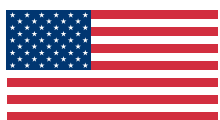




**SURVEYS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE NORTH
OF CENTRAL AMERICA, FRAMED BY THE
SANITARY EMERGENCY CAUSED BY COVID-19**

COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGNS (C4D)

May 2020



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INTRODUCTION

The campaigns “Échale ganas” in Guatemala, “Conectá con tu futuro” in El Salvador and “Ponele plan a tu vida” in Honduras were launched in 2019 with the aim of promoting positive behavior changes in young people. We aimed for the target audience to be able to make decisions about their lives and consider alternatives to irregular migration, such as local options for development and regular migration channels.

The three campaigns have been developed in a participatory way, along with target audience members, community leaders, government institutions and civil society organizations. These key actors have supported IOM in the choice of each approach, other aspects of creative and message design, as well as in some dissemination activities.

In order to expand the scope of the campaigns to new communities and analyze the knowledge, attitudes and skills of young people, in February 2020 three new surveys were conducted to build a new baseline. These studies confirmed the relevance of continuing to work on the approach of alternatives to irregular migration with

particularities tailored to each community. However, the appearance of COVID-19 in the region raised the need to adapt this approach to the current changing.

The health emergency context directly affects the target audience of the implementing communities in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. The main reasons have to do with partial or absolute curfews, mobility restrictions, an avalanche of confusing information, uncertainty, the closure of schools and shops, the suspension of field activities of institutions and organizations and, of course, the closing of international borders.

In response to this, in May 2020, IOM conducted digital surveys with young people in the same three countries, in order to get to explore some issues directly related to the construction of the campaigns. These are, for example, the new concerns that the pandemic has fostered in young people, as well as their methods of information, their ability to recognize false information, their opinions regarding international migration and the feasibility of fulfilling their goals.

MAIN GOAL

Identify the perceptions of young people of the communities currently implementing C4D in the northern countries of Central America, concerning international migration and the feasibility of meeting their goals under COVID-19 and in medium term future.

SPECIFIC GOALS

- Exploring young people’s current concerns.
- Identifying through what media they get informed and who they trust the most during the pandemic.
- Probe their skills in recognizing false information and their vulnerability in trusting strangers.
- Explore the plans young people have once the restrictions because of the pandemic are over.

SAMPLE

The surveys were conducted through online questionnaires, where each person could select and fill in

their answers. In the case of Guatemala and El Salvador, the link to the questionnaire was shared with organizations, schools and institutions with direct contact to young people in the target audience, such as educational centers, youth centers and non-governmental organizations. In Honduras, we contacted directly young people who have participated with previous campaign activities, which were carried out in 2019, and also community leaders.

It is worth mentioning that the methodology suggests as a starting point that the participants have some kind of internet access. However, during the process of response, part of the evidence confirmed that there was some, if

limited: in Honduras, 75% can be connected through Wi-Fi. In Guatemala, 35% indicate that they do not have stable internet access. In El Salvador, 43% indicate that connect to the Internet via prepaid data and 41% via Wi-Fi.

Due to the methodology described in the previous paragraphs and the limitations posed by the pandemic, it should be clarified that this process is not a survey but a poll. This means it's a short, random process, the results of which are not necessarily representative from around the country or the communities interviewed.

However, the intention to get closer to the reality of young people, as modified by the pandemic, was fulfilled.

The following is a breakdown of the demographic data:

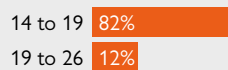
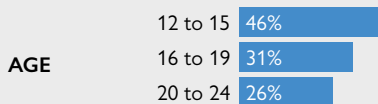
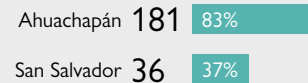
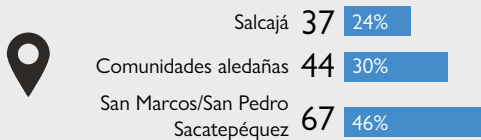


FULL SAMPLE

Guatemala
147
people

Honduras
65
people

El Salvador
217
people



DATES 4 to 13 de may, 2020

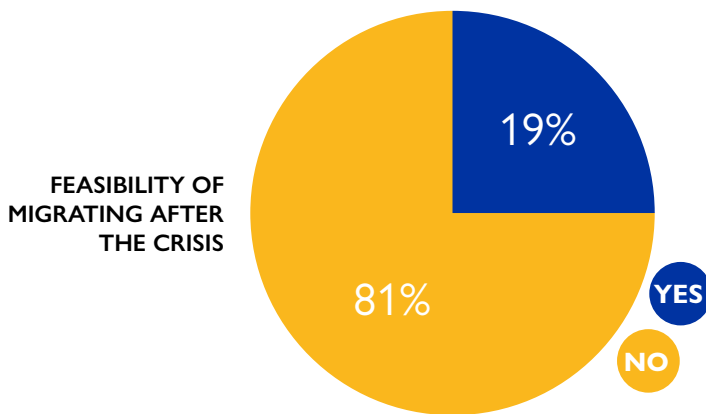
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MAIN RESULTS

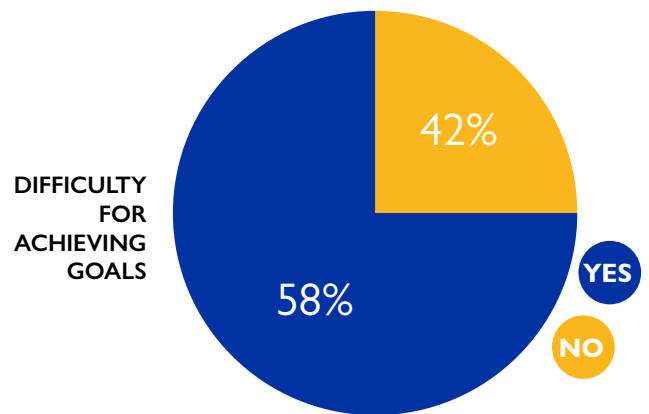
WILL MIGRATING BE AN OPTION?

Of the 429 young people surveyed, a majority have discouraging perceptions of migration in the emergency context created by COVID-19. 81% consider that migrating is not a viable option, neither now, nor whenever quarantines have ended, and borders reopened.



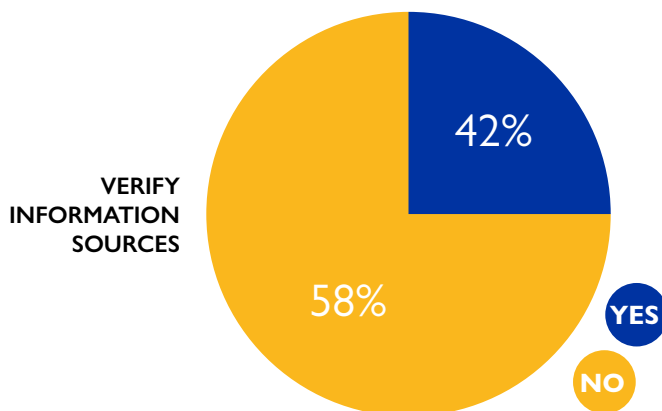
WILL THEY ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS?

The participants were also consulted on their perception in terms of being able to achieve their goals at the end of the crisis and 58% think it will be difficult. When analyzing the comments to this question, specific aspects were highlighted both favorable and unfavorable.



CAN YOU IDENTIFY RELIABLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION?

In relation to young people's ability to identify reliable sources of information when searching for job and education prospects, 58% said they are unable to identify whether that source of information is real and reliable. The rest of the young people, who do have some notion of how to identify them, explain that they do so based on confidence they have in people close to them or institutions which handle the subject matter.



In Honduras and El Salvador, young people's perception seems to be more positive, with 63% and 46% who believe they won't have it that hard to achieve their goals. In Guatemala, in contrast, a greater concern was observed.

FAVORABLE ASPECTS

Young people believe their goals remain the same, even if they will have to be delayed.

It is very important for them to have confidence in themselves.

Some young people state that they are not that worried, because they can count on their families supporting them.

UNFAVORABLE ASPECTS

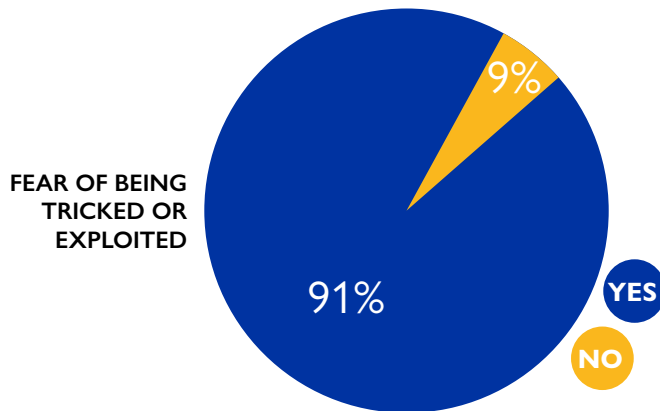
Young people express that even after the crisis, the fear of getting the illness will prevail.

The uncertainty of the length of the quarantine weighs on their fears about the future.

Some of them expressed that they are worried about their families being unable to support them, either because they have lost jobs or because they fear they will.

DO YOU FEAR BEING TRICKED OR EXPLOITED?

91% of young people manifested some fear of being tricked or exploited, had they to look for opportunities during or after the COVID-19 crisis.



THROUGH WHAT MEDIA ARE THEY GETTING INFORMED DURING THE PANDEMIC?

The main means by which young people are getting informed in the context of the crisis generated by the pandemic are Facebook, Internet and TV. It is also important to take into account that, in the case of Guatemala, the use of radio is reflected in 39%, while in Honduras and El Salvador it is little used, with 6.2% and 2% respectively.

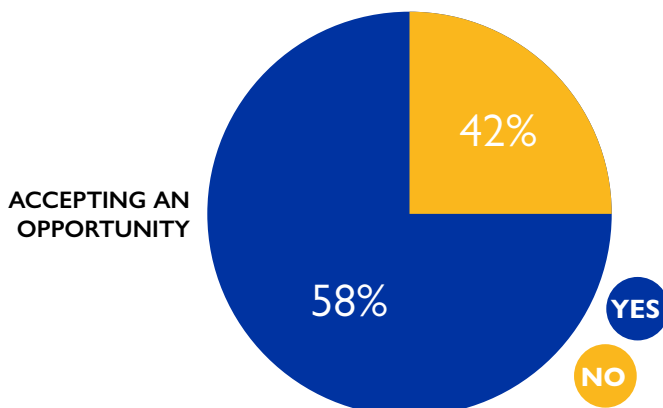
Other media emerged as very little used for information, as is the case with YouTube, Google and WhatsApp.

USE OF MEDIA



DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE LEVEL OF RISK ACCEPTING DECEPTIVE OFFERS ENTAILS?

Regarding comprehension and level of risk involved in accepting work or other opportunities to generate income, offered by a person or company they don't know, 58% mention they would take the offer. In Honduras, the percentage was much higher, with 86% of interviewees saying they'd accept. In Guatemala and El Salvador, only half of each sample agreed with the proposition, even with many expressing not being completely assured.

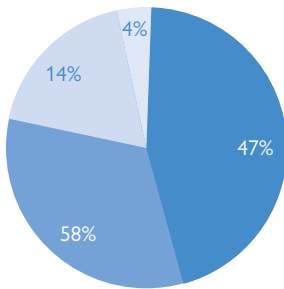


WHO DO THEY TRUST THE MOST?

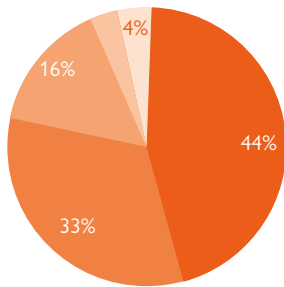
When talking about sources young people trust, the data showed different results for each country.

WHO THEY TRUST THE MOST FOR INFORMATION

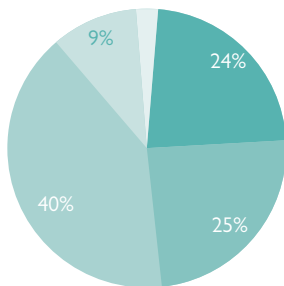
GUATEMALA



HONDURAS



EL SALVADOR



HOW IS THE CRISIS AFFECTING YOU?

The young people said that the crisis generated by the pandemic affects them in three areas:

ACADEMIC

There are many young people who don't have the technical resources to be able to receive classes online, which can generate a great vulnerability and the fear of losing their school year.

Other young people also expressed concern in the face of the loss of jobs by their relatives. This situation means that they cannot buy data or Internet plans to access their respective classes.

ECONOMIC

Following the loss of employment or reduction in salary, there have been multiple difficulties in covering all expenses necessary in their families.

In some colonies, community leaders stated that the biggest concern is the difficulty to be able to provide food for the whole family and for long periods of time.

HEALTH

In El Salvador and Guatemala, young people expressed need for psychological support in the wake of this crisis.

CONCLUSIONS

The responses of the young people show that, indeed, their daily situation has changed in one way or another, with most changes focused on the economic and educational areas. In addition, perceptions about their futures have been modified, usually with a much more negative picture than the one they had before the pandemic.

Migration is not a feasible option in a scenario that generates a lot of uncertainty regarding the possibilities of mobilization, even after the quarantine is over. Therefore, a regular migration approach, in a context where migrating, would be unsuitable at campaigns aiming to stay in tune with their communities.

From this point of view, it is of utmost importance to emphasize all results related to risk of trafficking in persons. These results evidence a need to educate young people on how to recognize sources of reliable information when migrating and looking for work or educational opportunities.

On the same note, we highlight the concern of this young people about meeting their goals. Thus, it seems important to reinforce these projects without endangering their life and integrity. In relation to the fulfillment of goals, it also lends itself to an approach about helping youth to stay active during quarantine: in constant search of work and education, taking advantage of educational opportunities online and the like.

Constant activity can also help relieve the mental health-related difficulties that some participants manifested, although there should also be consideration of the means in which psychosocial support sessions for youth groups can be offered in the implementing communities.

From the media perspective, the consumption habits of participants point to a campaign with Facebook and TV as its main media, with a key strengthening of the Somos Colmena webpage and, specifically in Guatemala, radio products.



SOMOS
COLMENA
by IOMX

