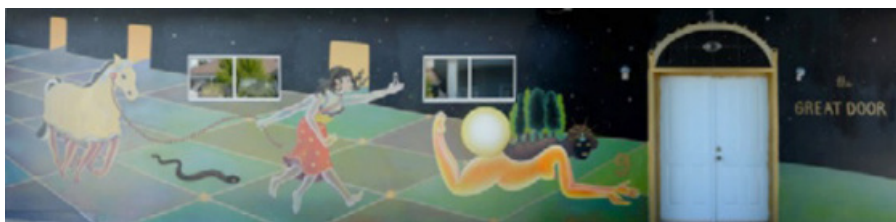
RESEARCH REPORT



Brasília
2019

Short explanation about the mural painting presented on the cover of this report:

Upon entering the Mother Assunta Institute, a mural is painted on the left wall in which the women victims of internal forced displacement are represented by the horse costume that hides them with a blanket while they flee. The horse is guided by a woman who personifies the hope for a better life. The black snake that accompanies them along the way means fear during their journey. The Hope guides you to a door, The Great Door, which symbolizes the possibility of refuge or asylum in another country. A fairy can be seen, which means its integration into a whole, to the earth and at the same time the fragility of their lives.



Source: COMISIÓN NACIONAL DE LOS DERECHOS HUMANOS. Murales, no muros. México, 2019.

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R311 Rebuilding Life at the Border [electronic resource]: Assistance and
Attention to Migrants on the Northern Border of Mexico: research
report / Scalabrinian Centre for Migration Studies (Org.). -- Brasília :
CSEM, 2019.
138 p.: il.

Includes bibliography.

ISBN: 978-85-87823-39-7

Electronically published using PDF format, on the World Wide Web

1. Migration. 2. Human mobility. 3. Border. 4. Mexico. 5. Human rights . I.
Scalabrinian Centre for Migration Studies (Org.).

CDU 325(721)

Fabiane Nogueira Freitas – Librarian – CRB – 1 /2710

Graphic design: Roberto Marinucci e Gladison Rocha

Cover design: Elisa Coutinho

Photos: Igor B. Cunha

CSEM – Centro Scalabriniano de Estudios Migratorios

SRTVN Edifício Brasília Rádio Center

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INTRODUCTION

This research aims to analyze the socio-pastoral¹ actions carried out by the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles Borromeo – Scalabrinians (MSCS) with migrants in border regions; more specifically in Tijuana, a Mexican city located on the border between Mexico and the United States, working from the Madre Assunta Institute (IMA)², an institution founded in 1994.

It integrates a broader research program, developed by CSEM, called *Rebuilding life at the border: assistance and attention to migrants*, which takes place on the borders between Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa and Mozambique, Mexico and the United States. It seeks to analyze the way migrants and refugees live and how they face situations of risks and uncertainties in border regions, and how socio-pastoral actions are carried out in these localities in response to these migration challenges.

The CSEM has what is called the Core Guideline of the Research Program, the result of a diachronic process of collective reflection, which is adopted as a guiding and articulating principle for its research and analytical programs, in medium and long term. It takes as a basis the promotion and defense of life and human dignity of the subjects in a situation of mobility, their ability to resilience, resistance and impact on their own processes and on the events and meanings of the historical processes of other actors involved in the micro and macro-structural field.

To synthesize the institutional, conceptual and semantic reflections, strategically, the Core Guideline can be called as **protagonism of the migrants and refugee**. Under this denomination are considered the agency of the subjects in mobility, their capacity and their potential to act, influence and transform the facts and meanings, as well as their capacity to be resilient in front of the lived situations that challenge them, the autonomy to take decisions for themselves and their families and participate in the processes of the societies in which they become part.

¹ By socio-pastoral we understand the social actions developed by the MSCS sisters in favor of migrants, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. The social action of the Catholic Church contemplates sensitivity and solidarity towards the most vulnerable segments of society, the prophetism in denouncing and combating injustice and the liberating spirituality, with the aim of contributing to the formation of a more human, fraternal and just society, based on the principles of the Gospel and on the fundamental rights of the human beings (CNBB, 2001).

² We use the abbreviation “IMA” to refer to the Madre Assunta Institute, referring to the Spanish name *Instituto Madre Assunta*.

This set of concepts and categories demarcate a methodological option for CSEM studies and research based on the perspective of human rights and the promotion and defense of life and human dignity of subjects in a situation of mobility.

This report is organized into five chapters in addition to this introduction. The *first* chapter presents the context of the investigation. For this, it focuses on the city of Tijuana inserted in a much larger area of the border between Mexico and the United States, with its historical-political implications and the symbolic burden that this geographical place has not only for the citizens of Mexico and the United States, but for all the countries of the Latin American and Caribbean continent. In this context, the presence of the Madre Assunta Institute (IMA) is analyzed and data are presented on the profile of migrant women and children who were admitted there during the years of 2015, 2016 and 2017. It is worth mentioning in this first instance that the MSCS sisters have been present in Tijuana since 1985, having founded the IMA in 1994.

The *second* chapter explains the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of the research, in order to lay the epistemological underpinnings that supported the processes of reflection and decisions throughout the study. In what refers specifically to field research, the empirical phase of the process where the data were collected, we identified two main phases: *exploratory*, previous and preparatory to the second, which we call the *deepening phase*. In the first one, interviews were made with Sisters who had previously acted in the IMA, and in the second, our researchers went to Tijuana to work directly with the IMA's nowadays sisters, workers, volunteers and beneficiaries.

The analysis of the data collected in the field is carried out in two main movements. One that is dedicated to the Madre Assunta Institute in particular, addressed in *chapter 3*, and another analytical movement that refers to other institutions present in Tijuana also dedicated to the service of people in mobility, *chapter 4*, as well as the implications of these actions in the context of the migration industry.

Finalizing this research, we present the conclusions to the work done in *chapter 5*, which proposes, on the one hand, actions identified as good practices that characterize the work of the Sisters with migrant women and children. On the other hand, future perspectives of action in a sense of seeking to contribute with an external perspective of the process. It was considered pertinent to identify good practices and to point out some recommendations this is done seeking to rescue and collaborate in a process of systematization and production of knowledge about this life and work history that the MSCS Sisters have been building together with the women, children and migrant men for more than a century.

All wealth of the experience and content of this research would not have been possible without the support and contributions of Scalabrinian sisters: Gemma Lisot, Aires Scapini, Orila Travessini, Odila Ros, Solome Huicahapa and Maria

Donadel; and the sisters Adelia Contini, Katarina Gengu, Anete Tonial and Leticia Valderrama; all the work team and volunteers of Madre Assunta Institute, as well as all the institutions that received us in Tijuana and Mexico City. Our special thanks to Adveniat for funding part of this research.

1. CONTEXT AND SINGULARITIES

Historically, the border between Mexico and the United States has become the main migratory corridor in the world. According to the most recent report of the United Nations that flow has registered about 12.7 million people (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2017).

For the United States, this migratory flow that comes from Mexico is the most lasting in its history. For several decades now, this flow has been studied, lasting more than one hundred years, due to the large number of people affected, and the potential impact in social and economic terms, both in Mexico and the United States. What is known as common sense of the dimension of Mexican emigration is that it is a massive phenomenon, which affects all social, economic and political indicators, therefore, also to the sphere of great politics (Durand, 2000: 32).

Beyond this quantitative dimension, the region deserves the attention of the rulers, civil society and scholars, especially due to the degrading conditions and vulnerabilities in which such displacements occur, especially in a context of new flows from Central America countries, such as Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, to the United States.

The following maps show the geographic/strategic location of Mexico as a transit country (to the United States) of migrants from Central and South America. But more recently, Mexico also is a destination country for migrants who avoid the risks derived from the North American immigration policy that closes the doors to the poor and racialized population. The condition of Mexico as a transit country (see Map 1) also poses other challenges for the management of migratory movements, especially regarding the transit of unaccompanied children. Besides this, it is a region marked by dangers and by the degrading conditions of crossing, either by the desert, or by other terrestrial forms, being common the action of intermediaries and human smugglers.

The construction of the wall that separates Mexico from the United States forces a large percentage of migrants to try to cross the border through increasingly precarious and dangerous means, making them even more vulnerable to violations during the crossing.

The Northern border of Mexico covers an area of just over 3,000 km and includes six states on the Mexican side (see Map 2). In this context of border traffic, the cities of Tijuana, Mexicali, Nogales and Ciudad Juárez, on the Mexican side; San Diego, Calexico, Nogales and Arizona, on the United States side.

Map 1 - Mexico and Central America.

Source: <https://es.maps-mexico-mx.com/mapa-de-méxico-y-américa-central>

Map 2 - Border between Mexico and the United States.

Source: <http://ciudadjuarezdesdearras.blogspot.com/2010/10/ciudad-juarez.html>

Despite not being a homogeneous region in what refers to its economic development, it identifies a permanent dynamic of border processes for the transit of merchandise, services, people (often associated with the possibility of being useful labor force), forming a mosaic of population and cultures. On

the other hand, it is a strongly militarized space, where it is sought to establish maximum control over the entry of foreigners. This results in a conformation of a space that stands out for receiving a high number of deported migrants.

The wall closes the city of Tijuana in a straight line and winds over the hills. It is a set of steel plates three meters high (...) A total of 1,050 km of walls (...) one third of the total length of the border line between the two countries. (...) Since the beginning of the Gatekeeper operation, more than 10,000 people have died trying to cross the border. Between 2016 and 2017 the death toll would have increased¹.

1.1 THE CITY OF TIJUANA AND THE MADRE ASSUNTA INSTITUTE

In this context, the actions of the Scalabrinian Sisters, specifically in the city of Tijuana, began in 1985 and became more effective as of 1994, in view of the need to have a specific place to receive migrant women and children, starting from the beginning of the Madre Assunta Institute.

The city of Tijuana, given its geographical location, has been for many years a centre of attraction for people from all over Mexico and other countries in Central and South American who are looking for a better life in the United States. Faced with a context in which most of these migrants do not have family support networks, and therefore is in a vulnerable situation due to deportation, they are unprotected, susceptible to the action of assailants, border police and indifference of the society in general, the Madre Assunta Institute is placed as a spot of reference support.

It is worth mentioning a recent investigation carried out in Tijuana (Albicker and Velasco, 2016), which problematizes the stigma attached to deported migrants in this border region. It is emphasized that the stories of rejection or distrust experienced by the people who were deported to Mexico was a constant in the testimonies. Some report that when residents of border cities become aware that they have been deported, deny them the possibility of using or accessing certain services, stigma that is reinforced in the media, as well as in the speeches of government authorities when the idea of deportee is associated with crime and danger.

It would seem then, that in Tijuana, the social category of “deported” is linked to problems of public safety, such as crime and drug addiction, as well as evokes discourses of solidarity and compassion. (Albicker y Velasco, 2016: 100).

It is important to remember that, since 2001, with the attack on the Twin Towers of New York and with the tightening of security policies adopted by the United States and of border control, there has been a change in the profile of the people served by the Madre Assunta Institute, since it happens to receive mostly deported women. The

¹ «Balade surréaliste à Tijuana, le long du Mur Mexique-USA». Available at <https://lejournalminimal.fr/bienvenue-a-tijuana-long-mur-mexique-usa/>, Access date: may 2018.

separation of mothers from their children is constant in these cases of deportation, which draws attention to gender issues and the importance of emotional support work for these migrants and their families.

Ofelia Woo (2004) argues that women, because of their gender status, immigration status, irregularity in terms of documentation and because they are migrants, are more vulnerable than men and suffer different forms of violence and violation of their rights. The author understands by gender condition, the social and oppressed condition of the feminine gender as subject of permanent violation of human rights (Maier apud Woo, 2004).

To confront the situation of women who migrate from Mexico to the United States is to analyze how their projects move between empowerment and fear, in a traditionally male and labor migratory flow. Furthermore, as advocated by Woo (2004), migrants are associated with the stigma that links migration to crime (for violating laws of other countries), and women are considered (without any basis) as an additional weight to the national expenses of the country of destination, clearly showing the economic nature of the prejudices against migrant women.

In this sense, the vulnerability of migrants means lack of power, and the fact of being in an irregular situation of documentation in the country of destination and / or transit represents for themselves and for others who are violating the laws of this country and, therefore, abuse is “justified” for the authorities against migrant women (Bustamante apud Woo, 2004).

1.2 REGISTRATION OF MIGRANTS ASSISTED BY THE MADRE ASSUNTA INSTITUTE

The Madre Assunta Institute provides essential support for the reconstruction of the lives that pass there. Not only barely food and shelter, there is an *integral attention* that seeks to promote in them a recovery process in front of the feeling of humiliation and frustration that they carry during their wait for the request of political asylum, or when being deported and, sometimes, for not to be able to cross the border, as they had planned.

In this way, beyond social assistance, the Institute seeks to offer more than a place for migrants to sleep and feed themselves. There the migrants also receive medical attention, psychological counseling, legal advice, access to communication means to be able to get in touch with their relatives and introduce them in the offer of job boards offered by some public bodies in the city.

In this sense, we bring the idea proposed by Alain Musset (2015), that more than thinking about waiting places to cross the border, the author proposes talking about waiting territories:

[...] displacements are marked by in some way long times and moments of waiting. Its origin can be for technical, administrative or political reasons, and often such moments find a spatial translation: there are

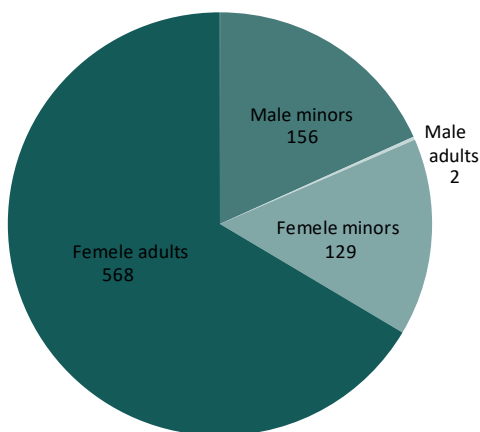
territories that welcome these societies in a waiting situation (Musset, 2015: 307).

It is estimated that some 20 thousand women passed through the Institute since its foundation in 1994. To understand a little more where these migrants come from, what are the main causes of migration, among other information, to continue we present an analysis based on figures provided by the IMA, coming from its databases, referring to the years of 2015 to 2017.

Comparative figures for the years 2015 and 2016²

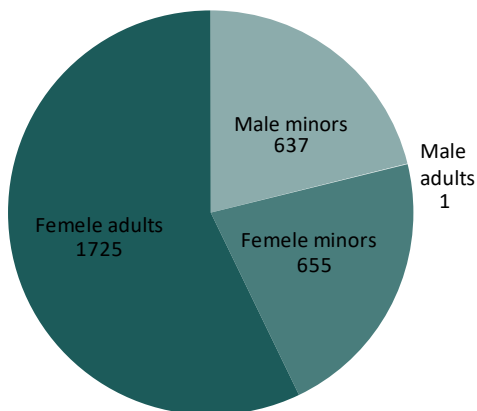
Graphs 1 and 2 show the number of migrants served during the years 2015 and 2016 by the Institute. In the comparison of 2016 with 2015 there has been an increase of 353% in the total number of migrants assisted. It should also be noted that, for both periods, more than half of the migrants received were adult women, representing 57% in 2015 and 66% in 2016. Some of them are accompanied by underage children.

Graph 1 - Migrants assisted at the IMA during 2015.



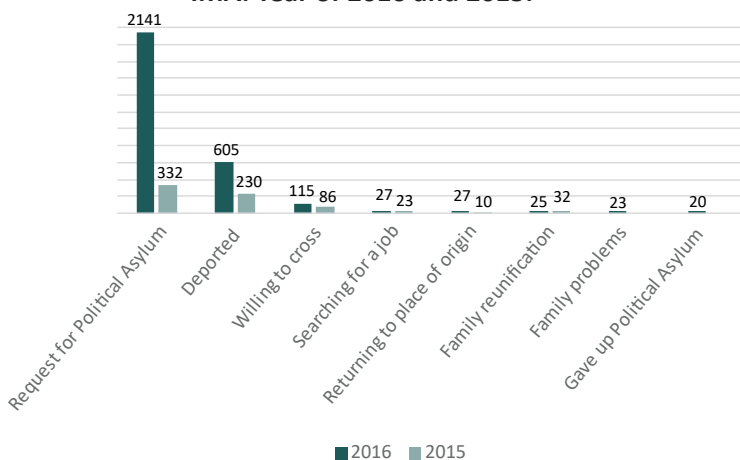
Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

² The reason for organizing the analysis in this way is that, taking into account the content for each year, we have been able to make a comparison between the first two years (2015 and 2016) because it contains the same information. In the case of the year 2017, although the information is very similar, it is analyzed separately because it contains some differentiated data from the two previous years.

Graph 2 - Migrants assisted at the IMA during 2016.

Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

Regarding the main causes that may have led them to migrate, the Graph 3 explains that, for both periods, the three main causes declared by the migrants³ themselves have been the request for political asylum, followed by deportees and the desire to cross the border. There are other causes as: the decision to seek employment, the decision to return to the place of origin, family reunification, family problems and some who have withdrew the political asylum.

Graph 3 - Main causes of migration declared by migrants assisted in the IMA. Year of 2016 and 2015.

Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

³ In this case, we specifically refer to adult women *migrants*, since the interviews were done to investigate diverse information, such as the causes of migration. The Chapter 3, in which a qualitative analysis of the Madre Assunta Institute is made, refers to the people who are assisted and the way the service is provided.

Consequently, we can observe that, although the causes that the migrants declare when being interviewed in the Madre Assunta Institute are diverse, it becomes evident the predominance of the request for *political asylum* as the one that most influences the decision-making process. In 2015, the request for political asylum represented 47% of the total number of cases declared; and in 2016 it represented 68% of the causes declared for migration.

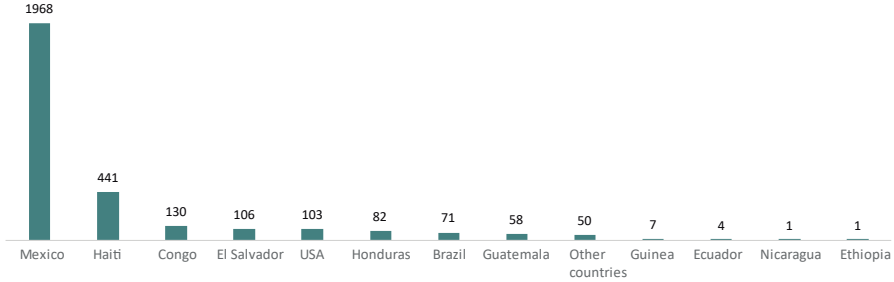
To this we can even add one more data. If we take up what we mentioned earlier, that the total number of migrants assisted by the IMA grew 353% in 2016 compared to 2015, we note that the request for political asylum as the main cause for migration had a growth of 645%, if we compare the year 2016 to the year 2015. Although this last comparison is made in absolute terms, it also represents a growth higher than that registered in the number of migrants assisted (relative comparison).

Graph 4 - Main countries of origin of the beneficiary migrants. Year 2015.



Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

Graph 5 - Main countries of origin of migrants attended. Year 2016.



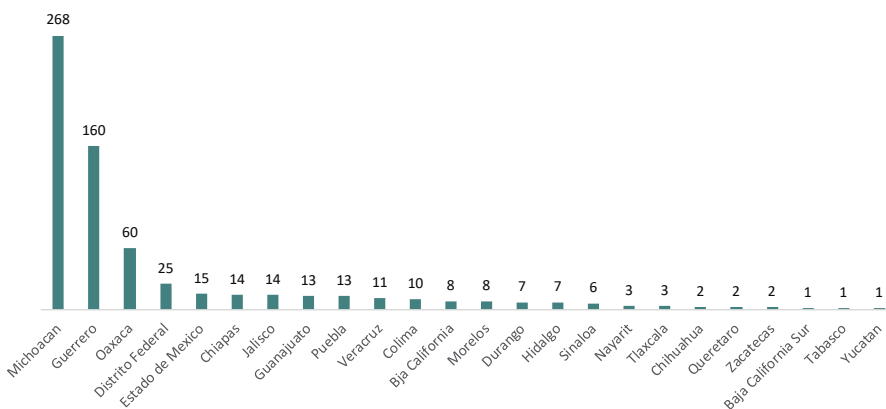
Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

Graphs 4 and 5, previously presented, show the main countries of origin of the migrants welcomed at the Institute. Clearly, Mexico is the country of origin that excels in both years, being that in 2016 other countries appear that did not appear in the records of 2015. It is worth noting the case of Haiti, which is in second position in 2016, as well as countries of Central America.

However, it is also worth noting that during the field investigation it could be verified that the registered country of origin is not always the country of birth. For example, in the case of those registered as “Brazil” in 2016, when, as previously stated, there was an expressive increase of Haitians seeking political asylum in the United States, many of these migrants came from Brazil for having lived temporarily there.

Regarding the regions of origin of Mexican migrants, it can be seen in graphs 6 and 7, how is the distribution by country states for both 2015 and 2016 respectively.

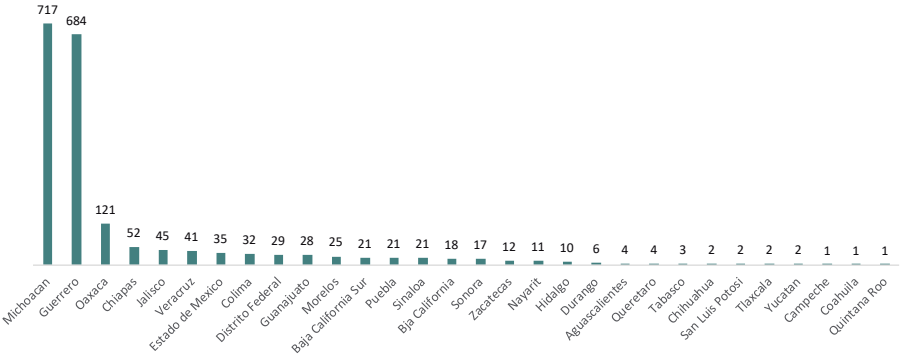
Graph 6 - Main States of origin of migrants served. Year 2015.



Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

The two states of Mexico that lead as migrants' place of origin, in both periods, are Michoacán and Guerrero. The first represented 41% in 2015 and 36% of the total of Mexican migrants. Guerrero represented 24% in 2015 and 35% in 2016 over the total of Mexican migrants attended by the IMA. Map 3 presents the political division of Mexico, divided by States, and highlights the location of the States of Michoacán and Guerrero.

Graph 7 - Main States of origin of migrants attended. Year 2016



Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

Map 3 - Political Division of Mexico



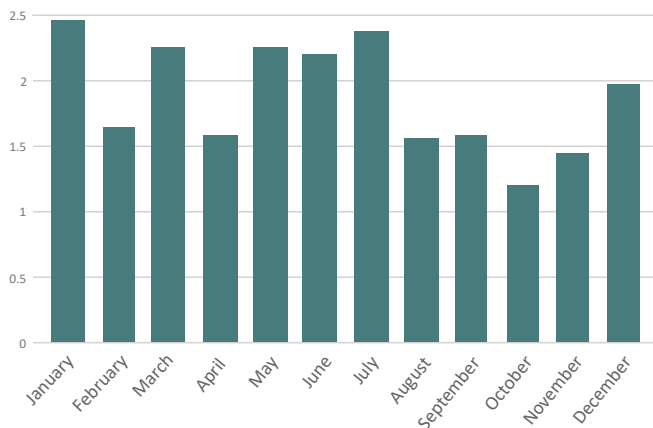
Source: <https://descargamapas.net/mexico/mapa-mexico-estados-y-capitales>

Numbers of 2017

During 2017, 1275 migrants were assisted. Among all, there was the entry of 12 adolescents between 15 and 17 years without the mother, a situation that has begun to become more present than in the past.

Also 254 migrant women who were mothers and were already accompanied by minor children had been recorded. As a result of this registry, analyzes carried out by the Institute itself show that during 2017, each migrant mother was accompanied by an average of 1.5 children (see Graph 8).

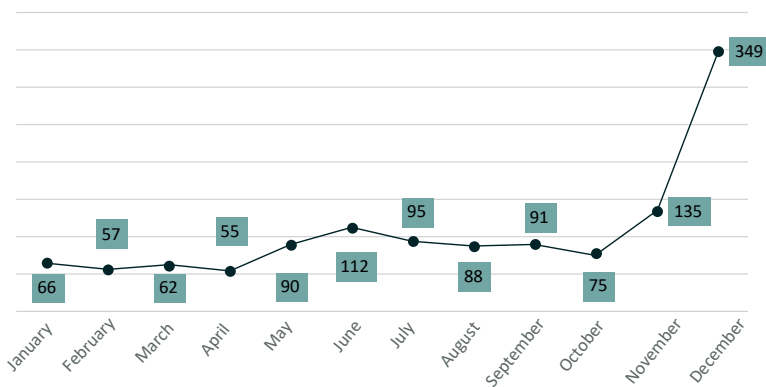
Graph 8 - Average of migrant children by mother attended. Year 2017



Source: Prepared by the IMA and assigned for this research.

Graph 9 shows the month-to-month reception of total migrants during the year of 2017. The month with the highest number of migrants attended was December with 349, followed by the month of November with 135. Throughout the twelve months of the year, the average of migrants per month is 106.25.

Graph 9 - Migrants assisted by the IMA. Year 2017

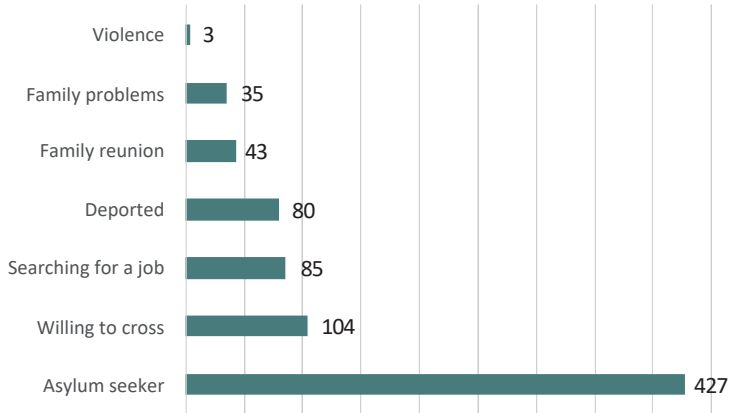


Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

In what refers to the main causes declared for migration, figure 10 illustrates that, also in 2017, the *request for political asylum* stands out as the main cause, although not necessarily the only one.

The difference found in 2017 compared to the previous two years, analyzed above, is that the *deportation* becomes to occupy the 4th place after the *desire to cross the border* and the *job search*.

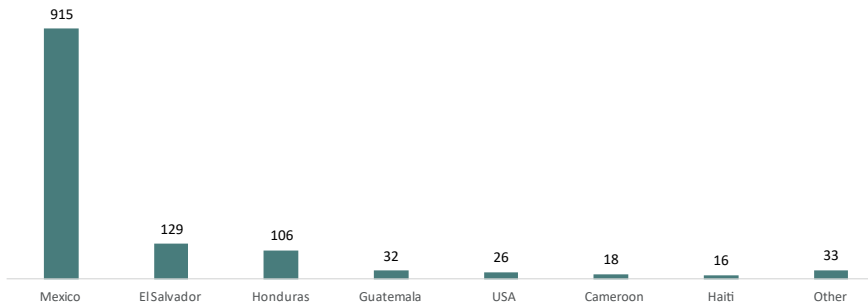
Graph 10 - Main causes of migration declared by migrants assisted. Year 2017.



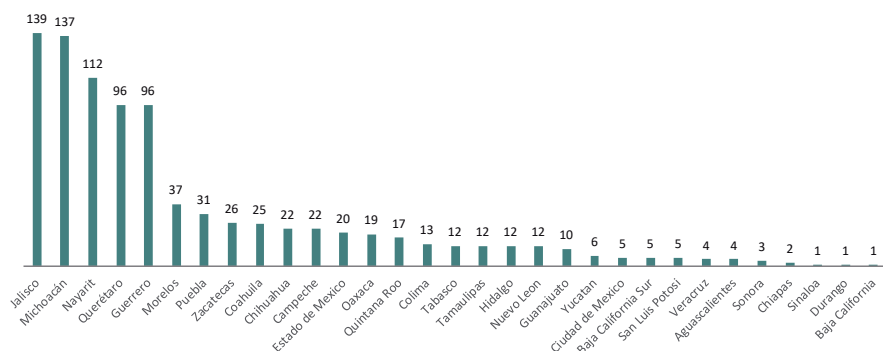
Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

The countries of origin of the migrants register some variations. Although Mexico continues to lead, figure 11 shows that Haiti, a country that ranked second in 2016, clearly loses this position, fact that shows the fluctuations in the origin of the flows that cross the border. However, the presence of migrants from Central America, mainly El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, once again stands out in 2017, a phenomenon that is evident in the graph.

Graph 11 - Main countries of origin of migrants served. Year 2017.



Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

Graph 12 - Main Mexican States of origin of migrants attended. Year 2017.

Source: Prepared for this research with data provided by the IMA.

In the year of 2017, the Mexican state of origin with the largest number of migrants attended by the IMA was Jalisco (Graph 12), displacing Michoacán to second place, and in the two previous years the latter occupied the first place as state of origin of migrants. Figure 12 shows, in addition, that Guerrero, State that occupied the second place in 2015 and 2016, in 2017 came in fifth place.

Both, the variations in the Mexican States of origin, the countries of origin and the main causes declared for migration, demonstrate that the dynamics of migration flows respond to a very diverse set of variables (political, economic, cultural, family, religious, etc...), which imposes challenges to the attention given in the IMA and demands more and more diversified and dynamic responses.

2. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS

In this chapter we present a brief reflection on theories and ways of making and producing knowledge that have inspired and guide this research.

There is a group of concepts that configure the process of reflection and conception of the Core Guideline of the Research Program of CSEM and that, in turn, give scientific basis to the theoretical-methodological proposal of this research. Always in dialogue with other possibilities of analysis that emerged during the field research stage in Tijuana, in the months of January and February of 2018.

This is because, the core proposal is to focus on the person in mobility (migrant, refugee, other categories) as a subject of rights, as a social actor who actively contributes to the construction of their own history. In other words, not simply a subject victim of macrosocial processes, but as being an active part of events, which is producing meanings of the events to which it is related.

In this way, at first (item 2.1), we approach the terms protagonism, subject / social actor, agency, because it is this conceptual debate that allows us to establish essential epistemic bases from which the whole process was elaborated of research. Obviously, this is not proposed as a form of definition and theoretical framework 'sufficient and finished'. Throughout the report other reflections are being raised, but we understand that it is from these foundations that the others emerge.

In a second moment (item 2.2), we explain the methodical processes of research, as an exercise in reflective analysis about "being the research and connecting to it" in the research. That is, to explain the origin, motivations, forms and decisions taken to develop this whole process.

2.1 THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES FOR UNDERPINNINGS

This section focuses on presenting the basic theoretical concepts, which lay the underpinnings for research. Firstly, we highlight the concept of **agency**, which can be defined as the ability of individuals to make independent decisions - to act or not to act in a certain way in specific situations - and, consequently, refers to the possibility of altering the social structure (Haas, 2009). This concept is generally used to problematize the degree of freedom of individuals in situations that are often embarrassing, reinforcing the idea that, even in a scenario of actions limited by the constraints of the social context, people always have some level of freedom of action, a room for maneuver (Bakewell, 2010). In the case of

migrants, this room for maneuver would be the route by which some of them find to rebuild their lives.

In other words, agency is an attribute of all members of a society, which refers to the ability of social actors to reflect on their positions, develop strategies and act to achieve their goals and desires. All these elements refer to the individual's ability to be an "agent of change", which goes beyond the individual sphere and also involves what a person can perform as a member of a group, community or political community (Lacomba and Boni, 2017).

Dutra (2009) proposes to understand that migrants can be conditioned in their decisions to migrate for reasons as political, family, religious, environmental and lack of work. However, for the author, there are elements of her individuality (self) that encourages them to make the decision to leave and not stay.

The agency is the capacity of the actor, individual, to process the social experience and to outline ways of facing life, even under the most extreme forms of coercion. Within the limits of information, uncertainty and other constraints (physical, normative or political-economic), social actors are 'knowledge holders' and 'capable'. They seek to solve problems, learn how to intervene in the flow of social events in their environment and continuously monitor their own actions, observing how others react to their behavior and perceiving various unexpected circumstances.

Emphasizing the characteristics that refer to the capacity of individuals (migrants in this case) of incidence, protagonism, emancipation, capacity for social change, creativity, etc., is particularly important because it rescues the understanding of the meaning that we establish in the proposal of the Core Guideline of CSEM, and its application in this research.

Beyond this, the use of the agency concept in migration studies explicitly explains the perspective under which the phenomenon is understood.

For Paulo Inglês (2015), it is possible to assume a vision about the migrant or refugee as an emergency or catastrophe, which means, in practice, an understanding as a social, economic and political problem (sometimes psychological or public health) that needs to be controlled and solved; or, on the other hand, migratory movements can be understood as a creative way for individuals to deal with adverse situations or adapt to sudden changes in their context. The first perspective insists on the scenarios of suffering or vulnerability in which migrants and refugees are, assuming the status of "victims" and "passivity" in the face of structural circumstances. The second is the understanding of migration as a way for individuals or groups to reaffirm their dignity or face adverse political and economic situations; thus, it perceives the migration as a resource that it is prepared to face unfavorable circumstances, presupposing, even in the worst of scenarios, space for making decisions (Inglês, 2015).

From this perspective, human displacement emerges as a flexible resource that people use, highlighting their creativity and ability to adapt by using

migration as a way to recreate daily life, even if it is done in another space. This perspective entails methodological and epistemological implications. First, to emphasize the active dimension, the capacity to make decisions despite material and political impositions; makes us understand mobility beyond the idea of failure, violation, vulnerability or disintegration. That means, in the words of the author, that “refugees, basically, are normal people living a specific circumstance. This circumstance does not detract from their dignity or put them in a situation of anomaly” (Inglès, 2015: 183). It also highlights migration as a human phenomenon, in which the protagonists, migrants, do not respond passively, but also have their visions and reflect on migration, which encourages us to value in our analyzes what they think and what that make in this social process that is the migration.

2.2 METHODOLOGY: ON PROCESSES AND DECISIONS

The **general objective** of this research is to analyze the sociopastoral actions carried out by the MSCS Sisters along with migrants in border regions, more specifically in Tijuana city located on the northern border of Mexico, from the Madre Assunta Institute. In order to explain elements of analysis that allow the understanding of this objective, four specific objectives were defined:

- (a) To analyze broadly the activities carried out by shelters in the border region with migrants;;
- (b) To understand the specificities of the socio-pastoral action of the MSCS Sisters;
- (c) Emphasize the good practices of the socio-pastoral actions developed by the MSCS Sisters with migrant women and children;
- (d) To explore how the actions developed by the MSCS Sisters with the migrants contribute in the development of relations of autonomy, protagonism, dependence.

In order for the research to progress in the proposed objectives, two phases were identified that allowed the organization of the work in order to maintain a permanent dialogue between theoretical underpinnings (throughout the whole process) and contact with the investigated empirical reality: the exploratory phase (2.2.1), where an approximation to the empirical reality is made through a first contact with MSCS Sisters who had already acted in the IMA; the deepening phase (2.2.2), in which two researchers conduct a period of ethnographic immersion in the city of Tijuana and the Madre Assunta Institute.

It is important to emphasize that the scenario of this research inevitably crosses the institutional sphere. This has meant that the contact with most of the sisters interviewed in this first phase has been mediated by the proper hierarchical processes internal to the institution. This, on the one hand, provided access and facilitated dialogue, and on the other, also demanded to recognize the

impact that the hierarchical institutional dimension has on the interviewer and interviewee relationship.

In this sense, it is worth retaking Bourdieu's (1997) reflection on the situation of the interview where there is an inevitable "intrusion" on the part of the interviewer, as well as the fact that there is always an "asymmetrical relationship" between the two parties, because as in any instance of interaction, also in the interview relationship can be an asymmetry.

This reflection is valid both for this phase of exploratory research, as well as the phase of interviews and conversations held in Tijuana at the beginning of 2018, which we call the deepening phase. In each case, for each of the interviews conducted for this research, the asymmetric relationship is changing and can not be eliminated. That is why attentive and methodical observation becomes fundamental, allowing us to reach a sociological understanding and interpretation of the content of the interviews (Dutra, 2013: 126-141).

2.2.1 Exploratory phase

In this exploratory phase, a first approximation to the field is made between August 15 and September 5, 2017. In it, a researcher conducted interviews with six (6) Scalabrinian Sisters who were already linked to the Madre Assunta Institute, for having made some kind of work in this space. The objective of this stage of empirical research was: 1) to gather information on the historical trajectory of this mission; 2) to identify important elements for the design of the categories of analysis, which allowed to guide the selection of bibliography and the construction of the first version of the questions that would give bases to the interviews and the guidelines of observation for the second phase of the investigation of field realized in Tijuana in 2018.

The service to the migrants is part of the spirituality of the Scalabrinian sisters, being one of the topics in which it is sought to deepen with this investigation. As a balance of this first stage of interviews, some aspects call attention to further study:

1. How do the migrants understand, interpret the actions of the sisters?
2. How do the sisters understand, interpret "the migrant"? It is someone who suffers from the migratory trajectory, for having been deported, for having his family 'separated' by the migration. But on the other hand, it is someone with inner strength to withstand, with faith and hope to win...
3. How is spirituality placed as an element of empowerment of migrants in their migratory projects?
4. What does it mean for the sisters to hear the life stories of the migrants who receive the "being present" actions? On the other hand, what does it mean for migrants to be received and heard by the sisters?
5. How do the sisters 'rebuild themselves' in the terms of such intense work?

6. How is spirituality present in the methodology of work?
7. How does the relationship between assistance – self-development – Scalabrinian spirituality come about?
8. What would be the specificity that characterizes the work of the MSCS sisters in Tijuana in a comparative manner to the other shelter institutions?

Beyond the issues raised by this first stage of field research, work was done to systematize these narratives, in order to initiate a thematic analysis. To perform this thematic analysis is to discover the ‘meaning core’ (núcleo de sentido, in Spanish) that make up the communication and whose presence or frequency of appearance can mean something for the chosen analytic objective (Bardin apud Dutra, 2006).

For this, all recorded interviews were heard in order to identify the most important passages, making a partial transcription of this material. In this way, we obtained a previous selection of passages that we consider to be relevant for the next stage, which consisted in constructing the *meaning core*, which guided us in the process of elaboration of analytical categories, always in a permanent movement between theoretical and the empirical elements, of concrete reality, collected.

In addition to being attentive to the sense constructed in the narratives, we also sought to identify the words that appeared most frequently in the testimonies of the different interlocutors to better develop the attributed meaning and to try, based on a meaning core, to cover all the wealth of the significance. We want to emphasize that each narrative refers to a single meaning core, which should have as a characteristic to be mutually exclusive and carefully chosen so that they do not become too broad or too specific, so they can be grouped. In this way, the following meaning core were defined.

1. **“Rebuild life”**: It refers to two instances: a) migrants – their migratory project, which is guided by the dream of arriving in the United States having a migratory path marked by difficulties and violations, which leads to look for a safe place to “rebuild themselves” (shelters); and how they interact with the sisters in those spaces; b) the sisters – who use spirituality as a tool to promote the “rebuild life” concept with the migrants; which interpret the attention given to migrant women and children (routine activities, such as providing food, lodging, etc.) from the reception concept, highlighting the “service of listening” from a Integral attention perspective
2. **“Migration Industry”**: Refers to all non-state actors providing services to facilitate, restrict or assist international migration (Sørensen, 2017), a structural and significant issue in a border context involving: coyotes, government, other NGOs and the shelter itself;
3. **“Gender”**: It refers to gender as a conditioning to: sexual violence based on gender, that is, to women who suffer sexual abuse, even in shelters

that were mixed, which justifies the creation of a specific house for women; to the idea that women should receive the minimum care that creates conditions for them to feel free to decide on their migratory path; the understanding of the woman's autonomy; and how the gender issue appears in interface to the familiar relations.

2.2.2 Deepening phase

In the second phase of the field research, two CSEM researchers moved to Tijuana during the period from January 23 to February 26, 2018.

During the almost five weeks of direct contact with the reality to be studied, an ethnographic investigation was carried out divided into two main movements: *within the Madre Assunta Institute* (chapter 3) and outside the city, Tijuana, always looking specifically for other institutions (chapter 4). All were institutions that are linked to the mobility service (migrants, refugees, returnees, deportees) and therefore interact directly or indirectly with the IMA.

In general, the methodology adopted included *observing* while the researchers took part in the daily activities of the household (assistance in the cooking and distribution of food, cleanings, internal celebrations, etc.); *informal conversations*, that is, while being at home and participating in daily life, interaction situations that favored dialogue were exploited so as not to force a dialogue that could intimidate our interlocutors; and *formal interviews* after a few days of coexistence, in which the presence of our researchers began to be felt closer and integrated to the day-to-day of IMA.

In both movements of ethnographic research, it was sought to cover the diversity of the actors participating in both IMA and institutions outside the Institute. This is to capture the wealth of different *places of speech* (Braga apud Dutra, 2006). We understand that speech, recorded in informal conversations (taking notes after a day's work) or in (recorded) interviews, must always be related to the historical moment that the enunciator is living as well as to the social context in which that testimony (what was spoken) means (Dutra, 2006).

Following this proposal, we bring the perspective of different actors: **the migrant women** protagonists for the service of integral attention; **the work team, volunteers**, and **the sisters** who work there, as well as other *places of speech* whose enunciators are publicly and formally *institutionalized*.

It should be noted that both researchers participated in daily activities of the IMA, with the aim of integrating with the dynamics of the house and interacting with both the migrants themselves and with the work team, volunteers and the Sisters themselves in the context of the experience of attention to migrant women and children. As well, both went around in some way through the city with the objective of knowing key locations for the understanding of this border context and the city.

However, each of them assumed primary responsibility for one of the two field research movements. One of them was in the Madre Assunta Institute, while the other was dedicated to the analysis of institutions beyond the walls of the IMA, but also looking to an institutional view of the IMA and other institutions from the perspective of key actors working in the area of the Madre Assunta Institute or interacting with it.

The complicity and mutual support in this phase of the research, as well as the dialogue with the other researchers who were not in the field, have been fundamental to surpass the challenges that presented daily for the two of them. Following to this, some obstacles could be transformed into opportunities for new looks and more discoveries. Next, we quote the researchers' field diary.

A migrant, Angelita⁴, who had arrived two days earlier, said her children were about to arrive. She had been detained in the USA for 8 months and subsequently deported. When she arrived at the shelter she was in shock and crying a lot. At one point, a car arrived and stopped in front of the Institute. She ran towards the door and Sister Adelia told us to record the moment of the encounter between mother and children. But that was not the car. Among the stress of waiting, she said that for some reason her relatives could not deliver their children in the shelter. Suddenly, Nathália suggested that we could accompany her to the border to meet her children, considering that she had not come to Mexico for many years and did not feel safe. It was a small walk until finding the right exit. They were three children, the girl cried a lot. They said that on the trip the two children had vomited quite a bit, probably from the stress. They crossed the border and there they were waiting next to the grandmother and the cousins and they took them to the shelter. At the time of the meeting, Angelita asked us not to take photos. It was possible to register the border from far, since the Border Patrol police did not authorize to take closer photos, even being in Mexican soil. It was a impacting encounter between mother and children, a result of the way deportees are treated in the United States. It was impacting having received Angelita crying in the shelter days ago, a lot may have happened in her deportation story; respecting their pain and intimacy we did not ask for details. The reunion at the border meant a start for the family, which meant spending some days in the shelter, waiting for her husband, who said that would come for them. We do not know when he will come, but we will be attentive about the outcome of the story. (Igor's field diary, about the first week at IMA, Tijuana)⁵.

⁴ Migrants are quoted by fictional names to preserve their identity.

⁵ *Una migrante, Angelita, que había arribado hacía dos días, dijo que sus hijos estaban por llegar. Ella había sido detenida en EUA durante 8 meses y posteriormente deportada. Cuando llegó al albergue estaba en estado de shock y llorando mucho. En determinado momento, llegó un carro y se detuvo en frente al Instituto. Ella fue corriendo en dirección a la puerta y la Hermana Adelia nos dijo para registrar el momento del encuentro entre madre e hijos. Pero ese no era el carro. Entre el nerviosismo de la espera, ella dijo que por algún motivo sus familiares no podrían entregar sus hijos en el albergue. De pronto, Nathália sugirió que podíamos acompañarla a la frontera al encuentro de sus hijos, considerando que ella no venía a México hacía muchos años y no se sentía segura. Fue una pequeña caminata hasta encontrar la salida que estaban los niños y la abuela, junto a los primos. Eran tres hijos, la niña lloraba bastante. Dijeron que en el viaje los dos niños habían vomitado bastante, probablemente de nerviosismo. Ellos cruzaron la*

This week was an interesting week, as we were able to do many meetings and interviews. It is easier to talk to the people in the house, they know me better and it is possible to better understand the daily dynamics. It was the preparation of the sister Adélia party, we worked hard so that everything went well and the voluntary migrants were quite busy. The biggest challenge was the physical exhaustion of being all day in the shelter, which caused a delay in the daily reports in the field diary. We also had difficulty interviewing sisters and migrants. From now on I will adopt new strategies. The adaptation we made to the guiding topics was good and I felt that the interviews flowed much better that week if I compared them with the ones from last week, maybe my familiarity increased too. (Nathália's field diary, on the third week at IMA, Tijuana)⁶

frontera y allí estaban esperando junto a la abuela y los primos y los llevaron al abrigo. En el momento del encuentro, Angelita nos pidió que no sacásemos fotos. Si fue posible registrar la frontera de lejos, pues de cerca los policías del Border Patrol no autorizaron sacar fotos, mismo estando en suelo mexicano. Fue un encuentro impactante entre madre e hijos, resultado de la forma que los deportados son tratados en los Estados Unidos. Fue impactante haber recibido a Angelita llorando en el albergue días atrás, pues mucho puede haber ocurrido en su historia de deportación; por respeto a su dolor e intimidad no preguntamos detalles. El reencuentro en la frontera significó un recommienzo para la familia, mismo que eso implicara pasar algunos días en el albergue, esperando a su marido, que ella dijo que vendría por ellos. No sabemos cuándo vendrá, pero estaremos atentos sobre el desenlace de la historia. (Diario de campo de Igor, sobre primera semana en IMA, Tijuana).

⁶ Esta semana fue una semana interesante, pues pudimos hacer muchas reuniones y entrevistas. Está más fácil conversar con las personas en la casa, ellas me conocen mejor y está siendo posible entender mejor la dinámica diaria. Fue la previa a la fiesta de la hermana Adélia, entonces trabajamos bastante para que todo salieran bien y las migrantes voluntarias estuvieron bastante ocupadas. El mayor desafío fue el cansancio físico de estar durante todo el día en el abrigo, lo que generó un atraso en los registros diarios en el diario de campo. También tuvimos dificultad para entrevistar a las hermanas y migrantes. A partir de ahora adoptaré nuevas estrategias. La adaptación que hemos hecho a los tópicos-guía fue buena y sentí que las entrevistas fluyeron mucho mejor esa semana si las comparo con las de la semana pasada, tal vez que mi mayor familiaridad también. (Diario de campo de Nathália, sobre tercera semana en IMA, Tijuana)

3. MADRE ASSUNTA INSTITUTE (IMA)

In this chapter, Madre Assunta Institute (IMA)⁷ is analyzed, more specifically, the work done by the Institute from the analytical categories that are extracted from the testimonies of the actors who contributed to the research: sister missionaries, officials, volunteers and migrants who are received there temporarily. For this, its institutional dynamics is observed from the questions that arise from the daily experiences of the premises, emphasizing the socio-pastoral work exercised by the Scalabrinian sisters, which is the object of this investigation.

There are many topics⁸ that can be brought to the surface in the routine of an institution like the IMA, as there is a vast wealth of issues that can be treated within a routine such as this shelter house. There, many people pass by and are attended very day, people with different trajectories, functions, intent and visions of the world, so that it would be impossible to capture and write about everything that happens within this mosaic of lives. Consequently, we will deal here the points that we drew attention during the field work related to the research goals.

3.1 THE OPERATION OF THE SHELTER⁹

The Madre Assunta Institute operates every day of the year receiving migrant women and children (deportees, immigrants, emigrants, refugees, etc.). It offers the women served three meals a day, clothing, footwear, legal assistance, psychological care, medical and spiritual assistance, as well as access to telephones and internet.

The routine is well established and there is discipline in the fulfillment of time schedules. The day begins at 6:30 a.m. when they wake up, at 7:30 a.m. breakfast is served. The bedrooms are closed during the day, the migrants go out to search

⁷ Legally, an association connected to the Province of the North Our Lady of Fatima, of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of San Carlos Borromeo - Scalabrinianas. More info: www.scalabriniane.org.

⁸ This topic is a summary of chapter 3 of the research report, dedicated to the Instituto Madre Assunta. The topics that are presented are: the operation of the shelter, its facilities, financing and projects and the main issues that surround it - the integral attention, the dining room, the religious attention, the specificities of the issues of gender, family, ethnicity and nationality. In addition to the difficulties and profile of officials, volunteers and migrants. The women and children served were prioritized, and the profile of the people served, and their life histories were presented. Finally, there are the internal interactions with the institute and relations with the outside world - bodies, governments and institutions present in this context of the existence of the IMA and we approach the evaluation carried out by the internal social actors on the difficulties and limitations of the Institute in its work daily.

⁹ It has been officially founded as Instituto Madre Assunta. In the day to day the name of Casa Madre Assunta, or simply 'the Shelter', is more commonly used. We decided to keep in the nomenclature the words that their users use, seeking to reflect in the written report the daily spirit of the IMA and its protagonists.

work, or they stay at the house during the day, especially those who have children, are arranging documentation or resting. They collaborate in preparing the food, cleaning, and the household activities. At 12:00 pm the migrants have lunch, at 1:00 pm the doors of the house open to give lunch to people from outside, a fact that happens from Monday to Friday. A large table is placed in the patio and the migrants help to serve the people on the street who come to eat. Lunch is served until 1:30 p.m. or 1:45 p.m. Some of those people who participated in the lunch also help with the cleaning. During the afternoon dealing with migrants fill bags of bread distributed to those who come to ask, make burritos and help in the preparation of dinner. At 5:00 p.m. burritos and coffee with milk, or oatmeal, are served to outsiders by the door, and at 6:00 p.m. the migrants have dinner. At 7:00 pm the rooms are open so that the migrants can retire to rest; at 8:00 p.m. silence is requested and at 9:00 p.m. the lights are off. The migrants who left during the day cannot return to the shelter after 7:00 pm.

In the following photo, which was taken from a mural in the house for the knowledge of the migrants, you can read how these guidelines for organizing the house, in what refers to schedules, are transmitted in written form, in addition to the explanations that they can personally receive at the moment of being received in the shelter.

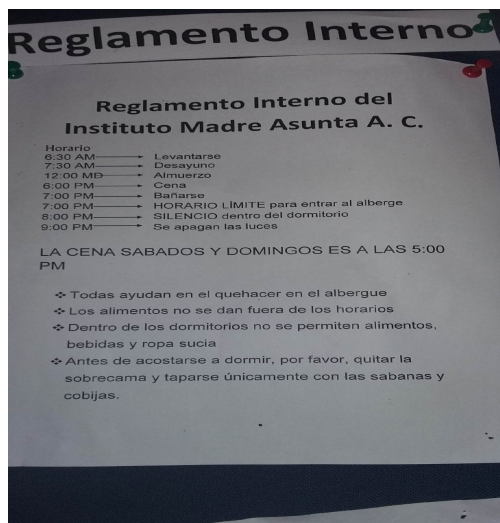


Photo: Taken during the investigation

There are activities that occur only on specific days, for example, on Saturday mornings there is a bazaar open to the community where the sisters sell some clothes and objects to help with the maintenance of the house. Some projects, such as arts workshops for children and yoga, also take place on specific days.

3.2. IMA TEAM

During the period of research, the IMA team was composed of three Scalabrinian Sisters - Adelia Contini (director) and Anete Tonial, both Brazilian, and Katarina Gengu, Indonesian. In addition to the sisters, the house works with five people employed with various types of contracts: a cook, a social worker, two social service interns and a lawyer. The other functions are exercised by volunteers who have different profiles, can be independent professionals, or who participate in projects that dedicate some time of their work to the Institute, such as the psychologist, the doctors, the lady who gives the art workshop, and the project "Save the children" which is a project that gives the workshop for children.

Three Scalabrinian sisters work in the Institute. One of them takes care of the direction, another of the help in the daily general tasks, and the third deals with the donations of clothes and spiritual attention. They do the work with total dedication and with very few resources available when analyzing the breadth of the service provided and the amount of population that they serve. In dialogue with the social worker, she maintains that it is important to value the work of the sisters, since in many moments it is forgotten within the structure of the church and the congregations.

The Sister who is the director lives in the house in an integral way, dedicated exclusively to the attention in the Institute. She is responsible for everything that happens and, little by little, she was assuming the function of solving everything and any problem that arises: she cooks when the cook is not there, she takes care of the donations, of the general organization of the house, she makes interviews with the migrants when the social workers are not there, take care of the works, the bazaar, the accounts and the shopping. As a result, many functions have been centralized because there are no other trustworthy people who can take responsibility. On the other hand, having sisters in the staff of the shelter has a symbolic meaning that is quite elucidating, as we can perceive from the figure of Sister Adelia. She is the closest person to the migrants to advise and support them, the children love her, and the migrants trust her. It is she who generally perceives when a migrant needs attention, is a person of great sensitivity according to the psychologist¹⁰

Psychologist - (...) when there is a situation that social work, or Sister Adelia - especially her - because... she has a different sensitivity, different...

Interviewer - Between the Sister and the workers?

¹⁰ We will use the true names of the MSCS Sisters, with proper authorization. However, in order to preserve the identity of the staff, volunteers and migrants interviewed, when their names are mentioned, fictitious identities are used. In many cases, only the profession (eg psychologist, social worker) is used, without the need to mention a name, as a way of better contextualizing from what position in the social structure, in general or in the IMA itself, is the perspective of the social actor interviewed.

Psychologist - Yes... that is given to her, because she talks to them, because they are here and she observes them... then when I arrive and they tell me: I have three, I want you to see such, such...¹¹

The psychologist also tells that children follow her a lot and end up creating a different connection with her.

Psychologist - The children, Sister Adelia, especially her, but Sister Katarina is the same because she plays, has fun, talks. Sister Adelia, the children follow her, there is a child who was here who did not eat if Sister Adelia did not serve her, did not go with the Sister to ask for food, went with Sister Adelia to ask for food, the little one¹².

She is associated with an image of authority, a person of reference for all, which gives it the respect and recognition of other people in the house, as well as those served from the outside.

Interviewer - Because, I imagine, how much they listen to her, and if she gives advice, they should take it into account.

Psychologist - Yes and I tell you that this is important because that does not work if it is not an authority figure. Yes? Because when Sister Adelia is not there, there are things that continue to be done. Because she left the situation, because she saw, because she knows. But a lot happens because that's how your presence is not. Yesterday I realized. His conviction is and generates to keep thinking that if... that if light, if the ceiling, more else the other house, the other sisters more volunteers, we all want to talk to her, to give us her time¹³.

The Institute is fuller of work on weekdays that they offer food to people from outside. Employees also work from Monday to Friday alternating periods. For example, the social worker works on average 4 hours a day, the social service interns work two days each, the psychologist attends once a week, as well as the doctors. The lawyer goes every night from Monday to Friday. The sisters work every day, but only one of them takes Sundays to rest. The cook works all day from Monday to Saturday. Volunteer service provision varies from sporadic donations, some hours a week, to almost daily frequency.

¹¹ Psicóloga - (...) cuando hay una situación que el trabajo social, o la Madre Adelia - sobre todo ella - porque... es una sensibilidad diferente, distinta...

Entrevistadora - ¿De la madre y de las trabajadoras?

Psicóloga - Sí... que se da con ella, porque les platica, porque ellas están aquí y las observa... entonces cuando yo llego y me dicen: tengo a tres quiero que veas a tal, a tal...

¹² Psicóloga - Los niños, la madre Adelia, sobre todo ella, pero la Madre Catarina igual porque ella juega, se divierte, platica. La Madre Adelia, los niños la siguen, hay un niño que andaba aquí que no comía si la madre Adelia no le servía, no iba con la mama a pedir comida, iba con Madre Adelia a pedir comida, chiquito.

¹³ Entrevistadora- Porque me imagino, cuanto la escuchan, y si da consejos los deben tener en cuenta.

Psicóloga - Si y te lo digo que eso es importante porque eso no funciona si no es una figura de autoridad. ¿Sí? Porque cuando la madre Adelia no está, hay cosas que se siguen haciendo. Porque ella dejó dirigida la situación, porque ella vio, porque ella sabe. Pero mucho sucede porque así es su presencia no. Ayer me daba cuenta. Su convicción, está y le genera para seguir pensando, que si... que si la luz, que si el techo, más lo demás la otra casa, las otras hermanas más los voluntarios, que todos queremos hablar con ella, que nos dé tiempo.

A big difficulty not referring to the workers is that there is no money in the projects to invest in employees and the IMA has a huge bottleneck in attracting resources for these purposes. They would need to hire a person who would only take care of that, fundraising, to be able to carry on.

Sometimes 20, 30 migrants arrive at once, when all employees are gone, and the Sister ends up depending on the help of other migrants. So, it would be important to have more sisters who would stay in the house, even on weekends, since the house works every day and 24 hours a day. There are also missing employees who deal with the bureaucratic part, promotion, donations, organization and cleaning. Other services could also be more frequent, such as psychological support and activities with children. Having permanent employees, who cover more hours of the day, would alleviate the burden of the sisters considering the huge amount of work they do.

An alternative was to hire the migrants as assistants, which is also a way to provide them something and help them get started. However, even though the intention is to help, and that the institution aims to help migrants in their needs, having no funding conditions to pay properly, the house might end up reproducing the exploitation that society promotes to the migrant workforce there.

Another strategy is the agreement with volunteers to carry out daily activities. To be a volunteer of the house there is not much formality, people just need to introduce themselves and combine with the director the schedules and the work they intend to execute. The commitment is informal. To stay inside the house, the sisters only accept women, but there are male volunteers who help in the donations, in the bazaar and as doctors, for example.

Volunteers are of different types, we can identify three profiles of volunteers. First, the *migrant volunteers*, who are women who received help there, stayed at the shelter when they arrived in Tijuana and now, they return after being established in the city to help the sisters in what they need, as a driver, with the donations, with organization and cleaning of the house, etc. Some come to frequent almost daily, they created a family relationship of care with the sisters.

Other migrants go sporadically, and some make donations and punctual aid. One of the sisters explains that there is a relationship of exchange there, she observes that some volunteers come when it is interesting for them, when they want something else that does not come, even those that come always win things, dispenses, clothes, etc.

The second profile is that of *students* who come to the shelter to collect material for their work at the university - monographs, dissertations and theses. Then, during the period they spend in the house doing the research they assist in the works. These volunteers can spend a week, a month, or come periodically. One of those we interviewed no longer needs interviews for her research, but she keeps coming to help a few times a week because she has become attached to IMA

and its environment. Despite this type of case, most volunteers with this profile are quite seasonal.

The third profile is that of volunteers who are *professionals*, such as psychologists, doctors, or ordinary people who are dedicated to helping migrants for as long as they can, some hours a week, for example.

During the field investigation, we had contact with about 18 volunteers, 8 ex-migrant volunteers, 7 professionals and civilians, and 3 graduate students. Of those 18 volunteers, which we identified, we managed to converse with 5 in a more structured way and 3 formal interviews. Some institutions also contact the IMA to give workshops and do some specific work, but they do not fit into this volunteer account because it is a more institutional relationship.

Some people are motivated to help for religious reasons, as is the case of a housewife who comes to do crafts with the migrants once a week. Others, former migrants, say that they help in gratitude for having been helped once.

Interviewer - And why do you want to help there?

Volunteer - One of the things is because I was there, I know what it feels like. The Madre Assunta House is getting better every day. Look, at the time I was there were no tortillas on the table, now I see that there are already tortillas. They did not put salsa now I see that there is salsa, that is, because I go to dinner there, when I go on Wednesdays, I go to dinner. I go to see the children and I realize, and I remember. I tell you because I bought my Chile, as spicy, so to flavor the food I bought my Chile and my tortillas. Now I see that they already put. If you're doing with love, nothing like that.

So, now there are many things... one thing that I said, when they interview me, is, I give, not because I have a lot of money, I give because I know how it feels to be there, because I was there for that, not because I have to spare, I'm not rich¹⁴.

One of the great “bottlenecks” of the operation of the IMA is the professional workforce. Although the volunteers provide help, this workforce is quite seasonal and without formal linkage. Therefore, it is not possible to entrust some work to them, which concentrates a lot of work on sisters, especially on the director.

¹⁴ Entrevistadora - ¿Y por qué deseas ayudar allá?

Voluntaria - Una de las cosas es porque yo estuve allí, yo sé lo que se siente. La Casa Madre Assunta cada día va mejorando más. Mira, en el tiempo que yo estuve no había tortillas en la mesa, ahora veo que ya hay tortillas. No ponían salsa ahora veo que hay salsa, o sea, porque yo voy a cenar ahí, cuando me voy los miércoles, yo voy a la cena. Voy a ver a los niños y me doy cuenta, y me acuerdo. Te digo porque yo compraba mi chile, como picante, entonces para dar sabor a la comida yo compraba mi chile y mis tortillas. Ahora veo que ya ponen. Si estás haciendo con amor, nada más así.

Entonces, ahora ya hay muchas cosas... una cosa que yo dicho, cuando me entrevistan, es, doy, no porque tenga mucho dinero, doy porque sé cómo se siente estar allí, porque yo estuve allí por eso, no porque me sobra, no soy rica.

3.3 FACILITIES

The IMA works in a house built by the congregation of the Scalabrinian sisters from various donations received at that time. The property is large, has a spacious patio, garage, kitchen, laundry room, cold-climate chambers, room, workshops, office, a multipurpose room, 3 dormitories with bathrooms, some single rooms for sisters who sleep in the house, plus of pantries used to store food.

The house has the capacity to host up to 45 migrants at a time, but there have already been times of humanitarian crisis, as happened with the massive arrival of Haitians, where the house received more than 200 people. However, in normal periods the space usually meets the demand. The period in which the field investigation was conducted¹⁵ it was of low migratory flow because it is a colder period, with many rains to the south and after the end of the year festivities, so that the shelter did not manage to operate at its maximum capacity, despite the continuous flow. That is, every day new migrants arrive and leave, but during our presence we did not count more than 25 migrants in the same day.

The atmosphere is quite pleasant. The cleanliness and organization are part of everyday the hostel and that is something noticed in many interviews. When asked about the differential of the IMA, for many of them who had already had the experience of other shelters, cleanliness, organization and discipline are always cited as a favorable point in relation to other shelters and host houses.



Photo taken from an external wall of the IMA taken during the investigation

When arriving at the shelter there is a painting on the external wall of the garage that draws attention. They explained to us that the painting, made some time ago, was idea of a group of migrants at that time staying at the IMA. Obviously, it represents a series of very significant experiences for them, but today they materialize and give new meanings in the past-present-future game of women in movement.

¹⁵ Months of January and February of 2018.

According to Sister María Antonia, in the painting above the horse with the legs is the escape, they hide to go to another place, the snake represents the temptations to return and the dangers they encounter along the way, the woman represents they themselves, the migrants with several legs and arms to go everywhere and the eye in the hand is the focus where they want to go and what they want to reach, and finally the woman with the moon and the forest above is the hope.

On the other side of the wall that is left in the children's playground, there is another painting in which there are many happy faces and some sad faces on the wall. The happy ones are the majority. The sister tells us that migrant children where they painted themselves and that the only direction that was given to them was painting expressing how they felt at that time.



Photo taken from an external wall of the IMA taken during the investigation

However, to make a more in-depth analysis of the painting it would be necessary to interview those children at the time they were made. The same happens with the first painting presented by migrant women, if they seek to understand what motivated them to paint that. In any case, the meaning of painting transcends its authors and space time, because they remain generating a dynamic of senses, in fact which is what marks the place.

In this regard, we understand that paintings give life to the external area, new and diverse senses; the children who take refuge in the Institute spend most of their time playing in the playground, where there is a slide, some tables, a sofa and various toys. Most are not in very good condition and all come from donations.

3.4 CHARISM AND MISSION

The Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo has as its aim the evangelical and missionary service to migrants, preferably the poorest in situations of greater vulnerability¹⁶.

We asked the sisters and the employees about the Scalabrinian charism and the mission of taking care of the migrants, and their importance, since the charism seemed to us a fundamental differential to face the difficulties of the attention to the migrant.

Interviewer - And why do you consider that mission important?

Sr. Adelia - Why is it important? Because... I feel that our Charism is for migrants. Attending those people who arrive and do not have anything to eat, has nothing to wear. You are going to read the gospel, "I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was naked, and you dressed me", this part. Then with that, reflecting all this passage of the gospel, he made me like this... Enter inside me, what I need... What I needed to do. Then, thinking about the Charism, which was to serve the migrants more than anything, then, I had, I saw the migrants who arrive at the door, who were in this situation, to serve them¹⁷.

Sister Anette believes that migrants are the neediest people, because they are misplaced.

Interviewer - Why do you consider that this mission, specifically, is important?

Sr. Anette - Oh, it's super important. I think it is the category of people most in need. The poor man is in his place, he is poor, but he is in his place. Those who must leave the place of origin... My dear God, what they pass. Every day I hear stories of them... They are emotionally broken. They arrive here broken sometimes. Situations, they go through kidnappings, they go through so much physical, sexual abuse... It's a lot. They come out of a very sad situation, (...). And then, all that on the way, imagine? Those who go on the train...¹⁸

¹⁶ Constitutions of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo - Scalabrinians. www.scalabriniane.org.

¹⁷ Entrevistadora - ¿Y por qué usted considera que esa misión es importante?

Hna. Adelia - ¿Por qué es importante? Porque... Siento que nuestro Carisma es para los migrantes. Atender esas personas que llegan y no tienen con qué comer, no tiene con qué vestir. Se tú vas a leer el evangelio, "Tuve hambre y me diste de comer, tuve sed y me diste de beber, estaba desnudo y me vestiste", esta parte. Entonces con eso, reflexionando todo este pasaje del evangelio, me hizo así... Entrar dentro de mí, que necesito... Qué necesitaba yo hacer. Entonces, pensando en el Carisma, que era para atender los migrantes más que nada, entonces, tenía, veía a los migrantes que llegan a la puerta, que estaban en esta situación, para atenderlos.

¹⁸ Entrevistadora - ¿Por qué usted considera que esta misión, específicamente, es importante?

Hna. Anette - Ah es super importante. Creo que es la categoría de gente más necesitada. El pobre está en su lugar, es pobre, pero está en su lugar. Aquellos que tienen que salir del lugar de origen... Mi Dios querido, lo que ellos pasan. Todos los días escucho historias de ellos... Emocionalmente están quebrados. Llegan aquí quebrados a veces. Situaciones, ellos pasan por secuestros, pasan por tanto abuso físico, sexual... Es mucha cosa. Salen de una situación muy triste, (...). ¿Y después, todo eso en el camino, imagine? Aquellos que van encima del tren...

From outside the IMA, other partners also mentioned about charism and its importance in social service. In the words of the director of the Casa del Migrante, Scalabrinian father, it is due to the charisma that it is possible to “open our hearts to say” brother, sister, that here has its place, it does not have to be on the street”¹⁹. The Executive Coordinator of the Coalición Pro Defensa al Migrante (Coalition for the Defense of Migrants) also argues that:

(...) I think what you call this and what you always have in mind is to be able to help migrants especially try to see their immediate, urgent needs, and then see how you can give them this next step, which is s important , no, not just welfare, and now, I've helped you and no, it's the urgency of what you are, what you need urgently and how can I support you to take the next step whether you want to go to your place of origin, that you are going to stay here, how can we insert you, maybe you have a health problem, you need a document, the idea is to help the migrant globally and what has to happen less hard, that's what, and the truth is that it's been like that I see it that way personally, it's very impressive to see how a person can change your life in seconds (...) ²⁰

About the importance of working with migrants, one of the volunteers gave us a very interesting answer:

Interviewer - Why do you think that attention to migrants is important?

Volunteer - For many things, first I think that a person who migrates is by necessity, not really for pleasure. Because nobody completely leaves your house if you do not have a reason. So, I think that it is necessary to pay attention to them because what they really need, and not to be making ideas of what they might need. And not being one doing ideas of what you might need and moving on to see what one needs. I think. The migrant has a lot of help, because we all help, but migrants sometimes occupy more.

Interviewer - And because?

Volunteer - Because they must feel fear, because being in a place where your life... sometimes you do not understand the language, sometimes no more than the necessary to travel, a week if you do not understand the language you panic (sic). Now a person who does have to start his life from scratch, work, find school for my children, find where to live, is something I think is scary²¹.

¹⁹ “abrir nuestros corazones para decir “hermano, hermana, que aquí tiene su lugar, no tiene que estar en la calle”.

²⁰ (...) creo que lo que te llama de esto y lo que siempre tienes presente es el poder ayudar a los migrantes sobre todo tratar de ver sus necesidades inmediatas, urgentes, y luego ver cómo los puedes dar este siguiente paso no, que es como lo importante, no, no nada más el asistencialismo, y ya, ya te ayudé y no, es la urgencia de cuál es tu, lo que tú necesitas de manera urgente y como puedo yo apoyarte a dar el siguiente paso ya sea que te quieras ir a tu lugar de origen, que se te vas a quedar aquí, como podemos te insertar, a lo mejor tienes un problema de salud, te falta un documento, la idea es ayudarles de manera global al migrante y lo que tiene que pasar lo pase menos duro, eso es el que, y la verdad es que ha sido así yo lo veo así de manera personal, es bien impresionante ver como una persona le puedes cambiar la vida en segundos (...)

²¹ Entrevistadora- ¿Por qué usted cree que es importante la atención hacia los migrantes?

Voluntaria- Por muchas cosas, pues primero que nada yo pienso que una persona que migra es por necesidad, no en realidad por gusto. Porque nadie deja completamente su casa si no tiene una razón. Entonces yo

Understanding migrants as people who need more help because they are foreigners in that land, because in addition to being needy, they have no one they know that would help them. Therefore, the act of helping a foreign person is an act of great love. By adding the challenges of attention to migrants today, human beings facing all kinds of exploitation and violence, the Scalabrinian charism becomes fundamental, especially in the context of Tijuana.

3.5 THE SERVICE OF ATTENTION

As explained above, the attention to migrants is daily and permanent. Every day new people arrive, the schedule varies, but during the observation period we found that deported migrants arrive mainly during the night period, between 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

The women and children who arrive there do so, in most of the times, in a situation of great physical and emotional fragility. Many times, they come with the suffering of having left their homes, sometimes leave the family or are violently withdrawn from it. They arrive with their clothes on, without money and without the knowledge of the functioning of the Mexico / US immigration system that they will have to face.

The first attention consists of an interview where the data of the migrants are recorded: very specific elements of their life histories, address where they come from, personal data, companions, the reason for migration, where they are going, etc. In addition to the basic information, other data relevant to the IMA refer to whether they have taken communion, if they are married in the church, etc.

It also inquiries about the needs of the migrants, how they are at that moment and clarifies doubts, if they have them. It is explained on: (i) the operation of the house, (ii) what are the available care services, (iii) that there is a need for help and participation of them in daily tasks, as well as (iv) the rules of coexistence and temporary stay. The migrants can be settled in the house for a period of 15 days, extendable according to need.

After the interview, the migrants are taken to a room where they receive clothes and personal hygiene products and are offered the possibility to bathe and fix their things in the bedroom. Food is also offered in case of having arrived after the hours of having been served.

During the days that the migrants stay in the house, they can make use of the services that are provided there. For example, they can talk to the psychologist,

pienso que es necesario darles atención porque lo que en realidad necesita, y no estar haciéndose ideas de lo que pueda necesitar. Y no estar uno haciendo ideas de lo que pueda necesitar y pasar a ver lo que uno necesita. Pienso yo. El migrante ocupa mucha ayuda, pues todos ocupamos ayuda, pero los migrantes a veces ocupan más.

Entrevistadora - ¿Y por qué?

Voluntaria- Pues porque deben sentir miedo, pues estar en un lugar donde tu vida... a veces el lenguaje no lo entiendes, a veces no más con el derecho de uno viajar, una semana si no entiendes el lenguaje te paniqueas (sic). Ahora una persona que sí tiene que empezar su vida de cero, trabajar, buscar escuela a mis hijos, buscar en donde vivir, es algo pienso yo que da miedo.

social workers, the lawyer, get medical attention and receive spiritual help if they want to. The talks are aimed at helping migrants to “rebuild life”; that is, help them in what they need and create an environment in which they can decide what the next step will be, seeking to help them find the minimum conditions that will allow them to start again. When they decide to leave, at the time of their departure, the migrants are helped with groceries, food for travel, coats and everything that the sisters can offer from the donations that the IMA receives.

Thus, the shelter provides the satisfaction of their basic needs, information and support so that the migrants enjoy a period of peace and tranquility to think about how they are going to rebuild their lives. The interview with the psychologist gives us a notion of the importance of providing attention to the basic needs of the migrants who seek support there:

Psychologist - For people not fall in a stronger crisis they must eat and must sleep. Without these two daily habits, the chances of a mental disorganization are high, because they bring a very high level of stress, and the two things together, we can make a bomb. Not in all people. (...) That's something that you not see here, here there is room to feed and rest.

Interviewer - They give them the basic things.

Psychologist - Sure. And you realized that here many things may be missing, but not food. Yes?²²

3.6 INTEGRAL ATTENTION

Integral attention is the way that the IMA work team classify the service provided by the Madre Assunta Institute. For some staff members or volunteers interviewed, providing Integral attention is to meet the specific needs of the migrants. How they come after a traumatic experience; all they need is a space where they can have all their basic needs taken care of, clean and security. Lisa, an IMA volunteer, expressed that migrants arrive with a strong need to be heard, and analysis of their legal status, that means, documentation.

Considering the perspectives of those interviewed, who over time have incorporated a way of serving and being with migrants within the framework of the charism of the Scalabrinian sisters. Integral attention means receiving migrants and treating them as Humans. That is, to support them in all possible ways: food, clothing, psychological, legal, health, spiritual support, and helping to open roads for them to decide. In the words of one of the Sisters and a Social Worker:

²² *Psicóloga - Para que las personas no caigan en una crisis más fuerte tienen que comer y tienen que dormir. Sin estos dos hábitos cotidianos, las probabilidades de una desorganización mental son altas, porque traen un nivel de stress muy alto, y las dos cosas juntas, nos pueden hacer una bomba. No en toda la gente. (...) Eso es algo que no se ve aquí, aquí hay espacio para alimentarse y descansar.*

Entrevistadora - Cómo darles las cosas básicas.

Psicóloga - Claro. E ya te diste cuenta que aquí pueden faltar muchas cosas, pero comida no. Sí?

Interviewer - Why does it say that it provides personalized attention to migrants, and this attention is exactly what it is?

Social Worker - It is to make a sociodemographic study to each one of them. Where were you born, where do you come from right now? What family member can I call in case something happens? What studies do you have, how many children, where are you, how many you have had, if you have had an illness, if you are ill, how did you travel, how did you get here, why are you migrating, there are many questions to know a little of them, yes? If someone says to me: it's because I came to Tijuana because I want to find a job, then in my file I have go and look for a job. But if I see this migrant every day there, sit down, I say: hey, do you come to look for work? you did? Are you looking? Do you need something that supports you? What am I going to do? Then it is to give them such attention, the house gives them 15 days to stay. (...) The work of the sisters has been very valuable, and well, here we are, every time that the migratory policies change, we must somehow see what program can benefit more the migrants, according to the profile that they present. We make a very personalized interview and we follow up on each of the cases, because we can, because our population is small. If we had 100 or 200 migrants, we could not do it²³.

In this extract from the interview, the social worker points out an important factor of the Integral attention: the particularization of the situation of each migrant, not only pointing to the attention to all the needs, but to the specific attention that can be given to each case that arrives in the shelter, something that as she affirms, it would not be possible if they received, for example, average 200 people, as is the case of the Casa del Migrante, or in times of crisis, how was it when Haitian migrants arrived, in 2016, and ended up overcoming the IMA's attention capacity.

3.7 THE COMMUNITY LUNCHROOM

From Monday to Friday the house offers lunch and a snack at night for the people on the street. According to Sister Adelia, they serve from 50 to 80 people, reaching up to 120, who come every day. Lunch is served from 1:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. For the people of the street it is also distributed bags of bread, clothes and blankets from donations. In addition to the lunch they serve burritos with coffee at 5:00 p.m.

²³ Entrevistadora – ¿Por qué dice que hace atención personalizada a las migrantes, y esta atención qué es exactamente?

Asistente Social - Es hacer un estudio sociodemográfico a cada una de ellas. ¿Dónde naciste, de dónde vienes ahorita? ¿Qué familiar tuyo puedo llamar en caso de que le pase algo? ¿Qué estudios tiene, cuántos hijos, dónde están, cuántos ha tenido, si ha tenido una enfermedad, si está enferma, cómo viajó, cómo llegó hasta acá, por qué está migrando, hay muchísimas preguntas para conocer un poquito de ellas, ¿sí? Si alguien me dice: es que yo vine a Tijuana porque quiero encontrar trabajo, entonces en mi expediente tengo que ir a buscarle un empleo. Pero si, esta migrante la veo todos los días ahí sentadita, digo: hay, vienes a buscar trabajo, ya fuiste, está buscando, necesitas algo que te apoye, ¿qué voy a hacer? Entonces es darles una atención así, la casa les da 15 días para permanecer. (...) El trabajo de las hermanas ha sido muy valioso, y bueno, aquí estamos, cada vez que cambian las políticas migratorias. Tenemos que de alguna manera ver qué programa le puede beneficiar más a las migrantes conforme el perfil que presente. Nosotras hacemos entrevistas muy personalizadas y le damos seguimiento a cada uno de los casos, porque se puede, porque nuestra población es pequeña. Si tuviéramos 100 o 200 migrantes no podríamos hacerlo.

The installation of the Lunchroom was completed some three or four years ago from a project of the Committee of Hunger of Mexico and the National Institute of Migration (INM) that supported providing inputs for shelters to serve migrants. As an IMA Social Worker explains during our interview:

(...) The Hunger Committee, then, and the INM decided to support those who were responsible for serving migrants and who could have a lunchroom. Gave us the supplies to start the lunchroom. Previously we gave the burrito to the lunch that is given to them at 6 p.m. in the afternoon, that we already gave it. And that's why migration said: We give you supplies but open the lunchroom let people serve and eat. So we started, they gave us a year supplies, but the project was finished and finished the supplies, but Mother Adelia, she who had a lunchroom for people living on the street in Ensenada, she said "no, but I want to continue with the lunchroom because it is not possible for me to have food and not feed people who are hungry"²⁴.

However, the IMA chose to continue offering lunch to outsiders supported by the donations they receive:

Interviewer - So now they do with their own funds?

Social Worker - Yes, with our own funds.

Interviewer - And do not they manage to put this in another project?

Social Worker - What happens is that, truly, that there is food, the house has other economic needs. The food arrives, it needs the light, gas, those things, public services.²⁵

The lunchroom at the beginning did not have a quiet implementation, a consensus, and even today it is a controversial issue. The opening of the lunchroom brought near to the house several homeless people that were not there before. Previously to the opening of the lunchroom there were people who came for the burritos of the night, but they were few, they served barely about 30 burritos, as it was explained. Currently, these people, especially men, stay all day in front of the shelter asking for things to all those who they can see, migrant women, children, in a certain way altering an atmosphere of tranquility and stability that the sisters seek to provide as part of the service integral previously explained.

²⁴ (...) El Comité del Hambre, entonces, y el INM decidieron apoyar a los que se encargaban de atender migrantes y que pudieran tener un comedor. Nos dio los insumos para comenzar el comedor. Anteriormente nosotros dábamos el burrito al lonche que se les da a las 6 de la tarde, eso ya lo dábamos. Y por eso migración dijo: yo te doy insumos, pero abre el comedor deja que la gente se sirva y coma. Así empezamos, nos dieron por un año insumos, pero se acabó el proyecto y acabó los insumos; pero la Madre Adelia, ella que tenía un comedor para personas en situación de calle en Ensenada, ella dijo "no, pero yo quiero seguir con el comedor porque no es posible que yo tenga comida y no les de comer a gente tiene hambre".

²⁵ Entrevistadora - ¿Entonces ahora hacen con sus propios fondos?

Asistente Social - Sí, con nuestros propios fondos.

Entrevistadora - ¿Y no logran poner esto en otro proyecto?

Asistente Social - Lo que pasa es que verdaderamente es que comida hay, la casa tiene necesidades económicas de otro tipo. Llega el alimento, le hace falta para la luz, el gas, cosas de esas, servicios públicos.

These people who attend in search of the food are almost all homeless, some suffer from alcoholism and drug addiction. Some of them are, or were already one day, migrants, who either are not in any shelter, or come from shelters that do not have food to offer. The appearance of the majority is of people who are in a street situation, judging by the state of the clothes and the hygiene situation; others appear neater, bringing children, could be workers of the neighborhood. In a conversation with a volunteer from the Institute, she explained that many of them are people who already live there in Tijuana, but still need help and come to lunch there. Some even sleep there on the sidewalk in front of the hostel.

The controversy revolves around the role of the IMA in relation to that specific attention for several reasons. The first reason is the dependency relationship that this type of assistance promotes, because it ends up generating a service space that the IMA provides, understood by many of its beneficiaries, as something obligatory, as a right of them to receive it.

A second problem is the relationship with these people and the security of the sheltered and civil servants. It is attended to many people who are in street situation, some of them in altered state of consciousness, which makes some episodes of verbal aggressions and demands. During the period of field research, we have witnessed, more than once, similar episodes in which they are swearing, especially if the meal is over or they are contradicted with negatives when they try to sensitize by saying that they are hungry to get more food or other things. They often sell the donations that the sisters give to them. However, the sisters do not feel especially threatened, they only get angry.

Another element to take into consideration refers to security, or the lack of. Small muggings sometimes occur during lunch, for example, the sisters avoid letting men use the external toilets because they steal the lamps. The neighbors also do not like the presence of these people in front of the shelter and this is one of the conflicts that the house has with the neighborhood, as Sister Anette tells when she considers this issue of the acceptance of the IMA neighbors.

Interviewer - And the neighbors, the local population of the neighborhood, how they live having a...

Sr. Anette - We have problems with neighbors. They do not accept much...

Interviewer - Migrants?

Sr. Anette - Yes, the men out there, mainly. Umm is that you have daughters and umm... But we do not give so much importance, I do what I must do. What I am going to do? They are people. We cannot... I always have that not... God does not reject anyone. God cares for all, God loves everyone, God listens to everyone. God gives plenty of opportunity to all, and so... Ah... Between us things also happen, and I say 'oh no'... if she was rude to me, will I be rude to her? Do not! Because I try to

understand. Maybe he did not sleep well, maybe he's in trouble at work... That's why... The spirituality that one has also helps me a lot, right?²⁶

The focus of this discussion, as already explained, in addition to the shelter security element, is the function of the lunchroom. The lunchroom mainly serves people in street situations who may have been migrants, but who nowadays are no longer,, according to the Mexican legislation of the region. Then, the action of charity exercised there when feeding these people has more to do with assistance to poor people and in a street situation. Therefore, little is done in the sense of remaking life or leading those people as it happens with the migrants from within, who are also given emergency assistance of food and shelter. In the care to integrate the migrants who stay there and are welcomed, there is a concern to provide elements for the person served to go ahead and there are rules, so that this care is not prolonged and does not promote dependency, a situation very different from the care of the lunchroom for the external.

Despite all the problems that the lunchroom causes, there is also the conviction in some of the actors involved that the lunchroom is important, as there is a lot of food inside the shelter and it is the sisters' duty to feed those who are hungry, that continues to offer this service.

3.8 RELIGIOUS ATTENTION

As already explained, The Madre Assunta Institute is a Catholic oriented house, therefore, one of the important elements for the sisters with the attended migrants is the spiritual care. Spiritual care is inserted into the everyday of the house. They pray every day in the morning, before breakfast, before dinner and at night. On Mondays the local parish priest comes to pray a mass and give communion to the migrants, and one of the sisters is in charge of making the spiritual assistance more directly.

²⁶ Entrevistadora - Y los vecinos, la población local del barrio, cómo vive el hecho de tener una...

Hna. Anette - Tenemos problemas con los vecinos. Ellos no aceptan mucho...

Entrevistadora - ¿A los migrantes?

Hna. Anette - Sí, los hombres allá afuera, principalmente. Umm es que uno tiene hijas y umm... Pero no damos tanta importancia, hago lo que tengo que hacer. ¿Qué voy a hacer? Son personas. No podemos... Siempre tengo eso no.... Dios no rechaza a nadie. Dios atiende a todos, Dios ama a todos, Dios escucha a todos. Dios da mucha oportunidad a todos, y así... Ah... Entre nosotros también suceden cosas, y digo 'ah no'... si ella fue grosera conmigo, ¿yo voy a ser grosera con ella? ¡No! Porque intento entender. Tal vez no durmió bien, tal vez en el trabajo está con problemas... Por eso que... La espiritualidad que uno tiene también me ayuda bastante, ¿no?



Photo: Celebration Eucharist at the IMA

Due to the migratory experience, which is quite difficult, demanding a great capacity of the migrants to overcome the difficult moments and rebuild their lives, whenever questions about religiosity are raised, the answers obtained sustain their importance in that context to give hope and security to the migrants who pass by there.

Interviewer - For you, why is it important that these activities are carried out with the migrants?

Social Worker - Because in some way heals what they bring, with that they reaffirm their faith, it gives them a new hope, it's like opening a little bit, cleaning a little bit of the places they are going through, feeling protected is feeling guided, to know that they are not alone, that they have Jesus, that they have God, because they do not just received Catholics here, they received from all religions, right? And it's something that we respect a lot too²⁷.

Interviewer - And how do you think these spiritual experiences help in this process?

Intern Social Worker - It helps them, I think to many migrants to not... I forgot the word in Spanish... to not give up... (laughs) to go forward, to follow your future, that God can help you if you believe. So, I think that's good for that, to give you a little bit of faith²⁸.

²⁷ Entrevistador- Para usted, ¿por qué es importante que esas actividades sean realizadas con las migrantes?
Asist. Social - Porque de alguna manera sana lo que ellas traen, en él reafirman su fe, en ellas esto les da como una nueva esperanza, es como abrirlas un poquito, limpiarles un poquito de los lugares que ellas van pasando, es sentirse protegidas es sentirse guiadas, saber que no están solas, que tienen a Jesús, que tienen a Dios, porque no nada más pasan católicos por aquí, pasan de todas las religiones ¿no? Y es algo que nosotros respetamos mucho también.

²⁸ Entrevistadora - ¿Y cómo crees que esas vivencias espirituales auxilian en este proceso?
As. Social/pasante - Les ayudan, creo que muchas migrantes no... olvidé la palabra en español... to not give up... (risas) para ir para seguir adelante, que sigan su futuro, que Dios sí te puede ayudar si tú crees. Entonces creo que eso es bueno para eso, para darles un poquito de fe.

In dialogue with the psychologist, she explains that in moments where the life of a human being is at risk, this system of values that people carry is brought to the surface and they must hold onto something. For her, faith is fundamental in this recovery process and she observes that people who do not have any faith “have a harder time” on this process. She also maintains that migrants who have faith activate another system, because the exercise of faith gives value to life, because the moment they enter that process, they must have a lifesaver to hold on. Faith promotes a chemical brain connection that gives you another management. With the children she works a lot with the idea and history of the little angels of the guard and says that this intervention is very successful.

Interviewer - So, this spiritual attention provided by the sisters, how do you think this spiritual attention influences this process?

Psychologist - Because it feeds your faith, there are people who, for example, do not believe in anything.

Interviewer - Do you think that those processes are more difficult?

Psychologist - Yes.

Interviewer - But, even if you do not believe in anything, do not you believe in your life?

Psychologist - It's not that it's easier, it's that we came back to the same thing. I tell you, the complexity of this phenomenon, because the moment you enter a situation of life, of insecurity, then it is like lifeguards that we do not see, as to promote survival, then these own lifeguards, bring a value system. It is not the same a person who believes, that in his system of values is faith and hope, without getting into the spiritual. The spiritual follows the way of maintaining this faith and this hope.

Interviewer - And have not you touched people who have a strong psychological, beyond faith?

Psychologist - Yes, well, this would be another study, because then, of course, there are personalities whose ability to recover is surprising²⁹.

For the migrants who arrive there, the very image of the sisters is the representation that they make against those who are consecrated to religious life, brings them an idea of security and peace. Arriving at the shelter and receiving

²⁹ Entrevistadora - Entonces, esta atención espiritual que brindan las hermanas, ¿cómo crees que esta atención espiritual influencia en ese proceso?

Psicóloga - Porque alimenta su fe, hay personas que, por ejemplo, no creen en nada.

Entrevistadora - ¿Crees que a esas se les cuesta más ese proceso?

Psicóloga - Sí

Entrevistadora - Pero, aunque no crean en nada, ¿no creen en su vida?

Psicóloga - No es que es más fácil, es que volvimos a lo mismo. Te digo, lo complejo de este fenómeno, porque al momento que entras a una situación de vida, de inseguridad, entonces es como salían salvavidas que no vemos, como a promover la sobrevivencia, entonces estos propios salvavidas, traen un sistema de valores. No es lo mismo una persona que cree, que en su sistema de valores está la fe y la esperanza, sin meternos a lo espiritual. Lo espiritual sigue a la forma de mantener esta fe y esta esperanza.

Entrevistadora - ¿Y no te ha tocado personas que tienen el psicológico fuerte además de la fe?

Psicóloga - Sí, vaya, este sería otro estudio, porque entonces claro, hay personalidades que es sorprendente su capacidad de recuperarse.

help from people they know will not hurt you is a great relief, and they feel safe. The psychologist believes that the sisters represent a mother figure for the children and for the migrants. This means that not only spiritual activities and faith reassure them, but also the idea of being in an environment of security for being a religious environment, for relating sisters to someone who is not going to hurt them, and, when they feel safe, as some of the interviewees expressed us, their faith is strengthened.

Interviewer - How do you think it helps them?

Volunteer - As they feel more secure, in internal security, I do not know how to call, of them and of the children as well³⁰.

Intern Social Worker - I almost did not participate in those [religious] activities, but the women I've seen who pass by here, who come and say, for example, I'm Catholic, sometimes tell you that they come with a very disappointed attitude about religion, about faith, their faith sometimes comes very weakened, because of all that they have gone through, and what I do see is that [being in the house] gives them back their faith. This convinces them that there is someone, something taking care of them and that is why they came to this house. So, whether they are Catholic or not, they become... this their faith I feel that they are strengthened again, at least if they were weak, they were not... how to normalize them...³¹

In an interview, Sister Adelia explains that spiritual attention is important, as it reminds them of the principles and leaves them calmer. "Many of them forget that God exists", she says. Another interviewee, a volunteer and PhD student in psychology, affirms that "people feel good here", they come with a lot of fear and it is the only space that can give them this peace. She adds that unlike spiritual support - and at that point she affirms that for her it is very similar to the psychological and that it follows this line - it is the psychic stability that it promotes, because "there is a platform where to land".

Another volunteer also tells us that other types of spirituality works in that context and described a time when there was a volunteer there who did yoga and spoke a lot about spirituality and how that was important for the children who were there at that time. She talks about a child who was very problematic at the house and with the yoga classes, and the help of the psychologist, he overcame many of his relationship's problems of interaction with others.

³⁰ Entrevistadora - ¿De qué manera piensas que les ayuda?

Voluntaria - Como que se sienten más seguras, en la seguridad interna, no sé cómo llamar, de ellas y de los niños también.

³¹ Pasante Trabaj. Social - Yo casi no participo en esas actividades [religiosas], pero las mujeres que he visto que pasan por aquí, que llegan y dicen, por ejemplo, yo soy católica, a veces te dicen que ellas vienen con una actitud muy decepcionada sobre la religión, sobre la fe, su fe a veces viene muy debilitada, por todo lo que han pasado, y lo que sí veo es que [estar en la casa] les devuelve la fe. Esto les convence que hay alguien, algo cuidando de ellas y por eso ellas llegaron a esta casa. Entonces sean o no sean católicas se hacen ... este su fe siento que se les vuelve a fortalecer, por lo menos si estaba débil, se les no ... cómo que se les normaliza...

The person who coordinates the spiritual attention is Sister Anette. She says that some time ago those moments were more frequent, and now that she is already with the advanced age (80 years), cannot stay so long in the shelter. The moment of the assistance it is a group moment where they talk about the Bible, pray, talk a bit about their experiences as migrants and sing.

Interviewer - How is that spiritual assistance? Do you call them to pray?

Sr. Anette - Pray, also biblical readings, of rites (...) One thing, God never abandons you, is with you, walking by your side. Seek help, work... We give advice like that, so as not to be there crying. So, they will have better days, we seek to give some advice, right? In the prayer, and in the songs, they cry at that moment and that helps them...³².

The sister says that sometimes, when she has a more heterogeneous group, she avoids talking about Our Lady and making prayers related to her to contemplate migrants who are not Catholic, who are Christian.

The fact of the IMA being a Catholic home was the subject of conversation in interviews with the migrants, it was always asked if this fact influenced the reception of immigrants and how they felt at home. Most of the answers refer to the fact that has no negative effects on those served, the interviewees did not witness any type of religious conflict, or discrimination and affirm that migrant women who practice other religions felt comfortable there, once the sisters were very respectful with the subject.

Interviewer - And people of other religions? If there are other challenges, another way?

Volunteer - I can say no, I have not seen. Personally, I am not religious, I am not Catholic, to me knowing the mother of this have never treated me badly, they have never made anything collide. Respect the fact that if you... or they ask you to respect them and respect you. For example, if they are praying then obviously that one does not have to be rude, must respect that moment. But they do not force you to be part of that either. Then, discrimination by religion no. And in fact, it's one of the things that all social workers try because one of the questions is their religion, and before they answer - and that I learned from XXX - that is - here is a place that nuns are Catholic, but your Religion is not going to take away the right to be here inside. Then it is something that they always tell you not to think they have to say they are Catholic. And, if you ask if you made your first communion, then they say that they are simply questions to have them here and to know more about all of them that are here, but they will not point you out as anything³³.

³² Entrevistadora - ¿Cómo es esa asistencia espiritual? ¿Usted las llama para rezar?

Hna. Anette - Rezar, también lecturas bíblicas, de ritos (...) Una cosa, Dios nunca te abandona, está contigo, caminando a tu lado. Busca ayudarte, trabaja... Damos consejos así, para no quedar allí llorando. Así, que ellas tendrán días mejores, buscamos dar unos consejos, ¿no? En la oración, y en los cantos, ellas lloran en el momento y eso les ayuda...

³³ Entrevistadora - ¿Y personas de otras religiones? ¿Si hay otros desafíos, otra forma?

Voluntaria - Yo puedo decir que no, no he visto. Yo en lo personal no soy religiosa, no soy católica, a mí sabiendo la madre de esto nunca me han tratado mal, nunca han hecho chocar nada. Respetan el hecho de

Interviewer - (...) some problem with the religious question with any of them...

Volunteer ³⁴ - No, none, because they, what mothers are, respect their religion a lot, and not because they are or if you are a Jehovah's Witness and I am taking care of you... they do not make any difference, they give the same attention, the same time, if you need to be more is fine, your religion has nothing to do. And that is very beautiful and very good for them. No discrimination because they are from another...³⁵

Interviewer - And for people of other religions?

Intern Social Worker - It is also important, although they say I am not... anyway they participate, maybe they do not know the prayers, but they are there respect, then...

Interviewer - No conflicts for religious reasons?

Intern Social Worker - No, because they are not forced, it is an option and I believe that women who are of another religion out of respect go to mass for example, what they do here³⁶.

Some migrants say they do not feel comfortable to pray and images, but most say that they respect because they are in their space and the sisters are good for them.

3.9 PEOPLE ATTENDED BY THE IMA

The public attended by the IMA is part of the population of migrant women and children that are recently arrived in Tijuana. There are some exceptions for both sides: it is not all women in these conditions who are eligible, and those who do not meet the prerequisites, are received, exceptionally, only if they arrive with children or if they arrive at night in the shelter.

que si tu... o sea te piden respeto a ellas y te respetan. Por ejemplo, si están rezando pues obviamente que uno no tiene ser grosero tiene que respetar ese momento. Pero no te obligan a que tú seas parte de eso tampoco. Entonces, discriminación por religión no. Y de hecho es una de las cosas que todas las trabajadoras sociales tratan porque una de las preguntas es su religión, y antes de que contesten - y eso lo aprendí de XXX - es decir - aquí es un lugar que las monjas son católicas pero tu religión no te va a quitar el derecho de estar aquí a dentro. Entonces es algo que siempre le dicen para que no piensen que tienen que decir que son católicas. Y también si pregunta si hiciste tu primera comunión, entonces dicen que son simplemente preguntas para tenerlas aquí y saber más de todas que están aquí pero no te van a señalar como nada.

³⁴ Ex-migrant, and years ago came to be attended at the IMA. Today she participates as a volunteer

³⁵ Entrevistadora - (...) algún problema con la cuestión religiosa con alguna de ellas...

Voluntaria - No, ninguno, porque ellas, lo que son las madres respetan mucho su religión, y no por ser o si eres testigo de Jehová y te estoy atendiendo... no hacen ninguna diferencia, le dan la misma atención el mismo tiempo, si necesitas estar más está bien, su religión no tiene nada que ver. Y eso es muy bonito y muy bueno para ellas. Ninguna discriminación porque son de otra....

³⁶ Entrevistadora - ¿Y para personas de otras religiones?

Pasante As. Social - También es importante, aunque dicen yo no soy... de todos modos ellas participan, tal vez no se saben las oraciones, pero ellas están ahí respetan, entonces...

Entrevistadora - ¿No hay conflictos por cuestiones religiosas?

Pasante As. Social - No, porque no se les obliga, es una opción y creo que las mujeres que son de otra religión por respeto van a la misa por ejemplo que hacen aquí.

In their majority, women who arrive at the shelter are migrants that are already been channeled from the module of attention to migrants³⁷ or from borders and spaces of migratory circulation. When they arrive to be assisted, an interview is conducted where the profile of that migrant is evaluated according to the profile of those served by the house.

That is, the IMA does not receive them if they are in a situation of drug addiction or alcoholism, due to the need to preserve the psychophysical integrity of those women and children who are already sheltered there. However, neither are they received in case of having already been living for some time in Tijuana (they did not specify how long, they say they have just arrived) or if they have family in the city.

The fact of not harboring that profile of women does not mean that they are going to leave them in the street, the social assistants always try to find another shelter that attends to that person with those specificities. A volunteer tells us that the “Mothers”³⁸ never leave the women who arrive there helpless: “This is what this place has, no one gets out on the street. No matter how bad the person is, no one gets out on the street. If you look elsewhere if and you cannot house them”. She also claims that all the times that the migrants leave from there, they are channeled to other places or leave on their own. But that mothers receive them. They never place women and children on the street at night. If it is daytime, they try to channel to another shelter if they are not migrants or if they are drug users. If it is night, they shelter them during the night and the next day they try to channel them. In Tijuana, there are shelters for domestic violence as well as houses for drug addicts and alcoholics, but in the latest case, people must stay at least 3 months in the house because they are rehabilitation centers.

Another exception is that sometimes, in special cases, the house receives women in situations of domestic violence who are not migrants. Many times, they leave their homes, inside the city itself, fleeing domestic violence, they arrive at the hostel very fragile and are welcomed at night. Women often come to IMA seeking shelter. As women are vulnerable and often bring their children, the house welcome them depending on the situation.

It can happen to the person to be a migrant that flee from domestic violence in another country or to be a deportee. In these cases, the work team talks with the psychologist so the person can have a specific attention.

Interviewer - And if a woman arrives who says she suffered violence, the things that have happened, what does she do?

³⁷ The module of attention to migrants - It is a space that the Coalition has inside the Garita de Chaparral to receive deported migrants. It is in La Garita that the Mexican government receives the Mexican deportees. The space concentrates a series of services for reintegration.

³⁸ While some of the Sisters stated that they do not feel comfortable with this way of being called, it is a cultural tradition in Mexico, as in other Spanish-speaking countries, to refer to consecrated nuns as “Madres”, a term that historically denotes a recognition and respect for the place they have of taking care of others, just as Mary was the Madre of Jesus.

Social Worker - At that moment I... I talk to her a little bit and then I suggest she talk with the psychologist who comes. I think he comes twice a week. I think it's better to be able to help them with what they are going through, to process better³⁹.

Another fundamental point is the "fact of being a migrant" to be the beneficiary of the attention. In the interviews it was clear that to be attended at the IMA, women *must be migrant*. And in front of the question: what are migrants? The interviewees answered that migrants are people in transit, leaving their place of origin.

Interviewer - ¿And what exactly is a migrant?

Intern Social Worker - It is a woman who is coming to the city, that comes with plans to leave the city more than anything that they come with a plan that is not staying in Tijuana, and when it is staying in Tijuana you realize because they say - it's not that I have a friend here, this is coming to Tijuana, for example, in the last week we had a woman who, her husband was deported, and he returned to his state, and he said no, here there is no work, let's go to Tijuana, and they are actually migrants, they are internal migrants, but they are leaving their place of origin to live elsewhere. So, the term migrant is someone who has left its roots to go and look for life somewhere else⁴⁰.

As already mentioned, the IMA also does not receive migrant women who have already been in the city for some time, who are either residents or have relatives in the city. An observed justification, for the non-reception of these people with more time or family, is the option for the migrant population that would need emergency care, who has nowhere to go and who needs a roof and food without having other forms of get it, which means that they would not have financial means or family support for it.

National Migration Law (LNM)

According to the LNM, a migrant person is one who leaves, transits or arrives in the territory of a country other than the one of origin for any type of motivation. A migrant, unlike a refugee, travels in search of a better quality of life in economic terms and continues to enjoy the protection of the government of their country of origin, in case the person returns. Sometimes, migrants do not know that they can apply for refugee status which is related to the reasons for leaving the country

³⁹ Entrevistadora - Y si llega una mujer que dice que sufre con violencia, las cosas que ha pasado, ¿qué hace? Trabaj. Social - En ese momento le... yo hablo con ella un poquito y luego le sugiero que converse con la psicóloga que viene. Creo que viene 2 veces a la semana. Creo que es mejor para poder ayudarlas con lo que están pasando, para procesar mejor.

⁴⁰ Entrevistadora - ¿Y qué es una migrante exactamente? Pasante Trabaj. Social - Es una mujer que va llegando a la ciudad que viene con planes de irse de la ciudad más que nada que ellas vienen con un plan que no es quedarse en Tijuana, y cuando si es quedarse en Tijuana tú te das cuenta porque dicen - no es que tengo un amigo aquí, este va venir a Tijuana por ejemplo en la semana pasada tuvimos a una mujer que, su esposo fue deportado, y se regresó a su estado, y dijo no, aquí no hay trabajo vamos a Tijuana, y ellos en realidad son migrantes, son migrantes internos, pero están dejando su lugar de origen para vivir en otro lugar. Entonces el termino migrante es alguien que ha dejado su raíz para ir a buscar vida en algún otro lugar

of origin. Therefore, if a migrant leaves his or her country because of violence lived in the country, and/or discrimination translated into persecution due to race, religion, nationality, belonging to a certain social group or political opinions and that because of the well-founded fears caused by this situation cannot or want to return to their country⁴¹. Source: <http://www.fundacionarcoiris.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Gui%CC%81a-para-personas-migrantes-LGBTI-interactivo-PDF.pdf>

It is also observed that the temporary issue is very important for most of the hostels in the city, since Tijuana is a “city of migrants”, it is a border city that has as a characteristic a resident population that is not native of there, being thus, many people could be considered as migrants, making it difficult for the IMA to cut back on who provides its integral care service. But the question that remains is, for how long can a person still be considered a migrant?

We interviewed the person who was the first coordinator of *The State Migrant Assistance Council*⁴². The council was founded on the demand of civil society associations. In the context of the creation of the council, to start the work and decide on the form of participation of Civil Society, they had to make a filter that, for the coordinator, has been important. They needed to choose associations that worked with migrants. However, what would it be like to be a migrant in the city of Tijuana? In order to channel the funds allocated to public policies aimed at the migrant population, a definition of what characterizes it was needed.

(...) The biggest problem I encountered when I arrived was to come up with a definition. In this phase, we had to overcome a sensitive line of a definition of a migrant person. That is why, today, just mentioning a person in the context of migration is recent, very recent. Because before the person who is there on the street is a migrant, that is, it was very easy to emulate or associate a person in an addition condition. Then they went by and had migrants from *El Bordo*, for example. I for example, I am not from Tijuana, I am an immigrant, I am a migrant now, but he does not tell me. So, the vulnerability of a person in migrant status is while in migrant status. And I told them, I started to review the civil code because there is no definition here in Baja California. So, I checked to see in the civil code that a person who resides, that is if he is considered a resident of the city of Tijuana after 6 months in the city, then I took this parameter when I was at the address. This is to

⁴¹ *Ley Nacional de Migración (LNM) - Según la LNM, una persona migrante es aquella que sale, transita o llega al territorio de un país distinto al de origen por cualquier tipo de motivación. Una persona migrante, a diferencia de una refugiada, viaja en búsqueda de una mejor calidad de vida en términos económicos, y sigue gozando de la protección del gobierno de su país de origen, en caso de que la persona retorne. En ocasiones, las personas migrantes no saben que pueden solicitar la condición de refugio la cual se relaciona con los motivos de salida del país de origen. Por tanto, si una persona migrante sale de su país por la violencia y/o discriminación traducidas en persecución vivida en éste por motivos de raza, religión, nacionalidad, pertenencia a un determinado grupo social u opiniones políticas y que a causa de los fundados temores causados por esta situación no pueda o quiera regresar a su país. Fuente: <http://www.fundacionarcoiris.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Gui%CC%81a-para-personas-migrantes-LGBTI-interactivo-PDF.pdf>*

⁴² For example, see: <http://www.tijuana.gob.mx/dependencias/SEDESOM/MIGRANTE/index.aspx>

have a parameter, it does not mean scientifically what happens after 6 months, it is just a parameter to consider a person who stops being in this migrant context, in that mobility, in the 6 months because he still does not you know if you can tell if this was a north-south migration, if it was an internal movement, or if that is a context of intercontinental migration, or of Latin America, after 6 months any person living in Baja California will be considered a resident. So while they last for 6 months they are in the context of a migrant because they do not know if they are going to stay, if they are going to leave, or who will help them in their place of origin, they will try to cross it, because they are still in transit and that's where assistance is needed, that's where public input is needed⁴³.

From the story we can understand that in the State of Baja California the Council has agreed a definition of what it is to be a migrant, that is to say, based on the time the person in transit in the region has been. It means that a migrant can legally be considered a "migrant" if it fits within six months. As the coordinator affirms, for them this measure is not scientific, but the operative parameter used in the definition of migrant, that is, of the target public that can benefit from these public policies channeled through civil society associations. After this period of 6 months, the migrant becomes a resident of the city.⁴⁴

Within the IMA the discussion about what a migrant person is, and the temporary discussion will affect, as already explained above, if he is eligible or not to receive the attention of the Institute. However, the temporary definition of the state administration of 6 months does not fit the IMA, because only women and children recently arrived in the city can, as a rule, stay at home. That is, people who had arrived in the city 4 months ago are not welcomed, as the institution turns to emergency and for a specific time for migrant women and children. In

⁴³ (...) El mayor problema que yo encontré cuando llegué fue llegar a una definición. En esta fase, había que superar una línea sensible de una definición de una persona migrante. Por eso, hoy apenas esto de hacer alusión a una persona en contexto de migración es reciente, muy reciente. Porque antes la persona que esta allí en la calle es migrante, o sea era muy fácil emular o asociar una persona en condición de adicción. Entonces pasaban por ahí y tenían los migrantes de El Bordo, por ejemplo, yo por ejemplo yo no soy de Tijuana, yo soy inmigrante, soy migrante ahora, pero no me cuenta. Entonces la vulnerabilidad de una persona en condición de migrante es mientras esté en la condición de migrante. Y yo les decía, me puse a revisar el código civil porque no hay una definición precisamente aquí en Baja California. Entonces yo revisando vi en el código civil que una persona que resida, o sea si es considerada residente en la ciudad de Tijuana a los 6 meses que esta en la ciudad, entonces yo tomé este parámetro cuando estaba en la dirección. Esto es para tener un parámetro, no quiere decir científicamente que es lo que pasa a los 6 meses, es apenas un parámetro para considerar una persona que deja de estar en este contexto de migrante, en esa movilidad, en los 6 meses pues todavía no sabes si puedes contar si este fue migración de norte sur, si fue un movimiento interno, o si eso es un contexto de migración intercontinental, o de latinoamérica, después de los 6 meses se va a considerar residente cualquier persona que viva en Baja California. Entonces mientras duran los 6 meses se está en contexto de migrante porque no sabe si se va a quedar, si se va a ir, o quién le va a ayudar en su lugar de origen, se lo va a intentar cruzar, pues entonces todavía se esta en tránsito y es ahí donde necesita la asistencia, ahí es donde necesita el aporte público.

⁴⁴ In the city there is an important presence of population in street situation. There are also immigrants from El Bordo. Part of the need to define the migrant population until the maximum period of arrival of 6 months, may be due to the lack of resources destined to those who were once migrants, but who today are no longer considered as such.

this way, a migrant who is already in the city a few weeks or months ago, although she has not yet established a residence, could not stay in the house.

The question is paradoxical, because, although they are not attended by the sisters and workers of the house (as well as authorities), they recognize that migrants often take longer than the stipulated time to rebuild their lives, which may have non-newly arrived migrants who need of help. The proof of this is the fact that many times they help many migrants with more time in the house and give food and donations to people in street situations, often referring to them as deportees, ex-deportees, migrants or ex-migrants. In this way, the effects of migration on the current situation of these people are recognized. However, they affirm that it is enough to take care of all this amount of people, explaining the cut in the attention.

There is a recurring criticism that is made from other institutions supporting migrants against this policy, which both the IMA and the Casa del Migrante practice, receiving only during the first days: What do these people do after the 15 days that the Scalabrinians offer to them? One opinion is that they become street people without further support.

There are other shelters that receive them for those who have been in Tijuana for a while, but most of them are not free. Few also receive addicts and people in other conditions.

Of the migrant women and children that the IMA receives, the majority is deported or are migrants trying to cross the border. Migrants trying to cross may attempt to do so “illegally”, or through the request for political asylum; in the second case they must put together a series of conditions to be accepted. The deported migrants are Mexican and those who try to cross are generally either Mexican or Central Americans. Most Mexicans are from regions in Mexico where public security is precarious - criminality, drug trafficking, etc. The Central Americans are mainly from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, which also suffer the endowment of criminal groups. There are also immigrants of other nationalities who migrate for other reasons, but all arrive in Tijuana with the objective of crossing; some, both Mexican and other nationalities, in case they desist to cross the border, they end up settling in Tijuana.

3.9.1 Migrant women and children

The Madre Assunta Institute was created with the purpose of specifically serving women and children. Sister Adelia says that the separation between women and men was because women did not feel well in the same place as men, they felt vulnerable. She explains that the division between men and women is for safety and that women have other needs.

Interviewer - So, you made the decision to make a house just for women and children, is that so? Why do you consider that they need to be separated? What is that specific attention for them?

Sr Adelia - At the beginning I was there at the Scalabrinian center, Sister Gemma, who says that women came to the United States. Because at that time there was not as much deportation as now. Then their husbands were already in the United States, and they wanted to go find them. They came here with their children, they rested for a few days and then they were going to cross, because the crossing was much easier at that time. Then there, in the Scalabrinian center, they did not feel well, in the middle of all those gentlemen who were unknown to them, there was no acquaintance. They talked with Sister Gemma and told her they were not comfortable, that they wanted to get out of there. Mother Gemma spoke with the superiors, saying that they had to build a house just for women. Once he had the permission, he managed to do the IMA, and they started to separate them. At the beginning it was not easy because the Scalabrinian center did not want to leave the women who were there to come here, because it was a number more than they had and...⁴⁵

Another issue for the change was to preserve the physical integrity of the women, which was more difficult to guarantee in a mixed house. Sister Adelia, before being the director of the IMA, ran a mixed house in Ensenada, and says that for her to start caring for only women was difficult, according to her attending to women demands more attention and more work.

Sr Adelia - Yes. Here, as director, I began to know a little bit of reality, because it was very different from the reality of Ensenada. I was used to working with men, more with men than women, and then at the beginning it was a bit difficult for me.

Interviewer - Oh yes?

Sr Adelia - Yes, because it is very different to work with men.

Interviewer - And with women. What is the hardest thing about working with a woman?

Sr Adelia - With women?

Interviewer - Aham

Sr Adelia - Because with women you must be “*apapachando*” (pampering)⁴⁶... you must be... “Mother gives me that, Mother gives me that, Mother gives me the” it’s a needle, it’s a thread... Even though there, too, where were the men, asked me for a needle to thread... to fix

⁴⁵ Entrevistadora - Entonces, ustedes tomaron la decisión de hacer una casa solo para mujeres y niños, ¿es así? ¿Por qué usted considera que ellos precisan estar separados? ¿Qué es esa atención específica para ellos?

Hna. Adelia - Al principio estaba allá en el centro Scalabrini, la hermana Gemma que cuenta que las mujeres llegaban para irse a los Estados Unidos. Porque en aquel tiempo aún no había tanta deportación como ahora. Entonces sus maridos ya estaban en los Estados Unidos, y ellas querían ir a encontrarlos. Venían para aquí con sus hijos, descansaban unos días y después se iban a cruzar, porque el cruce era mucho más fácil en aquel tiempo. Entonces allí, en el centro Scalabrini, ellas no se sentían bien, en el medio de todos esos señores que había, que eran desconocidos para ellas, no había ningún conocido. Hablaban con la hermana Gemma y le decían que no estaban a gusto, que querían salir de allá. La Madre Gemma habló con los superiores, diciendo que tenían que construir una casa solo para mujeres. Una vez que tuvo el permiso, logró hacer el IMA, y ya empezaron a separar. Al inicio no fue fácil porque el centro Scalabrini no quería dejar salir las mujeres que estaban allí para que vinieran para aquí, porque era un número más que para ellos contaba y...

⁴⁶ Expression in Castilian of Mexico and Central America. In this case, it would be a metaphor to express that women need to embrace them, ‘cover’ them, give them more love, protection.

a pair of pants, to fix the backpack. (...) And with them too, if they were not behaving well, you could say no. You cannot be here anymore. Be after alcoholic, lack respect for some volunteer as well... it was spoken e... "You put yourself in the regulation, or you leave". And then... with women you cannot do this because if you go to the street and where does it go?

Interviewer - Yes

Sr Adelia - And here you must be more like that... hanging on them. They are more sensitive, they are more like that... There are very difficult groups, and there are others that are more like that... Demure. Because in this part, in this part of... Of the cleaning, of the hand... So, of... help us all⁴⁷.

It was understood that catering to these public, demands from the shelter a different structure and greater care when receiving, to channel to other hostels and until the time to send when the time ends, as women and children on the street are subject to vulnerabilities and risks of all kinds. In an interview with the psychologist, she says that women are more vulnerable and separating them from men is part of handling that vulnerability.

Interviewer - Is there a difference in being a migrant woman than a migrant man? In the services...

Psychologist - Yes... specifically speaking about IMA and the Casa del Migrante, I believe that here in IMA there is more flexibility towards women, because in Casa del Migrante they are quite strict, migrants need to verify that they are working... to be able to extend them your stay... Here in the house is a little more flexible because many women come with their children and imagine we cannot take them out with their children. And he has the sisters who take care of the women. I believe that the Casa del Migrante many already come with an addiction, or fall into drug addiction here, out here. So, women are treated differently than men⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ Hna. Adelia - Sí. Aquí, como directora empecé a conocer un poquito de la realidad, porque era bien distinta de la realidad de Ensenada. Estaba acostumbrada a trabajar más con hombres, más con hombres que mujeres, y entonces al inicio se me hizo un tanto difícil.

Entrevistadora - ¿Ah sí?

Hna. Adelia - Sí, porque es bien distinto trabajar con hombres.

Entrevistadora - Y con mujeres. ¿Qué es lo más difícil de trabajar con mujer?

Hna. Adelia - ¿Con las mujeres?

Entrevistadora - Aham...

Hna. Adelia - Porque con las mujeres tú tienes que estar apapachando... o Tú tienes que estar... "Madre me da eso, Madre me da aquello, Madre me da la" es una aguja, es un hilo... A pesar de que allá también, donde estaban los hombres también me pedían una aguja un hilo... para arreglar un pantalón, para arreglar la mochila. (...) Y con ellos también, si no se estaban portando bien, tú podías decir no. Ya aquí no puedes estar. Se tras alcohólico, se faltar respeto para algún voluntario así... se hablaba y.... "Tú te pones en el reglamento, o te sales". Y entonces... con las mujeres no se puede hacer esto porque si sale va para la calle y ¿a dónde se va?

Entrevistadora - Sí

Hna. Adelia - Y aquí tiene que estar más así... pendiente de ellas. Son más sensibles, son más así... Hay grupos muy difíciles, y hay otros que son más así ... Comedidos. Porque en esta parte, en esta parte así de... De la limpieza, de la mano... Así de...ayudarnos todos.

⁴⁸ Entrevistadora - ¿Hay diferencia en ser una mujer migrando que un hombre migrante? En los servicios...

It was asked what specific demands migrant women had and why separate them from men. The interviewees gave many answers, the main one was *comfort and security*. A woman with her children in the middle of so many men does not feel safe and the migrant women, for everything that happens in their trajectory until arriving there, experience a great need to feel protected in the spaces. As we saw, the fact that the Madre Assunta Institute is a religious house helps in that aspect, then, it would resemble a sanctuary. And not having men is part of that process.

Interviewer - What services do women and children offer at home and why are they separate from men?

Migrant - Well, I do not know why, I am not a man I could not say that the needs are different, besides the biological needs, I think that most of what is done is for the safety of the people, of the children, because the men are more capable of defending themselves, men have more strength, so I think they do it more for safety and... because it is more comfortable, for more comfort, for example here a woman if she wants... well a woman with A woman leaving her child, breastfeeding to be in front of other men. So, I think it's more for all those things to say, the woman takes more treatment than the man to have them separately⁴⁹.

Another interesting discourse refers to the *machismo*⁵⁰ that women deal with in Mexican culture and the need for empowerment; a space only for women favors their strengthening process in face of the challenges they face.

Interviewer - Why women and children need specific attention?

Intern Social Worker - It is... the House of the Migrant that is for men; the migrants who are single, mothers who come, they need a little more help because already in this world you need help (...) I think they need a little more help in that sense of the Mexican culture as women are

Psicóloga - Sí... específicamente hablando de IMA y la Casa de Migrante, creo que aquí en IMA hay más flexibilidad hacia las mujeres, porque en Casa de Migrante son bastante estrictos, necesitan los migrantes comprobar que están trabajando... para poder extenderles su estancia... Aquí en la casa es un poquito más flexible porque muchas mujeres vienen con sus niños e imagínate no podemos sacarle a la calle con sus niños. Y tiene las hermanas que cuidan las mujeres. Yo creo que a la Casa del Migrante muchos ya vienen con una adicción, o caen en la drogadicción acá mismo, aquí afuera. Entonces, sí se les trata diferente a las mujeres que a los hombres.

⁴⁹ Entrevistadora - ¿Qué servicios ofrecen en la casa a las mujeres y niños y por qué por separado de los hombres?

Migrante - Bueno, no sé porque, no soy hombre no podría decir que las necesidades son diferentes, además de las necesidades biológicas, pienso yo que la mayor parte de lo que se hace es por seguridad de las persona, de los niños, porque los hombres son más capaces de defenderse, el hombre tiene más fuerza entonces yo pienso que lo hacen más por seguridad y por... pues por estar más cómodo, por más comodidad, por ejemplo aquí una mujer si quiere... pues una mujer con una mujer dejar a su niño, dar el pecho que estar en frente a otros hombres. Entonces pienso yo que es más por todas esas cosas a decir, la mujer ocupa más trato de que el hombre para tenerlos en separado.

⁵⁰ We opted using the word *machismo* as a description of an observed behaviour revealed almost exclusively by men. C.f. G. Miguel Arciniega; Thomas C. Anderson. Toward a Fuller Conception of Machismo: Development of a Traditional Machismo and Caballerismo Scale. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 2008, Vol. 55, No. 1, 19 –33

dependent on their husbands, or men then here I think we give them that power to get out of that and be able to work, to support their family.

Interviewer - Like *empowerment*

Intern Social Worker - humhum, like *empowerment* (laughs)⁵¹.

The city of Tijuana receives a much higher number of male migrants compared to migrant women. A Study of the socioeconomic situation of migrants and foreigners in Baja California⁵² of 2016 shows that among the migrants in Tijuana, 74.8% are represented by men; while 25.2% are women. When we ask about this fact, the interviewees do not know how to say exactly, but there is this perception, including the fact that La Casa del Migrante Scalabrini, which is on the same street, receives more than 200 men at a time, and the IMA 45 women.

The interviewees also point to the difference in migration, affirm that women when they try to cross the border are more organized to do so and men go more for adventure.

3.9.2 Family

On the theme of family, we sought to understand how social gender relations, and their implications, materialized when analyzing family relationships. The sisters who acted in the IMA at the time of the investigation did not seem to interfere much in the lives of the migrants, in their relationship with their children and companions. However, if the migrants ask for guidance, advice and help, the sisters speak, as well as they do if they see carelessness and abuse with the children.

In a specific interview, a volunteer says she was surprised by the tranquility that the sisters deal with these issues, denies having witnessed any type of problem, and affirms that she believed that she would find a stricter environment once she had bad experiences in the community where she lived with an aunt.

Volunteer - No, nothing to do

Interviewer - You do not see any opinion that they give about how the family should be, for example.

Volunteer - No (...) They do not care if you are Catholic, if you live outside the court and you are with a person, they treat you the same. They just want to see you do your job well and respect and that⁵³.

⁵¹ Entrevistadora - *Porque mujeres e niños necesitan de una atención específica?*

Pasante As. Social - *Es... la Casa del Migrante que es para hombres; las migrantes que son solteras, madres que vienen, ellas necesitan un poco más de ayuda porque ya en este mundo necesitas de ayuda (...) creo que necesitan un poco más de ayuda en ese sentido de la cultura mexicana pues las mujeres son dependientes se sus maridos, o de los hombres entonces aquí creo que les damos ese poder se salir de eso y poder trabajar , poder apoyar a su familia.*

Entrevistador - *Como empowerment*

Pasante As. Social - *hum hum, empowerment (risas).*

⁵² Available at: <http://www.copladebc.gob.mx/estudios/4.pdf> . Consulted: August 2018.

⁵³ Voluntaria Estudiante - *No, nada que ver*

Entrevistadora - *No observas alguna opinión que ellas den sobre cómo debería ser la familia, por ejemplo.*

In the same conversation we inquire if this extends to the relationship with the migrants and the volunteer confirms:

Interviewer - And do not the migrants give them opinions?

Volunteer - No, yes, they put on a veneer

Interviewer - How?

Volunteer - Cheeky, like she's playing, joking... because you're not married... or because you're alone but not because you're with someone if you're not married. Never. And like children like that because many times the mothers who come are not married but they do have children, or little girls, and they do not treat them badly or say anything to them.

Interviewer - And about caring for children, how does it have to be a better mom or things like that...

Volunteer - No, that is, they say: you must be patient, as if they see that the mothers are desperate screaming, if they tell you it is that you must be patient, go to work and I take care of you. So worse not that you must be a better mom, you must treat like that, never... and I tell you because I have seen many women here who do not... I do not want to say that they do not treat well but that they neglect their children, many, a lot of negligence. For example, if children are sick, or they want to go to the doctor. And sometimes there are doctors here and they do not even want to enter. And children who are very thin because of bad beliefs and even mothers say nothing. For example, if they are, because many of them ignore them, they shout at them, some believe they must let others cry that they must be carrying all the time, and even then, they are not told anything. You see a lot of negligence. Children are scolded if they are doing bad things, there if they scold them and tell mothers to pay attention. Sometimes they are on the cell phone and the child pum, goes head first, and then nobody (incomprehensible). So, there they say: leave the cell phone, take care of your children. Apart from that, no, I've never seen⁵⁴.

Voluntaria Estudiante. - No (...) A ellas no les importa si tú eres católica, si vives fuera del casorio y estas con una persona, ellas te tratan igual. Ellas simplemente quieren ver que hagas bien tu trabajo y respeten y eso.

⁵⁴ Entrevistadora - ¿Y tampoco las migrantes les echan opiniones?

Voluntaria - No, sí echan carilla

Entrevistadora - ¿Como?

Voluntaria - Carrilla, como que está jugando, bromeando... porque no estás casada... o porque tú estás sola pero no de que por qué estas con alguien si no estás casada. Nunca. Y como a los niños así porque muchas veces las madres que vienen no están casadas, pero si tienen niños, o niñas chiquitas, y no las tratan mal ni les dicen nada.

Entrevistadora - Y acerca de los cuidados con los niños, cómo tiene que ser una mejor mamá o cosas así...

Voluntaria - No, o sea, si les dicen: tienes que tener paciencia, como si ven que las mamás están se desesperando gritando, si les dicen es que tienes que tener paciencia, vete tú al trabajo y yo te lo cuido. Así peor no de que tienes que ser mejor mamá, tienes que tratar así, nunca... y te lo digo porque he visto aquí muchas mujeres que no... no quiero decir que no tratan bien pero que descuidan mucho sus hijos, muchas, mucha negligencia. Por ejemplo, si los niños están enfermos, o quieren ir al doctor. Y a veces hay aquí doctores y ni así quieren entrar. Y de los niños que están bien delgados por las malas creencias y ni así las madres dicen nada. Por ejemplo, si están, porque muchas de ellas les ignoran, les gritan, algunas creen que tienen que dejar llorar otras que tiene que estar cargando todo el tiempo, y ni así se les dicen nada. Se ve mucha negligencia. A los niños los regañan si están haciendo maldades, ahí si se los regañan y les dicen a las madres que les pongan atención. A veces ellas están en el celular y el niño pum, se va de cabeza, y pues nadie (incomprensible). Entonces ahí si dicen: dejen el celular, cuiden a sus niños. A parte de eso no, nunca me ha tocado ver.

During the interviews it became clearer that this relationship is different according to the Sister who is at the forefront and that each one has her own visions regarding the role of women in the family and with the children. In an interview with the psychologist, she tells that she met a Sister who was for a time in the house and she did suffer when she witnessed some family issues:

(...) [the sister she suffered because she said: - It is that this woman who left her with her children, as it is going to be, you tell me what is going to happen to them... and I said - Mother, is that man that the mistreatment cannot be with her does not give her a good life... and the Madre - but how is she going to get divorced? I - Sister, it is not that he is going to get divorced, but right now it is not time that this man is, maybe he is going to separate, so that he can be better and later we do not know...⁵⁵

An interview was interesting at this point, talking to a volunteer, a PhD student, we talked a bit at the end about gender issues and I tried to know if she saw something like that. She explained to me that she believed that it was not only the mothers who saw the migrants with this role of a woman and society in general, but yes, if a migrant is there and she is a mother, she has to take care of her children, she can not leave them to find a job, they also expect from women the service of cleaning and cooking always. That means, in our society this is the pattern of social division of labor, there is no way to be different inside a shelter in Mexico. However, we found from the observations and field interviews that this issue does not seem to be increased by the fact that it is a Catholic house.

A point of reflection on this issue is the power relations in society. The migrants respect the sisters very much and do the work because, from the situation in which they arrive there in the shelter, that relationship could not be different. These migrants, in a situation of vulnerability, tend to reproduce the oppressions that they live in the environment that they are.

3.9.3 Migrants in the IMA

During the period of the field investigation, obtaining formal interviews with the migrants assisted was one of the most challenging parts. This happened with the new arrivals, with those who had more time in the city and with those who, after reaching their autonomy, became voluntary.

The migrants have difficult stories, are there in a healing process after going through many things, and do not trust many people. In the same way, they are a mobile public, they pass through the shelter, many of them stay for one or two days and it is not always possible to predict when they leave. This led us to observe that, in some cases we observed an opening to ask for a longer conversation, it

⁵⁵ (...) [la madre] ella sufría porque decía: - Es que esta mujer que la dejó con sus niños, como va a ser, tú dime que va pasar con ellos... y yo decía - Madre es que ese hombre que la maltrata no puede estar con ella no le da una vida buena... y la madre - pero ¿cómo se va divorciar? yo - Madre, no es que se va a divorciar, pero ahorita no es momento que este hombre esté, a lo mejor se va a separar, para que pueda estar mejor y más adelante no sabemos...

ended in the migrant leaving before the conversation occurs. Some even, with whom we have to maintain a greater contact, we have not had the possibility of dismissing them.

Those with whom we have had more proximity and possibility of dialogue, it has been possible to conduct more focused interviews in the axes that we had previously decided to deepen. On the other hand, with several of them, the contact was more superficial, conversations at lunchtime and during the schedule of tasks. However, always this accompanied by an exercise in methodical observation, oriented to the purposes of research and open to the possibilities of discovering other elements. For this, we stayed with them while they talked, and we took part in a joint way of daily works for the maintenance and better functioning of the Institute.

PROFILE

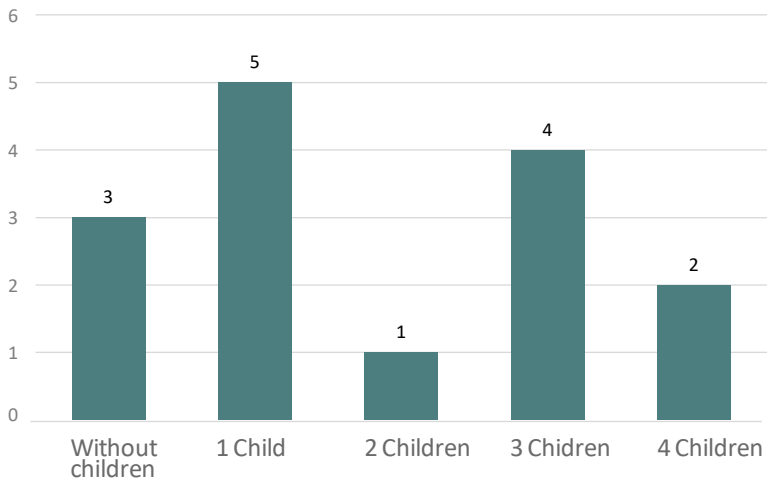
During the field research at the IMA, a total of 15 migrant women contributed in a way that allowed us various analytical levels: six of them, with whom we had spontaneous conversations and shared daily tasks, and eight other migrant women with whom we had access to conduct methodical interviews and, therefore, guided by the interests of this study. The following table details a brief profile of the migrants with whom they spoke or interviewed.

It is important to reinforce that four women are currently volunteers inside the house, a fact that we could think of as evidence of a gesture of recognition of the moral and material support sometimes received in their previous passages by the IMA. That is, the migrants themselves who were attended there, some of them who achieve autonomy of life and stay in the city (even if it is temporary), seek to give back with presence and time, helping the sisters in this work that they carry out, of attention to migrant women and children.

During the period that we were participating in the daily routine of the IMA, we had the opportunity to interact with other women. While this helped us to sharpen our observation and reflections for the investigation, their testimonies are as a background in this report, but not as a concrete fact.

Of the total of the 15 migrant women, only three declared not having children, and 5 of the 12 that were mothers were with at least 1 of their children together with them. The others had left them both in the US and in their places of origin, usually to the care of a relative. It resulted in an average of 2 children per interviewed, being that 6 of them had 3 or more children.

Graph 13 - Number of children per migrant woman. IMA, January / February 2018.



Source: Prepared for this investigation with data collected in the field.

Table 1 – Women migrants in IMA. Interviews and conversations.

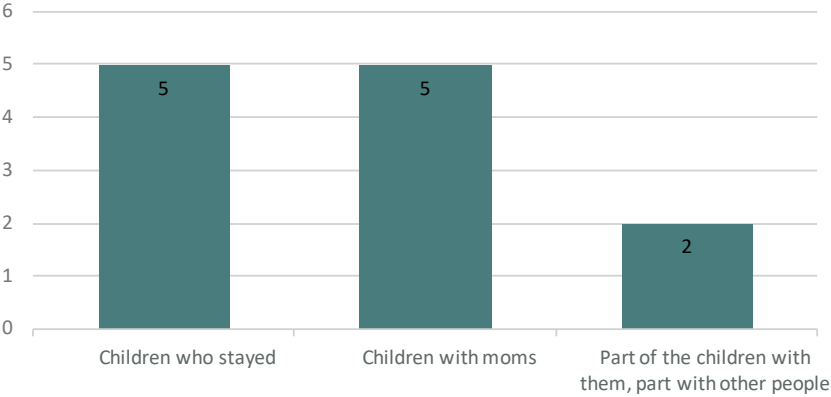
Fictitious name	Nationality	Children	History	Remaking life
Angelita	Mexican (deported)	3 children of 12, 10 and 8 years old	It was for the USA with 17 years, where she lived for 19 years without the required local documentation. Identified by the police as “without papers”, she spent 8 months in detention, until she got a judge. Children were in the US and then came with her. She still has her husband in the USA	Back to Oaxaca
Alma	Mexicana (Guadalajara) (migrant)	3 children of 8, 6 and 5 years old	She arrived in Tijuana with his partner to ‘try life’. They stayed at the hotel for a while because he had gotten a job. She left them to try to cross the border and was arrested. As she was already deported with a 10-year sentence, and the last time he tried he was 2 years in prison, he does not know how long it will be. She was left alone with the children and she went to the IMA when the money ran out.	She decided to return to Guatemala

Carla	Salvadoran (asylum seeker)	1 daughter of 14 years in El Salvador	She left El Salvador fleeing the Maras. She says his family is in great danger there. She got a humanitarian visa for having been a victim of crimes as soon as she entered Mexico.	For now, she works in Mexico, but in the future, she wants to move to the USA
Amparo	Mexican (deported)	4 children Of 10, 12, 14 and 18.	She crossed the border about 10 years ago. After 4 years she had to return to take care of her other children who had stayed with her mother-in-law. It's from Guerrero, she fled violence. The 2 youngest children were born in the US and arrived in Tijuana to send them and then try to pass. She left the first month to fix the papers of the 2 and then sent them to his brother.	Will try again to cross
Elena	Mexicana (Oaxaca) (ex-deportee)	1 daughter of 20 years	Went to the USA in 1989 where she lived for 20 years. She migrated, because she wanted to have a better life and she passed with a coyote known to the family. She lived in Los Angeles. She was deported 9 times and always crossed again. Almost died in the last attempt.	She decided to stay in Tijuana
Lisa	Mexican (ex-deportee)	3 children - the youngest, 12 years old, is with her	She came from the USA 1 year and eight months ago, after spending 23 years in the USA. She stayed in shelter for a few days. Today she has volunteered since she left - she feels IMA as her family.	She settled in Tijuana, works in a hotel and selling clothes. Volunteer at IMA
Marcia	Mexicana (Michoacán) (migrant)	3 children in the US and a 3-year-old daughter with her	She fled from Michoacán to live in Tijuana, because his younger brother was killed recently. She changed his idea about crossing after the road and seeing how it is to apply for asylum.	She decided to stay in Tijuana
Nidia	Mexicana (Michoacán) (deported)	3 children in the USA	Deported from the USA (where she lived 12 years) for problems with domestic violence.	She wants to return to the USA
Fernanda	Honduran (migrant)	2 (a girl of 2 years, 1 child of 6 months)	She came to Tijuana behind his sister who lives here. She asked for help, but the sister did not want to help her and started treating her daughter badly. She went to the shelter.	Return to Cancun

Maribel	Honduran (asylum seeker)	—	She arrived in Tijuana to ask for political asylum in the US because she suffers political persecution in Honduras. Participates in the opposition alliance since he was 17 years old. The problem in Honduras intensified in November after the last elections where the current president remained in office illegally. The threats to his group became more frequent and killed a close friend (December 26). She and another friend who smoked persecutions for being homosexual, decided to go to the USA.	Asylum in the USA
Norma	Salvadoran (deported)	—	She lived for 22 years in the USA. She had problems with his birth certificates, she went to the USA 'wet' when he was 22 years old, walking along the border with the help of a pollero. In 2008 she was deported and since then tries to return to the country.	We do not know, he left without talking to anyone in the house.
Ramona	Mexicana (Toluca) (ex-deportee)	1 daughter	She went to the USA to accompany the husband who was American. She went illegal and tried 3 times to get to Colorado. She was in the United States for 12 years and was already regularizing the papers when she was arrested. She arrived in Tijuana in June 2008. She lived in the IMA. Today is voluntary.	She decided to stay in Tijuana
Sonia	Salvadoran (asylum seeker)	1 daughter of 6 years	She fled El Salvador with his daughter and her husband. She stayed in the shelter for a period and now goes as a volunteer.	She settled with the family in Tijuana, she is a housewife
Vera	Haitian (migrant)	—	She immigrated first to Brazil (she lived 3 years in Santa Catarina with her husband). There she worked in a refrigerator (Sadia). They decided to go to the USA, where they have family. They started to climb, along with friends. They passed through Bolivia, Venezuela, Central American countries until they reached Tijuana.	She decided to stay in Tijuana, she is an IMA official
Veronica	Guatemalan / Mexican (migrant)	1 3-year-old daughter	She is in Tijuana 3 months ago and stayed 1 month in IMA. She tried to cross the border 2 times without success.	She settled in Tijuana but will still try to cross.

Source: Prepared for this investigation with data collected in the field.

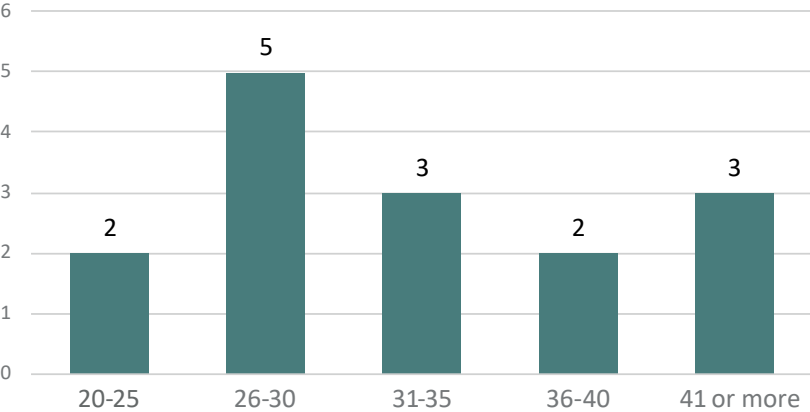
Graph 14 - Present situation of the children. IMA, January / February 2018.



Source: Prepared for this investigation with data collected in the field.

The age of these migrant women was between 22 and 58 years old, with a higher concentration between 26 and 35 years.

Graph 15 - Age of the migrants interviewed. IMA, January / February 2018.

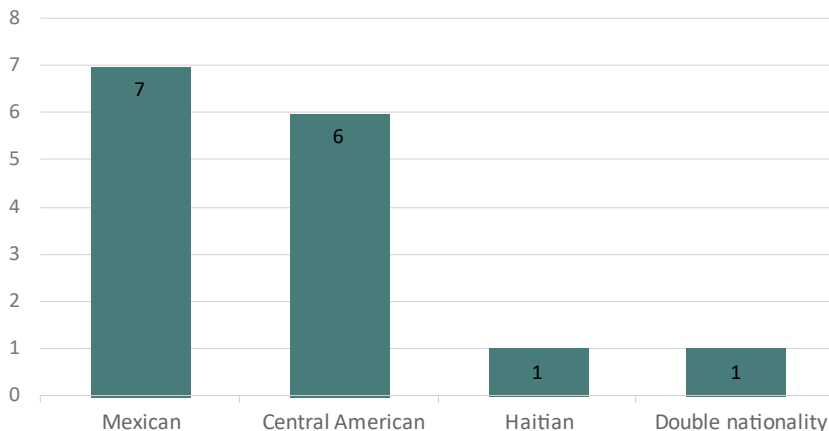


Source: Prepared for this investigation with data collected in the field.

Of the 15 migrants, 7 were deported Mexicans, 6 were Central Americans (Hondurans and Salvadorans), 1 was a Caribbean (Haitian) and 1 had dual nationalities because they were born on the border between Mexico and

Guatemala. Among them, 8 had already been deported, 3 were asylum seekers, and the others claim to have tried to pass but decided to live in Tijuana.

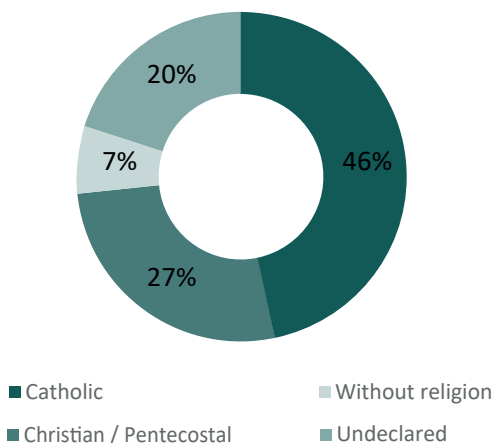
Graph 16 - Nationality of the interviewed migrants. IMA, January / February 2018.



Source: Prepared for this investigation with data collected in the field.

About the professed religion 7 (46%) of the interviewees said they were Catholic, 4 (27%) are Christian, 1 (7%) declares non-religious and the other 3 (20%) did not declare.

Graph 17 - Religion of the interviewed migrants. IMA, January / February 2018.



Source: Prepared for this investigation with data collected in the field.

3.9.4 Migratory Project and journey

The stories are quite similar among the migrants who collaborated with the investigation. The Central Americans leave their homes fleeing violence and crime (gangs) present in their country of origin; In some specific cases, these women flee situations of domestic violence to save their children and threatened husbands. Most of the migrants who ask for asylum in the US do so because of violence and threats. We found a migrant⁵⁶ who fled from a political persecution in El Salvador;

Interviewer - You tell me a bit how was this decision to immigrate

Maribel - Well, the decision to migrate was because there I was being threatened for my political ideology. I belong to the opposition over Honduras, to the opposition Alliance. Then November was the elections, because there was fraud, the president was again imposed, there was revolt on the part of the people, there were demonstrations, taking of roads and they threatened us, we who were party leaders, the same military police that is police of Juan Orlando Hernández, he is not a policeman for the town, and they threatened us, they told us that they knew us they were going to kill us. On December 26, they killed a comrade of ours and it was when we made the decision to leave, and they said that the next ones were us because we were quite involved in politics there, and all that, that's why I'm afraid they would do something to me then. that I had to leave my country, like that, fast⁵⁷.

The migrants who decide to apply for asylum in the United States must show evidence of their persecution and the cases are hardly similar to the case of this migrant who was really engaged in a political group and has registered complaints of persecution that she could prove. Most of the time, the persecution comes from criminal groups or they simply flee from the violence that takes place near their homes.

The asylum application is not simple, they are arrested for a few months, they are separated from their children, they must have someone resident who receives them, pay an assessment, and they only really get through if they can prove the persecution. If they do not have all these conditions, they are deported and return to the initial stage, so that there is almost no possibility of entry to the

⁵⁶ The names, or any other form of identification of migrant women in this report, are fictitious to preserve their identities.

⁵⁷ Entrevistadora - Me cuentas un poco cómo fue esta decisión de inmigrar

Maribel - Pues la decisión de migrar fue porque allá estaba siendo amenazada. Por mi ideología política. Yo pertenezco a la oposición allá de Honduras, a la Alianza de oposición. Entonces noviembre fueron las elecciones, pues hubo fraude, se impuso otra vez el presidente, hubo revuelta por parte del pueblo, había manifestaciones, toma de carreteras y pues nos amenazaron, a nosotros que éramos dirigentes del partido, la misma policía militar que es policía de Juan Orlando Hernández, no es policía para el pueblo, y nos amenazaron, nos decían que nos conocían que nos iban a matar. El 26 de diciembre mataron un compañero nuestro y fue cuando nosotros tomamos la decisión de salirnos, y decían que los próximos éramos nosotros 2 porque éramos bastante metidos en la política allá, y todo eso, por eso porque tengo miedo de que me hicieran algo entonces por eso tuve que salir de mi país, así, rápido.

United States for asylum, which is what most of the migrants arrive at the shelter planning to do. Unfortunately, most migrants do not have this information when they turn themselves in at the border. The intern of social work tells us how these cases are:

Interviewer - If a person says to you: I'm going to pass, I'm sure I'll pass, what do you say? Do you give some kind of advice?

Intern Social Worker - Yes, they are only told, for example if they want to apply for asylum if they already have a person who receives them there. Because it's usually what stops them. Sometimes they say that they have someone who will receive them and their relative repents. Then we say to them: You will have to pay the bail, because they put you in jail... the asylum seekers are put in jail... they call it the attention center, but it is a jail, and there are criminals and petitioners of asylum. Then the relative must pay bail and your family member must sign and say that he is taking care of you, and that's where a legal process goes.

Interviewer - And this relative must have a residence.

Intern Social Worker - Yes, because imagine if I am undocumented and I say that I am going to receive the family member, I put myself at risk of being deported. So, it must be somebody with normal legal status who are already residents or citizens⁵⁸.

Some Mexicans who live especially in the states of Guerrero, Chiapas, Oaxaca and Michoacán also flee crime and seek asylum, but in these cases, they flee the drug trade. As it happens in the story of Marcia. She tells us that she was coming from Michoacán, fleeing to live in Tijuana, she came here and a woman that she has met on the bus let her sleep with his daughter in a part of the house outside. But she, who was already scared, did not feel safe and sought for shelter. She says she did not sleep well for weeks, her younger brother was killed a short time ago, and this was the third person that they killed there. Marcia heard knocks at the door and believed that the criminals would not leave her alone. She was living with his father, but he did not want to leave, because he has a business there. Then she decided to migrate out of fear and for her 3-year-old daughter.

Marcia has three other children in the US, she was deported a few years ago, for involvement in a domestic violence process - she and her husband always fought and once she held back and broke his nose. Both went to the jail and then

⁵⁸ Entrevistadora - ¿Si una persona te dice: Me voy a pasar, estoy segura de que voy a pasar, ¿qué le dices? ¿Das algún tipo de consejo?

Pasante As. Social - Sí, solo se les dice, por ejemplo, si quieren solicitar asilo si ya tienen una persona que las reciba allá. Porque es usualmente lo que las detiene. As veces dicen que tienen alguien que las va a recibir y el familiar se arrepiente. Entonces les decimos: Vas a tener que pagar una fianza, porque te meten a la cárcel... a las solicitantes de asilo las meten a la cárcel... le llaman centro de atención, pero es una cárcel, y allí hay personas criminales y solicitante de asilo. Entonces el familiar tiene que pagar una fianza y tu familiar tiene que firmar y decir que él está encargándose de ti, y de ahí va un proceso legal.

Entrevistadora - Y este familiar tiene que tener residencia.

Pasante As. Social- Sí, porque imagínate si yo soy indocumentada y digo que voy a recibir al familiar me pongo a mí mismo en riesgo de ser deportada. Entonces tiene que ser alguna persona con el estatus legal normal que ya sean residentes o ciudadanos.

were deported. Her ex-husband had also abused her 10-year-old son. She said she crossed again after that and deported her again and then she did not try to come back again. She arrived in Tijuana to try ask for asylum in the US, but after talking with the Social Workers she changed her mind - "they told me that I am going to be detained and they are going to separate me from the girl". The narrative of the migrant is of much suffering and much pain. And this is an example of the many similar stories that come every day in the IMA.

Another emblematic story is that of Amparo. Amparo stayed a few months in the shelter and helped a lot there. She crossed to the United States the first time about 10 years ago, but after 4 years she had to get back to take care of her other children who stayed with her mother-in-law. Amparo is from Guerrero and has 4 children, one of 18 to one of 14, one of 12 and another of 10. The two youngest children were born in the United States and she arrived in Tijuana to send them back to US, and then try to pass. That's why she was there at the IMA for so long. She stayed the first month to wait for the papers of the two children and then sent them to his brother. The two older ones stayed in Guerrero, the older one was taken away by the mother-in-law. She says that she fled from the violence in Guerrero and that it has more to do with drug trafficking. The last news we had is that she tried again to cross into the States United but without the necessary documents to do it so.

Other Mexicans migrants were deported from the United States, some several times, both because of unsuccessful attempts and because of the difficulty of crossing the border, as Ramona relates with her case:

Ramona - There are some [migrants] who bring such strong cases. What I lived here and looked at helped me to definitely not try to cross until now. I'm afraid to cross the line, I'm scared, because they threw me on the bar, I fell and I... a guy who could not even move from the back, we had to carry it, or his feet were broken... oh no ugly... ugly, ugly.

Interviewer - And was it worth crossing? Is it worth going through all that?

Ramona - Well many times we go for the economic, and for the family that is already there then one wants to reunite again to have his family.

Interviewer -Do you earn much further? Is it better?

Ramona - Economically yes, but you are not living as a family, we lose a lot of her children's things, does not live with them a lot... because you have to work also, because, just as she does not work, she does not pay the rent, but if she is another level of life there...⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Ramona - Hay algunas [migrantes] que traen unos casos tan fuertes. Lo que yo viví aquí y miré me ayudó para definitivamente no intentar hasta ahorita cruzar. Yo tengo miedo cruzar la línea, me da miedo, porque me aventaron da la barra, me caí y me... una venía que ni siquiera podía mover de la espalda, teníamos que cargarla o se quebraban sus pies... oh no feo... feo, feo

Entrevistadora- ¿Y valió la pena cruzar? ¿Vale la pena pasar por todo eso?

Ramona - Pues muchas veces que vamos por lo económico, y por la familia que ya está allá entonces uno quiere reunir otra vez volver a tener su familia.

Entrevistadora- ¿Se gana mucho más allá? ¿Es mejor?

Ramona - Económicamente sí, pero no está conviviendo como familia, pierde uno muchas cosas de los hijos,

Some migrants lived in the United States and had to return to Mexico for some family reason, or they also accumulate several deportations. In the 1980s and 1990s crossing the line was much easier, then people went back to visit family members, etc., they had known coyotes and the cough did not seem so traumatic. Elena has about 10 deportations in her historical record, and she had successfully crossed several times. The last time she tried to cross almost died, then she decided to stop trying and settle in Tijuana.

Interviewer - Was this to cross a river?

Elena- No! After I almost died... the last time I tried to cross I almost died because I fell into a hole full of mud, and they were watching me, the people of the *Migra*⁶⁰ were watching me and they did not take me out, they were seeing... if they took me out, but I had mud all the way here, but they let me suffer, that I was scared that I thought I was dying, they are bad! They were analyzing me with their binoculars like a weirdo, so to see, to see... others were coming to save me, but I had mud all over here, look. Then they threw me like a stick ¿yes? the horses, I grabbed the stick and pulled it and it was (incomprehensible) and they took me out... it was full of mud...

Interviewer - Was this to cross a river?

Elena- Through beaches of Tijuana. There, those who go to Tijuana beaches walk through a small hill and must cross a river, a small river, but it is a river, and at that time there was mud, there was no water, but there was mud. And I, because I got in the river thinking that it did not sink...

Interviewer - And did you not have more people with you? Were you alone?

Elena - I was not alone, but the whole group that I was with went ahead and since I did not, it was in 2011 I had no more condition, the age... then I end up to staying here.

Interviewer - Was that after you were deported the last time?

Elena - That was in 2011 that was the reason why I decided to stay. I do not want to die. That was in 2011 that I tried to leave again... before looking for work all that... I was going, leaving... and I left and almost died.

Interviewer - Well, and from this time they deported you did not want to try again?

Elena - No, not because things get very dangerous, much vigilance, much danger, and I decided to look for work and stay here in Tijuana to see my daughter more often⁶¹.

no convive uno mucho... porque tiene uno que trabajar también, porque, así como no trabaja, no paga la renta, pero si es otro nivel de vida allá...

⁶⁰ The way the migrants refers to Border Patrols

⁶¹ Entrevistadora - ¿No tiene más la ilusión de ir allá?

Elena - ¡No!, después de que casi me muero... la última vez que intenté cruzar casi me muero porque caí en un hoyo lleno de lodo, e me estaban viendo, las personas de la migra me estaban viendo y no me sacaban, estaban viendo... sí me sacaron, pero yo tenía de lodo hasta acá, pero dejaron que yo sufriera, que yo me asustara que yo me pensara que estaba muriendo, ¡son malos! Me estaban analizando con sus binoculares

As we see in the case of Elena, one of the reasons for those deported to stay in Tijuana is to be close to relatives who still live in the US. In her case she has a 22-year-old daughter who is American, lives in San Diego and comes to visit her every vacation. Tijuana, according to the interviewees, for being on the border is a city with many employment opportunities, in this way the migrants who fail to pass, sometimes choose to stay and look for work there.

Veronica - I tried, twice, to cross but I could not cross, I (incomprehensible) by the *Migra*, but I thank God they did not catch me. They did not catch us, we escaped. That was a relief for me, I do not want to be in jail, I have a girl to support, I have a 3-year-old daughter, she's with my dad. It makes me go out and keep it, as I want the best for her, that she has a career, study, that's what I want for my girl... I'm looking around.

Interviewer - What plans did you have before leaving your country?

Veronica - Arriving in the USA, this is my dream, and I did not give up, it's what I want...

Interviewer - And what do you think is going to happen there?

Veronica - What I think right now is, do not know how I'm going to achieve it, but I'm thinking about doing it... taking out a visa is what I want now.

Interviewer - And do not you think about going back to your town?

Veronica - No, not now...⁶²

como un bicho raro, así a ver, a ver a ver... ya venían otros para salvarme, pero yo tenía lodo hasta acá, mira. Entonces me aventaron como un palo ¿sí? lo de los caballos, me agarré al palo así y lo jalaron y fue que (incomprensible) y ya me sacaron... estaba llena de lodo...

Entrevistadora- *¿Esto fue para cruzar un río?*

Elena- *Por playas de Tijuana. Por ahí, los que se van por playas de Tijuana caminan por un montecito y tienen que cruzar un río, un río chico, pero es un río, y en ese entonces estaba el lodo, no había agua, pero estaba el lodo. Y yo, pues me meto en el río pensando que no se hunde...*

Entrevistadora- *¿Y no traía más gente con Ud.? ¿Estabas sola?*

Elena - *No estaba sola, porque todo el grupo con lo que yo iba se adelantaron y como yo no tenía eso fue en 2011 yo no tenía más condición, la edad... entonces me fui quedando acá.*

Entrevistadora - *¿Eso fue después que fue deportada la última vez?*

Elena - *Eso fue en 2011 esa fue la razón por la cual ya decidí quedarme. No me quiero morir. Eso fue en 2011 que volví a intentar irme otra vez... antes de buscar trabajo todo eso... yo estaba con irme, irme... y me fui y casi me muero.*

Entrevistadora- *¿Pues, y ahí de esta vez que te deportaron no quiso volver a intentarlo?*

Elena- *No, ya no porque las cosas se ponen muy peligrosas, mucha vigilancia, mucho peligro, y ya decidí buscar trabajo y quedarme aquí en Tijuana para ver más seguido a mi hija.*

⁶² Verónica - *Intenté, dos veces, para cruzar, pero no pude cruzar, me (incomprensible) la migra, pero doy gracias a Dios que no me agarraron. No nos alcanzaron a agarrar, nos escapamos. Eso fue un alivio para mí, no quiero estar en la cárcel, tengo una niña que mantener, tengo una hija de 3 años, está con mi papá. Me hace pues salir y mantenerla, como quiero sacarla adelante pues que tenga una carrera, que estudie, eso es lo que quiero para mi niña... ando buscando por ahí*

Entrevistadora - *¿Qué planes tenía Ud. antes de salir de su país?*

Verónica - *Llegar a EUA, este es mi sueño, y no me di por vencida, es lo que quiero...*

Entrevistadora - *¿Y qué piensas que va a pasar allá?*

Verónica - *Que pienso ahorita es, no sé cómo voy a lograrlo, pero pienso en hacerlo.... sacar una visa es lo que quiero ahora.*

Entrevistadora - *¿Y no piensas volver a su pueblo?*

In the case of Haitians, they flee from the political, economic and environmental crises that Haiti suffered in the last decade. Some come after having gone through Brazil looking for a better job.

All migrants, regardless of nationality, seek security and employment opportunities and a more dignified life. Many did not have the option of staying in their homes. One example was the migrant Carla, who tells in an interview that she left El Salvador fleeing the Maras. According to her story, her family is in great danger there, she is a single mother and has a 14-year-old daughter who stayed with her mother, as it was dangerous to bring her, at least until she was safe.

Carla obtained a humanitarian visa for having been the victim of crimes as soon as she entered Mexico. She recounts the crimes that were victimized by her colleagues who were together, the story is one of chills with such violence: assault, extortion, torture and sexual abuse. The road for all is difficult, even those that care enough because crossing Mexico is the greatest danger. The criminal groups know the way of the migrants and take advantage of their vulnerability, the police do not make the difference and even the local inhabitants in some way exploit this population that walks through their country taking advantage of the migrant's documentation status and thus take advantage of their workforce.

Sexual abuse, as happened with Carla, are so frequent that according to a report by Vanguardia⁶³ It is estimated that 7 out of 10 women are victims of sexual abuse along the way. The report also shows that:

According to the Training and Training Study (Foca) and the Mesoamerican Women, Health and Migration Network presented in August 2015, sexual abuse and rape against migrant women during their journey through Mexico are almost common risks of migratory traffic, so they are almost forced to inject contraceptives before starting the trip⁶⁴

Norma is a migrant who has been trying to return to the US through Mexico for about 10 years -the migrant tells us in her story- up to at least three sexual abuse attempts along the way.

Norma - It has happened many times... The year before that a man wanted to rape me, he was going to throw me in a ravine. And I run and had a trailer [trucks] down there, and he let me go, and I said, 'they're going to come from the trailer now and they're going to help me,' I told them. And the man released me that. And I left, I ran, on that mountain, there was no shelter, there was nothing. And I went to Aqueduct, and

Verónica - No, por ahora no...

⁶³ Available at: <https://vanguardia.com.mx/articulo/de-un-infierno-otro-si-hablas-te-mueres-siete-de-cada-diez-mujeres-migrantes-son-victimas>, Consulted at: July 2018.

⁶⁴ Según el estudio de Formación y Capacitación (Foca) y la Red Mesoamericana Mujer, Salud y Migración presentado en agosto de 2015, los abusos sexuales y violaciones en contra de las mujeres migrantes durante su trayecto por México son riesgos casi comunes del tránsito migratorio por lo que ellas están casi obligadas a inyectarse anticonceptivos antes de emprender el viaje.

then, I did not like the house I was in, because it was abusive that one that was there. (...) He almost raped me. And last year I also wanted to rape another man, back in Saltillo. Because I was going that way in the north and wanted to rape the man because I asked for a ride to the other side of the bridge that was on the other side. And he gave me the ride, but he's going to drive and he's driving, and I said to myself, but where is he going? And where are we going, I told him. 'You do not say anything, we'll get there'. He got into some colonies and being there he wanted to rape me. And I opened the door, grabbed my purse, and jumped out of one. 'No one is going to touch me, you told me you were going to help me.' (...) When I saw he had stripped his pants, and I went quickly. (...) How disgusting he gave me. I just threw the door and left. And I got into some land and some wire fences, see that it is dangerous and then some dogs. (...) and when I got to the street... I got to the main one and I went there for the house of Saltillo, a shelter in Saltillo. And there was a taxi, and I said, 'I do not have money, I'm running from a man who wanted to rape me,' 'whatever I have to give,' and I took a garment from the bag. 'I give you this to sell,' I said. And he said, 'well something is something' and took me. I came to Saltillo's house and I worked there, like two weeks I worked... It's hard, it's not easy, it's not easy to walk alone. They can do something to him, they can kill one to him. Because Mexico is not easy⁶⁵.

Another migrant, Maribel, points to the need to have patience to protect herself along the way by not taking unnecessary risks. She also tells that she had to pretend that she was a lesbian to avoid harassment from migrant colleagues along the way.

Maribel - But it is by the same, by the desperation, or by the ignorance of coming without papers, to get in that train, and that train is fixed that the zetas and the delinquents and everything go up.

Interviewer - In *la bestia*?

Maribel- In *la bestia* and make disasters. I initially said if I fall... I will not expose as much and as I say, there as I was in Tapachula so long from my

⁶⁵ Norma - Me ha pasado muchas veces... El año antepasado me quiso violar un hombre, en un barranco me iba a tirar. Y yo corro y había unos tráileres [camiones] allá abajo, y me soltó, y yo le dije 'ya van a venir ahora de los tráileres y me van a ayudar' les dije yo. Y me soltó el hombre ese. Y salí, corrí yo, en esa montaña, no había albergue, no había nada. Y me fui a Acueducto, y luego, no me gustó la casa que estaba, porque era abusivo el que estaba allí. (...) Casi me viola. Y el año pasado también me quiso violar otro allá en Saltillo. Porque yo iba por aquel lado, por el norte y me quiso violar el hombre porque yo le pedí un ride para el otro lado, del puente que había del otro lado. Y me dio el ride, pero va de manejar y va de manejar y me dije yo, pero ¿para dónde va?, ¿para atrás? Y para dónde vamos, le dije yo. 'usted no diga nada, ya vamos a llegar'. Se metió en unas colonias, y ya estando allá quería violarme. Y yo abrí la puerta, agarré mi bolso y salté de un solo. 'No va a tocarme nadie a mí, usted me dijo que iba a ayudarme'. (...) Cuando vi se había pelado hasta los pantalones, y yo me fui rapidito. (...) Qué asco me dio. Sólo le aventé (sic) la puerta y me salí. Y me metí por unos terrenos y unos alambrados, fíjate que es peligroso y luego unos perros. (...) y cuando llegué a la calle (...) llegué a la principal y me fui para allá para la casa de Saltillo, un albergue que hay en Saltillo. Y allí había un taxi, y le dije 'yo no ando de dinero, estoy huyendo de un hombre que me quiso violar', 'ah lo que tenga que me pueda dar' y saqué yo una prenda de la bolsa. 'Le doy esto para que lo venda', le dije. Y dijo 'bueno algo es algo' y me llevó. Llegué a la casa de Saltillo y ahí trabajé, como dos semanas trabajé (...) es duro, no es fácil, no es fácil andar sola. Le pueden hacer algo, le pueden matar a uno. Porque México no es fácil.

work to my room I think the (incomprehensible) already knew me but as I entered from 6 to 6 then I never went out or anything, there are people who come here to loot to make disasters to do (incomprehensible), but your you bring your goal and your goal and not come out of it... but it is serious, quite serious. Because you see a woman...

Interviewer - A lonely woman?

Maribel - Hum, and there no (incomprehensible) men, where I was all, or all wanting with me, but I do not, I prefer to be told that I am believed... and neither (incomprehensible) to see us even. Because I cannot walk there what I walk... you must be very objective, be brave enough, and go ahead. And now...

Interviewer - Huevona (a dude) yes (laughs)?

Maribel - Yes, (laughs) one sometimes must go male sometimes...

Interviewer - Did you happen there?

Maribel - Yes, several times to stay well there in Tapachula, everyone thought I was a lesbian for the same, for protection because they were too annoying. And everything... and sometimes one ignores, and they are always cursing, then... If in the journey always said that I am a lesbian, for the same reason. So that they look at me and do not mess with me or anything.

Interviewer - But do not respect that, respect?

Maribel- Yes, some yes, some not⁶⁶.

Maribel was a very elegant and attentive young woman, she tells us that in order to travel that path the person must be not only brave, but also attentive, alive and not trusting anyone. Explains that there is a lot of boarding during the tour of poultry dealer and people looking for mules to cross the border with drugs, she says:

⁶⁶ Maribel - Pero es por lo mismo, por la desesperación, o por la ignorancia de venir sin papeles, subirse en ese tren y ese tren es fijo que se suban los zetas y los delincuentes y todo.

Entrevistadora - En la Bestia

Maribel - Si la Bestia y hacen desastres. Yo al principio dije si me caigo...yo no me voy a exponer tanto y como le digo, allá como estuve en Tapachula tanto tiempo de mi trabajo a mi cuarto yo creo que los (incomprensible) ya me conocían pero como entraba de 6 a 6 entonces yo nunca salía ni nada, hay gente que viene aquí a loquear a hacer desastres a hacer (incomprensible), pero su tu traes tu objetivo y su objetivo y no sale de él... pero es serio, bastante serio. Porque uno ve mujer...

Entrevistadora- Una mujer sola

Maribel - Hum, y ahí no (incomprensible) nada de hombres, ahí donde yo estaba todos, o sea todos queriendo conmigo, pero yo igual no, yo prefiero que me digan que yo soy creída... y ni (incomprensible) a vernos siquiera. Porque no puede andar ahí lo que ando... uno tiene que ser bien objetivo, ser bastante valiente, huevona y seguir adelante. Y ya...

Entrevistadora- Huevona si (risas)

Maribel - Sí, (risas) una a veces tiene que pasarse de macho a veces...

Entrevistadora- ¿Te pasó ahí?

Maribel - Sí varias veces para quedarme bien ahí en Tapachula, todo mundo pensaba que yo era lesbiana por lo mismo, por protección porque demasiado molestaban. Y todo... y a veces uno ignora y siempre andan chingando, entonces. Si en el camino siempre decía que soy lesbiana, por lo mismo. Para que me miren y no se metan conmigo ni nada.

Entrevistadora- ¿Pero no respetan eso, respetan?

Maribel - Sí, algunos sí, otros no.

Maribel - I said, I'm going to take this trip to see how it goes.

Interviewer - Well, and did I get here? He was very brave.

Maribel - Yes, the truth is, you must be, apart from being brave, you must be a little bit alive, quite *spark*, you do not know what you are doing in the truth... On the way you are going through a lot of options for get there faster, but at the end of it, right?

Interviewer - Yes.

Maribel - And in the end you know people and several... in each way you meet people... good and bad, more bad people than good. And as I say we were offering to do things very quickly, but after all we arrived here in Tijuana and they already called us ask that if we wanted to cross with (incomprehensible) they heard of the backpack... I do not know if they have heard of the backpack.

Interviewer - What do you have drugs inside?

Maribel - Ahan..., they give to them... apparently one of those who were there in a shelter in Mexico, he had told us about this and... I told him at the beginning - no, I'm going to ask for asylum... I say... And he says - we are not going to do that, I have it all safe, no more (incomprehensible), you get there... Then no, I say - no, no, you are crazy me and my friend we left him No, but then here he calls us and says - ah, he's already there if they want, I already tell him to come by you and I do not know what. And then we said no. As in Tapachula several poultry dealer, as they say here, appeared to us, but... how do I tell you one has to be quite alive, do not trust anyone, one cannot trust anyone. I could not trust my own friend, who abandoned me... yes⁶⁷.

For Maribel one of the worst things that happened on the road was having been abandoned by her traveling companion. All the time she was citing what happened to her, that confirmed that on this road you cannot trust anyone, and it is each one for yourself.

⁶⁷ Maribel - Dije, voy a hacer este viaje a ver cómo me va.

Entrevistadora - Bueno, y ¿llego hasta aquí no? Fue bien valiente.

Maribel - Sí, la verdad que sí, hay que ser, aparte de valiente, hay que ser un poquito vivo, bastante chipa, uno no sabe en lo que anda en la verdad... En el camino se le van pasando bastantes opciones para llegar más rápido, pero, al fin e a cabo ¿no?

Entrevistadora - Sí.

Maribel - Y en el final va conociendo gente y de varios... en cada camino conoce gente... buena y mala, más mala que buena. Y que como le digo le ofrecen las cosas rápido, pero al fin y al cabo nosotros llegamos acá en Tijuana y ya lo llamaron que si queríamos cruzar con (incomprehensible) escuchado en la mochila... no sé si han escuchado de la mochila

Entrevista - ¿Que tiene drogas adentro?

Maribel - Ahan..., le dan uno... al parecer uno de los que estábamos allá en albergue en México, él nos había platicado así de esto y ... yo le dije al principio - no, yo me voy a pedirle asilo... le digo... Y dice - no vamos a hacer eso, le tengo toda segura, no más (incomprehensible), te llegas allá... Entonces no, le digo - no, estás loco yo y mi amigo le dijimos que no pero luego aquí nos llama él y dice - ah que ya está allá si quieren yo ya le digo que pasen por Uds. y que no sé qué. Y pues le decimos que no. Igual que en Tapachula varios polleros, como les dicen acá, se nos aparecían, pero... cómo le digo uno tiene que ser bastante vivo, no confiar en nadie, uno no puede confiar en nadie. Ni en mi propio amigo yo podía confiar, que me abandonó... si.

Thus, the migrants arrive in the shelters with a load of suffering, pain, having been victims of all kinds of violence and, many times having lost everything they had before, home, family and the place where they lived.

3.9.5 Decisions and “Rebuild life”

When they arrive at the shelter after the whole journey or after having been deported, the migrants must face the decision of what they are going to do next. The time they spend there is a time where they are protected, have a roof and food to be able to think about what to do next.

The work of the social workers, the psychologist and the lawyer are very important at that moment, because they give the necessary advice and help them to think about their options. The lawyer, for example, explains the legal situation if they wish to request asylum, such as the procedures if they are deported and want to recover the children, instructs on the consequences of passing undocumented, or help if they need birth certificates or other documents.

With this information, migrants can decide better what to do and how to rebuild their lives. This part of the decision was quite considered in the field investigation, the idea was to understand how the house officials helped and advised the migrants at that time.

When you ask most employees, they say they do not advise migrants to cross or not, and that they do explain all the consequences of doing so - for example, they will damage their record in U.S. But they always clarify that it is a very personal decision and they will help them in whatever they can.

They say that especially the Central American migrants must be well oriented because they are looking for a Political Asylum that the United States does not provide to them. The intern explains that their role in social work is to give all information and leave migrants aware of the risks and processes that may happen, she says that many of them do not bring in their heads a plan b, another alternative. For example, she asks to them: “And if you do not manage to enter with asylum, what will you do?” and she says that sometimes they get scared because it does not occur to them, their effort is 100% in getting that, they not think further to that.

Interviewer - If they say, I'm going to cross, what do you answer?

Intern Social Worker - We can neither encourage nor discourage them. It is a very personal decision, but it is my obligation to tell you what the reality is at the border, what you will find. Yes? That they can extort her, that the coyote can damage, violate, kidnap her, yes? This... what migration police can do to you, how can it be stopped, how long are you going to have it, if they have children that you will happen with the children... because they are separated. Children cannot be detained then if a woman is detained in migration the child goes to a shelter, and explain that if she is deported the children will go out, but there is also a law in the USA that is the child's superior law, which they call them

juvenile law, for all those who entered 2 years ago in the USA, and who had them, they are still in shelter and there is a family member who asks for them, and they bring it in that law and the whole adoption process begins...

Interviewer - But again if they say: I'm going to pass, what do you say?

Intern Social Worker -I tell them everything, kind of, the process, everything that might happen.

Interviewer - Do you advise them not to try?

Intern Social Worker -No, we never tell you: Do not do it, we mostly tell them the risks⁶⁸.

The lawyer says that at first, he tried to say not to cross but now he knows that the advice is useless, because if they are for sure going to try, so he tries to leave them as informed as possible, even on the most dangerous roads.

Interviewer -How do you advise them about the migratory project they have? For example, if they say 'no, I'm going to try to pass...' What do you do?

Lawyer - At first, I was very like that 'no, do not go because this is going to happen to you...', and of the risks that were warned them. But already time is telling you that, if you already have a firm idea that they want to go to United States, even if you tell them not to go, they will go. Then, is better I have the knowledge, I advise about it, better not go here (for the swamp, etc.). Or I tell them, if you go on the road and you start to see these types of zones, do not continue, because they are very dedicated to kidnapping and they are going to steal you. Or here they are going to steal you, but you no longer deliver what you bring, and they will not hurt you.

Interviewer -And you know all the dangers... why do they tell you?

Lawyer -No, no. All the dangers do not. But I know some points that may be in danger. It has already happened to me that for a time (2 or 3 months) people arrive saying that they have been robbed, kidnapped by a certain area. And I tell them, they still go and in two days they return crying. And I'm not going to tell you, but what is mine now is to look

⁶⁸ Entrevistadora - Y si ellas dicen, voy a cruzar, ¿qué le contestas?

Pasante As. Social - Nosotros no podemos ni alentarlas ni desalentarlas. Es una decisión muy personal pero sí es mi obligación decirles cuál es la realidad en la frontera, qué van a encontrar. ¿Sí? Que la pueden extorsionar, que el coyote la puede pues dañar, violar, la puede secuestrar, ¿sí? Este... qué es lo que migración le puede hacer, cómo puede quedar detenida, cuánto tiempo la van a tener, si lleva hijos que va a pasar con los hijos... porque les separan. Los niños no pueden estar detenidos entonces si una mujer va detenida en migración el niño va a un shelter, y explicarla que si va deportada igual los niños van a salir, pero también hay una ley en EUA que es la ley superior del niño, que llaman ellos ley juvenil, por todos aquellos que entraron hace 2 años en EUA, y que los tenían, los tienen todavía en shelter y hay algún familiar que los pida, y lo traiga en esa ley y empieza todo el proceso de adopción

Entrevistadora- Pero, de nuevo si le dicen: voy a pasar, ¿tú qué les dices?

Pasante As. Social - Les digo todo, más o menos el proceso, todo lo que va a pasar.

Entrevistadora- ¿Las aconseja a no intentar?

Pasante As. Social - No, nunca les decimos: No lo haga, más que nada le decimos los riesgos.

for a solution, to do its process, to seek psychological help depending on what they had suffered⁶⁹.

The psychologist says that she works a lot with the migrants about the value to life, so that they take care as much as possible with what they decide; try to help them understand what they want with the work tool they have.

Interviewer - And do you help them with the decision to migrate?

Or not?

Psychologist - Yes, especially this part because here comes another aspect. Another aspect has to do with the whole value system, with its own idiosyncrasy, with its way of seeing things, with where it comes from, then it will seem that all the people, or those who migrate, their idea, their dream is to cross to the USA.

Interviewer - And when they tell you that, do you advise them, or do you expect them to make their decision?

Psychologist - I review what they believe and how their idea comes and here I intervene in the value of life, which is the difficult part because it is people who say no, they said they have to arrive and they will arrive, and there they have a family member, because they are waiting for them... then their idea is far away, it is very distant from what reality is, then you begin to realize that the illusion is so much that sometimes you start to say things that do not exist, like, - is that they told me that if I go there walking on a bridge then... - Who told you that? - "No, it's because they told me not to distinguish me because I'm from another side, so if I leave my güero⁷⁰ hair, then they will not say anything to me"... Like... yes... can I explain?

Interviewer - Yes...

Psychologist - With these things that the mind begins to produce... because it needs to believe in something. Then there I value...⁷¹

⁶⁹ Entrevistadora - ¿Cómo les aconsejas sobre el proyecto migratorio que tienen? Por ejemplo, si te dicen 'no, yo voy a intentar pasar...' ¿Cómo lo haces?

Abogado - Al principio yo era muy así 'no, no vayas porque te va a pasar esto...', y de los riesgos que había les advertía. Pero ya el tiempo te va diciendo que, si ya tiene idea firme de que quiere Estados Unidos, aunque le diga que no vaya, va a ir. Entonces, mejor sobre aquello que voy teniendo conocimiento le aviso, mejor no vayas por aquí (por el hongo, etc.). O les digo, si vas en el camino y comienzas a ver este tipo de zonas, no sigas, porque se dedican mucho al secuestro y te van a robar. O aquí te van a robar, pero tú no más entregas lo que traes y no te van a hacer daño.

Entrevistadora - ¿Y tú sabes todos los peligros... porque te cuentan?

Abogado - No, no. Todos los peligros no. Pero yo sé algunos puntos que pueden correr peligro. Ya me ha sucedido que durante un tiempo (2 o 3 meses) llegan personas relatando que les han robado, secuestrado por determinada zona. Y yo le aviso, igual van y en dos días la señora regresa llorando. Y no les voy a decir 'y qué te dije', sino que lo mío es ahora buscar una solución, hacer su proceso, buscar ayuda psicológica dependiendo de lo que ha sufrido.

⁷⁰ "Pelo Güero", expresión used in Mexico and Central American countries to designate people with fair complexion, blond or light Brown hair. Check in :<https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/G%C3%BCero>

⁷¹ Entrevistadora - ¿Y les ayuda con la decisión de migrar? ¿O no?

Psicóloga- Sí, sobre todo esa parte porque aquí viene otro aspecto. Viene otro aspecto que tiene que ver con todo el sistema de valores, con su propia idiosincrasia, con su forma de ver las cosas, con el lugar de donde viene, entonces parecerá que toda la gente, o los que migran, su idea, su sueño es cruzar a los EUA.

Entrevistadora - Y cuando te dicen eso, ¿les aconsejas, o esperas que ellas tomen su decisión?

Psicóloga - Yo reviso lo que creen y de cómo viene su idea y aquí intervengo en el valor a la vida, que es la parte difícil porque es gente que te dice que no, que dijeron que tienen que llegar y van a llegar, y allá tienen

With the sisters the issue is almost the same, they warn about the situation that might happen. Sister Adelia was the only interviewee who stated that they advise migrants not to cross the border, but she says that she knows if they want, and especially if they have small children on the other side, they will cross anyway.

Interviewer - If they want to cross, do you advise them not to do it?

Sr. Adelia - Yes. I tell them: "Stay here, put your business here", but... "Ah, there I have my family... here I will be alone".

Interviewer - And they ask you for advice, Sister? How do they see you, consider you?

Sr. Adelia - There are some or others that ask. They start to talk, then... Some come and say: "Oh... I do not know what to do, if I go for that or if I stay here." And because? Then they begin to say, and then one also because I know, and I tell them: "It is very difficult now to cross, there is a lot of vigilance, they put a lot of vigilance. So, for me, I tell them that with all that money they are going to spend to cross, that they put a business here, that they start working here, that they will have everything. "No, because I do not want to be away from my family, and my family is waiting for me", especially when they are little children, nothing stops them, they want to leave. When it's just the husband... They still leave him there and here they find another one, because he must already be with another one because after a while they are separated, they look for another one⁷².

Among the migrants we interviewed, the majority who decided to stay in Tijuana still say that if they have conditions one day they will try to go to the United States, but for now they will stay in Tijuana. A large part decided to try to cross to the United States requesting asylum or trying to cross the border and a small part decided to return to their place of origin in Mexico. We did not interview any Central American who opted to return to the place of origin, very possibly due to the violence that forces them to leave and leave their homes.

un familiar, porque las están esperando... entonces su idea dista mucho, es muy distante de lo que es la realidad, entonces te empiezas a dar cuenta que es tanta la ilusión que a veces te empiezan a decir cosas que no existen, como, - es que a mí me dijeron que si me voy ahí caminando por un puente luego... - ¿Quién te dijo eso? - No pues es que me dijeron que no me distinguiera que soy de otro lado, entonces si me voy con el pelo güero entonces no me van a decir nada... Como... sí... ¿me explico?

Entrevistadora - Sí...

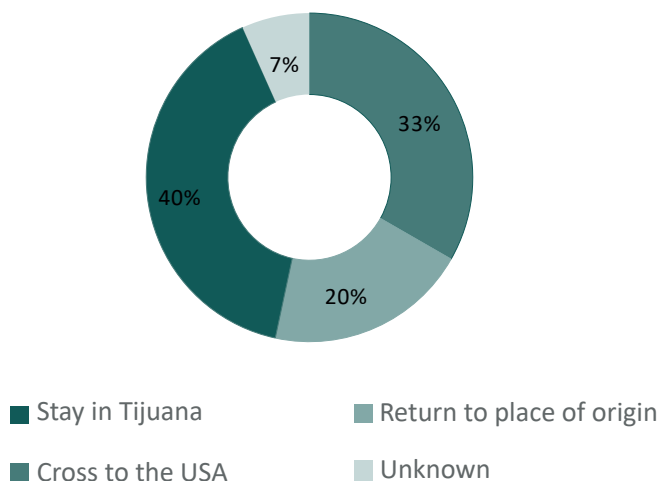
Psicóloga - Con estas cosas que la mente empieza a producir... porque necesita creer en algo. Entonces ahí yo valoro...

⁷² Entrevistadora - Si quieren cruzar, ¿ustedes les aconsejan no hacerlo?

Hna. Adelia - Sí. Se les dice: "Quédate por aquí, pon tu negocio aquí, pero..." "Ah, allá tengo mi familia... aquí voy a estar sola".

Entrevistadora - ¿Y ellas le piden consejo, Madre? ¿Cómo ellas te ven, te consideran?

Hna. Adelia - Hay unas u otras que piden. Que empiezan a hablar, entonces... Unas y vienen dicen: "Ahí... no sé qué hacer, si voy para eso o si quedo a aquí". Y ¿por qué? Entonces ellas empiezan a decir, y entonces uno también porque sé, y les digo: "Está muy difícil ahora para cruzar, hay mucha vigilancia, pusieron mucha vigilancia. Entonces, para mí yo les digo que con todo ese dinero que van a gastar para cruzar, que pongan un negocio aquí, que se pongan a trabajar que aquí, que van a tener todo. "No, porque no quiero estar lejos de mi familia, y mi familia está esperándome", sobre todo cuando son los niños chiquitos, nada las detiene, quieren irse. Cuando es solo el esposo... Todavía lo dejan aquí y se encuentra otro allá, porque ya debe estar con otra porque después de un tiempo que están separados, ya busca otra.

Graph 18 - Decisions of migrants interviewed to rebuild life.

Source: Prepared for this investigation with data collected in the field.

From what was observed in the research, providing a safe place, bed, food, orientation of various types including spiritual, is all that the migrants who arrive at the Madre Assunta Institute need to be able to rebuild their lives, with or without their families. This helps them in the pain they are carrying, as the psychologist affirms, and gives them a little comfort and serenity to continue their ways.

3.9.6 Evaluation of migrants on the IMA

The migrants were asked about what it was like in the IMA, how the sisters received them and, if they had been in another shelter, what were the differences that they identified with other similar institutions. Most of the migrants responded by making a very positive assessment of the IMA and with a clear sense of gratitude.

Interviewer - When did you arrive here, was there the same service that migrants receive today?

Ramona - Yes, I had a very nice, very big attention, and now many things have gone through many of them, but the attention is very nice in everything that I needed and still is, even more⁷³.

Interviewer - How have you felt living here these days?

Alma - Well calm... because, well we are not on the street, in the cold...⁷⁴.

⁷³ Entrevistadora - Cuando llegaste aquí, ¿existía el mismo servicio de atención que las migrante reciben hoy?
Ramona - Sí, tuve una atención muy bonita, muy grande, y ahora han superado muchísimas cosas muchas de ellas, pero la atención está muy bonita en todo lo que me necesitaba y todavía está, aún más.

⁷⁴ Entrevistadora - ¿Cómo se ha sentido viviendo aquí estos días?

They claimed to be very sad when they arrived and somehow the shelter ends up being a heavy environment, that is, where many people arrive with pain. At the same time, they feel quite safe and welcome there, the fact of the IMA does not seem, in its physical structure (a shelter but a house) helps, and the feeling of being a house run by nuns as well.

Interviewer - But what happened to you, what helped you, while in this situation, what do you think is good? This helped you or not, to continue moving forward. Because I'm interested in knowing about attention.

Elena - What helped me from there, nothing else as I told you was the place, if you put yourself there, it's a very calm, peaceful place. Tranquility. The tranquility that there is. You know that you are in a safe place that nobody is going to hurt you, you are in a safe place... and that gives you comfort and gives you the strength that tomorrow something will be, you will start again⁷⁵.

One migrant interviewed complained about the work (the migrants help with the housework) because she had a problem in her shoulders. She also did not like that the sisters close the bedroom during the day because she liked to rest. This migrant was already in many shelters and also counts, as a positive point, that the sisters do not charge the room and do not force them to do frequent the prayers as other Christians shelters do.

Cleanliness and discipline are always praiseworthy factors to the IMA as the situation of other places in relation to the very precarious cleaning, and that also makes them feel good in space. It also highlights the seriousness and the fact of being a shelter exclusive for migrants.

Interviewer - And how did you feel at the hostel? How did they treat you?

Elena - The hostel is a temporary place, it is a place that you can be, rest, eat, reflect, while, nothing else, while... the mothers are very nice, everything, but it is while, not to stay there, then I It seems a good place, for a while, that place saves many people, because if there were no place, where are you going? On dangerous streets? I support that there are shelters like the IMA, I give all my support because there are other hostels that do not have seriousness...

Interviewer - Oh yes?

Elena - Yes, and this has cleanliness, discipline, it's crystal clear, there's nothing to hide, it's transparent... it's a nice place... to think about what you're going to do... what are you going to do, what are you going to do...

Interviewer - Why do you say that other hostels are not serious?

Alma - Pues tranquila porque, pues no estamos en la calle, pasando frío...

⁷⁵ Entrevistadora - Pero qué te ha tocado, ¿qué te ayudó, mientras estaba en esta situación, ¿qué crees que es bueno? Esto te ayudó o no, a seguir en frente. Porque me interesa saber sobre la atención.

Elena - Lo que me ayudó de ahí, nada más como ya te dije fue el lugar, si tú te pones ahí, es un lugar bien calmado, pacífico. Tranquilidad. La tranquilidad que hay. Sabes que estás en un lugar seguro que nadie te va a hacer daño, estás en un lugar seguro... y eso te da consuelo y te da la fuerza de que mañana algo vas a ser, vas a empezar otra vez.

Elena - Because I have gone to others (shelters) and I have seen them very ugly, dirty... filthy, asking for money... there is no discipline and people who are not migrants are approaching. Street people. And what happens is that Madre Assunta is for migrants, you cannot approach anything that is not migrant, you even must show your sheet that you just repatriated, if we do not go, it's not your place here... because there is a lot of order.

Interviewer - And that's good?

Elena - It's good. Before they deceived the nuns, they said that all this was deported, but no more to bathe, to wash their clothes and to continue the party. Until recently this sheet of paper was required to check, because it is a house for migrants, a house for migrant women and children⁷⁶.

3.10 CHALLENGES IN CARE

One of the great challenges within all the houses that migrants receive is the question of *language*. In the Madre Assunta Institute, it is not different. If the migrant who arrives speaks another language besides Spanish and English, the communication becomes very difficult and the employees and volunteers of the house find it very difficult to attend to their needs and do a personalized job.

Interviewer - Migrants of other nationalities/ethnicities, is there a specific challenge for care?

Volunteer - Here the only thing that stands out is that, if they do not speak Spanish or English, it is a little bit more difficult to interact with them, and with respect to the interview, it becomes more difficult to obtain information. And see what is happening with them. The language barrier, then. I think this is the most specific thing. Yes, sometimes there is no way to get there. There are things that you can really treat, but there are things that with signs cannot be told. So, I think that this affects, not that there is discrimination, but that it affects the nationality or something, that does not speak. But other than that, I personally have

⁷⁶ Entrevistadora - ¿Y cómo te has sentido en el albergue? ¿Cómo te trataron?

Elena - El albergue es un lugar provisorio, es un lugar que puedes estar, descansar, comer, reflexionar, mientras, nada más, mientras... las madres son muy agradables, todo, pero es mientras, no para quedarte ahí, después me parece un lugar bien, por mientras, ese lugar salva mucha gente, porque si no existiera lugar ¿a dónde vas a ir? ¿En las calles peligrosas? Yo apoyo que existan albergues como el IMA, le doy todo mi apoyo porque hay otros albergues que no tienen seriedad...

Entrevistadora - ¿Ah sí?

Elena - Sí, y este tiene limpieza, disciplina, es cristalino, no hay nada que esconder, es transparente... es un lugar agradable... para pensar lo que vas a hacer... qué vas a hacer, qué vas a hacer...

Entrevistadora - ¿Por qué dices que otros albergues no son serios?

Elena - Porque he ido a otros y los he visto muy feos, sucios... sucios, piden dinero... no hay disciplina y se acerca gente que no es migrante. Gente callejera, gente y lo que pasa es que el Madre Assunta es para migrantes, no se puede acercar nada que no sea migrante, inclusive tiene que mostrar su hoja de que les acaba de repatriar, si no vamos, no es tu lugar aquí... por es que hay mucho orden.

Entrevistadora - ¿Y eso es bueno?

Elena - Es bueno. Antes engañaban a las monjitas decían que eran deportados todo esto, pero no más para que se bañara, para lavar la ropa y para seguir la fiesta. Hasta hace poco que se exigió esta hoja de papel para comprobar, porque es casa para migrantes, casa para mujeres y niños migrantes

not seen it. Until now all the girls who are here and XXX are very good at that, I've all seen them work⁷⁷.

Specific attention, such as that of the lawyer and the psychologist, is felt even more, since understanding the problem of the patient becomes even more imperative.

Interviewer - What challenges of migrants of other nationalities, ethnicities, have they treated differently?

Lawyer - For many, the language. When I got an African nationality (sic), I used to say, 'Who speaks Spanish of all'? Or when the Haitians arrived, just like a Mexican or one who spoke Spanish and I was saying, I explain to you and you explain to everyone. Because we had to do big talks. Many were interested, and many said, "I do not care about any of this"⁷⁸.

Interviewer - And if they are from other nationalities of other ethnic groups, do you think they are treated differently in society?

Psychologist - Yes, we return to the same thing, when they arrive at a place where there is awareness of what it is to be a migrant, then there is consciousness, when not...

Interviewer - And you, how do you do when you do not ask to be served?

Psychologist - Equal, that is, I return to this principle, if you are not connected with your conviction and you do not work your emotion, you do not get anywhere. With XXX, for example, I can take 30 minutes to explain what I do, but my relationship with her and my closeness to her, I know that if she needs her, she will eat. And it goes beyond maybe understanding the psychological technique⁷⁹.

Interviewer - I also wanted to ask about the challenges of attending migrants of other nationalities, of other identities in general, other ethnic groups, another language, questions of LGBTII migrants.

⁷⁷ Entrevistadora - *Migrantes de otras nacionalidades/ etnias, ¿hay algún desafío específico para la atención? Voluntaria - Aquí lo único que destaco es que, si no hablan español o inglés, sí es un poquito más difícil interactuar con ellas, y con respecto a la entrevista, se hace más difícil obtener información. Y ver lo que está pasando con ellas. La barrera del lenguaje pues. Yo pienso que esto es lo más específico. Pues sí, a veces no hay como llegar. Hay cosas que tú lo tratas verdad, pero hay cosas que con las señas no se puede contar. Entonces pienso yo que eso afecta, no que haya discriminación, pero de que afecte por la nacionalidad o algo, que no hable. Pero aparte de eso, yo personalmente no he visto. Hasta ahorita todas las muchachas que están aquí y XXX son muy buenas en eso, todas he visto trabajar.*

⁷⁸ Entrevistadora - *¿Qué desafíos tienen migrantes de otras nacionalidades, etnias, se los trata diferente? Abogado - Muchos el idioma. Cuando me tocó nacionalidad africana (sic), les decía ¿quién habla español de todos? O cuando llegaron los haitianos, igual ya miraba un mexicano o uno que hablara español y Le decía, te explico a ti y tú le explicas a todos. Porque teníamos que hacer pláticas grandes. Muchos eran interesados, y muchos decían "a mí no me interesa nada de esto".*

⁷⁹ Entrevistadora - *¿Y si son de otras nacionalidades de otras etnias, crees que en la sociedad les tratan diferente también?*

Psicóloga - *Sí, volvemos a lo mismo, cuando llegan a un lugar donde hay consciencia de lo que es ser migrante, entonces hay consciencia, cuando no...*

Entrevistadora - *Y Ud., ¿cómo hace cuando no piden para ser atendidas?*

Psicóloga - *Igual, o sea, vuelvo a este principio, si no estás conectada con tu convicción y no trabajas tu emoción, no llegas a ningún lado. Con XXX, por ejemplo, le puedo tardar 30 minutos para explicar lo que hago, pero mi trato con ella y mi cercanía con ella, yo sé que si ella necesitara ella va a venir. Y va más allá de quizás entender la técnica psicológica.*

Intern Social Worker - Of another ethnic group like the Haitians who did

not speak Spanish, this... then when there is a variety of language it is a little harder to be able to help them beyond giving them the basic needs. In fact, when there was the flow of Haitians, I was not there, but many ways changed them, made them bilingual, another part is in Creole⁸⁰.

An example of recent difficulties, about this group in the house, was the arrival of a large flow of Haitian migrants to Tijuana. This demanded a great mobilization to receive them and to adapt in the IMA, as for example, the translation to the Creole dialect of general notices in the murals, of interview files, etc. Every time you asked about other ethnic groups, the interviewees spoke first about the migrants from Haiti, the explanation for this may be the recent incursion of this population in Tijuana. Another explanation is the great difference of them with respect to other frequent migrants such as Central Americans who may have more similar phenotype and culture. Haitians are Afro-descendant, they speak another language, have another skin color, and bring another quite different culture.

3.10.1 Indigenous population

In the interviews, it did not occur to the interviewees to talk about the indigenous population when we inquired about the challenges of ethnicity, so that the question had to be repeated in order to obtain answers. Perhaps because the indigenous populations that pass through the IMA are mostly Mexican, or because the frequency of that population is not big enough. Regarding the indigenous ethnic groups, the linguistic issue was also the most targeted as a challenge in the attention.

Another element pointed out, not as a difficulty of attention in the house but in Mexican society in general, was the discrimination, that, as well as to other peoples, arises in relation to the indigenous peoples.

Interviewer - And of the indigenous people?

Intern Social Worker - Yes, also indigenous people are discriminated against. And it's because as they say of them, as they say, they say rudeness and they say these are Indians... this is Indian Mama... it's like expressions⁸¹.

Many indigenous women who pass by do not identify themselves as such, possibly because of prejudice in Mexican society. In an informal conversation

⁸⁰ Entrevistadora - Quería preguntarte también de los desafíos de la atención a migrantes de otras nacionalidades, de otras identidades en general otras etnias, otro idioma, cuestiones de migrantes LGBTII. Pasante As. Social - De otra etnia como los haitianos que no hablaban español, este... entonces cuando hay una variedad de idioma es un poquito más difícil poder ayudarlos más allá de darles las necesidades básicas. De hecho, cuando hubo el flujo de haitianos, yo no estuve, pero muchas formas las cambiaron, las hicieran bilingües, otra parte está en creole.

⁸¹ Entrevistadora - ¿Y de las personas indígenas?

Pasante As. Social - Sí también a las personas indígenas se las discrimina. Y es porque como se expresan de ellos, como dicen, dicen una grosería y dicen estos son indios... este es indio mamá... es como expresiones.

about two indigenous migrants who were at the time in the house, a Sister tells that she sometimes perceived that they were indigenous because they did not understand Spanish well, because of the small stature and the darker skin tone, but that they had not declared themselves as indigenous in the interview they do when they arrive.

Interviewer - I also wanted to ask you about the challenges of providing care to migrants of other nationalities, other identities in general, other ethnic groups, another language, questions of LGBTII migrants.

Intern Social Worker - Those who are going to request political asylum from another ethnic group, such as giving advice, how to tell them... it is difficult... or they will stay here in Tijuana if they want to apply for work they pay little, they offer not very good jobs because they are from other ethnic groups, because they do not speak the language, because sometimes they are black, and here there is still discrimination in Mexico. It is not something that is talked about a lot, but it does exist. I think we're in another relationship...

Interviewer - I was told no...

Intern Social Worker - Discrimination does exist in Mexico, or if sometimes I am also put up. [for the skin tone]

Interviewer - And he said sometimes to you? How?

Intern Social Worker - In general speaking as in Mexico, right? Between your complexion, if your complexion is darker, they treat you differently. Here in Tijuana has not happened to me, but in other parts of the country, yes. If you go to a business, they do not tend to you quickly, or so⁸².

It is difficult to reach clear conclusions about the indigenous population, since it was not an issue that we managed to talk about more deeply, because it was not understood by the interviewees as an issue to be observed. What we do pick up from our observations and dialogues is that Mexican society feeds prejudices in relation to indigenous people. Therefore, the challenge of investigating the problem of indigenous migrant women more thoroughly is raised.

⁸² Entrevistadora - Quería preguntarte también los desafíos de la atención a migrantes de otras nacionalidades, de otras identidades en general otras etnias, otro idioma, cuestiones de migrantes LGBTII.

Pasante As. Social - Los que van a solicitar asilo político que son de otra etnia, como darle asesoría, como decirles... es difícil... o se van a quedar aquí en Tijuana si quieren solicitar trabajo les pagan poco, les ofrecen trabajos no muy buenos porque son de otras etnias, porque no hablan el idioma, porque a veces son negros, y aquí todavía existe la discriminación en México. No es algo de que se habla mucho, pero sí lo existe. Creo que estamos de otra relación...

Entrevistadora - Me dijeron que no...

Pasante As. Social - La discriminación, sí existe en México, o si a mí ponen a veces también. [por el tono de piel]

Entrevistadora - ¿Y decía que a veces a Ud.? ¿Cómo?

Pasante As. Social - ¿En general hablando como en México verdad? Entre tu tez, si tu tez es más morena, sí te tratan diferente. Aquí en Tijuana no me ha pasado, pero en otras partes del país sí. Si te vas a un negocio no te atienden rápido, o así.

3.10.2 LGBTII population

Moreover, about migrants who intersect other types of vulnerability, a subject quite discussed during the fieldwork was the attention to LGBTII migrants. This is a relatively new issue and one that brings several challenges to the service provided in the IMA.

According to the guide for LGBTII migrants, carried out by the Arco Iris Foundation, an institution that serves exclusively this public, in recent years the migratory flow of LGBTII people has increased. The reason for the increase is due to the persecution that these people have faced in their countries of origin, because of their gender identity and sexual orientation, forcing them to seek protection and better living conditions. The social context for these people is violent and discriminatory, even within Mexico, this being the case of LGBTII migrants who arrive in Tijuana to try asylum in the US. The Lawyer of the IMA tells about the situation of those who have already had to attend.

Interviewer - And what LGBTII person have you attended?

Lawyer - Ah yes. (...) there have been such cases, the same thing happens with the question: I want to go to the United States because in my country [name several] I suffer discrimination because of my sexual orientation. Maybe you go to the United States and do not think its salvation, because that situation is also very hard. The same in the United States, if you go to a public school, because you are Mexican in the United States, they will not talk to you.

Interviewer - And here in Madre Assunta have you seen LGBTII people?

Lawyer - Yes, yes, when they come, I say, do not think that by going to the United States you will be safe. Maybe you're going to be a little bit safer in terms of public safety, or the police, but that's not going to exempt you from being discriminated against while in the United States. And if you are Mexican and you add that you are from the [LGBTII] community, rejection is automatic. And here, yes, it's a lot of rejection. There are cities, such as Mexico City, that have the pink zone for LGBTII people, or go to Garibaldi, that is, go to certain towns that you will not have that much discrimination⁸³.

The attention to this population is especially challenging because the shelters are divided between men and women, have little preparation in the matter, little

⁸³ Entrevistadora - ¿Y persona LGBTII te ha tocado?

Abogado -Ah sí. (...) Tocaban seguido ese tipo de casos, igual te topas con la cuestión que quiero Estados Unidos porque en mi país [nombra varios] sufro discriminación por mi orientación sexual. Igual vas a Estados Unidos y no creas que es la salvación, porque también está muy dura esa situación. Igual en Estados Unidos, si vas a una escuela pública, por el hecho de ser mexicano en Estados Unidos no te van a hablar.

Entrevistadora - ¿Y aquí en Madre Assunta te ha tocado personas LGBTII?

Abogado - Sí, sí, cuando vienen les digo no creas que por ir a Estados Unidos vas a estar a salvo. A lo mejor vas a estar un poco más seguro en cuestión de la seguridad pública, o la policía, pero eso no te va a exentar que, estando en Estados Unidos, no sufras discriminación. Y si eres mexicano y le agregas que eres de la comunidad [LGBTII] pues el rechazo es automático. Y aquí sí, es mucho el rechazo. Hay ciudades, como ciudad de México, que tienen para la gente LGBTII la zona rosa, o vete a Garibaldi, o sea, vete a ciertos poblados que no vas a tener tanto esa discriminación.

understanding of the subject and much prejudice. It is important to remember that Mexico continues to be a very chauvinist and conservative society, a fact that reinforces the place of greatest risk for the migrants who identify themselves. The shelters usually host many people in the same room, few places manage to separate these migrants so that they have more security, thus preserving their privacy.

Interviewer - And the shelters receive these people well? How do they do that?

Lawyer - Ah, that situation is very difficult. In fact, we have always sought to create, even if it is a small, a shelter for this type of population. Because it is difficult, where are you going to put them... with women, with men? Because men are many, how are you going to put them in a room (...) imagine they are 20 and you say they are all already asleep and how can you not know that they are going to do something to you? For the same security of them. There are shelters here as people from the community [LGBTII] but they are more for the sick. It is to serve the population of the community with some disease... AIDS, tuberculosis⁸⁴.

A Honduran migrant that we talked to had done the whole trip with a partner who was fleeing persecution in his country for being gay and tells the experience in Mexico, he describes it as positive because they were respected in shelters despite the fact that he avoided being afraid of being troubled. It is clear that when dealing with some migrants with this profile there are still uncomfortable situations and most of the shelters have difficulties to face this situation. The creation of a specific shelter for this population is on the agenda, however, as it continues to be the number of migrants who arrive at the shelters with this profile, according to the interviewees, most do not look for the shelters using more than your networks. Thus, few policies are developed in that sense and the shelters in Tijuana perceive the need to have a specific space to give adequate attention to this population.

It became clear that the shelter receives if there is a need, however, a second point that draws attention in this speech is the need to ask lesbian migrants to "respect other migrants" and to "behave well", this warning also appears in the talk of other interviews at the IMA when asked if they receive this audience:

Interviewer - And LGBTII population have you seen any case?

Intern Social Worker 2⁸⁵ - Not me, to another intern to her if she had I think once or twice.

⁸⁴ Entrevistadora - ¿Y los albergues reciben bien a esas personas? ¿Cómo lo hacen?

Abogado - Ah, es bien difícil esa situación. De hecho, siempre se ha buscado crear, aunque sea un pequeño, albergue para ese tipo de población. Porque sí es difícil, ¿dónde los vas a poner... con las mujeres, con los hombres? Porque los hombres son muchos, cómo lo vas a meter en un cuarto (...) imagínate son 20 y dices ya están todos dormidos y ¿cómo no saber que le van a hacer algo? Por la misma seguridad de ellos. Hay albergues aquí como personas de la comunidad [LGBTII] pero son más para enfermos. Es para atender población de la comunidad con alguna enfermedad.... SIDA, tuberculosis.

⁸⁵ On this occasion, a second social service intern who was in the IMA was interviewed. In this way, we have placed the number 2, to identify that it is not the same as that previously cited.

Interviewer -Are there any specificities? Or not?

Intern Social Worker 2 -No, no more than give rules that have to respect other migrants... if someone says something I do not know, if you do not behave well, please ask to leave the shelter, but...

Interviewer - But with mothers, there's no problem?

Intern Social Worker 2 - No, no problem, if they let her in, XXX told me that there was a - *transgender*? Wanting, and I told that the same rule, is fine but if someone says something that you mistreated or whatever, then they are going to tell you to please leave the shelter. But he said that everything was fine... he respected everyone and nothing else... (laughs)⁸⁶.

Was questioned exactly what it meant to “respect” the house and the other migrants, since asking for respect for what was understood that it was imperative for the reception in the case of LGBTII migrants in the IMA. It is clear that the position of the house is to “protect” the other migrants from possible sieges that could occur, and from what can also be understood to demand respect from other migrants. A particular case from a possible situation of harassment of two lesbian migrants to employees of IMA it served so that the workers of the IMA are attentive and treat differently to the migrants who arrived with that profile. There was a clear generalization for a group of negative behavior of some lesbian women who passed there, and we do not know if there is a causal relation, but there is a differentiated treatment when receiving them at home.

Differential treatment can be understood as discrimination, even if real cases justify it. What motivates such treatment is the condition or belonging to this group. It cannot be affirmed, but possibly the treatment was similar before the event, due to the stigmas that these public carries and that end up being reinforced inside the shelter as a space that communicates with the vision of society in its environment. Discrimination is something structural⁸⁷and it is reflected in people who establish a supportive relationship with them, which requires constant vigilance from the people involved in the care.

The availability of the house in relation to LGBTII migrants also changes. In dialogue with Sister Adelia, she affirmed that they accept them equally, but give them fewer days. He told us that the migrants themselves due to the uncomfortable situation, resolve to stay fewer days. She also affirmed that few of them arrive,

⁸⁶ Entrevistadora - ¿Y población LGBTII no te ha tocado ningún caso?

Pasante As Social 2 - A mí no, a la a otra pasante a ella si le ha tocado creo que una o dos veces.

Entrevistadora - ¿Hay algunas especificidades? ¿o no?

Pasante As Social 2 -No, no más de da as reglas de que tienen que respetar a las demás migrantes... si alguien dice algo no sé, si no se comporta bien, se pide que por favor se salga del albergue, pero...

Entrevistadora - ¿Pero con las madres no hay problema?

Pasante As Social 2 - No, no hay problema, si la dejan que entre, XXX me ha dicho que había una -¿ *transgender*? Queriendo y les dijo que la misma regla está bien pero si alguien dice algo que tu maltrataste o lo que sea, entonces se va a decir que por favor se vaya del albergue. Pero dijo que todo bien... respecto a todas y no más nada más... (risas).

⁸⁷ Several authors support the structural nature of the phenomenon of discrimination. The work of sociologist Erving Goffman is a clear example of this perspective.

because they have their own networks. In this conversation we asked if they are put in separate rooms, and she told us not to place them in separate rooms; and if so, it would lead them to stay more days.

LGBTII migrants, when they arrive at shelters, are usually separated by biological sex. That means lesbian women must stay in female hostels and gay men in male shelters. As most of the hostels have large collective rooms with bunk beds, few houses manage to separate that public. In case of having a transgender woman, the answers varied between receiving them in male shelters requesting them to wear male clothes, and receive them in the female and asking them to take showers at different times, and only having sex alteration surgery.

The IMA as an institution that shelters women and children in general, only receives lesbian women, and would not receive transgender women. Due to the absence of policies addressed to this population, not even the social workers knew how to channel this population if they came to request attention at the IMA.

Intern Social Worker - (...) I believe transvestites have not accepted, I mean, not transvestites, but transsexual, we have not accepted them if they have not made the conversion yet. And that's because everyone here shares a bathroom... and there are people who may not accept, we're not sure if everyone accepts, and I think that as far as I know, trans people cannot admit them, but they do get a place where to go. As I say, someone is always here to request a shelter, if we cannot let them in, we tell them you can go here, because we channel them.

Interviewer - And these women [Transgender], do they channel them to where?

Intern Social Worker - I do not know, I have not had to work with one. I think YMCA House (if I am not wrong is the YMCA house) but I have not had the opportunity, nor have I had the need to investigate, this is something I should know. Because if one day I have to have a trans person I will need to know⁸⁸.

However, the fact that the IMA does not receive transgender migrants is not a consensus, according to one interviewee the shelter receives transgender women and adapts to their specificities:

Volunteer - Apart from that, XXX says yes, they accept, if they talk to them, ok, if she is a lesbian, if they ask you not to bother other people, if she respects you, if they receive you and if they are transgender who likewise, who simply put respect. Those who maintain sex XXX asks to

⁸⁸ *Pasante Trabaj. Social - (...) Creo a travestis no hemos aceptado, digo, no travestis, pero transexual, no las hemos aceptado si todavía no han hecho la conversión. Y es pues por aquí todas comparten baño... y hay personas que a lo mejor no aceptan, no estamos seguros si todos aceptan y creo que a lo que yo sé, a personas trans no podemos admitirlas, pero si se les da un lugar a donde ir. Como te digo, siempre viene alguien aquí a solicitar albergue, si no podemos dejarlas entrar les decimos puedes ir aquí, pues las canalizamos.*

Entrevistadora- Y estas mujeres [Transgénero], ¿las canalizan para dónde?

Pasante Trabaj. Social - No sé, no me ha tocado trabajar con una. Creo que la Casa YMCA se no me equivoco es la YMCA, pero no he tenido la oportunidad, ni he tenido la necesidad tampoco de investigar, esto es algo que yo debería saber. Porque si un día me toca tener una persona trans voy a necesitar saber.

bathe in different hours. Because the showers are communal and open, what they ask is that they be very careful with that. But I do know that they are received⁸⁹.

Another issue that afflicts is discrimination against other migrants to them, as illustrated by the response of the interview when asked conflict between migrants, despite the negative response on discrimination, “pretend they are invisible” without a doubt are configured in a differentiated treatment, therefore, that discriminates towards them.

Interviewer - And with lesbians have they had a conflict?

Volunteer - I think that, as I see it here, there is no discrimination against lesbians... it is that they ignore them. They pretend like they are not here. That are invisible. Then they do not interact with them⁹⁰.

Finally, he was questioned about the reception of the Sisters regarding to this audience, which was reported as calm and respectful. Based on the testimonies, there are no specific problems on their part to receive the LGBTII population.

Interviewer - And the sisters? How do you look at that?

Volunteer -I think they look at them with a lot of compassion and the same as I tell you, the mothers say, with her being well behaved because they can enter, and if they do not tell us anything else, they say they have respect for the house, for the others. But if they receive them without judging them⁹¹.

3.10.3 Emotional load

One of the difficulties of working with direct attention is dealing everyday with the suffering that migrant women and children face. There are always many difficult stories and the sisters end up being figures with whom the migrants identify and tell their stories seeking to be comforted.

All the people in the shelter who work directly with the migrants tell how it is difficult to deal with this emotional burden. The sisters were then questioned,

⁸⁹ *Pasante As Social - (...) Créo a travestis no hemos aceptado, digo, no travestis, pero transexual, no las hemos aceptado si todavía no han hecho la conversión. Y es pues por aquí todas comparten baño... y hay personas que a lo mejor no aceptan, no estamos seguros si todos aceptan y creo que a lo que yo sé, a personas trans no podemos admitirlas, pero si se les da un lugar a donde ir. Como te digo, siempre viene alguien aquí a solicitar albergue, si no podemos dejarlas entrar les decimos puedes ir aquí, pues las canalizamos.*

Entrevistadora - Y estas mujeres [Transgénero], ¿las canalizan para dónde?

Pasante As Social - No sé, no me ha tocado trabajar con una. Creo que la Casa YMCA se no me equivoco es la YMCA pero no he tenido la oportunidad, ni he tenido la necesidad tampoco de investigar, esto es algo que yo debería saber. Porque si un día me toca tener una persona trans voy a necesitar saber.

⁹⁰ *Entrevistadora - ¿Y con lesbianas han tenido algún conflicto?*

Voluntaria -Yo creo que, como la veo aquí no hay discriminación contra las lesbianas... es que las ignoran. Pretenden como que no están aquí. Que son invisibles. Entonces no interactúan con ellas.

⁹¹ *Entrevistadora- ¿Y las madres? ¿Cómo miran eso?*

Voluntaria -Creo que las miran con mucha compasión e igual como te digo, las madres dicen, con que ella se porte bien pues poden entrar, y si no nos dicen nada más dicen que tengan respeto a la casa, a las demás. Pero si las reciben sin juzgarlas.

how it was for them, and they have some psychological help in that regard. Sister Anette expresses:

Interviewer - And for you to hear those stories daily, does not it become heavy?

Sr. Anette - Heavy, yes. Look, at the beginning... Ah... in the early days, you know that... I had a chicken heart.

Interviewer - Chicken, why?

Sr. Anette - Because I cried a lot... when, I made the moments of prayer with them and... I used many dynamics, right? I do not know... everything that God inspired me I did for them, then they opened up, and... My dear God... It's a lot of pain to hear things from them, because... it's a way to vent a little, to help them in that sense...

Interviewer - Sure!

Sr. Anette - Then I did a lot, and I cried too.

Interviewer - And how did she deal with that later, when he returns to the house?

Sr. Anette - I do not know, but I think that prayer helps a lot.

Interviewer - The prayer?

Sr. Anette - The prayer. (...) I think a little bit is having learned to live life. Yes, sometimes it accumulates things that are not so pleasant, right? Of worries, of anguish, I would like to do more, and it is only that little that can be done, then do that... no longer do that... In my case, I no longer have the conditions I had before, then... a little mixed feelings, as they say, right?⁹²

And even today, Sister Adelia finds it difficult, despite the fact that time and experience provide her with more elements to cope with extreme situations.

Interviewer - And today, Sister? Do you still...

Sr. Adelia - Sometimes yes.

Interviewer - But has it become easier, with the passage of time?

⁹² Entrevistadora - Y para usted oír esas historias diariamente, ¿no se vuelve pesado?

Hna. Anette - Pesado, sí. Mira, al inicio... Ah... en los primeros tiempos, usted sabe que... yo tenía corazón de pollo

Entrevistadora - De pollo, ¿por qué?

Hna. Anette - Porque lloraba mucho... cuando, hacía los momentos de oración con ellas y... usaba muchas dinámicas, ¿no? No sé... todo lo que Dios me inspiraba yo hacía por ellas, entonces ellas se abrían, y... Mi Dios querido... Mucho dolor escuchar las cosas de ellas, porque... es una manera de desahogarse un poco, de ayudarlas en ese sentido...

Entrevistadora - ¡Claro!

Hna. Anette - Entonces yo hacía bastante, y lloraba también

Entrevistadora - ¿Y cómo hacía para lidiar con eso después, cuando vuelve para la casa?

Hna. Anette - No sé, pero creo que la oración ayuda mucho.

Entrevistadora - ¿La oración?

Hna. Anette - La oración. (...) Creo que un poco es haber ido aprendiendo a vivir la vida. Sí, a veces acumula cosas que no es tan agradable, ¿no? De preocupaciones, de angustia, me gustaría hacer más, y es sólo ese poquito que se puede hacer, entonces haz eso... ya no hagas aquello... En mi caso, ya no tengo las condiciones que tenía antes, entonces... un poco de sentimientos mezclados, como dicen, ¿no?

Sr. Adelia - Yes, because the situation is already known. You already have more knowledge of how things are. For example, this [a migrant] that we started to say because (...) there were several situations with her. The government took away the children. They are with the father and she does not agree that they are with him, because... in the end she is a victim, victim of everything. So... You know, you know why this person is like that. That it's not right, that it has double... double character... One moment is fine, another moment... it's the only victim in that world. So, because of this, one already knows, already knows and can understand better, it does not affect so emotionally⁹³.

The other sisters also relate the same, which is difficult and even today, after so many years, it is still difficult to hear these stories without suffering together with the migrant. For this reason, we inquired about whether they had any psychological help to cope with the work and how they did it with that burden. Conversations between them and prayers was what they responded as ways of working the emotional burden.

The psychologist has the same answer about prayer as a way of channeling those questions, she also affirms that it is their great conviction, their charisma and their mission that makes them endure this work.

Psychologist - I think there is something here that helps them that is not easy, because it is their deep conviction. They are very clear about their conviction. If it is not your conviction, I believe that I could not be here. Because then, nothing else is the work with them, if it is not all the work of all that. There is a lot of work behind that. Yes? Then yesterday, I do not know if you noticed. It is the mother, the mother Adelia who has the ability to organize, to be aware, the water, the light, the tortillas, if I explain myself? That is, how, and she every time they arrive, they are inserted to that system where there are, there are habits, there is a very established routine, then this routine, this order helps a lot. Because it is what structures them. With them I believe that their conviction, because here, yes, the Scalabrinians, their mission is the migrants, right?⁹⁴

⁹³ Entrevistadora - ¿Y mismo hoy en día, Hermana? Usted todavía...

Hna. Adelia - A veces sí.

Entrevistadora - ¿Pero se le ha tornado más fácil, con el pasar del tiempo?

Hna. Adelia - Sí, porque ya se conoce más la situación. Ya se tiene más conocimiento de cómo son las cosas. Por ejemplo, esta [una migrante] que nosotros empezamos a decir porque (...) hubo varias situaciones con ella. El gobierno le quitó los niños. Están con el papá y ella no está de acuerdo que estén con él, porque... al final ella es víctima, víctima de todo. Entonces... Uno ya sabe, ya conoce por qué esta persona está así. Que no está bien, que tiene doble... carácter doble... Un momento está bien, otro momento ya... es la única víctima que hay en ese mundo. Entonces, por esto, uno ya sabe, ya conoce y puede entender mejor, no afecta tan emocionalmente.

⁹⁴ Psicóloga - Yo creo que aquí hay algo que a ellas les ayuda que no es fácil, pues, es su profunda convicción. Tienen muy claro su convicción. Si no es su convicción yo creo que no podría estar aquí. Porque entonces, nada más es el trabajo con ellas, si no es todo el trabajo de todo eso. Hay mucho trabajo detrás de eso. ¿Sí? Entonces ayer, no sé si te diste cuenta. Es la madre, la madre Adelia que tiene la capacidad de organizar, de estar pendiente, el agua, la luz, las tortillas, ¿sí me explico? O sea, cómo, y ella cada vez que llegan se insertan a ese sistema donde hay, hay hábitos, hay una rutina muy establecida, entonces esta rutina, este orden ayuda muchísimo. Porque es lo que les estructura. Con ellas yo creo que su convicción, porque aquí sí, pues los scalabrinianos, su misión son los migrantes ¿no?

Each sister has a different role also in dealing with migrants so that those who absorb this role of counseling and emotional care more end up being the one that is most present and close to them

3.10.4 Evaluation of the IMA Work

An important part of the service of attention to a population is the work of self-evaluation. To understand which the fragile points are, to identify the bottlenecks and the things that can be improved, as well as what is properly done and must be highlighted, is a fundamental exercise. It was in this sense that all the members of the IMA were investigated, focusing on the difficulties they faced in the day-to-day care service and how the work they performed there could be improved.

Among the difficulties of the IMA, the social worker affirms that the lack of the specialized person/professional, is the biggest of them because many things are carried out by the volunteers, reason for which, the IMA does not have conditions to measure, of evaluate accurately.

To improve this aspect, it would be necessary to hire professionals. The psychologist points out time as a factor, she would like to have more time available to care for migrants, but since she is a volunteer, she cannot neglect her office. He also says that he would like to have a room, an adequate space where he could do activities with the children.

The lawyer also points out time as a difficulty. He says that he would need more work hours to better serve all migrants. Or he would like to have assistants, because he says that “the human hand is very busy” there in the IMA.

Interviewer - And how do you evaluate your work here, what are the difficulties?

Lawyer - Specific difficulty...

Interviewer - With your work, to do better...

Lawyer - I do not know... more hours a day. I do not know... that he knows more languages and [laughs] that he learns to do more paperwork. The human hand is very busy here. There are times that have been with me people who help me, comes a lawyer from a school, or an intern, people who want to help, come and stay a season, we serve more people, and we help more people and in a better way, but they are shorts periods if we had another person still, then we would attend to more cases... and now many come from outside. There was a time that they sent me to do radio, but more radio no longer because I have a line outside [laughs] or we put them on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and we must come Monday, Wednesday and Friday⁹⁵.

⁹⁵ Entrevistadora - ¿Y cómo evalúas tu trabajo aquí, ¿cuáles son las dificultades?

Abogado -Dificultad específica....

Entrevistadora- Con su trabajo, para hacerlo mejor...

Abogado -No sé... más horas al día. No sé... que sepa más idiomas yo [risas] que aprenda a hacer más trámites. Es que aquí sí se ocupa mucho la mano humana. Hay tiempos que han estado conmigo gente que me ayuda, viene un abogado de una escuela, o un pasante, gente que quiere ayudar, viene y está una

Time for him is part of the challenges of serving a migrant person.

Interviewer - And he told us that one of the challenges is time, right? What other challenges to address this migrant population?

Lawyer - No, well no more TIME. That is, we talk about time, we talk about violence, because the migrant goes, raises a report about kidnapping, after a while they have it identified, they know that they are in the Casa del Migrante and they do not want to leave the house, because he was and denounced an offender and it turns out that the authority is covering the offender. Because we already had a time, when I was with the men, we raised a report of kidnapping and it turns out that the person who received the accusation for kidnapping and entered with the migrant to tell how things happened, moved him to the city of Mexico, for being in a gang of kidnappings. So, how did I go and present a person to the authority and it turns out that I was in the band of kidnappers?!⁹⁶

The fact of not being a permanent fixed population, a population that circulates, also affects the work of psychological help. The psychologist says that it is very difficult to deal with the issues in such a short time and that the ideal thing would be to follow up on the care she provides with the migrants.

The director of the IMA also responded to our inquiries complaining about the lack of people, adding the lack of resources, in addition to the limitations to use public resources that should be spent as planned and give a lot of work in generating reports and accounts. The fact that there are no staff to carry out different demands of the day to day in the house means that they cannot concentrate on some tasks.

Interviewer - What are the difficulties faced at work?

Sr. Adelia - The difficulties are many. Lack of personnel to attend all the things that... of the government's demand, because they ask for reports, they ask you for letters, they ask you for evidence, apart from a... questionnaire, to answer... a report... Then, do not answer letters... Because XXX does not... apart from everything already... After she got sick, she's working three and a half hours... four. Then it is less time and it reaches to do less things. So, for me, this is a difficulty because....

temporada, si atendemos más gente, y ayudamos más gente y de mejor manera, pero son períodos cortos. Pero si tuviéramos a otra persona todavía, pues atenderíamos más casos... y ahorita llegan muchos de afuera. Hubo un tiempo que me mandaban a hacer radio, pero ya más radio no porque tengo fila afuera [risas] o ponemos que vengan los martes y los jueves, y tenemos que vienen lunes, miércoles y viernes.

⁹⁶ Entrevistadora - Y nos dijo que uno de los desafíos es EL TIEMPO, ¿no? ¿Cuáles otros desafíos para atender esa población migrante?

Abogado - No, pues no más el TIEMPO. O sea, hablamos de tiempo, hablamos de violencia, porque el migrante va, levanta una denuncia por secuestro, al rato ya lo tienen identificado, saben que está en la Casa del Migrante y ya no quiere salir de la casa, porque él fue y denunció a un delincuente y resulta que la autoridad está cubriendo al delincuente. Porque ya nos tocó un tiempo, cuando estuve con los hombres, levantamos denuncia por secuestro y resulta que la persona que nos recibía la denuncia por secuestro, y se entraba con el migrante para que dijera cómo pasaban las cosas, lo trasladaron a la ciudad de México, por estar en una banda de secuestradores. Entonces, ¿cómo yo iba y le presentaba a una persona a la autoridad y resulta que estaba dentro de la banda de secuestradores?!

Interviewer - Why then do you have to do it?

Sr. Adelia - No... it does not give me the time, there are also my limitations. And the difficulty also of having resources, because we do not have a staff like that, that is going to look for, find resources for the house. Then one is very limited to spend the most necessary. And the labor too, you have labor, but it's always... it's not stable. And if it's not stable you must be teaching every day or every half day

Interviewer - Then you need to always be there

Sr. Adelia - So, you must be aware of the whole situation, because... one is going to answer the door. So, he has no authority, but there is no such decision, "Can I receive the clothes? Can I receive donations? Can I receive this? "No..." Mother! They want to talk to you! "I go, they want to offer a shirt, a pair of pants, and other things. So, because I do not have the people responsible for this, it makes it harder for me.

Interviewer - Yes...

Sr. Adelia - That's why I can no longer be concentrated in the office to do another job, I have to be always aware of everything...⁹⁷

According to the director, the work team difficulty increases with the fact that people are always changing, because the activities are carried out by the migrants or by volunteers.

Sr. Adelia - Besides always having different staff in here. Changes a lot. Because, if today you say: "Do this, this and this", if tomorrow is going to be the same person you already know how to do it. Then, as I do not have...⁹⁸.

⁹⁷ Entrevistadora - ¿Cuáles son las dificultades enfrentadas en el trabajo?

Hna. Adelia - Las dificultades son muchas. Falta de personal para atender todas las cosas que... de la exigencia de gobierno, porque te piden informes, te piden cartas, te piden evidencias, a parte así de un... cuestionario, contestar de... un informe... Entonces, no contestar cartas... Porque XXX no... aparte de todo ya... Después que se enfermó está trabajando tres horas y media... cuatro. Entonces es menos el tiempo y alcanza a hacer menos cosas. Entonces, para mí, es una dificultad esto también porque...

Entrevistadora - ¿Por qué entonces es usted que la tiene que hacer?

Hna. Adelia - No... no me da el tiempo y tampoco mis limitaciones. Y la dificultad también de tener recursos, porque no tenemos un personal así, que vaya a buscar, encontrar recursos para la casa. Entonces uno queda muy limitado para gastar lo más necesario. Y la mano de obra también, tú tienes mano de obra, pero es siempre...no es estable. Y si no está estable tú tienes que estar enseñando cada día o cada medio día

Entrevistadora - Entonces precisas estar siempre allí

Hna. Adelia - Entonces, hay que estar pendiente de toda la situación, porque... una va a atender la puerta. Entonces, no tiene ni autoridad, pero no existe aquella decisión, "¿Yo puedo recibir la ropa? ¿Yo puedo recibir donaciones? ¿Yo puedo recibir esto?" ¡No... "Madre! ¡Quieren hablar con usted!" voy, quieren ofrecer una camisa, un pantalón, esto, aquello otro. Entonces, por no tener las personas responsables para esto, me dificulta más.

Entrevistadora - Sí...

Hna. Adelia - Por eso ya no puedo estar concentrada en la oficina para hacer otro trabajo, tengo que estar siempre pendiente de todas las cosas.

⁹⁸ Hna. Adelia- Además de siempre tener personal diferente aquí adentro. Cambia mucho. Porque, si hoy tú dices así: "Haz esto, esto, esto", si mañana va a ser la misma persona ya sabe cómo tiene que hacer. Entonces, como no tengo...

It was asked who could help in these difficulties, it means, from which organ the help could come for the problems of personnel and resources that the institution faces.

Interviewer - And, who could help you with these difficulties?

Sr. Adelia - Who could help me? It would be a person of... pay, pay this person... could be. Because she volunteers to you, but she does up to here. If it feels good, it helps you. If it does not feel good, I want to do...

Interviewer - But to find money for that labor, should it be from Projects? Or come from...

Sr. Adelia - Projects or one person, another person looking for projects for personnel. The government part does not give you anything for staff⁹⁹.

In addition to the lack of time and resources, officials and volunteers did not point out other issues of other orders as problems to be overcome for attention in the IMA. In many interviews the interviewees did not point out difficulties, they affirmed to pass all the support for the work they do.

3.11 DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is an important phenomenon when it comes to migrant women, especially when trying to integrate into society. Complaints of unequal treatment, of obtaining fewer jobs and lower salaries were frequent with migrants of other nationalities, especially those with irregular documentation.

Discrimination is a negative differential treatment, or unfair treatment, motivated by the person's belonging to a group or by having specific characteristics such as sex, race/color, ethnicity, origin and age. Discrimination is a structural and subtle phenomenon. A defining element of discrimination is the actual or potential negative consequences of the discriminatory act for the discriminated individual or group.

Discrimination against immigrants has its particularities, and may be based on the phenotypic characteristics, the nationality (national origin) or the migratory status (documentation) of the immigrant, being the status also derived from the conditions and motivation of migration. In this sense, the whole series of issues of the legal status of the immigrant, from their citizenship, through political rights to the asymmetry of power between foreigners and nationals, which legal issues generate in practice, are factors that increase vulnerability of this

⁹⁹ Entrevistadora - Y, ¿quién podría ayudarle con esas dificultades?

Hna. Adelia - ¿Quién podría ayudarme? Sería una persona de... de paga, pagar esta persona... podría ser. Porque voluntarias te hace, pero hace hasta aquí. Si se siente bien, te ayuda. Si no se siente bien, yo tengo ganas de hacer...

Entrevistadora - Pero para encontrar dinero para esa mano de obra, ¿tendría que ser de Proyectos? O venir de...

Hna. Adelia - Proyectos o una persona, otra persona que busca proyectos para personal. La parte del gobierno no te da nada para personal.

migrant population exposes them to situations of violence and obstacles in access to fundamental rights (Fernandes, 2016)¹⁰⁰.

The issue of differential treatment was addressed in all interviews, most of the discrimination is explicitly reported and for different reasons, as we saw in the points dealing with nationality, ethnicity and LGBTII population.

Interviewer - I also wanted to ask you about the challenges of attending migrants of other nationalities, of other identities in general, other ethnic groups, another language, questions of LGBTII migrants.

Intern Social Worker - Those who are going to request political asylum from another ethnic group, like giving advice, like telling them... it is difficult... or if they are going to stay here in Tijuana, if they want to apply for work they pay little, they offer not very good jobs because they are from other ethnic groups, because they do not speak the language, because sometimes they are black, and here there is still discrimination in Mexico. It is not something that was talked about a lot, but it does exist. I think we're in another relationship...

Interviewer - I was told no...

Intern Social Worker - Discrimination does exist in Mexico, or yes, sometimes they also apply to me [for the skin tone].

Interviewer - And he said sometimes to you? How?

Intern Social Worker - In general speaking as in Mexico, right? Between your skin tone, if your skin is darker if they treat you differently. Here in Tijuana has not happened to me, but in other parts of the country, yes. In which if you go to a business do not attend fast, or so¹⁰¹.

Asking about discrimination was one of the most difficult things about the questionnaire because we did not have a lot of time to understand what we were talking about, and we could not induce. After the first week we changed the question, before we asked about the challenges and we went on to ask about different treatment, which gave better results, even if they did not feel discrimination they arrived at the point.

¹⁰⁰ Translated freely from the original in Portuguese.

¹⁰¹ Entrevistadora - Quería preguntarte también sobre los desafíos de la atención a migrantes de otras nacionalidades, de otras identidades en general otras etnias, otro idioma, cuestiones de migrantes LGBTII. Pasante As Social- Los que van a solicitar asilo político que son de otra etnia, como darle asesoría, como decirles... es difícil... o si se van a quedar aquí en Tijuana, si quieren solicitar trabajo les pagan poco, les ofrecen trabajos no muy buenos porque son de otras etnias porque no hablan el idioma, porque a veces son negros, y aquí todavía existe la discriminación en México. No es algo de que se hablaba mucho, pero sí lo existe. Creo que estamos de otra relación...

Entrevistadora - Me dijeron que no

Pasante As Social - La discriminación, sí existe en México, o sí a mi ponen a veces también. [por el tono de piel]

Entrevistadora - ¿Y decía que a veces a Ud.? ¿Cómo?

Pasante As Social- ¿En general hablando como en México verdad? Entre tu tez, si tu tez es más morena si te tratan diferente. Aquí en Tijuana no me ha pasado, pero en otras partes del país sí. En el que si te vas a un negocio no te atienden rápido, o así.

Interviewer - And do you think that migrants are treated differently by institutions or society, for any condition? Due to your immigration status, other specific vulnerabilities?

Volunteer Student - Outside of here?

Interviewer - Yes, in a general way how migrants are treated here.

Volunteer Student - Yes, from what I have seen, migrants are always treated differently. Whenever a person knows that someone has been migrating, they have different treatment, especially if they are from outside of Mexico. For example, there are many women who were deported who had their children there in the US, and from what I have heard they have many problems with the teachers because they do not speak Spanish well and start having problems with the teachers. When they know that they come from Central America, from all those places I have heard many things, because those who have problems when treating children at school. There are also problems at work. Well, another day I was marked by a woman calling someone to work, and when she asks me if I have someone, she says: But where is the person you are sending me from? And I say why? And he says: Well, if it's from the other side, I do not want it because they do not know how to clean, I want it to come from inside... That is, such small things that you do notice discrimination and difference. For me this has nothing to do because there are people there who clean very well right? Then yes, if there is. That call took me a lot of wave. I do not know, I never thought there was something as simple as cleaning to see where you came from to know how to clean¹⁰².

Interviewer - Are they treated differently in Mexico, because they have another color, another accent, another nationality?

Lawyer - Yes, they are discriminated. The city is composed of different nationalities, different people, there are many people who support, but many people who have repudiation, rejection of the migrant, they see color and... they are hard. When much came Africans saw in newspaper notes, the people here or Americans (because America is another country that discriminates a lot), passed and he threw to African banana boxes and things, 'Eat this, eat this!' Thinking of the African and the

¹⁰² Entrevistadora - ¿Y crees que a los migrantes las instituciones o sociedad les tratan diferente? por alguna condición: ¿Por su condición migratoria, otras vulnerabilidades específicas?

Voluntaria Estudiante - ¿Afuera de aquí?

Entrevistadora - Sí, de manera general cómo se tratan los migrantes aquí.

Voluntaria Estudiante - Sí, por lo que yo he visto, a los migrantes siempre se les tratan diferente. Siempre que una persona sabe que alguien ha estado migrando tiene trato diferente, y más si son de fuera de México. Por ejemplo, hay muchas mujeres que fueron deportadas que tuvieran sus niños ahí en EUA y por lo que he escuchado tienen muchos problemas con las profesoras porque no hablan bien el español y empieza a tener problemas con las profesoras. Cuando saben que vienen de Centroamérica, de todos esos lugares he escuchado muchas cosas, pues los que tienen problemas cuando se trata a los niños en la escuela. También hay problemas en el trabajo. Pues otro día me marcó una mujer llamando a alguien para trabajar, y cuando me pregunta si tengo alguien me dice: Pero de donde es la persona a que me estas mandando, y yo digo ¿por qué? Y me dice: Pues si es del otro lado yo no la quiero porque no saben limpiar, quiero que venga del interior... O sea, cosas así chiquitas que si notas la discriminación y la diferencia. Para mí esto no tiene nada que ver porque hay gente de allá que limpia muy bien ¿verdad? Entonces sí, si hay. Esa llamada me sacó mucho de onda. No sé nunca pensé que hubiera algo tan simple como la limpieza se fijara de dónde vienes para saber cómo limpias.

Haitian. Let's think now of the Central Americans, here they tell that part that 'if you work that is your salary, if not, I will speak to migration'. Or 'I will not pay you', a lot of this situation¹⁰³.

Many of the complaints of discrimination and human rights violations are against the immigration police, the migrants complain of mistreatment, torture, corruption, extortion, sexual harassment, as well as racism and discriminatory treatment.

Interviewer - (...) I would like to know for you, why is this mission important?

Intern - I think it has to do with the same thing that the migrant has a very high level of vulnerability, that there are not many resources for them, and more people are needed to do that work, to raise the voices of migrants and improve the rights of migrants. migrants, because I think that migrant suffered a lot of discrimination, especially the migrant who is not Mexican, the Central American migrants.

Interviewer - Is it different for them?

Intern - Yes, because they spend a lot of racism in Mexico, a lot of racism, many think that there is a poor Mexican, but the Central Americans, as you said a while ago, Mexico... they say you? Do you think the wall is from here is the biggest wall? No, Mexico is the giant wall. Then they will go all over the wall... it is a country like a stopper. Because if they do not come with humanitarian visas they have to hide, all over the country until they come here, the discrimination they suffer here is very strong. There is a lot of corruption, the police abuse them, they take their money, your humanitarian visa does not count, you must give... they take it away, then it is very difficult.

Interviewer - Do the Central American migrants arrive with these stories?

Intern - Yes. Exactly. They come with stories that a federal migration agent wanted to violate them, they go through many strong things, so I say, they are very vulnerable that I think it is important that we use it as that collective power to help them even though there are not much financial resources¹⁰⁴.

¹⁰³ Entrevistadora - ¿Se los trata diferente en México, por tener otro color, otro acento, otra nacionalidad?

Abogado - Sí, los discriminan. La ciudad está compuesta de diferentes nacionalidades, diferente gente, hay mucha gente que sí apoya, pero muchísima gente que tiene repudio, rechazo hacia el migrante, lo ven de color y... son duros. Cuando vinieron mucho los africanos, se vio en notas de periódicos, la gente de aquí o americanos (porque Estados Unidos es otro país que discrimina muchísimo), pasaban y les tiraban a los africanos cajas de plátanos y cosas, '¡cómete esto, cómete esto!' Pensando en el africano y el haitiano. Pensemos ahora de los centroamericanos, aquí cuentan esa parte que 'si trabajas ese es tu sueldo, si no le hablo a migración'. O 'no te pago', muchísimo esa situación.

¹⁰⁴ Entrevistadora - (...) Me gustaría de saber para Ud., ¿por qué esta misión es importante?

Pasante - Creo que tiene que ver con lo mismo que el migrante tiene un nivel de vulnerabilidad muy alto, que no hay muchos recursos para ellos y se necesita más personas haciendo ese trabajo, para elevar las voces de los migrantes y mejorar los derechos de los migrantes, porque migrante creo que sufrió mucha discriminación, especialmente el migrante que no es mexicano, los migrante centroamericanos.

Entrevistadora- ¿Es diferente para ellos?

Pasante- Sí, porque ellos pasan mucho racismo en México, mucho racismo, muchos piensan que hay es mexicano pobrecito, pero los centroamericanos como te dice hace un rato, México... dicen ¿Ud. cree que

The criminality and accentuated violence of the Central American countries, the existence of so-called gangs (Maras, Zetas, etc.) and the fact that many of these immigrants arrive in Mexico are running away, also causes discrimination, because they are considered dangerous people. An interviewed migrant who went through a large shelter in Tapachulas, tells us that the city does not welcome migrants and even themselves had difficulty finding work due to prejudice. In her opinion, the community is right to be afraid, because many people who arrive there commit crimes. The same interviewee tells a case of extortion by the immigration police, and in her speech, it can be perceived that the migrant went through more things, because she mentions the female vulnerability, but when we ask about discrimination, she denies having suffered a different treatment, showing the difficulty of them to recognize discrimination.

Interviewer - Was there any other situation that treated you differently here in Mexico?

Maribel - No.

Interviewer - For nationality, for being a woman, for any other issue...

Maribel - Oh yes, one on this road suffers from all truth, but you must be quite brave surpassing everything and when you bring a goal... I am of this person when I put a roll in there nobody takes me out, and despite everything that has happened to us, yes, I have suffered a lot, enough psychological and personal things but there is no need to back down, my goal is that and I will continue and if it goes well and if not then...

Interviewer - And your goal now is crossing the border?

Maribel - Yes, ask for my political asylum. With the tests that I bring maybe, if not, what will be done? But I do not want to go back to Honduras in fact. Like, women are more vulnerable and several things happen to them, but you must be quite brave and forget about several things¹⁰⁵.

el muro es de aquí es el muro más grande? No, México es el muro gigante. Entonces ya recorrieran todo el muro... es un país pues tapón. Porque si no vienen con visa humanitaria tienen que esconderse, por todo el país hasta venir acá, la discriminación que ellos sufren aquí es muy fuerte. Hay mucha corrupción, la policía les abusan, les quitan el dinero, tu visa humanitaria no cuenta nada, tienes que dar... se las quitan, entonces es muy difícil.

Entrevistadora- ¿Las migrantes centroamericanas llegan con esas historias?

Pasante- Sí. Exacto. Llegan con historias de que un agente federal de migración las quiso violar, pasan por muchas cosas fuertes, entonces por eso digo, son muy vulnerables que yo creo que es importante que usemos pues como que ese poder colectivo para ayudarlos, aunque no haya mucho recurso financiero.

¹⁰⁵ Entrevistadora- ¿Hubo alguna otra situación que te trataron diferente aquí en México?

Maribel - No

Entrevistadora -Por la nacionalidad, por ser mujer, por cualquier otra cuestión

Maribel - O sí, uno a este camino sufre de todo verdad, pero hay que ser bastante valiente superando cada cosa y cuando uno trae un objetivo... yo soy de esta persona cuando meto un rollo de ahí nadie me saca, y a pesar de todo que nos ha pasado, sí he sufrido bastante, bastante cosas psicológicas y personales pero no hay que echarse para atrás, mi objetivo es ese y voy a seguir y si sale bien y si no pues...

Entrevistadora - ¿Y su objetivo ahora es pasar?

Maribel - Sí pedir mi asilo político. Con las pruebas que traigo tal vez, si no, ¿qué se va a hacer? Pero no quiero regresar a Honduras en la verdad. Es como si, las mujeres son más vulnerables y les pasa varias cosas, pero hay que ser bastante valiente y olvidarse de varias cosas.

When the migrants were asked about differentiated treatment, the answers differ a lot, some like this deny but cite cases, others say they are very well treated, others manage to relate the treatment they received with a discriminatory action. From the house work team there were also talks denying discrimination and reinforcing Tijuana's hospitality, like that of the social worker:

Interviewer - Do you think that migrants are being treated differently by society or by public institutions because of their immigration status here in Tijuana yet, or has it changed?

Valeria - Fortunately Tijuana I think it is a very open city. In fact, Baja California is very open because it has been built based on migrants, then it has a giant migratory history and also the relationship that exists between family and from the United States, Tijuana that live or working both sides makes Tijuana very open, respecting the institutions, as well as the fact that they are making improvements that maybe do not discriminate against a certain type but there is still a lot of deficiency between the practice and what should and what is really. And that's because of I do not know, government workers are unaware of the new legislation, so they continue to reject someone who does not have insurance, they do not want to give insurance to someone who is from Central America, no, for example, it's not because it's not in the law, but because people do not know how to do it, then this is the biggest problem we have¹⁰⁶

Interviewer - Do very different women go through then? Different religions, ethnic groups... Do you identify this as a cause of conflicts in the house?

Social Worker - There are conflicts, but not for religion, maybe there are conflicts for ethnic groups, that: - And you because you were like that but notice that the conflict is more for the idea that they already bring, pre-established. For example, the Central Americans believe they do not want them in Mexico. They believe that Mexicans do not want them, but that is because of the experience they have on the southern border. Do you understand? The southern border is really a very difficult border, because there is all the labor migration, behind the foreigners. When they arrive here in Tijuana, nobody goes after them. Even if they do not have papers, nobody is going to walk behind them. Migration can come here, and it does not do anything. Yes? Why? Because migration knows that they are not going to stay here, that they are people who are looking to go to the US, and also because it costs them more money

¹⁰⁶ Entrevistador- ¿Crees que a los migrantes la sociedad o las instituciones públicas le tratan diferente por su condición migratoria aquí en Tijuana todavía, o ha cambiado?

Trabajo. Social - Afortunadamente Tijuana creo que es una ciudad muy abierta, en realidad Baja California es muy abierta porque ha sido construida con base en migrantes, entonces tiene una historia migratoria gigante y además la relación que se tiene entre familia y desde Estados Unidos, Tijuana que viven o trabajan ambos lados hace que Tijuana sea muy abierta, al respeto a las instituciones, igual el hecho que vayan haciendo mejoras que a lo mejor no se discriminen a cierto tipo pero aún hay mucha deficiencia entre la práctica y lo que debería y lo que es realmente y eso es por cuestión de no sé, los trabajadores gubernamentales desconocen la nueva legislación entonces siguen rechazando alguien que no tiene seguro, no quieren dar seguro a alguien que es centroamericano, no, por ejemplo, no es porque no esté en la ley, pero porque la gente desconoce cómo hacerlo, entonces este es el mayor problema que tenemos.

to migrate and take them back to their place of origin. There on the southern border they no longer stop there, and, in a few kilometers, they are already there. Yes? But send them from here to there? No. And I'm telling you, look, is that nobody extorts you saying they're going to send you to migration, migration will not stop you if you do not commit a crime¹⁰⁷.

In the speech of the social worker she comments on the regional differences in Mexico in the reception of migrants, in the southern border of Mexico the inflow of migrants is intense, and the Mexican migratory police does a job of containment of the migration receiving for this pressure and US incentives. In Tijuana, on the northern border, the greatest flow is from migrants crossing to the United States. Many returnees are also received, and these are as they say “*paysan's*”, Mexicans in which the INM must do a more humanitarian work and reintegrate them. That's why the worker says that the police do not persecute the immigrants who arrive there.

Despite the less intense search to stop undocumented migrants from the migrant police in the region, and from the idea of the “welcoming Tijuana”, the data of discrimination against migrants directly face the discourse and the imaginary of a society that calls itself multicultural, hospitable and generous with those who come from outside. The National Survey on Discrimination in Mexico (ENADIS)¹⁰⁸, of 2010, presents information on migrants and reveals habits and attitudes of intolerance and discrimination that affect the exercise of their rights.

When they suffer violations of human rights and especially discrimination, migrants hardly complain and seek help, the reason for this is the fact that they are a population that tends to flee from institutions, documented or not, they do not know the country and the rules and they are always in transit, including permanent migrants. Furthermore, there is no understanding, in most cases, of discrimination as a violation of human rights, which leaves the complaint of discrimination in the background when it occurs¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁷ Entrevistador- *¿Pasan entonces mujeres muy diversas? Diferentes religiones, etnias... ¿Identifican esto como causa de conflictos en la casa?*

Asistente Social - *Hay conflictos, pero no por la religión, a lo mejor hay conflictos por las etnias, de que: - Y tú porque eras así, pero fíjate que el conflicto es más por la idea que ya traen, preestablecida. Por ejemplo, las centroamericanas, ellas creen que en México no las quieren. Ellas creen que los mexicanos no las quieren, pero eso es por la experiencia que tienen en frontera sur. ¿Entiendes? La frontera sur realmente es una frontera muy difícil, porque ahí está toda la migración de trabajo, detrás de los extranjeros. Ellas cuando llegan aquí a Tijuana, nadie anda detrás de ellas. Aunque no tengan papeles, nadie va a andar atrás de ellas. Puede venir migración aquí, y no hace nada. ¿Sí? ¿Por qué? Porque migración sabe que no van a quedarse aquí, que son personas que están buscando irse a EUA, y también porque le cuesta más dinero a migración agarrarlos y regresarlos a su lugar de origen. Allá en frontera sur no más detienen ahí y en algunos kilómetros ya están allá. ¿Sí? ¿Pero mandarlos de aquí hasta allá? No. Y yo se los digo, mire es que nadie te extorsione diciendo que te van a mandar a migración, migración no te va a detener si no cometes un delito.*

¹⁰⁸ http://www.conapred.org.mx/documentos_cedoc/Enadis-MIGRANTES-Web_Accss.pdf

¹⁰⁹ Fernandes, 2016, p.116.

This is because the legal assistance provided by the shelters is important because they feel more secure there. When complaints occur, many are made based on complaints from the foster homes or encouraged by them. In any case, it is not easy to prove discriminatory treatment and it is difficult for migrants to leave enough time to see the results of their complaints, be it discrimination or violation of human rights.

4. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATIONS IN TIJUANA AND MIGRATION INDUSTRY

The Tijuana region is composed of many migrants, it is estimated that in Baja California more than 40% of the population is composed of people who were not born in the state¹¹⁰. The migration issue is present in the central region, many of the workers are deported or migrants from other parts of the country, and even the world. When walking through the region you can hear Spanish and English in the streets.

Many of the interviewees, during our field research, perceive Tijuana as a very receptive and liberal city, but with reservations: in general, the perception is that with the migrant population in street situation the behavior of society changes. It is common for Tijuana police to violently approach migrants on the street, often because they are “poorly dressed”, and it is not uncommon for them to tear documents.

Many of the people in street situation and sex workers are also migrants or deportees, but the movements of Tijuana's civil society do not call them migrants, in an attempt to legitimize more work with migration –the “destitutes” (*indigentes*) as they say, are badly seen by society and the traditional¹¹¹ shelters that house migrants try not to link their image to the phenomenon that happens in the city centre.

In an interview, the director of the YMCA house for migrant children, showed outrage at recent statements by a politician in the region: “It is irresponsible to say that because of the migration crime increases in the city.” Another interviewee states that migration is related to the increase in violence, as deported people become easy prey for crime and organized crime. The perception is that deportees can have values and morals, but because they are young, mostly men and have no social connections or roots in the city, become vulnerable to associate with crime. He also cited those who are deported for having had problems with the law in the United States “and now they stay on the border and we all have a problem.”

Clearly, organizations may see migrants deported differently than migrants in transit.

¹¹⁰ Basic statistics of Baja California. Planning Committee for the development of the state, 2012. Available in: <http://www.copladebc.gob.mx/publicaciones/2014/estadisticasVtalesBCMar.pdf>.

¹¹¹ We consider traditional shelters those that begun the articulation of the Coalition Pro defense of the migrant, namely: Casa del Migrante, IMA y Ejército de Salvación.

Sr. Letty¹¹²- Look, working with those people who are here in transit (...) walking with those people who are going, in the way, is... if you face all these violent situations that you must have listened to, but the hope to think they are going to arrive, that they want to arrive, is like the engine to continue, for me the greatest challenge of the houses of the northern border is just the situation of people or the failure in quotation marks, as migrants call it, the failure because they have been deported. People don't understand that it is not a personal process but a consequence of a policy, right? Then, to see these people who return, who have no chance to try again the crossing because they would go to prison, that is very constant the situation of many people deported, they come with health needs, very complex, not just addition, but health (...) ¹¹³

The shelters in Tijuana worked primarily with the Mexican population that was migrating to the United States, in the 90s, when the border was still more used for the crossing. This characteristic changed with the restrictive policies of the US and certain demands begin to emerge from the deported population that arrived in the region and continues to arrive nowadays.

Deepening the meaning core of “industry of migration”, which refers to the set of non-state actors that provide services that facilitate, restrict or provide assistance in international migration (Sørensen, 2017), the second part of the field research was dedicated to know and investigate other institutions that provide services to migrants in Tijuana, beyond the IMA but in some way always interacting with the institute.

The research focused on recognize, through observations, informal conversations and interviews with other institutions (other social actors) that are related to the service to migrants; the religious institutions, state and civil society in general.

Table 2 - Institutions that collaborated with the research.

Institution	Description
Ángeles Sin Fronteras	Network of civil associations and shelters that works in the border region.
Atención a migrantes del gobierno de Zacatecas	Government agency of Zacatecas that gives attention to migrants in Tijuana.
Atención a migrantes del municipio de Tijuana	Agency of the municipality of Tijuana addressed to policies and actions for the population in situation of mobility.

¹¹² She was the director of the SMR (Scalabrinianas Misión con Migrantes y Refugiados), a house located in Mexico City, specialized in people in migratory flow and victims of grievous crimes.

¹¹³ *Mira, trabajar con esas personas que están aquí de tránsito (...) caminar con esa gente que va, en el paso, es... si enfrenta todas estas situaciones violentas que debes de haber escuchado, pero la esperanza de pensar que van a llegar, que quieren llegar, es como el motor para seguir avanzando, para mí el reto mayor de las casas de la frontera norte es justo la situación de las personas o el fracaso entre comillas, como le llaman los migrantes, el fracaso de haber sido deportados. La gente no entiende que no es un proceso personal sino es una consecuencia de una política, ¿no? Entonces, ver a esta gente que regresa, que no tiene posibilidades de volver a intentar a cruzar porque les aplicaría prisión, eso es muy constante la situación de mucha gente deportada, viene con necesidades de salud, muy complicadas, no solamente de adición, pero de salud (...)*

Border Church	Christian church that celebrates masses Sundays on the border wall, in English and Spanish, and offers food to deported people and migrants who come to the border requesting legal aid from volunteers.
Borders Angels	NGO that acts in the region of the border helping migrants that try to cross, in addition to diverse activism in defense of the migrants.
Casa de Oración	Shelter located near the Casa del Migrante and Madre Assunta Institute , receives male migrants and refugees.
Casa del Deportado Sagrado Corazón	Shelter located in the city centre founded by a transsexual woman and welcomes deported men and women, migrants and refugees.
Casa del Migrante	Traditional shelter for men deported, migrants and refugees belonging to the male Scalabrinian congregation.
Casa YMCA para menores migrantes	Shelter belonging to the YMCA Network of Houses for Minors, receives young and children in mobility situation.
CNDH – Comisión de Baja California	State agency for protection and reports about human rights.
Coalición Pro defensa del migrante	Cooperation network of shelters constituted by traditional civil society organizations purposing dissemination of information and assistance among shelters.
COCUT	NGO focused on LGBTII issues and HIV prevention
Deportados Unidos	NGO focused on the professional reintegration of deportees and general services to this population, located in the city centre of Tijuana.
Ejército de Salvación	Shelter that belongs to the christian church Salvation Army, receives deported men, migrants and refugees.
HFIT México	Organization for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, works with the most vulnerable populations in the downtown zone.
Madre Assunta Institute	Traditional shelter for deported women and children, migrants and refugees belonging to the Scalabrinian women's congregation.
Movimiento Juventud 2000	Shelter located in the city centre, hosts men, occasionally receives women and children. It belongs to the Alianza Migrante Tijuana network.
Roca de Salvación	Shelter located in the southeast area of Tijuana founded by a couple of Christian pastors deported more than 10 years ago to welcome deported men and women, migrants and refugees.
SMR (Servicio Scalabrinianas Misión para migrantes y refugiados)	Shelter in Mexico City specialized in victims of grievous crimes.

Source: Prepared for this research with data collected in the field.

Of all the institutions that were visited, we highlight the Coalición Pro-defensa de los Migrantes (Coalition for the Protection of Migrants), the Casa del Migrante and the state representatives, because they carry out activities directly with the IMA.

The Coalition is a network of civil associations specialized in the assistance, promotion and defense of the human rights of migrants in general. The Scalabrinian sisters and fathers are part of the group – with their houses of Madre

Assunta and Casa del Migrante, as well as several religious or institutions that had their beginning as religious institutions, such as the Salvation Army and the YMCA House for Migrant Children. In Mexicali, the Albergue del Desierto, the Centro de Apoyo al Trabajador Migrante (Migrant Worker Support Centre), and the the Centro de Derechos Humanos y Educación Cívica (Centre for Human Rights and Civic Education) are part of the cooperation network.

This network was formed in 1996, after the installation of The Guardian operation and its migration containment measures on the border between Mexico and the United States – increased border patrol and construction of the border wall, among other actions that had as objective to decrease the number of migrants crossing irregularly the border between Baja California and California (Smith, 2001). According to the account of the executive coordinator of this coalition:

(...) once the operative Guardian is deployed (...) the repatriations were at any time, there were no distinctions, then they [the institutions] begin to see all that and begin to see that it was very hard to work in an isolated way as an organization, and decide to form as a state network to be able to influence changes that would improve the conditions of migrants repatriated at that time (...) ¹¹⁴

It is noted that the Coalition has been created to embrace the demands of repatriates, Mexicans who have been deported or have left voluntarily from the United States, and from this organization, the collective actions targeting the incidence, promotion and protection of human rights resources have focused on all migrants in general, although due to structural characteristics and opportunities for action, they offer more services to Mexican returnees.

These characteristics are very much based on economic and financing issues. The Coalition has a room in the Repatriation Module of the INM (National Institute of Migration) to provide assistance to returnees. The space that is granted to the Coalition exists thanks to this federal program that receives resources to attend, register the entrance and provide immediate attention. In the room, they manage to receive and provide guidance to returnees about Shelters that must best serve them.

Another objective of the Coalition is the institutional strengthening of each member through training, participation in workshops, forums and other local, national and international events, agreements with other government agencies or not, academics and other institutions that add support and improve the incidence in the processes that lead to a development of the human rights of the population in migratory situation. On average, there are meetings four times a

¹¹⁴ (...) una vez que se instala el operativo Guardián (...) las repatriaciones eran a cualquier hora, no había distinciones, entonces ellos empiezan a ver todo eso y empiezan a ver que era muy difícil trabajar de manera aislada como organización, y deciden en conformarse como una red estatal para poder incidir en cambios que mejoraran las condiciones de los migrantes repatriados en ese momento (...)

year, depending on the need. The network of institutions also maintains a virtual relationship, through emails.

The Casa del Migrante is a civil association of the Scalabrinian fathers who care for male migrants that arrive in Tijuana, the deportees, migrants in transit, displaced people or refugees. The house has received more than 250,000 migrants since it opened its doors in 1987¹¹⁵. According to the director, more than 90% of the population served is migrants who were deported, and more than half of this population was imprisoned in the United States. In this way, the house has the function of socially and laborly reintegrating these people, through workshops and job opportunities, in addition to the activities of initial and basic care, such as food and place to sleep.

Of these people, around 30% want to stay in Tijuana looking to settle in the city, and about 30% seek to return to their places of origin, often using programs that pay them for the return tickets, according to the director – “the house is not only to provide shelter and bread, but to give more opportunities to rebuild life, a help to make the transitional path in the country.”

Finally, regarding representations for migrants from other states of the Mexican Republic, Tijuana has three: Representation of Zacatecas, Sinaloa and Chiapas. They are looked for by migrants to arrange documentation and to obtain more information and services, generally those who look for these offices have already gone through shelters like the Casa del Migrante and /or Madre Assunta.

The representation of Zacatecas contributes with 50 thousand Mexican pesos per year for three shelters in the city that receive migrants from Zacatecas. Currently, the 3 shelters benefited are the Casa del Migrante, Madre Assunta Institute and Movimiento Juventud 2000.

4.1 WELFAREISM

The discourse of assistance varies greatly between one organization and another. We identify primarily two visions, one is based on “when not helping we help them” and “everyone has the right to stay [in the shelters for longer].” There are shelters that consider people as migrants even though they have lived in the city for more than 6 months, and shelters that see prolonged assistance as a way for these people to live off the inputs that society gives them, and affirm that the government is the one who must take care of these people, through accommodation and qualification.

What prevails in the shelters of “when not helping we help them” is that they can not change their profile of assistance and are only available for new arrivals of migrants. Mental health issues and addiction are faced with rejections because of the alleged difficulty the shelters have: “I hope a mental health hospital can assist (...) any human being who can arrive with addiction.”

¹¹⁵ Casa del Migrante, <https://casadelmigrantetijuana.com/> .

There are divergences on the concept of “being a migrant” between local legislation, civil society organizations and even between volunteers and the shelter staff. This conception determines who can access the services of the shelters, and is mainly used in the more traditional shelters as a “filter” to receive beneficiaries, as explained by an employee responsible for public relations in the Casa del Migrante:

(...) perhaps observing a little about the amount of opportunities and security, also the fact that we are a shelter strictly for migrants means that we should have filters, right? So then, one of the first things that was explained to me is that someone who might have been in the city for a month, two months, there are different possibilities, right? For example, it can already be a person who is living on charity and who does not want to grow, who does not want to move forward, who is comfortable living in that way; and also the other option is that they can be people who have been into some criminal group that dedicates itself to hook people, I don't know, they can take out information, rob the migrants who are inside, It may be because sometimes the same need leads you to do it. So, more than anything, it's for security, I think it's a bit of an exaggeration that it's only a week, not more than a week [since they arrived in Tijuana, to be welcomed in the shelter], because I know many [migrants] that suddenly got lost in the city, or that they stayed first with a contact, with a friend and in the end they could not get support anymore then suddenly they arrive here now wanting the assistance, right? I think it's a little bit exaggerated the two weeks from my perspective, a week, but at least I think it worked on this type of security filter because we must continue¹¹⁶.

The policy of the maximum period of permanence is variable depending on the situation, and in an interview with one of the administrators of the Casa del Migrante said that the maximum time is actually 45 days, depending on each situation. In an interview with a migrant beneficiary of this space, he expressed concern with the time of permanence in the house: “Here I bring the card, if it expires I have to go to the social worker, if she says yes, I'll stay, if she tells me no, I have to leave the house, so I cannot be there.” The migrant said that if they cannot let him stay in the house for more days, he would have to go to sleep in

¹¹⁶ (...) observando tal vez un poco sobre la cantidad de oportunidades y la seguridad, también el hecho de que seamos un albergue estrictamente para migrantes hace que debamos tener filtros, ¿no? Entonces bueno, a mí una de las primeras cosas que me explicó es que alguien que a lo mejor ya estuvo en la ciudad un mes, dos meses, uno, hay diferentes posibilidades, ¿no? Por ejemplo, ya puede ser una persona que esté viviendo de la caridad y que no quiera sobresalir, que no quiere avanzar, que esté cómodo viviendo de esa forma; y también la otra opción es que sean personas que han caído en alguna como grupo delictivo que luego se dedique a enganchar personas, que a lo mejor se dedique a, no sé, nada más sacando información, estar robando a los migrantes que están adentro, puede ser porque a veces la misma necesidad te lleva a hacerlo. Entonces, más que nada es por seguridad, yo creo que es un poco exagerado el hecho de que sea solamente una semana, no más que una semana [desde que llegaron a Tijuana, para ser recibidos en el albergue], porque conozco muchos [migrantes] que de repente se pierden en la ciudad, o que se fueron primero con un contacto, con un amigo y al final no pudieron conseguir apoyo entonces de repente llegan aquí ahora sí queriendo el apoyo, ¿no? Se me hace un poco exagerado las dos semanas desde mi perspectiva, una semana, pero sí al menos creo que funcionaba en este tipo de filtro de seguridad porque tenemos que continuar.

the street. Being a Honduran, he said that Mexicans get a job more easily, and that he still had not gotten a job through the job opportunities offered at the shelter.

As each situation is analyzed by social workers to define the period of days of permanence, the beneficiaries do not know if they will achieve more days in the shelter or not. Possibly it is the way of doing “not just welfare” or “when not helping we help them”, a way to pressure them to take the next step.

There is a part of the civil society in Tijuana that harshly criticizes the 15-day system of the Casa del Migrante and of Madre Assunta. The argumentation refers to the fact that in 15 days the population does not manage to get a job and a complete readjustment in the city. In dialogue with the director of the Casa del Deportado, she manifested herself saying:

(...) then a chaos begun, it was a bit controversial, political thing, because when the Migrant's House worked with them no more that 15 days. After 15 days you could no longer be there, then these people went back into the street, where did they go? At the city centre, they then went to the shelters that in the city center, then a lot of people did not know because they only had the Casa del Migrante on the Postal, Madre Assunta, but you did not know after 15 days where to put the boys, because not everyone can settle down in 15 days, they were given 15 free days, very well, excellent, but after 15 if they did not have contact with their family if they did not have money to return to their land or if they could not go to the another side that boy after 15 days, where was he? What was he doing? He could not be there anymore, he had to go back to the street, so what was the goal? When they came to the city center, we no longer worked with them for 15 days, all the shelters in downtown worked with them for as long as it was necessary, it was no longer 15 days as they worked, so many began to see the Casa del Migrante began to express themselves politically, to all the people in city centre, that we were the guilty ones, that because of us all the people were here [living on the streets] and that we were the guilty of them being here so long when they only gave 15 days, then in a meeting that we did a long time ago, together with Mikaela, may she rest in peace, Mikaela and I always advocated that we were not the ones to blame for having street people here in Baja California, it was just that the 15 days were over and the boys were staying stranded and we have food outside, and it was not 15 days the time that the boy established, even if he established contact with the family, or established a job until it was stabilized this was what all the downtown shelters had as a goal to do, not to give 15 days no more, but the time that was necessary (...) neither here nor there is only 15 days, this is done only there, in Casa del Migrante (...) ¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁷ (...) entonces se metió un poco un caos como polémica, política todo eso porque llegó el momento en que la Casa del Migrante trabajaba con ellos 15 días no más, después de los 15 días tú ya no podías estar ahí entonces esta gente volvía a caer en la calle, ¿dónde venían? Al centro entonces volvían a caer a los albergues que están en el centro, entonces sólo que mucha gente no sabía porque ellos solo tenían la Casa del Migrante en la Postal, Madre Assunta, pero no sabías después de 15 días donde poner a los muchachos, porque no todos se acomodaban en 15 días, se les daba 15 días gratuitos sí muy bien, excelente, pero después de 15 si no tenía contacto con su familia si no tenía dinero para regresarse a su tierra o si no tenía como hacer p'al otro lado ese muchacho después de 15 días, ¿dónde quedaba? ¿Qué hacía? Ya no podía estar ahí, se tenía que volver a la calle, entonces, ¿cuál era el objetivo? que cuando vinieran al

The accusations that she claims to have received from the traditional shelters have to do with the different welfare policies adopted by the associations for migrant's protection.

An employee from one of the traditional Shelters in Tijuana explains that the issue of people living on the street shapes the way migrants arrive, with the objective of "getting ahead", in this way it is understood that the motivation that moves the shelters that receive free of charge is guided by the will to help them not to end up in a street situation.

Interviewer - Why do you think this attention is important to migrants, to the population in a situation of mobility?

Employee - Look, here especially in Tijuana, I do not know if you have noticed that but what we have is a big problem of people in street situation; in the canal, downtown, all parts of Tijuana. A big part of this problem is that people say a lot that these people are mostly deported people, not migrants. The people who are in the channel are all migrants and the truth is that they are not. So, well, to start with this vision, the needs that street people have - which are different from the people who are deported - or why a deported person arrives at a street situation, is by the principle that I put attention to this. Something that I have learned during this time that I have been here at the shelter is that a person who is deported, or who arrives here in southern Mexico, if they are not given that attention, if they are not supported in a correct way, can arrive in sad situations like being in call. So, the idea is that these people receive good attention so they can get ahead. That's why I think it's very important to be able to support people so that they can continue, they can make their lives, they can continue it¹¹⁸.

centro, nosotros ya no, no más trabajáramos con ellos 15 días, todos los albergues del centro trabajamos con ellos el tiempo que era necesario, que no más eran 15 días como lo trabajaban ellos, entonces muchos empezaron a ver si la Casa del Migrante empezó a aventarnos política, a todos los del centro, que nosotros éramos los culpables, que por nuestra culpa toda la gente estaba aquí y que nosotros éramos los culpables de que estén tanto tiempo aquí cuando ellos nada más daban 15 días entonces en una junta que fuimos hace mucho, junto con Mikaela que en paz descanse, Mikaela y yo siempre abogábamos que nosotros no éramos los culpables de tener a la gente agarrada aquí en Baja California, simplemente era que se acababa los 15 días y los muchachos se quedaban varados y ni modo nosotros tenemos comida afuera, y no era 15 días el tiempo que el muchacho estableciera, aunque estableciera contacto con la familia, o estableciera un trabajo hasta que se estabilizaba esto era lo que todos los albergues del centro teníamos como objetivo de hacer, de no dar 15 días no más, sino el tiempo que era necesario (...) ni acá ni allá existe 15 días, esto se hace sólo allá, en Casa del Migrante (...)

¹¹⁸ Entrevistador - ¿Por qué crees que es importante esta atención a los migrantes, a la población en situación de movilidad?

Funcionaria - Mira, aquí especialmente en Tijuana, no sé si has detectado que hay una gran problemática de personas en situación de calle, en el canal, en el centro, todas partes de Tijuana, y gran parte de este problema o más bien la gente punta mucho que estas personas son en su mayoría personas deportadas, no migrantes, las personas que están en el canal son todos migrantes y la verdad es que no, entonces bueno para empezar con esta visión las necesidades que tienen las personas en situación de calle que distinguen de las personas que son deportadas o por qué una persona deportada llega a una situación de calle es por el principio que yo pongo atención a esto, algo que yo he aprendido en este rato que llevo aquí en la casa es que una persona que es deportada o que llega aquí al sur de México si no se le da esa atención si no se les apoya de una manera correcta pueden llegar en situaciones tristes como estar en calle, entonces la idea es que estas personas pues reciben una buena atención para que puedan lograr salir adelante por eso pienso que es muy importante como poder apoyar a las personas para que puedan continuar, puedan hacer su vida,

The director of the Casa del Migrante said that the challenge of reintegrating the population welcomed in the shelter is big. According to him, half of the deported people welcomed went through the United States prison system. “When you are a deportee, you are lost,” said the father, sure that the deportees are the most vulnerable of the migratory dynamics.

Interviewer - And for you, why is the mission of the house specifically important?

Director - Look, this case is different from many cases, because 90% of the people who arrive here are deportees, and this is the story of the last 10 years of the Casa del Migrante. So, instead of receiving migrants who go to the other side looking for the American dream, we are receiving those who are no longer dreamers (incomprehensible). Mexicans who do not speak Spanish, who spend their entire lives in the United States. Here they deport more than half of the people from jail. For example: I was talking to a boy today in English, he went to jail for 14 years and he said ‘I do not know anything about life outside the jail, because I went there when I was 17 years or less from Mexico (laugh), then it is not the focus that has changed, it is not only giving shelter and bread, but giving a new life option and this (...) social reintegration in which we have a process to help the person to adapt to a new country even though it is their country of origin, and... that’s why we have social work, we have a job office that looks for jobs for the boys, we have a psychologist, a legal department, and we are always trying to give help... more, ah, help so this person can make a transition change in this country¹¹⁹.

In the Casa de Oración, the “rebelliousness” of the people was pointed out as one of the main difficulties, mentioning that the deportees generally had “bad attitudes”, because, according to the opinion of a volunteer, there were few detainees who were caught leaving their work, most were caught driving drunk, or are drug users who have “bad attitudes” and who “have no respect”. In this shelter, at the beginning of the interview, it is said that the deportees are a minority in the house, and that they accept more those who came from the south.

The vision of the “rebel” deportee is similar to the vision that blames deportation (or rather migration) as a source of the increase in violence, because it represents them as delinquents or people of bad behavior. It makes sense, from

puedan continuarla.

¹¹⁹ Entrevistador - Y para usted, ¿por qué la misión de la casa es específicamente importante?

Director - Mira, este caso es diferente de muchos casos, porque el 90% de la gente que llega aquí son deportados, y esta es la historia de los últimos 10 años de la Casa del Migrante. Entonces en lugar de recibir migrantes que vayan al otro lado buscando el sueño americano, estamos recibiendo los que ya no tienen sueño (incomprensible) llegan aquí mexicanos que no hablan español, que pasan toda su vida en Estados Unidos, aquí deportan más de mitad de la gente de la cárcel, ah, por ejemplo estaba hablando con un muchacho hoy por la mañana en inglés, entró a la cárcel por 14 años y me dijo ‘yo no sé nada de la vida afuera de la cárcel, porque fui a los 17 años y menos de México’ (risa), entonces no es enfoque lo que ha cambiado, no es solamente dar techo y pan, pero dar opción de una vida nueva y este (...) reintegración social en que tenemos un proceso para ayudar a la persona adaptarse a un país nuevo a pesar que es su país de origen, y... pues por eso tenemos trabajo social, tenemos oficina de trabajo que busca trabajos para los muchachos, tenemos psicóloga, departamento legal, y siempre estamos tratando de ayudar dar... más, ah, ayuda para que esta persona pueda hacer un cambio de transición en este país.

a perspective of stereotypes, the policy of the maximum time of 15 days, when society faces the stigma that the deportee is a person of bad attitudes. But it is a process criticized by other shelters that have the habit of giving more time to those who have just arrived or who needs shelter.

The vision of people deported as “problematic” is shared by government agents who work with direct attention to migrants, calling some migrants as people who will hardly readjust to society. In dialogue with the Director of Atención Municipal a Migrantes of Tijuana, he affirmed:

Look at this... the issue of people in the context of migration must be understood as it is, there are sometimes issues that hardly anyone will talk about them, for example the 100 returnees who are arriving every day, Right now approximately 20% have been complying criminal sentences, I do not want to say that they are all high-impact crimes, no. The majority should be driving while not sober, some fights between husbands and wives, but also some came because they committed murders, violations. So, imagine you, the shelters what they face, sometimes you face people a little bit misfit, unadapted, then you can have some people that think the shelter has the obligation to take care of them, people that for example don't want to clean the bed, those things happen. However, they have done very well and there is no, there is no problem that has transpired¹²⁰.

For an interviewed employee from the Casa del Migrante, there is a great difference in the treatment of migrants in Mexico according to the socio-economic condition to which they belong:

Interviewer - Do you believe that migrants are treated differently by society? Both society and government institutions treat them differently as migrants?

Employee - I do not think that is because of his migrant status. I believe that in the case of all the issues of xenophobia, racism, seeing a person as a bad person, it is not because of his migrant status, but because of his condition of poverty. Yes, a migrant that is a businessman comes to Tijuana from another part of the country, from another part of the world, to do business, to give employment, etc. He is very welcome, but a migrant who does not bring money, who needs services huh... who dress, a bit as poor, who seems poor (laugh) has the whole image of the poor, is not welcomed... here and in everywhere¹²¹.

¹²⁰ *Mira este... el tema de las personas en contexto de migración hay que entenderlo como es, hay a veces temas que difícilmente alguien te va hablar de ellos, por ejemplo los 100 repatriados que están llegando día a día ahorita es el número más o menos, más del 20% viene cumpliendo penas criminales, no te quiero decir que todos son delitos de alto impacto, no. La mayoría debe ser por manejar en estado de ebriedad, este, algunas razones peleas entre esposos, pero también vienen algunos por asesinato, por violaciones. Entonces, imagínate tú, los albergues a que se enfrentan también, a veces se enfrentan a personas un poquito inadaptadas, inadaptables, entonces sí pueden tener algunos sucesos como que la gente cree que el albergue tiene la obligación de atenderlo, de no querer por ejemplo limpiar tu cama, si suceden esas cosas. Sin embargo, lo han hecho muy bien y no hay ningún, no hay ningún problema que ha trascendido.*

¹²¹ *Entrevistador - ¿Usted cree que a los migrantes la sociedad les trata diferente de alguna forma, tanto la sociedad como las instituciones gubernamentales les tratan diferente por su condición de migrantes?*

Funcionario - No creo que por su condición de migrantes, yo creo que en la, todas las cuestiones de xenofobia,

For the interviewee, the connotation of migrant is for all people who move from one place to another, the definition is not separated between rich and poor, but society makes the distinction, a person with money is not seen as a migrant, the term “migrant” already carries a connotation that implies needs.

4.2 RELIGIOUS CHARISMA

The Mexican population, historically, is shaped by Catholicism and its social influences, so the community's support to Catholic religious associations that work with migrants exists and is seen by the interviewees as an opportunity to raise awareness among practitioners, between society and even in the political arena.

Organized civil society jointly exercises the role of social awareness, which often relies on religiosity as a tool to make the issue of migration seen as a human rights issue.

Catholicism is an important factor in the composition of the two most famous and important houses in Tijuana: Madre Assunta and Casa del Migrante. The men's house, run by fathers, manages to receive more donations because fathers have more influence in the Catholic community than the missionary sisters, since the celebration of masses and activities led by them, gives them the voice to mention the situation of migrants and sensitize potential donors.

The director of the Casa del Migrante said that many of the beneficiaries who arrive have Catholic roots, but some lose faith due to various events in their lives. According to him, upon arriving at the house and receiving everything for free, the beneficiaries begin to recover the faith, and in this way the officials and volunteers use compassion as a key to enter the hearts of people, being able to change lives. The perception that the absence of faith means more suffering for people is clear to the priest. In his speech he was more concerned with people who lose faith, because that way they “get lost in the quickest way”.

The Executive Coordinator of the Coalition for the Defense of Migrants, says that the Scalabrinian charism has to do with immediate and urgent help, but “not just welfare and ready, I've helped you”. The denial of assistance in many instances that work directly with migrants can be related to the vision of society before the population in street situations, to which social problems are attributed as the violence increases in the city. “Take the next step” is very emphasized in the traditional shelters of Tijuana because it is alleged that most of the population in street situation has already gone through Shelters like the Casa del Migrante.

It is observed that in these houses the rules referred to the time to go out to work (or to look for a job, for the majority) are strict, with the objective of

racismo, el ver mal a una persona, no es por su condición de migrante sino por su condición de pobreza, sí, un migrante que llega a Tijuana un empresario que viene de otra parte del país, de otra parte del mundo, a hacer negocio, a dar empleo, etc. es muy bienvenido, pero un migrante que no trae dinero, que necesita de servicios eh... que visten, un poco como pobre, que parece pobre (risa) tiene toda la imagen de pobre, es mal visto... aquí y en todas partes.

making sure that the migrants wouldn't stay during the day with nothing to do. The job opportunities were also observed in the male shelters as reintegration options offered to these people. In the female shelters rules that demand the exit of the house during the day were not observed, due to the differences between the service of attention to the two groups divided by gender.

4.3 MIGRATION INDUSTRY

The so-called "wave of Haitian migrants" that arrived in Tijuana in 2016 forced some existing shelters to expand their reception capacity and caused new shelters to have arisen in the city, among Christian churches that received migrants in their dependencies and new civil society organizations that began to receive migrants even without fixed financing or better adapted physical structures.

In a shelter visited for one of the researchers in the city centre that receives deportees for a free period of time, it was observed that the dependencies and the situation is precarious for the reception of migrants, the donations of food were not enough and they couldn't make a minimally healthy diet, the water service had been cut for lack of payment and in some rooms there were no light bulbs.

In this shelter, there has been no intention to obtain fixed financing from the government, since the director expresses aversion to who gets involved with the city's politics, saying that those who are receiving money from the government do the service of receiving migrants as a business, and that's why they get money to expand their dependencies and even buy vans to collect donations. However, this same shelter tried to join a network of civil associations to access resources that the traditional shelters had more access, according to the administrator of the Casa del Deportado:

(...) the objective that was set was that we were all united so that the government would realize the needs Baja California faces. What was the objective of making the alliance? The objective that he told me is what I am remembering, the aim was because the Casa del Migrante hoarded all donations for them, and that the 'Casa del Migrante for women' from Sister Assunta also hoarded everything and when a report used to come from the government, they would be the first to be there. They were the only ones who worked helping and all of us from the city centre were turned into ghosts, or we did not exist for them, so that's why we build Alianza to make ourselves known by the government because we also existed, right? (...) ¹²²

¹²² (...) el objetivo que se fija era de que quería uno que todos estuviéramos unidos para que el gobierno se diera cuenta de las necesidades que había en Baja California. ¿Cuál fue el objetivo de hacer la alianza? El objetivo que me comentó es lo que yo estoy recordando que se me dijo para que me invitó hacer esa alianza, el objetivo era porque la Casa del Migrante en la Postal acaparaba todas las donaciones para ellos, y que la Casa de migrante de mujeres que es de la hermana Assunta también acaparaba todo y que cuando llegaba el aviso un informe de gobierno que ellos serían los primeros que separaban el cuello de la corbata que son los que ayudaban no más y a todos los del centro nos hacían como los fantasmas, o sea no existíamos para ellos, entonces de ahí se surgió de hacer esta alianza de darnos a conocer al gobierno que también existíamos nosotros, verdad? (...)

Their allegation for not accessing government programs that help civil associations is that they prefer to be “more community-focused than political”. Coalitions between civil associations try to find funding more quickly and easily between them, but they do not always manage to achieve a harmonious network:

Actually, now what is said the Alianza is, I do not see any Alianza because most of us are not in alliance, (...) because if we were the donations that come to everyone, we all share between us (...) a communication as an alliance, right? To support us. But as there are no such circumstances, we are each looking for our own sponsors (...)¹²³

She said that an alliance was made between the centre shelters to get financing, but that never happened in fact, because according to her report, it was actually each of them by themselves and the research for financiers did not happen for the benefit of all shelters linked.

It was found that some shelters, mainly the most recent ones located in the city centre, do not have financing from the government or from larger organizations, as the administrator of Casa del Deportado states:

Interviewer - And now how do you finance the house?

Administrator - From my work. (...) There are some boys who were deported and their period here is over so they are now not paying, and then said why instead of renting a house, why not we help you here, give a little money and go paying little by little, there are 5 people who live permanently, those are the ones who pay because sometimes we have to pay water, gas (...) but I mostly have to get it out from my work.¹²⁴

Shelters that do not have external funding tend to use alternatives to stay acting. The case of the Casa del Deportado, the shelter was started with the intention of helping those who arrive without having a place to sleep. In this way, they have a limit of days that can be left unpaid, but the other days are already charged, a small contribution value. It was recorded from the staff of one of the traditional shelters that the shelters that charge are “business hostels”, which aim is to profit from the situation of the migrants. In some streets of the city centre there are “shelters” that only accept people by paying the daily fee which is usually 25 Mexican pesos (1.30 USD).

An administrator of one of the most traditional shelters calls the new shelters “adventurers” for wanting to welcome many people without having the money

¹²³ *Realmente ahora que se dice qué es la Alianza yo no veo ninguna Alianza porque la mayoría no estamos en Alianza, (...) porque si estuviéramos en una alianza las donaciones que llegan a cada quien todos los compartiéramos (...) una comunicación como alianza, ¿no? De apoyarnos, pero como no hay estas circunstancias estamos cada quien buscando nuestros propios patrocinadores (...)*

¹²⁴ *Entrevistadora – ¿Y ahora cómo hace para financiar la casa?*

Administradora – De mi trabajo. (...) Hay algunos muchachos que fueron deportados y que ya se acabó su periodo aquí que les dan gratuitos aquí en la casa, y entonces por qué en lugar de rentar una casa, por qué no mejor te ayudamos mejor aquí dan un dinerito y vas pagando poco a poco, hay 5 personas que se hicieron de planta, verdad, esos son los que pagan porque tenemos que pagar a veces un poquito el agüita, el gas (...) pero yo la mayor parte la tengo que sacar de mi trabajo.

and structure necessary to promote basic care in a decent way. For him, the accusations of the smaller shelters about the large amounts of money in the traditional shelters receive by the government are false, since the great majority of the obtained financing is through other donations.

Criticism comes from both sides, from the smaller shelters to the larger ones, and from the more traditional organizations to the shelters that still do not have the whole structure, or plan of work, the traditional institutions have. In an interview, the Director of the Jesuit Service to Migrants in Mexico affirms:

(...) when I arrived and went to work in [says the names of the hostels and I realized that (...) depending on the volunteer that was working the model of attention changed, then sometimes a few things helped the attention than others¹²⁵.

Regarding the traditional institutions, it has been observed that the idea exists that the Scalabrinian shelters in Tijuana have a model of their own and recognized attention among the organizations of the Mexican migratory pastoral:

Director SJM - Well, I see that in Tijuana they have just released a model elaborated by themselves. I think it seems right to me, that is, the models must answer the reality of each one, and often also is related to the charisma as they are a religious congregation, right? They put the charisma¹²⁶.

The category “Integral attention” appears in interviews in both traditional shelters, and in shelters with less infrastructure. It is observed that it is a way to legitimize the service offered, proving that comprehensive attention to migrants is a positive action before society, in the words of the Movimiento Juventud 2000 director: “(...) and of course, not just give them a place to sleep, and food, but also see the need they bring depending on where they come from (...)”.

It was observed that traditional shelters in Tijuana have similar reception processes at many points. Generally, upon arrival, the beneficiaries are interviewed by a social service employee or by the person in charge of the shelter. The questions vary around the civil status of the beneficiary, historical past, if she has family in the city, the reason for migration and other personal data. These interviews, with approximately the same content, are always applied at the moment of reception of the beneficiaries, as a method of security and control.

The time of permanence in the shelters of Tijuana is variable. The Scalabrinian houses there are short-stay houses, while other traditional institutions make a stay plan that can rise the permanence to a medium stay, as well as others in the city that offer a longer stay, sometimes through financial contribution.

¹²⁵ (...) cuando llegué y me fui a trabajar en [dice los nombres de los albergues] y me daba cuenta de que (...) dependiendo del voluntario que estaba cambiaba el modelo de atención, entonces a veces salían cosas que ayudaban mejor la atención de los migrantes que otras.

¹²⁶ Bueno yo veo que en los de Tijuana se acaban de sacar un modelo que ellos hicieron, yo creo que me parece bien la cosa, o sea los modelos tienen que responder la realidad de cada quien, y muchas veces responde también al, al carisma del caso de que son congregaciones religiosas ¿no? Les ponen el carisma.

The relationship between Tijuana's traditional shelters and those that form part of the Coalición network is harmonious, as observed in the conversations with the interviewees. The Casa del Migrante, for example, sometimes offers assistance to other minor shelters, as was the case of the data compilation model that Casa del Migrante shared with Movimiento Juventud 2000, which, despite not being part of the Coalition, was able to receive the "model" in order to standardize data raised on the attention to migrants.

The difficulties most cited by the interviewees, mainly in the youngest shelters, are related to the financial issue and the lack of staff training. Many shelters do not have financing capable of maintaining employees dedicated to social issues, such as social workers, lawyers and psychologists. They maintain activities related to these issues through volunteering. Voluntary help is present in all the shelters, but only some of them keep professional staff hired – there is a difference of perception among the shelters that have more professional staff, as is the case of the Casa del Migrante and the IMA, with the diversification of activities provided to the beneficiaries, and larger projects that can be developed.

4.4 COOPERATION NETWORKS

The importance of networking is focused on having a unified voice of the organizations part of it, not only with the government but also to make complaints at institutional levels against human rights violations and to play the role of awareness on these issues in the community.

When a new organization is included in a cooperation network, beyond the aim to strengthen the institutions, the coalition looks towards the potential of transparency and institutional integrity.

One of the interviewees sees political proselytizing as a negative point when deciding to add a new organization to their cooperation network. That happens because the political cost that can possibly exist is a risk for a network. There is a massive participation of some organizations in the media and consequently the political positions are not so impartial.

Sr. Letty - In Tijuana they have a network work but I think it's a more local network, it's called (I forgot the term) is... *Coalición*, and it's very local, very governmental, I think, good and also with a look at the north, the south is not the focus, then this in some way is a big disadvantage because probably there they have a very focused reality but the field we do not know then we can not make other incidence and policy changes because we know little, right? If this were also worked towards the south, probably you could have more favorable changes for the population eh... that attend, I will give an example. Family reunification, not necessarily the families they have to stay in Tijuana to achieve family reunification, it is assumed that the person has this right regardless of where you are, but since it is not a right... it is not a... a right that is well known, then women can return to their place of origin. But here in their place of origin or in their municipality, nor their state nor the laws help them to search for the right of family reunification, all women end leaving

the city, the community and return again to the border and request the litigation of her cases...¹²⁷

Some interviews demonstrated that there are some identified motivations for working in networks of cooperation. An employee from Casa del Migrante states that:

Sometimes acting alone is very hard, then when you want to achieve changes of greater impact there is nothing better than joining together with the different, the same institutions that do a similar job. It is the same thing that we develop with the network of the north zone that are all the houses and migrant care centers that are there in the north zone, it is not because we are shelters that have it better, there are certain similar problems in each sometimes there are some institutions that are more prepared than others. That is why it's very important to support each other in access to information, in processes that have already been carried out before and the last thing I say, the question of political incidence, it's only achieved when it is done by group, myself, Valeria, can not just say "hey, I want a new law, a new law on migration", no, all the network members, the entire Coalition network, the network of the northern area that make diagnosis there is this problem across the border and we are doing the work when we can do a real advocacy work, right? That's the power of Coalition, working as a team for this type of change¹²⁸.

In the same way that motivations are identified, conflict situations also appear in the interviews.

¹²⁷ En Tijuana tienen un trabajo en red pero creo que es una red más local, se llama se me olvidó el termino es... Coalición, y es muy local, muy estatal, yo creo, bueno y también con una mirada como más hacia el norte, el sur como muy poco se mira, entonces esto hasta cierto punto es una gran desventaja porque probablemente allá tienen una realidad muy enfocada allá pero en campo no conocemos entonces no se logra hacer otro tipo de incidencias y de cambios de política porque poco lo conocemos, ¿verdad? Si esto se trabajara también hacia el sur, probablemente se pudiera tener cambios más favorables para la población eh... que atienden, voy a dar un ejemplo. La reunificación familiar, no necesariamente las familias ellos tienen que quedarse en Tijuana para lograr la reunificación familiar, se supone que el derecho lo tiene la persona independientemente del lugar donde estés, pero como no es un dere... no es una... un derecho que es muy conocido, entonces las mujeres pueden regresar a su lugar de origen pero acá en su lugar de origen ni su municipio, ni su estado ni las leyes le acompañan para hacer esta búsqueda del derecho de reunificación familiar, todas las mujeres terminan dejando su ciudad, su comunidad y regresando otra vez a la frontera para allá y pedir el litigio de sus casos...

¹²⁸ A veces actuar solo es muy difícil, entonces cuando se quieren logran cambios de mayor impacto no hay nada mejor que unirse entre las diferentes, los mismas instituciones que realizamos un trabajo similar. Es lo mismo lo que desarrollamos con la red de la zona norte que son todas las casas y centros de atención a migrantes que están ahí en la zona norte, no es porque nada más seamos albergues que tienen muy grande, hay ciertas problemáticas similares en cada lugar hay a veces instituciones que están más adelantadas que otras que pueden servir. Por eso es muy importante para apoyarlos mutuamente en acceso de información, en procesos que ya se han llevado a cabo y lo último te digo es el aspecto de incidencia política, solamente se logra cuando se hace por grupo, yo como Valeria no puedo llegar y decir "oye yo quiero una nueva ley, una nueva ley de, sobre migración" no, si no es hasta que ya toda la red de casas, toda la red de Coalición, la red de la zona norte que realizan un diagnóstico y es que está este problema en toda la frontera y nosotros estamos realizando los trabajos cuando ya se puede utilizar un real trabajo de incidencia, ¿no? esta es la fortaleza de Coalición, trabajar en equipo por este tipo de cambios.

Interviewer - Have you noticed any kind of conflict in the shelters that are part of these networks?

Employee - Yes, it is usual. Everyone has the same will and they work perfectly. But hey, this is seen ahm... suddenly people do not agree on how the other person does the work. Well, by institutions I mean, or sometimes suddenly problems that have more to do with the personal way of doing it and sometimes it is a bit silly to say it, but it can greatly affect this kind of events, eh, not to do something like cancelling an event, for example, but they are small things, I think never, I think that if there is no drama in the place (laugh) the place is not interesting, no, it is finally built of people who are free, right?¹²⁹

Although there are some conflicts, a professional atmosphere of mutual support is perceived between the institutions that walk towards the same motivation, which is to promote and protect the human rights of migrants. It has not been perceived, during the field work, that institutional conflicts influence the work, mainly among the shelters that make up cooperation networks.

4.5 GENDER ISSUES IN THE SHELTERS

4.5.1 Reinsertion activities

There is a disparity between the work of the two most important houses for the reception of migrants in Tijuana: in the men's house, Casa del Migrante of the Scalabrinian Fathers, the effort on reintegration activities is much bigger when compared to the female house, the IMA of the MSCS Sisters, Scalabrinians.

The disparities of the daily activities of the beneficiaries in both houses were noticed. In the men's house, few beneficiaries remain in the shelter during the day, most need to leave the shelter in the morning and return at the end of the afternoon, alternating their free time with courses and voluntary activities offered by the Casa del Migrante.

Meanwhile, at the Madre Assunta Institute, women are allowed to stay inside all day, due to their more vulnerable situation, but the shelter do not offer courses of social and work reinsertion, the integral care proposed in the shelter is mainly aimed at basic and urgent issues. Due to the profile of the beneficiaries, these urgent needs are summarized in having a place to sleep and eat.

Although the two shelters have similar policies of permanence for the beneficiaries, the male has more options for the social and labor reintegration, while the activities in the Madre Assunta are summarized in terms of helping to

¹²⁹ Entrevistador - ¿Has presenciado algún tipo de conflicto en estos albergues que hacen parte de estas redes?
Funcionaria - Sí, es común, o sea todos tienen la misma voluntad y trabajan perfectamente pero oye esto se ve ahm, de repente personas que no están de acuerdo como hace el trabajo la otra persona, bueno por instituciones me refiero, o a veces de repente problemas que tienen más bien con la forma personal y a veces resulta un poco tonto decirlo pero puede afectar muchísimo este tipo de eventos, eh, nada que ver con el aspecto de interrumpir un evento, que se tenga que salir de la red por ejemplo, pero son cosas pequeñas, creo que nunca, creo que el hecho de que no haya drama en el lugar (risada) no es interesante, no, finalmente está construido de personas que son libres, ¿no?

prepare food and cleaning the premises. In Madre Assunta Institute two meals a day are served to the external public, which is made up mostly of men who have already been through the migratory condition and live in the zone, and women beneficiaries at the institute work help to prepare these daily meals.

The importance of reintegration activities is seen when the beneficiaries of the shelter get employment: in the first week of field work, after going through the experience of accompanying the welcoming of beneficiaries, some in shock, others apathetic and serious, during a breakfast two migrants were very happy, with very different faces from those they had in previous days, and talking about future plans – the two had gotten a job. One of them commented that the important thing is to be able to sustain their own children, and not be sustained. The beneficiary also said that she knew that life would not be easy as it was in the shelter, but sustaining her own children was more important. Sister Katarina, present at this moment, affirmed that the migrants leave the house with a very different look from when they entered, suggesting that the house is a point of strengthening for the migrants.

4.5.2 LGBTII

Tijuana can now be known as a cosmopolitan city and offers employment opportunities regardless of the gender or sexual identities. Being located on the border with the most populated state of the United States and with the highest GDP, it consequently suffers influences from the culture. The acceptance in Tijuana can be increasing, as the city is “made by migrants”, as is often said.

The director of the Centro de Atención a Migrantes of Tijuana’s municipality says the number of LGBTIIs arriving to request assistance is small, although there is not data yet that could compare or analyze the LGBTII community presence on the border. Likewise, he acknowledged that the phenomenon occurs in the zone and his vision is that it would be better if there was a program with funds to pay one or two weeks in a hotel that would have some kind of agreement with the government for these LGBTII people who need some place to stay. The interviews show that the shelters have difficulties in welcoming LGBTII people, mainly trans people, due to issues of acceptance of the other migrants themselves. The volunteer responsible Doctor for the clinic that assist trans people, belonging to HFIT (Health Frontiers in Tijuana), has told us that:

(...) It really is hard because either they want to put [the trans population] up with men, what is going to be a bit difficult; or with women what also they say is going to be hard, but sometimes they don't want to put them with women even trans women, maybe it would be easier for trans women coexist with other women because they are mentally women, psychically many of them identify themselves as woman and [they] are women (...)¹³⁰

¹³⁰ (...) realmente es difícil porque o los [la población trans] quieren poner con hombres que va ser un poco difícil o con mujeres que también dicen difícil pero a veces no los quieren poner con mujeres aunque sea

According to him, there is still much unraveling on the issue among civil society entities even though the LGBTII population is considered a vulnerable group within vulnerable groups of migrants.

The greatest obstacle in the Baja California border region is not having a specific shelter for migrants who identify themselves in the group. The existing shelters, which are mostly coordinated by people with religious beliefs, do not have specific spaces for the LGBTII population, especially for trans people. He still maintains that the shelters have no contact with civil society organizations that support the LGBTII cause.

The Casa del Deportado, a shelter in the city center run by a trans woman, receives trans people if necessary and places them in private rooms, but it is not specialized in these cases and does not seem to be a known point for this population, neither for organizations nor by workers of civil society bodies.

The shelters of the Ejército de Salvación (Salvation Army), both male and female, are known by the Module of attention to deportees, of the Coalición Pro Defensa de los Migrantes, located in the El Chaparral guarita, for being more prepared and for receiving trans people. There they are placed in private rooms and their gender identity is respected, as reported by Isaac, director of the Ejército de Salvación men's shelter.

Cohler and Hammack (2007), in their work on LGBTII youth, point out that many people reject certain categories since society tends to consider sexuality as a factor in the construction of the social identity of people, in a generalized way. In this way, understanding that the fact of presenting itself to a shelter as a person of non-heterosexual orientation brings social connotations of behavior already established and, consequently, the staff and volunteers who bring these behavioral preconceptions express recommendations that can be considered as discriminatory. People who are not identified as LGBTII are not oriented to behave well after asking them about their sexual orientation. In an informal conversation, a volunteer also said that they are told to ask about the sexual orientation of migrants who arrive "if it is seen that they are [LGBTII]".

Welcoming

During an interview with a trans activist from the Centro Comunitario LGBTII in Tijuana, the interviewee explained that frequently LGBTII people who come to the city don't look after shelters, afraid of the eventual rejection they may suffer. There is no shelter in the region that receives the LGBTII migrant population, according to the Director of Dirección Municipal al Migrante:

Interviewer - Does the assistance to migrants happen equally to the specific groups of migrant population, such as indigenous people, such as women, such as the LGBTII population as well?

con mujeres trans, tal vez sería hasta más fácil para las mujeres trans convivir con otras mujeres porque mentalmente son mujeres, psíquicamente muchas de ellas se identifican y son mujeres (...).

Director - Yes, like... for example, eh... we have two shelters for women and children and two for men, they are not mixed, for the LGBTII population there is a bit of contrasts because, uh... we still do not have a shelter that is really specialized or has an adequate space for them, right? We have not reached that level (...) ¹³¹

The Doctor volunteer at the HFIT Mexico explains how the awareness is important for organizations that deal with trans people:

(...) taking into account that a trans person has important psychological aspects because, let's say, there are studies presenting differences when it comes to the central nervous system where...some areas of the brain of a trans woman resemble a woman's brain more than a man's, then they are aspects that we still do not understand well, but if there are samples that there are biological aspects of this, that makes a trans person a real... it's like if I was living in a woman's body, I would not feel well, eh, it causes serious mental health problems, and aside from violence (...) ¹³²

There is an issue about of coexistence among LGBTII, which has been observed by volunteers who work in rehabilitation houses that receive them. In this way, the idea of a hostel for trans people only has figured as more applicable.

Assistant at HFIT - For example at the best ones, right? the best ones have their section, they have their section for gay people, and from there when they started to have the situation of the trans, of the LGBTII, in fact they changed the name of the room for LGBTII, but thinking of separating them by the question of some were just gays, gays, and others, transgender, right? Then they were having problems together living together, and thought of separating them, I do not know what problem there was in the end they left together but among them, they support themselves, I tell you because I go often, they support themselves but in reality there really is an internal problem there living together, homosexuals and trans (...) ¹³³

¹³¹ Entrevistador - ¿La atención a los migrantes se da de forma igual hasta a los diferentes grupos específicos de esa población migrante, como los indígenas, como las mujeres, como a la población LGBTII también?

Director - Sí, este... por ejemplo eh... tenemos dos albergues para mujeres y niños y dos para hombres, no están mezclados, para la población LGBTII ahí sí hay un poquito de contrastes porque, eh... todavía no tenemos un albergue que realmente se especialice o tenga un espacio adecuado para ellos, ¿no? no hemos llegado a ese nivel (...)

¹³² (...) en el sentido de que una persona trans tiene aspectos psicológicos importantes porque digamos, hay estudios que muestran que hay diferencias a nivel de sistema nervioso central donde este.. algunas áreas de cerebros de una mujer trans se asemejan a una mujer más que a un hombre, entonces son aspectos que todavía no entendemos bien pero sí hay muestras que sí hay aspectos biológicos de esto, que hace que una persona trans realmente este... el no, es como si yo viviera en el cuerpo de una mujer, no me sentiría a gusto, eh, causa problemas de salud mental serios, y aparte la violencia, hay estudios que dicen que una típica trans (ruido, incomprensible) y también ayuda a prevenir violencia, o sea que una persona bien manejada de la población trans, no sea percibida como un hombre vestida de mujer (...)

¹³³ Asistente en HFIT - Por ejemplo en las mejores, ¿no? las mejores tienen su sección, tienen su sección para personas gay, y a partir de ahí cuando empezaron a tener la situación de los trans, de los LGBTII, de hecho cambiaron el nombre del cuarto para LGBTII, pero pensando en separarlos por la cuestión de que unos nada más eran gays, gays declarados, y otros, transgénero, ¿no? Entonces estaban teniendo problemas entre ellos conviviendo juntos, y pensaron en separarlos, no sé qué problema hubo que al final los dejaron juntos pero entre ellos, se soportan, te digo porque voy seguido, se soportan pero en realidad en realidad sí

The Director of Casa del Deportado welcomes everyone, including gay, bisexuales, lesbian and transgender people. She said that in the other shelters they do not receive them, and if they do receive them, it is under discriminatory conditions, such as when trans women are asked to behave like men. She says that when the shelters receive these people, the trans are kept in separate rooms, just as men and women are also separated, for reasons of security. The question of the separate rooms for trans people was observed in all the places that claim to receive them openly, or that have a policy of non-discrimination to the LGBTII community, and the excuse used is always about the safety of trans and cis people.

The institutions of civil society that are responsible for promoting and protecting LGBTII rights do not really look for migrant shelters among their partner institutions, as the case of COCUT, which the perception was about the LGBTII NGOs not feeling comfortable to contact the shelters because they are religious institutions.

Although it is known that trans people are not formally denied in the traditional shelters of Tijuana, they do not have specific spaces for this community. As recorded in an interview with a Casa del Migrante employee, the vision of some religious people is that they should look to the “essence” of the person, as God created it, that is, if a trans man was born with the female sex, they see him as woman, if the trans woman was born with the masculine sex, they see her as a man, and this is told them when they are entering the shelters.

5. ADVANCES AND PROPOSALS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The main objective of this research was to analyze the socio-pastoral actions carried out by the MSCS Sisters in the Madre Assunta Institute with migrants in border regions, more specifically in Tijuana city, located on the Northern Mexican border.

Based on this, specific goals, models and analytical strategies were drawn to allow us to go through the whole process of theoretical and empirical research.

In this last chapter, we define the lines of progress and the proposals from this study. For this, we organize the analysis identifying two main axes for the diagnosis. The first, what we call good practices – which refer to action models, programs and /or policies that were successful when responding to specific needs of migrants and the population in general (PADILLA; PORTUGAL, 2007), in our specific case, the intervention practices of the MSCS Sisters developed in Tijuana at the Madre Asunta Institute. Second, the future perspectives of action that are raised in this report based on observations, informal conversations and interviews that have been conducted during the two phases of the field research.

In both axes, we have sought to make explicit a diagnosis¹³⁴ seeking to contribute and add elements for the systematization and production of knowledge about the historical work that the Sisters carry out together with the migrants.

5.1 GOOD PRACTICES

- a) ***Focus of action.*** The IMA is defined as an institution that welcomes migrant women and children.

Keeping this focus is what allows human quality to be given to the integral care service that is provided and, consequently, effectiveness assisting the process of *rebuild life*. It is important to be aware that any definition of specific field of action leads to the exclusion of some migrant profiles. But as the IMA is connected with a larger network of service to migrants in Tijuana, this ‘exclusion’ of some profiles, supposedly, should not become a problem.

- b) The ability to ***listen*** and make each story of each migrant unique and important. Because each particular case is going to be followed, even in those cases that the migrant is sheltered for a very short period. This ‘listening’ that the

¹³⁴ **N.B.:** Each item raised as ‘good practices’, is related to some recommendation of future performance perspective. For example, the letter (a) in good practice, is related to the letter (a) of future prospect of action, and so on.

Sisters, and the work team, systematically seek to perform is what allows, in this case, the IMA to provide an Integral attention.

- c) **Discipline and order** in the daily routine of the IMA was highlighted by some ex-migrants interviewed, as a positive element that helps who arrives to recover from the experiences lived during the migration trajectory and/or deportation.

The IMA has clear internal rules in terms of schedules, collaboration in the cleaning and cooking, as well as the providing of free psychological, legal, spiritual support and assistance to approach the existing work opportunities in institutions.

- d) **Respecting** the way migrants, the work team and volunteers **live** its religiosity. Being a Catholic house that welcomes migrant women and children does not force people to participate in catholic celebrations or practices in their daily lives. In fact, there are people who work there that explicitly assume to be part of other religions or beliefs.
- e) **Fostering research** and production of scientific knowledge.

The IMA is a space that is always open to welcome students/researchers or interns interested in migration issues. These activities can promote the work done and strength the production of knowledge for those who approach and collaborate.

5.2 FUTURE PERSPECTIVES OF ACTION

- a) **Focus of action.** Keeping a focus of action along with a certain migrant profile is essential if the shelter want to have a service that is viable and liable to be executed and maintained over time. In this way, some elements need to be listed to contribute more clearly in this work line:

- i) The focus of action is not rigid, cannot be modified (except in some cases) on a day-to-day basis. This would weaken the service, since the available finite resources become permanently felt as *insufficient*. This situation could lead to demoralize the work team and make the expected results (for example, help migrants to reach a minimum autonomy that allows them to start something to rebuild their lives) hard to reach.

Therefore, the evaluation of the focus of attention (which public to assist and what services to provide) is recommended to review possible action strategies to adjust the work and correct inconsistencies with the defined objectives.

- ii) Strengthen work in cooperation network with institutions linked to the service of attention to migrants (public and civil society). This item must be prioritized when deciding the distribution of work demands, it can not be left as something marginal that is done intuitively and only when there is enough time (because there is never enough time). This

action front should be thought and planned with clear objectives to be achieved. In this way, positioning the IMA as an agent institution capable of directing specific demands to public entities, or other institutions of Civil Society, International Organizations and not only those present in Tijuana.

That is, to act beyond the limits of the city, beyond the limits of the house, of the congregation, of the Church. In this sense, the MSCS Sisters have all the conditions to take advantage of this international network that they have. It means that the IMA is not acting isolated and the MSCS Sisters already have people with a lot of experience and contacts that can help initiate an action plan for the IMA.

- iii) Dedicate time, hours of work of some trained staff, for fundraising. Although this may seem unfeasible in the present time, considering the current conditions of IMA, the work overload of all the members of the IMA work team can be perceived, it will no longer be impossible if it is understood that in the medium term only this will allow making fundamental changes to improve daily performance.

Another possibility that is observed is to ask for external help (which may be temporary until this action is incorporated into the fixed work table of the IMA, if this is evaluated as necessary) so that someone can execute fundraising during a certain time. If this is done, it would be interesting that at the same time, someone could be trained to provide continuity and institutionalize the function of fundraising as part of the permanent framework. This indication is fundamental as a component (not unique) to make viable the presence of the IMA in this border region (give continuity in time).

Another strategy would be to increase the dialogue with the Mexico City mission, also of the MSCS Sisters, and act together and support each other to attract resources and other activities, whenever possible.

- iv) We know that in the daily life there are exceptional situations (for example, during the early hours or late at night women victims of domestic violence –and not necessarily migrants, knock on the door to receive help) that demand a humanized response. We recommend creating a space within the IMA, which can be small and exclusive, to give a quick response. Then, it is necessary to incorporate these demands to the Work Agenda of the person responsible for the articulation and strengthening cooperation network (as far as possible anticipate).
- v) Reconsider the external food service that serves people (mostly men) in street situation and/or unemployed. We recommend closing this service and transferring to another entity. In this way, the IMA can increase the network performance by directing the resources available, such as food, to other institutions. In addition, this strategy action will allow

the IMA to reorganize itself based on its real possibilities in terms of human and material resources. It is a service that increases excessively the work of the sisters, officials, volunteers and the migrants themselves. Furthermore, it is a security matter for all people living at the IMA, which must be preserved, once it is fundamental for the process of emotional and physical recovery of women and children sheltered.

- vi) Although the IMA does not have an specifically organized activity to assist LGBTII migrant women, it was explained to us that they eventually receive. We understand that it is fundamental to discuss institutionally how the IMA will address this issue. The MSCS Sisters have positive examples of action for this population in other localities, which may not necessarily be 'reproduced' in the IMA but it might inspire them to respond to this matter. It is an urgent discussion to be carried out so that a clear position can be taken to prevent discrimination, also to help them understanding this particular situation that involves migrant women. Still about the LGBTII population, a first step could be dedicating at least a small room to host them, considering, so far, that only evangelical shelters in Tijuana do provide personalized attention for LGBTII people.
- b) The ability to listen. Explain and record this action so that it can be transmitted in formation courses not only for Sisters, but also for lay activists linked either as the staff or as volunteers of the migrant service with the MSCS Sisters. This will allow us to make this practice of listening – and implicitly says who is being cared: it is you who matters, it is your personal history that is important for us – a method of work that makes the work of the Sisters more particular and can be taught and transmitted, since it is a knowledge accumulated and already practiced by many of them.

This allows us to establish a relationship that personalizes the situation of each migrant served and to welcome her in her singularities.

- i) To keep a personalized qualified service, it is essential to take care of the emotional part of all the people involved in it. Not only the migrants need psychological support, but also the Sisters, staff and volunteers. Certainly, the spirituality that the Sisters refer to in the interviews is very important and makes a difference to the charisma that is lived by the IMA. But psychological support should not be discarded but added to this spiritual dimension.
- ii) Carefully evaluate the distribution of tasks and the workload within the IMA. As well as identifying functions to be filled by new staff members and covering those that are not being executed at the moment. New hires resources are needed, and for this we raise a proposal in the item (e.1). We also recommend as an urgent step to close activities that are not part of the priorities of the IMA. Those demands could be transferred to other organizations.

- iii) Designate a person responsible for the volunteer organization, in order to avoid a lack of control of everyday situations and distraighten the personalized service of integral attention.
- c) Discipline and order in the daily routine of the IMA is something that is explicit for both the migrant population served, the officials and volunteers. This is an specificity of the IMA compared to other Shelters in the City. However, the approach to other similar institutions that provide service to migrant men, and to the LGBTII population, for example, allowed us to observe good practices that can be inspirational to the IMA in order to improve the quality of its service.

In the case of migrant women in the IMA, the time they spend in the House in order to attend the Children needs (for those who migrate accompanied by minors), collaborating in the House activities like preparation of food and cleaning, gives them no time for training of professional skills (courses) which would improve the possibilities of getting jobs, and consequently achieve their financial independence.

In this sense, what on the one hand is highlighted as positive by some of them to rebuild life (order, discipline), does not need to disappear, but need to be balanced in order to avoid perpetuating a sexual and racial division of work.

That is, it may be difficult for a migrant woman, generally poor and racialized in the logic of the Global Labor Market, aspire to perform other functions outside of domestic work and care. For reaching this, it is necessary to invest time in training, taking this challenge into account because they are marked by a hard life story in this sense.

However, we can ask if the IMA could be beyond then a safe place that gives women, for a few days, minimum conditions of dignified life, a space that opens a door to other possibilities of professional life, further then cleaning and cooking for others (perhaps, for some, this might be the first opportunity).

To generate this, it is essential attracting resources and building institutional articulation to promote courses in the city that do not perpetuate the sexual division of courses for men and courses for women.

- d) In respect to the way of living the religiosity not only of the migrants but also of the staff and volunteers, it is observed that historical religious matrices are present in everyday situations that might be discriminatory or represent contradiction to the integral care service that is so carefully provided.

Issues such as attention to LGBTII or the impossibility of women being together with their partners (often men staying at the Casa del Migrante, for example), have not been incorporated into the service of the house. It would be a way to improve efforts to respect integrity and the right to live their identities and family options. It is recommended to evaluate some specific strategy, such as enabling a space and agenda that does not compromise the 'safe' place that the IMA represents today for women and minors. For

example, the adoption of a place as a “visiting room” that allows men, couples to the priest of migrant children, access the IMA and see their wives and children.

e) Fostering research and production of scientific knowledge.

It is recommended to give continuity to this policy already practiced by the IMA. But we can also add some suggestions to move forward:

- i) Through the international network of the MSCS Sisters, open calls for students and/or researchers of diverse origins to apply for internships in loco. These calls can be organized according to the present needs or to the future plans that the congregation intends to implement for the IMA. For example, having identified the need to fundraising for IMA, one could submit a project to an International Institution or Foundation (inside or outside the Catholic Church, but always within the principles of Human Rights) requesting funds for internships, directed to advanced students in related areas and interested in international cooperation, resolution of critical situations, etc. The same can be thought for other areas such as: specialists in gender issues, labor market and migration, among other issues.
- ii) Involve the selected researchers in providing training courses for officials and volunteers who work with their knowledge areas applied to the care of migrants. These courses could open some quotas for other tutoring institutions with migrants in Tijuana. This is a way to strengthen the place of the IMA in its role of stimulating work in cooperation networks.
- iii) Start a database to which all the academic papers, scientific publications, audiovisual production, made from an internship experience (either work or research) in the IMA are linked. It can be presented as an extension project idea to a local university, or another, with whom a fluid dialogue can be established and who are also interested in having access to this information. The database can be strictly linked to the IMA, at first, and then extended to the other local institutions presented in chapter 4. This would allow a longer-term work in conjunction with a Mexican and / or American university, where the IMA initiates and supports the initiative, but ends up being an autonomous project that does not demand time or resources from the institution. In other words, to transform it into an action whose objective is to consolidate work in cooperation networks not only with other local institutions, but also with institutions beyond the borders of Tijuana.

As a result of this process of stimulating the production of knowledge on the migration issue, a practice already institutionalized by the congregation of the MSCS Sisters, improvements are being experienced in care services for migrants. Also, society may be sensitized about the right to migrate and its implications.

To conclude, we understand that the integral care service provided in the Madre Assunta Institute is essential, both historically and currently in an increasingly challenging situation, in the face of the permanent increase in the demand for attention to migrants and refugees. In this way, we sought in this research to provide suggestions for the improvement of the service provided and prospects for future action to better respond to the challenges that a reality as complex as the one that Tijuana imposes on caring for people in mobility.

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