


PROJECTS IN OAS MEMBER STATES


1. STRENGTHENING SOCIAL PROTECTION DIALOGUE AND INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE AMERICAS.




Brief description and objective: The Project aims to strengthen the technical capacities of social development officials for designing, implementing, and evaluating social protection policies. Through the reactivation of the Inter-American Social Protection Network (IASPN), it promotes knowledge exchange, cross-sectoral cooperation, and peer-to-peer assistance. Its ultimate goal is to contribute to bolster social protection systems, reduce poverty and inequality, and foster a community of practice around these challenges.

 **Geographic scope/Beneficiary country/countries:** All OAS Member States


 **Relevance:** Over the past few decades, the Americas have made significant strides in reducing poverty and extreme poverty, largely due to expanded and improved safety net programs, including innovative social protection initiatives. However, the region remains highly unequal, with growing inequality fostering a sense of distrust among citizens who feel that democracy is not effectively addressing their needs. Therefore, there is an urgent need for public policies that improve citizens' material conditions, enabling them to fully exercise their citizenship. In recognition of the success of the IASPN, ministers and high-level authorities at the Fifth Meeting of Ministers and High-level Authorities of Social Development (2022) renewed their support for reactivating and relaunching the network as the main mechanism on social protection for technical cooperation in the region.


 **Beneficiaries:**


- **Direct Beneficiaries:** Officials at Social Development Ministries and equivalent institutions across the Americas.
- **Indirect Beneficiaries:** Regional, national, and non-governmental Social Development organizations and individuals participating in social protection programs implemented by Social Development Ministries and equivalent institutions in Member States.

 **Duration:** 24 months (June 2024 – June 2026)

 **Amount and Donor:** USD \$ 399,364.94 - U.S. Permanent Mission to the OAS (USOAS)

 **OAS Pillars:** Democracy, Human Rights and Integral Development. Specific mandate contained in Resolution AG/RES. 3028 (LIV-O/24) "PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS", section on "Expanding social protection and inclusive opportunity in the Americas".

 **Challenges:** The project remains under review by the U.S. Government as per various 2025 Executive Orders, which could result in potential delays or changes to its scope and execution.


 **Opportunities:** Renewed OAS member state commitment to poverty and hunger eradication—through initiatives like the: “Manifesto Against Poverty in the Americas,” led by the Permanent Mission of Colombia to the OAS, and the OAS’s role in the “Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty,” led by the Permanent Mission of Brazil, creates momentum for reactivating the Inter-American Social Protection Network (IASPN). The upcoming Ministerial Meeting on Social Development in Panama (TBC) provides an opportunity to relaunch the IASPN, showcase achievements, and secure additional funding. Additionally, the Second World Summit for Social Development organized by the UN (Qatar, November 2025) will provide an opportunity to elevate the IASPN’s visibility, attract donors, and strengthen OAS leadership in inclusive social policies in the Americas.



2. THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTARY FUND


Brief description and objective: It was established to support the execution of the activities and priorities approved by the Member States through the Action Plans adopted at the meetings of Ministers and High Authorities of Social Development (REMDDES) and the Inter-American Commission on Social Development (CIDES).

 **Geographic scope/Beneficiary country/countries:** All OAS Member States

 **Relevance:** The Fund enables concrete follow-up to these high-level commitments by financing projects, programs, and initiatives aligned with the shared regional social agenda turning those commitments into action.


 **Beneficiaries:**


- **Direct Beneficiaries:** Officials at Social Development Ministries and equivalent institutions across the Americas.
- **Indirect Beneficiaries:** Regional, national, and non-governmental Social Development organizations and individuals participating in social protection programs implemented by Social Development Ministries and equivalent institutions in Member States.

 **Duration:** Ongoing since 2022


 **Amount and Donor:**

- Since 2022: \$94,000
- Contributing Donors: Canada, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Trinidad & Tobago and Panamá.

 **OAS Pillars:** Democracy, Human Rights and Integral Development AG/RES. 2988 (LII-O/22) Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development: Promoting Resilience contained in Strategic line: “Fostering social inclusion with equity to contribute to sustainable development in the Americas”

 **Challenges:** Since the Fund is voluntary, it relies on contributions from Member States and partners. This can lead to:

- Inconsistent or insufficient funding over time.
- Difficulty in planning long-term or multi-year initiatives.
- Dependency on a few active donors.


 **Opportunities:**

- The Fund provides a practical mechanism to translate political commitments into concrete action across Member States.
- It can facilitate cross-country collaboration, sharing of best practices, and regional pilot initiatives that can be scaled.
- Cooperation initiatives conducted in coordination with Department of Effective Public Management, in particular using their methodology: the Interamerican Peer-Review Mechanism on Effective Public Management (MECIGEP).

3. INCREASING SOCIAL COHESION AND COUNTERING GANG VIOLENCE IN HAITI


Brief description and objective: This project addresses the root causes of the country’s violence and poverty by strengthening community-based organizations and promoting social inclusion as a violence reduction strategy. By equipping local actors with the necessary tools and resources, the project seeks to foster safer, more resilient communities.


 **Geographic scope/Beneficiary country/countries:** Haiti

 **Relevance:** Increasing social cohesion and countering gang violence in Haiti requires a multifaceted approach that addresses the root causes of violence while fostering unity and long-term stability. DSI is leveraging its expertise on social protection and vulnerable populations to help strengthen the capacities of civil society and community-based organizations (CBOs) to fight crime and violence promoted in targeted communities and increase youth engagement and community resilience against crime and violence.


 **Beneficiaries:**

- **Direct Beneficiaries:** Prime Minister’s Office and Haitian Government Stakeholders, Haitian National Police, Civil Society Organizations, At-risk Youth, Persons with Disabilities, Women and Marginalized communities
- **Indirect Beneficiaries:** General Haitian Public

 **Duration:** 36 months: January 2022- December 2025

 **Amount and Donor:**

- The first phase, funded by the U.S. Department of State with a \$5 million investment, was implemented from January 2022 to September 2023.
- The second phase, currently underway with \$14.7 million CAN (\$10.83 million US) funding from Global Affairs Canada, began in January 2024 and should be completed in December 2025.

 **OAS Pillars:** Democracy, Human Rights, Multidimensional Security and Integral Development. Specific mandate contained in CP/RES.1237 (2469/23).



Challenges: The challenges for effective and timely implementation include:

- The frequent political unrest and instability as well as security issues which can disrupt operations.
- The weak infrastructure-poor roads, unreliable electricity, and limited internet access-can hinder project implementation and logistics.
- Bureaucratic and Administrative Barriers.
- Natural Disasters and Climate Vulnerability, especially the country's vulnerability to hurricanes, earthquakes, and flooding.
- Funding & Donor Dependence: Securing consistent funding is challenging, and reliance on external donors can make projects vulnerable to shifts in international priorities.



Opportunities:


- OAS has a strong and more continued presence in the field. It has also gained the trust of various stakeholders and donors, which creates an opportunity to expand the presence and agenda of work of the OAS in the country.
- Strong Community Resilience & Engagement: Haitian communities are resourceful and willing to collaborate on initiatives that address their needs.
- Partnerships with Local Organizations: Working with grassroots groups and NGOs can improve project effectiveness, sustainability, and trust.
- High Need for Development & Humanitarian Support
- Youth Population & Workforce Potential Haiti's Haiti is a very young country with more than half, approximately 54% of its population under the age of 25 years. There is an opportunity to invest in education, skills training, and job creation for long-term impact.
- Untapped Innovation & Local Solutions: Leveraging technology, social enterprises, and local knowledge can lead to sustainable and scalable solutions tailored to Haiti's needs.





4. TRAINING AND INNOVATIVE PUBLIC POLICY DIALOGUE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN NETWORK OF HIGH-LEVEL AUTHORITIES ON POLICIES FOR THE AFRO-DESCENDANT POPULATION (RIAFRO)

Brief description and objective: The project aims to improve the technical-political dialogue capacities and the public policy design, implementation and monitoring skills of civil servants in national institutions responsible for addressing the needs of Afro-descendant populations.




 **Geographic scope/Beneficiary country/countries:** 12 RIAFRO Member States, including: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay.

 **Relevance:** According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), approximately 134 million people in the region self-identify as Afro-descendants, representing about 20.9% of the region's total population. Despite Afro-descendants constituting a significant portion of the population, they continue to face disproportionate levels of poverty, exclusion, and inequality. Despite the shared history and similar challenges faced by Afro-descendant populations across the region, there is often a lack of coordination or shared learning between countries on how to better serve these communities.


 **Beneficiaries:**


- **Direct Beneficiaries:** Civil servants of RIAFRO Member States in national institutions in charge of the Afro-descendant population.

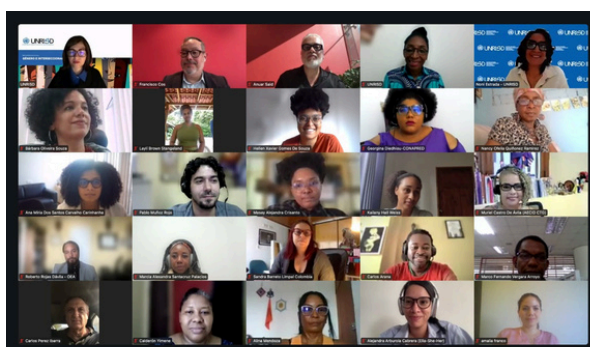
 **Duration:** 18 months

 **Amount and Donor:** US\$ 215,473.40 - OAS Spanish Fund (FEPO)

 **OAS Pillars:** Human Rights and Integral Development Specific mandate contained in CP/RES.1237 (2469/23) 8.

 **Challenges:** The institutional framework for people of African descent in Latin America, understood as the set of national institutions dealing with policies for the Afro-descendant population, is weak and diverse. This means that while there may be various institutions in place at national levels, they are often fragmented, lack coordination, and may not have the capacity or political backing to address the challenges facing Afro-descendant populations comprehensively. In some countries, the lack of political will to address Afro-descendant issues means that institutions meant to support these populations are weak, underfunded, or subject to political manipulation, reducing their effectiveness.

 **Opportunities:** In this context, improving the institutional capacities of the officials in the national institutions on the development, implementation and monitoring of policies for the Afro-descendant population, as well as improving their capacities for technical-political dialogue will contribute to more impactful, inclusive, and sustainable development policies that promote the rights and welfare of Afro-descendant populations. RIAFRO can help bridge the gaps between national institutions and create a more unified approach to Afro-descendant issues in the region.



5. COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS FRAMEWORK (MIRPS) TO ADDRESS FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO.



**Comprehensive Regional
Protection and Solutions Framework**
Addressing forced displacement in Central America and Mexico

Brief description: The MIRPS is an intergovernmental cooperation mechanism established in 2017 to address the challenges of forced displacement in Central America and Mexico and create shared solutions to the complex and often cross-border issue of forced displacement which often results from violence, persecution, and instability in various countries.

Objective: This collective effort provides a coordinated regional response that combines humanitarian, development, and peace-building efforts to address both the immediate needs of displaced populations and their longer-term integration into society such livelihoods, access to services, and community cohesion. By working together, the countries involved aim to build a stronger regional framework for addressing displacement and ensuring that refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, stateless persons and returnees in need of protection are supported effectively. The MIRPS engages various stakeholders, including countries of destination, international organizations, international financial institutions in the MIRPS Support Platform, as well as civil society, the private sector and academia. These actors work together complementing governments efforts and collaborating to improve resilience and reduce the vulnerabilities of displaced populations and ensuring sustainable solutions. DSI along with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) co-lead the Technical Secretariat of MIRPS by fostering dialogue and facilitating the strengthening of institutional capacities to effectively manage forced displacement.



Geographic scope/Beneficiary country/countries: Subregional: 7 OAS Member States: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Panama. The MIRPS Mechanism has a Rotating Chair led in 2024 by Belize, in 2025 by Costa Rica and in 2026 by El Salvador.



Relevance: In Central America and Mexico, one of the key migratory corridors in the region, more than 2.4 million people have been forced to move in and from these countries due to various causes such as violence, organized crime, extortion and persecution, in addition to natural disasters, climate change, poverty, social inequality and lack of economic opportunities. The number of refugees and asylum seekers in this sub-region has increased dramatically over the past 6 years, rising from 44,600 in 2017 to 592,000 as of June 2023. This is an increase of 1,327 percent. The persistence of these mixed movements through this subregion has increased protection risks for refugees and migrants, while placing an immense burden on refugee and migrant reception systems.





Beneficiaries:


- **Direct Beneficiaries:** Officials from government agencies leading migration and refugee protection in the 7 MIRPS Countries.
- **Indirect Beneficiaries:** Refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced and returnees in need of protection and their host communities.



Duration: Ongoing, since 2017

 **Amount and Donor:** Yearly contributions 2025: \$230,500 from different donors: United Nations High Officer for Refugees (UNHCR), Permanent Observer Missions of the Republic of Korea and the Republic of Portugal.

 **OAS Pillars:** Human Rights, Development. Specific mandate contained in AG/RES. 3028 (LIV-O/24) PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS in section on the “protection of asylum seekers and refugees in the Americas”.

 **Challenges:**

- Ensuring long-term funding is essential for the effective implementation of MIRPS countries actions.
- Changes in government administrations can potentially affect the continuity of commitments and the implementation of policies agreed upon within the MIRPS framework.

 **Opportunities:**

- Collaboration with the MIRPS Support Platform Members, civil society, the private sector, and academia allows for diversified support sources and improved responses to displacement.
- The MIRPS framework facilitates the exchange of best practices, coordination of efforts, and mutual learning among MIRPS countries.
- The MIRPS provides a coordinated and robust framework, recognized as such by Member states. It is also an ideal space that can be leveraged to address the current trends of return migration and support the affected countries to develop and strengthen comprehensive policies and programs for the reception and long-term reintegration of returnees, essential to help these individuals rebuild their lives and prevent further displacement.

6. THE COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS FRAMEWORK FUND - MIRPS FUND



OAS MIRPS Fund


Brief description: The MIRPS Fund is the specific Fund for voluntary contributions to Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework initiatives (MIRPS, by its acronym in Spanish) to address forced displacement in Central America and Mexico. The MIRPS Fund is a donor driven fund created as one of the key mechanisms for mobilizing resources and coordinating the support required by the MIRPS States complementing existing funding efforts to manage regional displacement responses.


Objective: The MIRPS Fund was established as a financial mechanism designed to mobilize resources, address funding gaps, and provide critical support to the regional response to forced migration and displacement in MIRPS States. Underway a contribution from Spain that has allowed for the first portfolio of projects implemented in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Panama between 2023 and 2027, focusing on:


- Humanitarian assistance for displaced populations.
- Strengthening institutional capacities through modernization and training
- Facilitating access to documentation for refugees and returnees.

- Providing durable solutions such as livelihood support and expedited work permits.
- Protecting and restoring rights for returned children and their families.

With a rights-based and inclusive approach, these projects aim to benefit over 100,000 people in the region. The OAS Department of Social Inclusion (DIS) is responsible for the administration, financial management and accountability of the MIRPS Fund. Moreover, the DSI provides technical support and guidance to ensure the achievement of the expected results of the projects financed by the MIRPS Fund.


 **Geographic scope/Beneficiary country/countries:** Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama) and Mexico


 **Relevance:** Those who have experienced forced displacement in and within countries of Central America and Mexico have fled their homes due to violence, instability, and persecution, seeking a safer future. These threats are even greater in the context of increasing global risks, such as pandemics and economic pressures, which demand more attention to protect these vulnerable populations as they are forced to flee to secure their rights and find durable solutions. In these circumstances, receiving, transit, and return countries face challenges and opportunities that they cannot effectively address on their own. Currently, these responses in Central America and Mexico lack sufficient funding and threaten the protection needs and access to durable solutions for vulnerable populations. The MIRPS Fund was created within the OAS a key fundraising mechanism to broaden the support and bridge the investment gaps in the key areas identified by MIRPS States in addressing forced displacement in the region.


 **Beneficiaries:**

- **Direct Beneficiaries:** Forcibly Displaced Persons: Refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, returnees and their host communities.
- **Indirect Beneficiaries:** National Governments and Local Authorities of the MIRPS States

 **Duration:** Ongoing

 **Amount and Donor:** The first portfolio of projects is financed by Spain with a contribution of 1 million Euros.

 **OAS Pillars:** Human Rights and Integral Development. Specific mandate contained in Resolution CP/RES. 1154 (2286/20).

 **Challenges:**

- **To Sustainability of Funding:** The MIRPS Fund relies on international donors, governments, and private sector contributions. However, humanitarian funding is often inconsistent, with resources fluctuating based on global priorities and crises elsewhere. Ensuring long-term financial commitment is critical but difficult, particularly when competing with other urgent global needs.
- **Implementation Capacity:** Some MIRPS countries, especially those with weaker governance structures, struggle with administrative and logistical challenges in executing programs effectively. Issues such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, lack of technical expertise, and weak institutional frameworks can slow progress.



Opportunities:

- **Strengthened Regional Collaboration:** MIRPS encourages greater cooperation among Central American and the Mexican governments, fostering regional solutions to forced displacement. By working together, countries can develop shared policies on asylum, protection, and economic integration, which can enhance stability in the region.
- **Private Sector Engagement:** Businesses have the potential to play a significant role in refugee integration by offering employment opportunities, vocational training, and investment in local economies. Engaging the private sector can not only support displaced people but also contribute to economic growth in host communities.
- **Potential for Policy Reforms:** By demonstrating successful integration programs and protection mechanisms, MIRPS can influence national policies on migration, asylum, and protection. This could lead to improved legal frameworks that better support displaced people in the long term.



GOVERNMENT CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES

1. INTER-AMERICAN COURSE ON MIGRATION AND PROTECTION

Brief description and objective: The Inter-American Course on the protection of internally displaced persons, migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons, survivors of human trafficking and returnees in need of protection in the Americas seeks to contribute to the response of the OAS Member States in the context of the current dynamics of human mobility, providing a space for the exchange of good practices, as well as the review of universal and inter-American standards.



Geographic scope/Beneficiary country/countries: Regional



Relevance: Migration and international protection remain one of the crucial challenges in the Americas due to factors such as violence, economic instability, climate change, and political persecution. The course equips participants with the knowledge and tools to understand these challenges and develop effective responses at national and regional levels as well as to create and implement policies that provide legal protection, social inclusion, and humanitarian support to migrants and displaced persons.



Beneficiaries: In five editions, more than 400 officials among institutions of the Member States, Permanent Missions, Permanent Observers, the General Secretariat, and other actors interested on forced displacement, international protection and migration, based on the current situation in the region.



Duration: Ongoing (yearly) since 2020.



Funding: The Inter American Course is organized through institutional partnerships and collaboration with UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the University of Notre Dame with the support of the OAS School of Government.



OAS Pillars: Human Rights and Integral Development AG/RES. 3013 (LIV-O/24) Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development: Promoting Resilience contained in Strategic Line: “Fostering the promotion and protection of the human rights of migrants, including migrant workers and their families, in accordance with the Inter-American program on this subject to enhance their contribution to development”.

Challenges:



- To Ensuring continuous participation and commitment from attendees, especially those with demanding professional responsibilities.
- Organizing a high-quality course requires financial, human, and logistical resources, which may fluctuate.

Opportunities:





- The course provides a unique space for government officials, international organizations and the academia to enhance their knowledge and skills.
- The knowledge shared during the course can directly influence policy formulation and implementation in the participants’ respective institutions.
- The co-organizer partners investing with experts and resources.





2. DIGITAL DIPLOMA ON LEADERSHIP FOR INCLUSION AND ACCESS TO RIGHTS


Brief description and objective: The Digital Diploma aims to equip and train leaders with the tools, knowledge, and skills needed to promote inclusion and ensure access to rights for marginalized communities throughout the Americas. Combining live online sessions, asynchronous learning modules, and networking opportunities, the initiative fosters a collaborative learning environment that cultivates transformative leadership across the region. The program covers essential topics, including Inter-American legal frameworks, advocacy strategies, strategic communication, human rights-based education, fundraising, public speaking, social media management for leaders, among others.


 **Geographic scope/Beneficiary country/countries:** Open to all OAS Member States, with a strong emphasis on ensuring geographic, gender, generational, and sectoral diversity.


 **Relevance:** Since its launch, the program has received over 9,800 applications, reflecting strong regional demand for training in human rights and inclusion. The course is delivered through digital platforms, making it accessible to individuals across different countries and regions of the Americas.

 **Beneficiaries:** Public officials, civil society leaders, and private sector professionals, among others, especially individuals who identify as Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants, Persons with Disabilities, Women and Youth, Older Adults, Migrants and Forcibly Displaced Persons. More than 3,500 individuals from government, civil society, and the private sector have completed the diploma through scholarship opportunities, of which 70% (approximately 2,450) were government officials.


 **Duration:** Ongoing (yearly) since 2020 with five editions completed as of 2025.

 **Funding:** The Diploma business model has made it sustainable (self-funded from tuition rates). DSI has raised USD 123,600 (before internal deductions), contributing to its financial self-sustainability. This has allowed DSI to provide full and partial scholarships for participants covering up to 100% of tuition costs.

 **OAS Pillars:** Human Rights and Integral Development Resolution AG/RES. 3028 (LIV-O/24) "Promotion and Protection of Human Rights ", section on "Expanding social protection and inclusive opportunity in the Americas".

 **Challenges:**

- The program must stay updated with the latest social trends, legal developments, and technological advancements to remain relevant and effective ensuring that the content remains relevant to the needs of participants.

 **Opportunities:**

- Participants gain key leadership skills related to advocacy, policy formulation, program design, and implementation within the context of social inclusion and access to rights that prepares them for roles in government, civil society, or international organizations.
- The diploma provides participants with the chance to engage with professionals and experts from across the Americas that allows them to expand their professional networks, forge partnerships, and share experiences that could be beneficial for their future projects or careers in social inclusion and human rights.
- Upon completion, participants earn a digital diploma, a recognized credential. This offers professional validation that can open doors for participants' career advancement.





UPCOMING PROJECTS


1. IMPROVING THE EXERCISE OF LEGAL CAPACITY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (IN NEGOTIATION)

Brief description and objective: The project aims to support the efforts of States for the effective implementation of UN and OAS mandates related to Persons with Disabilities, and specifically their right to legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life.

The project will train and equip legal professionals in Member States so they can better support the legal capacity of persons with disabilities, to ensure respect for their rights, their will and preferences, with corresponding safeguards to prevent abuse. The focus would be on building institutional capacity for recognizing the legal capacity of persons with disabilities and ensuring that the systems of justice and public administration are inclusive. The trainings and capacity building will be based on the Guidelines for the Establishment of Support for the Exercise of the Legal Capacity of Persons with Disabilities- Guía para el Establecimiento de Apoyos para el Ejercicio de la Capacidad Jurídica de las Personas con Discapacidad- of the OAS Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (CEDDIS). This guide was created to help States in the Americas effectively implement Article 12 of the UN treaty.


 **Geographic scope/Beneficiary country/countries:** Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama (first phase)

 **Relevance:** Most of legal systems often do not recognize the right of persons with disabilities to make independent legal decisions. Laws that grant others (such as guardians or curators) the ability to make decisions on their behalf are often a form of guardianship that reduces personal autonomy and dignity for persons with disabilities. Countries that are parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), are obligated to promote and guarantee the human rights of persons with disabilities, including their right to exercise their legal capacity on an equal basis with others.

 **Beneficiaries:**

- **Direct Beneficiaries:** Public officials from the National Secretariats or Councils for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (SENADIS/CONADIS), officials of legislative bodies, Officials of judicial bodies, officials in charge of citizen service, Prosecutors, Ombudsmen's Offices, National registries, notaries, civil society organizations of persons with disabilities and their families
- **Indirect Beneficiaries:** People with disabilities and their families

 **Potential Donor and amount:** CAF Bank of Latin America - \$200,000

 **OAS Pillars:** Human Rights and Integral Development. Specific mandates in Resolution AG/RES. 3028 (LIV-O/24): PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS", section on the "Program of Action for the Decade of the Americas for the rights and dignity of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2026 (PAD) and support for the Committee for the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against Persons with Disabilities".



Challenges

- Limited Political Will: Although there is growing recognition of the rights of persons with disabilities in international frameworks, many governments in the Americas lack the political will to prioritize or fully implement reforms. This may be due to competing priorities, lack of awareness, or insufficient political advocacy by persons with disabilities themselves.
- Fragmented or Inconsistent Policy: Some States have not yet developed comprehensive and coordinated policies to support the legal capacity of persons with disabilities. In some instances, different ministries or agencies may have inconsistent or fragmented approaches, making it difficult for people with disabilities to access the support and services they need.



Opportunities


- Many countries in LAC have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, CRPD, creating an opportunity to align national laws and policies with international standards, thereby enhancing the legal capacity of persons with disabilities.
- Inter-American System: The Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities offers additional regional support for improving the exercise of legal capacity. DSI is pushing forward initiatives that advocate the legal and social inclusion of persons with disabilities, creating momentum for legal reforms across the region.


2. ENHANCING MIRPS STATES' RESPONSE TO DISPLACEMENT THROUGH STRENGTHENED ASYLUM SYSTEMS AND REINTEGRATION (IN NEGOTIATION WITH CANADA)

Brief description and objective: The proposed project aims to strengthen the capacity of MIRPS States to manage their asylum systems more effectively, ensuring a fair and equitable refugee status determination process that provides greater protection for vulnerable displaced populations in Central America. The initiative seeks to streamline and enhance asylum management by improving procedural frameworks, strengthening data management systems, and building institutional capacity to efficiently process application. The project will also be supporting the countries of Northern Central America in the implementation of their reception programs for returned individuals, critical for ensuring that the reintegration process is smooth, humane, and sustainable. This project stems from a consultative process conducted by the DSI/OAS in which each country ensuring that the project aligns with the governments' priorities and is responsive to national goals capturing key priority areas of governmental agendas, especially in relation to managing displacement and supporting migrants and refugees' central issues in line with their realities and particular context. The governments of these countries have formally requested assistance to address these issues.




Geographic scope/Beneficiary country/countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama


 **Relevance:** The asylum systems in Central America face challenges due to the increase in applications driven by violence, organized crime, and poverty which often hinder their effectiveness in protecting refugees and asylum seekers. Costa Rica is the main recipient, with over 220,000 applicants (2023), mostly Nicaraguans. Panama has seen an 85% increase in applications. In El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, the systems are fragile and not easily accessible, with limited resources and capacity to handle asylum seekers coupled with return migration. Also given the current migration context, the increasing number of returnees places significant pressure on national systems, requiring immediate and well-coordinated responses to ensure their dignity, well-being, and long-term reintegration. Without adequate support, returnees face heightened vulnerabilities, including limited access to healthcare, psychological support, and economic opportunities, which can hinder their successful reintegration and increase the risk of re-migration. Thus, strengthening asylum systems and supporting the reintegration of returnees are critical aspects of the response for MIRPS states in addressing displacement and ensuring that displaced individuals and returnees are protected and can rebuild their lives.


 **Beneficiaries:**

- **Direct beneficiaries:** Government officials from institutions responsible for asylum processing.
- **Indirect beneficiaries:** Refugees, asylum seekers and returnees and host communities.


 **Duration:** 36 months

 **Potential Donor and amount:** Canada - ·CAN \$ 2,834,512.99

 **OAS Pillars:** Human Rights. Specific mandate in AG/RES. 3028 (LIV-O/24) PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS in section on the “protection of asylum seekers and refugees in the Americas”.

 **Challenges**

- Shifts and changing government priorities can undermine efforts to strengthen asylum systems and implement reintegration programs. Asylum and migration policies may be inconsistent or subject to sudden changes, making it difficult to establish long-term, sustainable solutions.
- Ongoing Violence and Conflict: In countries where returnees come from areas of generalized violence, gang violence, organized crime actions, the security situation may not be conducive to safe and successful reintegration. Returnees may be at risk of facing violence or repercussions for their previous decisions to flee, making reintegration dangerous or impossible for some.

 **Opportunities**

- Reducing the Push Factors: Strengthening asylum systems and reintegration programs offers an opportunity to address some of the root causes of displacement. Through long-term reintegration, returnees can contribute to rebuilding their home communities, which may help reduce factors like violence, poverty, and lack of opportunity which are key drivers of displacement in the first place.
- Regional Economic and Social Development: Promoting the reintegration of returnees also aligns with broader goals of economic and social development in the region. Supporting returnees to find work, access education, and improve their living standards helps build a more stable society, reducing future displacement risk.