

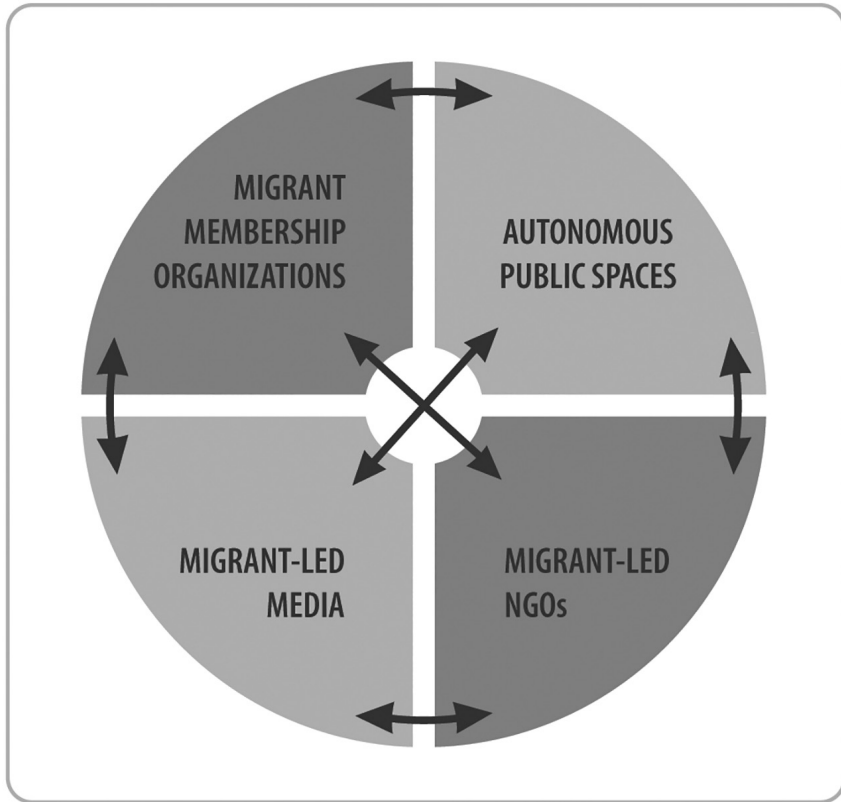
CHAPTER 1

Mexican Migrant Civil Society: Propositions for Discussion

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Migrant collective action is often grounded in transnational communities and shared collective identities. These social foundations constitute the basis of migrant civil society, which emerges in locally grounded public spaces that extend across national borders and expresses migrants' capacity for self-representation in the public sphere. Simply put, "migrant civil society" refers to migrant-led membership organizations and public institutions. Specifically, it includes four arenas of collective actors and actions: migrant-led membership organizations, migrant-led nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), autonomous public spaces such as large-scale cultural or political gatherings, and migrant-led media.¹

To spell out what the four arenas look like, *membership organizations* are composed primarily of migrants and can range from hometown associations to worker organizations, religious associations, and indigenous rights groups. They tend to come together around four broad collective identities—territory of origin, shared faith, work, and ethnicity. Sometimes these multiple identities overlap, as in the cases of Oaxacan Catholics in Los Angeles or religious farmworkers in the US Midwest, where union leaders have been known to preside over weddings and baptisms. The second arena involves *migrant-led NGOs*. Because of the emphasis here on repertoires of self-representation, this category does not include those many nongovernmental organizations or nonprofits that serve migrant communities but are not directed by migrants themselves. One must keep in mind the distinction between NGOs and membership organizations, a distinction elided in the fuzzy US term "community-based organization." The key difference is who governs them; NGOs report to self-appointed boards of directors, while the leaders of membership organizations are ostensibly accountable to the members themselves.² *Public spaces* are gatherings where migrants set the agenda and can interact and express themselves with relative freedom



1.1. Migrant civil society: Pathways of synergy

and autonomy. Culture, religion, sports, and recreation encourage collective identity and a sense of belonging. *Migrant-led media* also bolster collective identity and voice. Migrant-led media include nonprofit initiatives but also extend beyond the traditional boundaries of civil society to encompass individuals and institutions in commercial media. In practice, the boundaries between these four arenas are blurred, and each can reinforce the others, as illustrated in figure 1.1.

This approach emphasizes the analytical importance of recognizing migrant-led organizations as a set of civic, social, and political actors that are qualitatively distinct from the advocacy organizations that most mass media, politicians, and scholars treat as the main interlocutors speaking on behalf of immigrants in the United States. In other words, the proposition here is that “pro-immigrant” and “immigrant-led” are not synonymous. The underlying question is one of who speaks on behalf of immigrants. While most observers and scholars elide that distinction, it matters to organized

immigrants. The questions of representation and whose voice is heard become especially relevant when one is trying to understand the political discourse and advocacy positions of different actors regarding the ongoing immigration policy debate. For example, pro-immigrant political forces have been willing and able to take positions in the comprehensive immigration reform debate in the US Congress that may or may not have represented the interests of the undocumented population. During the brief window of political opportunity during the Obama administration, the leading pro-immigrant advocacy groups and their elected allies insisted on an eventual path to citizenship, a requirement that appears to have prevented winning over some Republicans to vote in favor of mass regularization. As designed in this insider compromise, the proposed pathway to citizenship was quite long and indirect, and it offered uncertain results. In this case, the positions of US civil rights-oriented organizations may not have taken into account the primary concerns of undocumented workers, which may have been regularization rather than a much more hypothetical pathway to citizenship. Yet immigrants' own organizations had little influence in the legislative agenda-setting process. The question is not whether political tradeoffs were made in the search for a viable comprehensive reform proposal; they clearly were, as in accepting a hardening of the border. The issue is whose views counted when the pros and cons of those policy tradeoffs were assessed and negotiating positions were staked out. Indeed, when the Dreamers movement—the undocumented youth movement that burst into the national political scene in the spring of 2010 with a flurry of occupations, hunger strikes, and demonstrations calling for support of the DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act)—became a national political force, one of its main demands was to have a seat at the table when strategies and policies affecting them were discussed (Nicholls 2013). The Dreamers' capacity for self-representation, beginning in California and spreading across the country, transformed what had been a coalition of US immigration reform groups into a much more bottom-up, decentralized movement targeting multiple levels of government.

The rationale for focusing on the migrant-led dimension of civil society is to encourage migrant actors, observers, and potential allies to recognize the organizations through which migrants have strengthened their capacity for self-representation; such recognition would then serve as a basis for more balanced coalition building with other actors, notably US liberal elites. This is not to suggest that migrant-led and pro-immigration organizations are completely separate from each other, just that they are in some ways distinct. Migrant civil societies often emerge in dialogue with a broader civil society, though whether those relations are local, long-distance, or both varies widely.³

The “migrant civil society” umbrella category of collective actors and public spaces involves many different kinds of migrants. Migrants’ varying degrees of rootedness in their countries of residence influence their capacity for building autonomous institutions and their capacity for self-representation. Meanwhile, within settled immigrant worker communities, legal status and the political environment also determine the capacity for collective action. Migrants also have differing interests and abilities to remain engaged with their homelands. States and societies of origin, in turn, differ in the degree to which they view their diasporas as remaining part of them. Often one of the central dilemmas for migrant individuals and their families is how to overcome the feeling of being from “neither here nor there” (Zavella 2011). Similarly, the challenge for migrant civil societies is overcoming exclusionary attitudes in sending and host societies to achieve recognition and inclusion both here and there.⁴

The concept of a migrant civil society is the point of departure for the following seven propositions, each of which is informed by a combination of research, coalition-building experience, and advocacy practice. The propositions address a series of related analytical questions involving migrant organizations, the struggle for migrant rights, and strategies to alleviate poverty and violence in sending communities and create viable alternatives to future migration. The propositions are illustrated by specific cases. While wide-ranging, the examples are not meant to represent the entire terrain of organizations, networks, and fields of activity covered by the concept of migrant civil society.

1. Forms of migrant organization are shaped by migrants themselves, by their political-institutional environments, and finally by nonmigrant allies in host countries.

As happens in collective action more generally, migrants do not organize in a vacuum. Their capacity to find the free spaces needed to come together in pursuit of common goals depends heavily on their social, civic, political, and spatial environments. Freedom of movement and of association are fundamental—yet those freedoms vary widely across countries, workplaces, and communities and depend heavily on individuals’ immigration status. Similarly, access to the kinds of information needed to organize, including shared language, is highly uneven, yet such access is crucial for identifying potential allies and assessing opportunities for change.

Access to civil and social rights for migrants can be highly uneven within countries and across issue areas. An example is the disconnect between kinds of rights in the United States. On the one hand, undocumented workers are highly vulnerable to deportation and have limited rights to due process. On the other hand, migrants’ children have a constitutional right to attend pub-

lic school, migrants have the legal right at least on paper to receive care in hospital emergency rooms and be provided with interpreters, and their employers are nominally obliged to respect federal minimum wage and occupational safety laws (e.g., Gleeson 2010).

The local, national, social, and political forces of the host country—including its religious institutions, trade unions, legal defense groups, and political parties—also determine the availability of potential allies for migrant rights.⁵ However, the density and disposition of potential allies within host countries can vary geographically as well as across languages, religions, issue areas, and ideologies. Migrants who share languages, religions, or ideologies within host-country civil societies are likely to have more opportunities to build strong social ties across borders.

The political-institutional environment that determines the possibilities for migrant action includes the government policies in countries of origin and transit. In the face of systemic, unpunished violations of the rights of transmigrants in Mexico, until very recently Central Americans in Mexico did not dare to come out publicly and protest their treatment. Conversely, the Mexican government has responded to the demands of its nationals in the United States and taken an active role in defending them and advocating for the undocumented in numerous ways. One of the most notable official Mexican responses has been to grant millions of consular IDs (*matrículas consulares*).⁶ The Mexican government and immigrant defense organizations have persuaded many local government agencies, among them police and financial institutions, to accept the documents as official IDs. Despite these efforts, many Mexicans remain doubly undocumented in that they lack official recognition from the United States and their own country.⁷

One way to sum up this proposition is that “context matters” (Bada et al. 2010). That is, the local environment for organizing often varies widely within both the country of settlement and the country of origin. There are two major sources of this variation. First, the power of opponents of migrant rights is unevenly distributed. Second, the power of potential migrant allies is unevenly distributed within countries. In the United States the possibilities for forming powerful coalitions vary greatly because immigrant-friendly US institutions are much stronger in some cities than in others. Notably, supportive churches, labor unions, and Spanish-language broadcast media are dispersed unevenly across the US landscape. The core infrastructure for immigrant rights mobilization in the United States rests not so much on national organizations as on multisectoral, city-level coalitions that bring together migrant-led and US organizations. Importantly, the breadth and density of immigrants’ most consistent coalition partners—the institutions of US Latino civil society—are vastly different across cities and states, as is US Latino citizens’ capacity to organize politically (Bada et al. 2010).

Another way to illustrate how local political context matters is to examine how migrant-led organizations are shaped by migrants' own political backgrounds, the overall political situation, and the density of the civil society network where they live. Interaction between political capital and institutionalized local political structures gives rise to diverse political expressions in regions with high densities of both. This political diversity is reflected in the paths immigration reform campaigners have followed since 2001, when the DREAM Act to regularize child migrants was introduced in the US Senate, and especially after the December 2005 introduction of the Sensenbrenner bill in Congress to criminalize violations of federal immigration law, which triggered massive marches in the spring of 2006 (Bada, Fox, and Selee 2006; Voss and Bloemraad 2011).

The comprehensive immigration reform campaign was led by US civil rights-oriented advocacy organizations and their political allies from a center of gravity in Washington, DC. Though some analysts argue that the DC-based organizations that led the campaign, such as the National Immigration Law Center and the Center for Community Change, pursued a DC-insider strategy (Nicholls and Fiorito 2015), the groups also built a broad network of allies in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and many other cities. The Center for Community Change launched the Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) in 2000; FIRM's Immigrant Organizing Committee included some thirty groups including the Casa de Maryland, Gamaliel Foundation, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, New York Immigration Coalition, and Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA). Though the national conveners were US organizations, many of the citywide coalitions were migrant-led. That said, in contrast to those network members that were close politically to mainstream US organizations aligned with the Democratic Party, other migrant-led groups like the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, Central American Resource Center, and Dignity Campaign were more willing to openly criticize the Obama administration's immigration enforcement strategy and especially its Secure Communities program, which pushed local police forces to collaborate with immigration authorities.⁸

The national campaign revealed migrants' limited access to agenda setting. Such uneven terrain is especially relevant because while migrants have unquestionably demonstrated their capacity to build their own social and civic institutions, their capacity to take the next step and create one clear voice and secure political power in the policy process requires building coalitions with established institutions such as FIRM. Creating a shared space at the city or state level can, in turn, influence when and how migrants choose to engage in advocacy and collective action. This virtuous circle represents an

important potential pathway for migrant empowerment but one that will become visible only if diverse patterns of civic engagement are unpacked at the local level. One must recognize the diversity of political practices and coalitions developed by different migrant-led organizations and networks to understand the opportunities and constraints they face.

2. The organizations that constitute migrant civil society are based on multiple, often overlapping collective identities.

Like collective action more generally, migrant organizations emerge from a combination of shared interests and identities. Some groups come together based primarily on their shared community or nationality of origin, perhaps encouraged by home-country governments or nongovernmental actors in either country.⁹ Yet in terms of organizing, shared migrant identities are a double-edged sword; while they facilitate some organizing strategies, they can hinder others.

Other migrant rights groups, in contrast, bring together migrants from several countries, most notably to focus on the shared struggle for worker rights or legal status. In receiving societies, core issues concerning human rights and legal status can create shared interests among migrants who otherwise differ in terms of national origin, language, ethnicity, class, caste, or ideology. Despite such objectively shared interests, conscious political strategies are usually required to bring together migrant workers of different national origins. This is even the case where migrants from different countries share a language, as with Latino immigrant worker organizing initiatives in the United States, often led by immigrants who were politicized in their home countries.¹⁰

In migrant rights organizing, one of the most important distinctions is between groups that primarily relate to their home countries and those that primarily focus on their countries of residence. Over time, however, the distinction has eroded as an increasing number of migrant organizations pursue agendas that are both here and there. Migrants organize through multiple channels simultaneously, coming together as employees at their workplaces, for example, or as women or members of distinct ethnic groups—especially when their roles in the labor market or community are specifically gendered or racialized. At the same time, migrants may organize as members of the same villages of origin when supporting community development back home or as citizens of their home countries and/or supporters of homeland political parties when they call on their own governments to respond to their concerns. Yet while migrants often pursue different agendas simultaneously through different organizations, their full repertoire of actions may not be visible to migrants' potential allies.¹¹

One such unnoticed example of migrant organizing involves the complex

and lively debates about immigrant identities and political practices unfolding in migrant-led media. Antonieta Mercado (2011) argues that the proliferation of migrant-led media in the United States in recent decades has led to an accumulation of Mexican migrant communication practices particularly among indigenous migrants, an expression of what she and others call “cosmopolitan citizenship.”¹² Mercado further asserts that “those practices offer a good example of how cosmopolitan engagement across nations is constructed from below, enriching instead of limiting the conception of citizenship” (2011:xxiv–xxv). The online station Radio TexMex FM-Identidad Migrante links migrant communities by bringing news from Mexico and the United States to a binational audience. The station has developed strategic partnerships with hometown associations, NGOs, advocacy organizations, and governmental offices on both sides of the border.¹³

In another of Mercado’s case studies (2015) she demonstrates how migrant-led media within the Oaxacan community in the United States have played an important role in increasing the subgroup’s public visibility. Its visibility is all the more impressive in a context in which ethnic difference within the Mexican migrant community is generally ignored (Fox and Rivera-Salgado 2004). Mercado (2015) analyzes issues of *El Tequio*, which was published by the Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales from 1991 through 2010, first as a monthly newsletter, then as a quarterly magazine beginning in 2006, and finally as a digital publication in 2015. Oaxacan-led migrant media also include the binational weekly radio show *La Hora Mixteca* transmitted by the Fresno-based Radio Bilingüe binational network; *El Oaxaqueño*, a weekly newspaper that circulated simultaneously in Los Angeles and Oaxaca City from 1999 to 2010; and the biweekly newspaper *Impulso de Oaxaca*, which appeared in Los Angeles in 2004. These migrant-led media initiatives fostered a powerful sense of community among their readers and listeners.

Commercial migrant-led media are also relevant for understanding how migrant collective identities are constructed and embedded in the community. Although commercial enterprises do not fit into the classic definition of civil society, an argument can be made that some new commercial media projects geared toward the Latino population, immigrant and US-born, overlap with the goals of nonprofit, migrant-led media initiatives. Both provide platforms on which to discuss political agendas and migrant-related issues.¹⁴ For instance, commercial Spanish-language TV and radio obviously played a central role in mounting and guiding the unprecedented spring 2006 mass mobilizations in defense of immigrant rights (Bada, Fox, and Selee 2006).

The commercial Spanish-language media’s civic leadership is especially evident in Noticias Univision (Univision News), which has publicly voiced

concerns of the Latino community throughout the recent surge in strong anti-immigrant rhetoric.¹⁵ Jorge Ramos, a leading Univision news anchor, has famously become a vocal advocate of the Latino community and a critic of Donald Trump (Calmes 2015). Ramos has declared, “Our position [at Noticias Univision] is clearly pro-Latino or pro-immigrant. . . . We are simply being the voice of those who don’t have a voice” (in James 2013b). Based on their coverage of the 2016 presidential campaign, one can conclude that US Spanish mainstream commercial media—the two national TV networks, Univision and Telemundo, as well as radio and print media—are heavily pro-immigrant (Parkeraug 2015).

Another example of commercial migrant-focused media is the Fusion TV cable channel. This English-dominant, second-generation-oriented channel was launched in October 2013 in a partnership between Univision and ABC (James 2013a,b). Fusion relies on the star power of Univision’s Jorge Ramos hosting the weekly program *Real America* and of Mexican-born León Krauze, news anchor at Univision’s Los Angeles station KMEX-TV, Channel 34, and former host of Fusion’s *Open Source* (Calmes 2015; Gabriel 2015; Johnson 2013). In 2018 Ramos had 3.3 million Twitter followers, more than all US Latino political leaders combined, demonstrating that commercial migrant-oriented media contribute to collective identity formation, a key component of civil society. Moreover, the institutions and individuals of commercial Spanish-language media have played an explicitly civic role, encouraging collective action and a defense of migrant rights, thereby blurring the conventional boundaries that define civil society.

3. Balancing the differences between service-oriented and defensive work on the one hand and more strategic policy advocacy work on the other requires sustained exchanges and deliberate strategies.

Supporting migrant workers takes many different forms. Migrants face hardships and traumas that affect them daily. Accordingly, it is important and necessary to have organizations that can aid them directly, whether by visiting them at detention centers, preparing them for return migrations, counseling them, or providing shelter for distressed workers. The list of potential issues is long. Service-oriented work in response to the problems will be forever needed if their roots are not addressed through focused policy advocacy. Without a deliberate strategy to initiate policy changes that protect the rights of migrants at each step in the migration process, there will be no end to the exploitation.

For organizations working on the US side, advocacy, politics, and service are part of their DNA despite the traditional view that nonprofit organizations do not engage in politics because of restrictions imposed on charity

organizations in the United States.¹⁶ An example of the mixture of advocacy, political activism, and service is seen in the work of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA); its work includes legal services, policy advocacy, civic engagement, community organizing, and community education. CHIRLA has spun off a separate legal entity and incorporated it as a political action committee to allow the coalition to fully engage in the political process by lobbying openly for immigrant-friendly laws in California and by mobilizing members to support specific political fights and elections. Similar trends are visible among the largest immigrant advocacy organizations in other parts of the country, notably in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and the DC metro area.¹⁷

A new development in the consolidation of migrant civil society at the transnational level has been the emergence of Mexican actors defending immigrant rights in the United States as well as the rights of transmigrants within Mexico. The diverse mix of primarily Mexican organizations ranges from university research centers, both private and public, to legal advocacy organizations and shelters run by Catholic Charities. Several US-based organizations participate in the network. The advocacy network has taken shape as the *Colectivo Migraciones para las Américas* (COMPA).¹⁸ It emerged in 2013 to advocate that Mexico's incoming government include a migration policy focusing on development, human rights, and gender in its 2013–2018 National Development Plan. The federal government ostensibly uses the plan to outline its priorities and asks the Mexican Congress to appropriate funds accordingly. The government eventually published a set of migration policy priorities, some of which responded to COMPA's suggestions, in the Special Migration Program, the *Programa Especial de Migración 2014–2018*.¹⁹

The adoption of the Special Migration Program, the first comprehensive Mexican government policy framework, as part of the National Development Plan was an important achievement for COMPA, which substantially influenced the process. The program was dropped in 2017, and the difficult task remains of sustaining the coordination among the many NGOs that came together to push for the policy.

COMPA set out to develop a public education campaign to promote inclusive and democratic participation in Mexican immigration policy issues, building on the work begun by several of its founding organizations. The network's original name was *Colectivo Plan Nacional de Desarrollo-Migración* (*Colectivo PND-Migración*). It sought to coordinate the efforts of several NGOs along with national and international networks to tackle issues surrounding migration from Mexico to the United States and the migration from Central American countries through Mexican territory. Its innovation was to network and advocate within Mexico on behalf of Central Americans

and Mexican migrant communities of origin. At the time it was quite novel for Mexican civil society organizations to recognize their country not only as a sender but also as a receiver of immigrants. The network's stated objective was nothing short of building "a transnational strategic migration agenda, inclusive of the diverse expressions from the community itself and of the church's areas of work, with work aimed to support migrants and other emerging issues."²⁰

Another migrant-led organization, the Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (FIOB, Binational Front of Indigenous Organizations), has responded in similar ways across its three sites of activity—Oaxaca, Baja California, and California. Its strategy has been to separate the FIOB as a political membership organization from the service component, setting up sister organizations registered as nonprofits in states on both sides of the US-Mexico border. This arrangement is working relatively well in California, where FIOB-California maintains close relations with the Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño (Binational Center for Oaxacan Indigenous Development), a nonprofit service organization. FIOB-Oaxaca has been successful in working with its counterpart Desarrollo Binacional Integral Indígena, which itself has partnered with several national and international funding organizations to foster economic development and capacity-building opportunities for migrant-sending communities in Oaxaca. This arrangement has proven to be less fruitful in Baja California, where FIOB-Baja California has had limited success in developing its service-providing counterpart organization, Cuvandi Ichi (Haciendo Camino).

Tension exists between advocacy and service, but organizations have adopted strategies to respond to immigrant communities' increasing need for services and to engage in the political process while navigating different political and geographical contexts.

4. Migrant organizations often come together in networks, but only some networks can sustain coalitions.²¹

In practice, the term "coalition" is often used interchangeably with "network," "campaign," and "movement." The terms all refer to efforts in which distinct actors come together with the expectation that the whole will be greater than the sum of its parts. However, these everyday terms describe very different kinds of relations between partners, and it is useful to distinguish between them. While it may seem merely academic to differentiate a network from a coalition, a more nuanced approach could be useful insofar as partnerships are bolstered by agreed-upon expectations regarding their goals and capacities.

What, then, are the differences between networks, coalitions, and move-

ments? There are many definitions of “network.” Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink’s classic study offers a succinct formulation: “Networks are forms of organization characterized by voluntary, reciprocal, and horizontal patterns of communication and exchange” (1998:8). Coalitions, in contrast, are partnerships of distinct actors that coordinate action in pursuit of shared goals (Fox 2010).

The actual use of these terms can be confusing. Some dense coalitions refer to themselves as networks. Some thin networks refer to themselves as coalitions. While coalitions often begin as associations of organizations, the coalition leadership or staff can in effect become an organization, retaining the coalition label but not the practice of representing diverse constituent member groups. Coalitions that attempt to sustain representation of diverse constituencies face the challenges of seeking balance while crossing boundaries of class, gender, race, language, and national origins.

Some coalitions of disparate actors describe themselves as movements, overstating their degree of cohesion and shared collective identity (Fox 2010). Some movements, in turn, may identify themselves as coalitions of organizations. The global justice movement of the 1990s and 2000s was described as a “movement of movements.” One way to frame the distinction between networks, coalitions, and movements is to consider each term as referring to a different point along a continuum of organizational density and social cohesion. Networks, coalitions, and movements can all engage in campaigns, which usually are joint actions with specific goals, targets, and time horizons. When networks do engage in actual campaigns, though, they pivot from communication and exchange to joint action and behave more like coalitions.

It is puzzling that while movements are always grounded in social networks, only some social networks generate movements. The idea of movements also implies a high degree of shared collective identity, yet neither networks nor coalitions *necessarily* involve significant horizontal exchange between participants. Indeed, many transnational networks and coalitions rely on a handful of interlocutors to manage relations between broad-based social organizations that may have relatively little awareness of the nature and actions of their counterparts. At the same time, some transnational movements achieve such a high degree of shared symbolism that active members can identify strongly with each other in spite of quite limited direct contact, as in the emblematic case of the anti-apartheid movement of the 1970s and 1980s.

The concept of transnational social movements suggests a much higher degree of density and much more cohesion than is involved in networks or coalitions. The more precise term “transnational movement organization”

implies an organized membership base in more than one country, as in the Binational Front of Indigenous Organizations (FIOB) in the United States and Mexico. And yet many migrant organizations, though transnational in their worldviews and agendas, do not have organized social bases in their countries of origin.

Distinguishing between networks, coalitions, and movements also helps to avoid blurring political differences and power imbalances within what may appear from the outside to be homogeneous transnational movements. Keck and Sikkink point out that transnational networks face the challenge of developing a “common frame of meaning” in spite of cross-cultural differences (1998:7). In practice, such shared meanings are socially constructed through joint action and mutual understanding rather than merely through professed values and goals. Political differences within transnational networks are not to be underestimated, either, despite the apparently shared goals of their members.

One of the questions, then, is under what conditions networks become more goal-oriented coalitions capable of producing joint action. Coalitions are often a means to an end, but while the interest-based principle “The enemy of my enemy is my friend” may be enough to account for coalition formation among nation-states or political parties, it is rarely sufficient inspiration for civil society actors. Shared political ideologies certainly facilitate coalition formation, but they are not a precondition for it. Some basis for shared values is often crucial in bringing civil society organizations together in spite of their many differences. As a practical matter, shared targets are usually necessary to translate feelings of solidarity into joint action. Shared targets, simply put, help diverse groups to answer the ever-present question “What is to be done?”

Transnational exchanges between social organizations can produce networks, which can produce coalitions, which can in turn produce movements. Underscoring the distinctions does not imply any judgment that more cross-border cooperation is better. On the contrary, realistic expectations about what is possible are necessary to sustain collective action. Cross-border cooperation involves costs and risks that must be taken into account, and it depends heavily on finding appropriate counterparts with whom to ally.

These conceptual points draw from the *Diálogos* exchanges between social organizations in Mexico, the United States, and Canada in 1988–1998. The goal of this series of structured multisectoral conversations was to bring together counterparts to share perspectives on the social and political dimensions of North American integration. The concept of counterpart social organizations and public interest groups implies not similarity or agreement but rather analogous roles in their respective societies (Brooks 1992; Brooks

and Fox 2002). In the US-Mexico-Canada Diálogos context, the strategy involved bringing together unions of auto workers, telephone workers, and teachers with family farm organizations, immigrant rights defenders, environmental activists, and human rights advocates to sit at the same table across from their respective cross-border counterparts in each sector or issue area. In contrast to solidarity gatherings, many of the counterparts did not share underlying political ideologies or even specific political stances on, say, NAFTA. Most were primarily domestically oriented groups that were addressing globalization for the first time. The structured conversations led to greater mutual understanding, and the terms of engagement included a willingness to agree to disagree as a basis for finding specific areas of common ground.

5. The construction of civil society coalitions that bring together organizations from host and sending countries requires a conscious strategy and sustained investment.

This proposition raises the question of what kind of social, civic, or political organization has the will and capacity to sustain strategic investments in immigrant organizing and coalition building. Conventional partisan political actors in the United States are primarily interested in citizens and, in particular, high-propensity voters in swing states. The social justice and internationalist elements within private philanthropic organizations can take a longer-term view, though they also can accede to the imperative to emphasize short-term results and adopt reactive strategies. Trade unions have certainly played a key role in immigrant gateway cities, and some have been revived by immigrant membership, but their rapidly shrinking presence in the private labor market limits their bargaining power. Outside of immigrant gateway cities, a substantial fraction of union members appears to be vulnerable to political messages that blame immigrants and international trade for the loss of high-paying manufacturing jobs, especially in the Rust Belt.

US citizen-led civil rights and immigrant defense organizations are on the front lines of immigrant organizing, supported by various foundations and unions, but outside of immigrant gateway cities, they often tend to be on the defensive. Meanwhile, the founding era of immigrant hometown organizing during the 1990s was driven in part by a different kind of external actor, the Mexican state itself, through its consular apparatus in the United States. Coalition building between the different kinds of organizations raises the question of who actually speaks for immigrants.

As immigrant organizing has tended to depend to varying degrees on external allies, how can migrant-led organizations build their own capacity for influencing organizing strategies? By the mid-2000s, some of them began to

claim a larger role in representing their own perspectives. The National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities was formed in 2004 as a migrant-led organization to improve the quality of life for its member communities in the United States and their countries of origin. After its first decade, it was renamed *Alianza Américas* in 2015 to better reflect the increasing diversity of its member organizations. *Alianza Américas* seeks to build transnational leadership and has devoted a great deal of its work on reforming US immigration policies that address the root causes of migration as well as on challenges faced by migrants in the United States. *Alianza Américas'* cross-border advocacy engagement with home-country policies distinguishes it from other immigrant-led organizations. At the same time, its migrant-led character distinguishes it from established US Latino organizations that have close ties with elected officials.

The emergence of the *Red Mexicana de Líderes y Organizaciones Migrantes* (Mexican Network of Migrant Leaders and Organizations) exemplifies the complex process of consolidating specifically Mexican immigrant-led transnational coalitions that are developing their own long-term strategies. The network was incubated within the alliance now called *Alianza Américas*, which included some of the largest and most consolidated federations of Mexican hometown associations, especially in Chicago and (initially) in Los Angeles.²² The *Red Mexicana* was first organized in the summer of 2012 as a kind of caucus within the larger alliance to bring together all the Mexican immigrant-led organizations in the United States to influence the immigration policies of the incoming administration of Mexican president Enrique Peña Nieto. The network's transnational political agenda included mobilizing an advocacy campaign across the United States and Mexico to enhance Mexican federal funding for programs aiding Mexican migrants living in the United States such as the Three-for-One program, which matched collective remittances for social investment projects, and to protect Central Americans crossing through Mexico on their way to the United States. The *Red Mexicana* collaborated closely with the Mexico-based COMPA network to secure funding for a specific set of programs contained in the massive National Development Plan.

In addition to the Mexican migrant campaign, the *Red Mexicana* launched public education campaigns aimed at its members in the United States. The Pro DAPA-DACA+ campaign informed the Mexican immigrant community about the opportunities for semiregularization offered through Obama's executive orders, providing information about the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) application process and attempting to mobilize support for Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA). The *Voto Digno* 2016 campaign concentrated on mobilizing the immigrant vote leading up

to the 2016 US presidential elections and No Más Deportaciones on stopping deportations. The Voto Digno 2016 campaign targeted young Latinos through public announcements featuring young voters addressing their peers about the importance of participating in the election. Lastly, keeping true to its transnational political platform, the Red Mexicana launched a simultaneous campaign it called *Credencialízate y Vota, Es Tu Derecho* for immigrants to obtain their Mexican voting IDs in time to vote in the July 2018 Mexican presidential and congressional elections.

The emergence of the Red Mexicana coincided with the consolidation of a certain type of civil society network in Mexico. These networks responded to the growing visibility of Mexico as not only a source of migration but also the primary cross-migration region for Central Americans and increasingly for migrants from other parts of the world. An example of migration advocacy networks in Mexico is the Red Regional de Organizaciones Civiles para las Migraciones (Regional Migrations Network of Civil Society Organizations). The Red Mexicana and the Alianza Américas have become important US-based counterparts to the regional networks based in Mexico that nevertheless have member organizations from the United States, Canada, Central America, and the Caribbean. Given the binational positionality of organizations like the Red Mexicana, they are valuable partners for other civil society organizations attempting to influence migration policies in sending countries.²³

6. The “migration and development” agenda, which focuses on remittances, contrasts with the “development and migration” agenda, which addresses the promotion of alternatives to migration.

Migrant engagement with development projects at home can bolster local social infrastructure such as schools or water systems but does not readily lead to the sustainable jobs needed to curtail future migration. Up until now, the migration and development agenda has been largely confined to addressing the issue of remittances within families. While these transfers improve living standards and access to services including education, which should be considered an investment, only a small proportion of remittances generates enduring improvements to the public good, even in countries whose governments offer matching funds. These social infrastructure projects are the focus of many optimistic accounts of governmental migration and development initiatives.²⁴ However, as evidenced by Mexico’s paradigm-case Three-for-One matching-funds programs, a small share of the resources go to sustainable job creation.²⁵ While the goal of “banking the unbanked” is certainly important to those migrant families who send remittances, the spillover effects on broader development challenges remain uncertain. Creative model

projects seeking to channel remittances into productive investments have been few in number and tiny in scale. As a result, while the “migration and development” agenda addresses the quality of life of nonmigrants, primarily migrants’ family members and their neighbors, thus far it has not addressed the systemic reasons for the lack of employment opportunities in communities of origin.

There are many reasons migrant-led community development projects have yet to focus on productive investment on a meaningful scale. Among the reasons is the dearth of investment opportunities in so many sending communities as well as the critical need for on-the-ground entrepreneurial and technical capacity. Such challenges of economic viability are compounded by the long-distance decision making involved. Credible oversight is crucial to the viability of collective remittance projects.²⁶ This raises the question, however, of the role of citizens in the communities of origin as well as of their public officials, who are sometimes democratically elected. Their degree of involvement in the selection and oversight of migrant-led projects varies widely. At one extreme, these actors can be largely bypassed by well-organized migrants and remain uninvolved in projects; at the other extreme, local officials can be highly proactive, traveling abroad to induce migrants to form hometown clubs to petition for funds in support of given project agendas. In Mexico’s Three-for-One program, most hometown association-led projects lack counterparts from among local civic or social organizations with which to share decision-making duties and oversight. By 2007, the Mexican Social Development Ministry began establishing local project oversight committees, known as “mirror clubs,” but it is not clear how many have survived. In the northern region of Guerrero, many hometown associations consolidated during this period. Their efforts to bolster oversight of the use of the public funds that matched their remittance contributions involved winning *de facto* veto power over project spending, including the right to cosign project-related checks with mayors (Méndez Lara 2013). However, more recent informal field reports indicate that the regionwide penetration of local government by organized crime has sharply curtailed civic oversight capacity of Three-for-One projects.

Important differences have emerged between public goods-type community development projects and economic development projects that involve investments in private enterprises including small-scale cooperatives. When organized migrants pool their hard-earned money for hometown development projects, they place a premium on investments that provide benefits to the community as a whole. Most job-creating investments, in contrast, directly affect only a small subset of the community, at least at first, before scaling up. The benefits of such projects may be perceived as vulnerable to

being monopolized by local elites or well-connected kinfolk, demonstrating the difficulty inherent in long-distance accountability (Burgess 2016; Fox and Bada 2008).

The persistent disconnect between the remittance-oriented and development-oriented agendas stems from the predominant and narrow project framework. In the Mexican context, a project framework has not been accompanied by broader attention to crafting an alternative development policy agenda. Even states governed by political leaders who are ostensibly open to policy dialogue with organized migrants have yet to pursue alternative policy strategies that are more effective at generating substantial increases in employment.

If the causes of underemployment are systemic, then national-level policy shifts are required to create viable alternatives to migration, that is, more local jobs. In middle-income sending countries, the main constraint is not so much a lack of public resources as the priorities that guide the allocation of those resources. Mexican farm subsidy checks, for example, totaled more than \$20 billion from 1994 to 2010 but were targeted primarily to medium and large commercial agribusiness rather than to small-scale family farmers (Fox and Haight 2010). Yet national-level pro-employment measures to redirect substantial flow of public resources (such as farm subsidies)—in contrast to a project-level focus on local social infrastructure investments—may threaten vested interests.

Whether to focus migration and development advocacy agendas on (trans)local projects as opposed to broader development policies can easily be presented as though the first approach is pragmatic and the second more political. After all, a project-led approach has the advantage of achieving tangible results in the short term and doesn't risk butting heads with home-country governments. A project-led approach allows hometown associations to engage directly with local governments and communities in the sending countries. Advocacy for alternative development policies, in contrast, involves both a larger-scale approach and a longer time line as well as political uncertainty over how the potential reforms will affect clearly defined constituencies in specific places.

Pragmatic project initiatives, though, may be far from apolitical, as can be seen in the design of Mexico's Three-for-One matching-funds program. One of its strengths is that it draws on contributions from federal, state, and local governments, but that structure gives effective veto power to each level of government. The necessary consensus has led to a high concentration of projects in a small number of states where organized migrants have political leverage vis-à-vis state governments. Meanwhile, US-based migrant associations may well be excluded from access to governmental matching funds if they question the status quo by campaigning against human rights viola-

tions at home, call for broader development policy alternatives, or associate with the political opposition. Thus the choice to prioritize short-term, local projects is a distinctly political decision.²⁷

Furthermore, when a home-country government comes to power that is willing to question a labor-exporting strategy and prioritize job creation at home, opportunities could arise for advocates of developmental policy alternatives. In that case, organized migrants may be able to move forward with translocal projects and contribute to national efforts to change economic development policy. More generally, the key to building alternative development agendas involves effective coalition building with civil society and political actors in the country of origin that are committed to policies designed to encourage large-scale job creation.

7. The coalitional dynamics involved in campaigning for migrant rights in the United States are different from those that address development issues and the causes of migration in Mexico.

There has been a persistent disconnect between campaigns for migrant rights in receiving countries and home-country campaigns for national alternative development policy agendas. The two change agendas may or may not fit neatly together. Given the structure of interests involved, the agendas of current migrants might have limited overlap with those of potential future migrants, who may have a bigger stake in encouraging their own governments to pursue job creation and development strategies at home.

Also worth considering is the debate over unauthorized workers in the United States. The current balance of US political forces suggests that in any scenario for immigration reform in the near future, there will be tradeoffs involving the treatment of current and future migrants. If Democrats regain legislative majorities in the future, possible legislative bargains may allow some current migrants to regularize their status, but only if the US government further tightens border controls and imposes harsher measures against those migrants unable to access what can be a very arduous, punitive, and possibly exclusionary regularization process. If that occurs, the resulting political-institutional situation could create tensions within migrant civil society between current and future migrants. Any opportunity for regularization is likely to be limited to some current migrants, whereas the further hardening of the border will affect future migrants. While regularization of status is the most pressing issue for current migrants, the national development agenda in a country of origin will have the most direct impact on potential future migrants. This structure of interests poses dilemmas for building and sustaining shared, cross-border migration and development agendas.

Meanwhile, from a sending-country perspective, there have been efforts

to newly frame the relationship between migration and development. Mexican rural development strategist Armando Bartra (2003:33) bridges the migration, development, and rights agendas with the call to respect “the right to not migrate.” Global Exchange (2008) and David Bacon (2013b) have called that prerogative “the right to stay home.” After all, the Mexican Constitution still speaks of its citizens’ right to “dignified and socially useful work.” The right to not migrate is a useful bridging concept for promoting reflection and discussion between diverse actors who see the process differently. This principle recognizes that while migration is an option, it is a choice that stems from public policies that elevate some development strategies over others. In spite of this phrase’s catchy emphasis on the underlying causes of migration, it did not catch on in the public discourse, judging from the low number of online searches for the term. Yet Mexico’s incoming president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, adopted the underlying idea in his campaign, with his emphasis on creating alternatives to migration.

Conclusion

When it comes to applying the concept of migrant civil society, there may be a tension between emphasizing processes (social networks, repertoires of collective action, organizations and coalitions) and emphasizing outcomes. How do civic actors and public spheres connect and empower their participants? But also, how do their actions influence the broader political and civic contexts?

For those who are primarily concerned with the challenges immigrants face in their daily lives, a focus on social, civic, and political processes—which might involve only a small proportion of the immigrant population at any one time—risks eliciting a “So what?” response, at least from some skeptical academics. We contend, however, that paying attention to the emergence and consolidation of migrants’ ability to build their own social, civic, and political organizations is necessary but not sufficient to understand how they are treated by dominant public institutions in their societies of residence. Analysts interested in connecting the dots between the distinct public spheres within migrant civil society and the actions of sending and receiving states would do well to take three factors into account. First, considering the many obstacles to autonomous migrant collective action, the construction of migrant civil society has been an inherently uneven, long-term process. Second, migrants have, at best, relatively little influence over sending and receiving states, with the notable exceptions of migrant-sensitive institutional enclaves, such as municipal governments in immigrant gateway cities, and

migrant support programs operated by the governments of sending states. Third, analysts need to be prepared for unexpected shifts that change migrants' terms of engagement with each other and with the state.

The 2016 US election results drove dramatic changes in the role of the federal government in immigrants' lives. Yet that threat may be pushing migrant-friendly enclaves and sending governments to take even more proactive, migrant-friendly stances. Whether and how mainstream nongovernmental institutions, notably churches, respond to a substantial hardening of anti-immigrant policies remains to be seen at this time. It is worth recalling a previous historical surprise that caught analysts completely off guard. This unprecedented 2006 wave of immigrant collective action in the United States was one of the largest mass civic protests of any kind in US history (Bada, Fox, and Selee, 2006; Fox and Bada 2011). This display of disciplined, self-organized activism convinced the US Senate to reject proposed hardline legislation that would have ratcheted up criminalization of undocumented immigration. In other words, there is a precedent for mass political action by immigrants to directly influence the US legislative process.

The 2016 presidential election results can be read through two lenses. Trump's victory revealed a resonance with a populist, nationalist discourse against immigrants and global trade. Yet Democratic contender Hillary Clinton's more immigrant-friendly, internationalist discourse probably contributed to her winning a majority of the US popular vote, especially in California.

One of the most salient long-term trends has been the increasing engagement of migrant civic, social, and political institutions with their counterparts in US society (Bada 2014; Bada et al. 2010). Over time, migrant civil society actors have transitioned from being outsiders to becoming "both-siders." Despite the 2016 election's strong anti-immigrant message, an internationalist perspective retains solid political support in cities where most immigrants live and institutions of migrant civil society are most consolidated.²⁸

Clearly, the post-2016 US political environment poses huge challenges to migrant networks and organizations. Experiences like the 2006 mass mobilization or the campaign begun during Barack Obama's presidency against city police turning undocumented immigrants over to federal authorities suggest that when it comes to federal policy, migrants may have more capacity to resist new threats than to promote actual regularization, with the notable exception of the DACA program, a proactive, inclusionary measure that was made possible by migrant-led protest and advocacy.

Whether and how the governments of states and cities where many immigrants live will be willing and able to fend off the likely hardening of anti-

immigrant federal policies remain open questions. Moreover, the responses of migrant organizations and mainstream institutions of US civil society will reveal a great deal about the nature of their relations with each other. Under increased federal immigration enforcement pressure, will migrant and US civil society organizations close ranks or be pulled apart? How will cross-border networks respond? Webs of migrant organizations have gradually moved from the margins of civil society toward the US mainstream, promoting a discourse of rights for migrants on both sides of the border. Now, however, they are faced with a US government that rejects the very premise of migrant rights. The future will stretch those webs, putting their resilience to the ultimate test.

Notes

This chapter is a substantially revised version of Jonathan Fox and Willian Gois, “Migrant Civil Society: Ten Propositions for Discussion,” a paper presented at the “People’s Global Action on Migration, Development and Human Rights,” Mexico City, November 2010, and published in Spanish as Fox and Gois 2010.

1. The definition encompassing four arenas follows the long tradition of defining civil society in contrast to both the state and the market and therefore does not include most private-sector actors, with the notable exception of migrant-oriented mass media. Our discussion of migrant civil society draws from Fox 2006, 2007 and Fox and Bada 2008.

2. The question of how civil society organizations are governed raises an issue that will not be resolved here, one of what counts as a “migrant-led NGO.” Does the term refer to organizations with executive directors of migrant origin? Directors are hired and fired by NGOs’ boards of directors. Therefore, a broad definition of “migrant-led NGO” would be based on the national origin of its executive director, and a more bounded definition would focus on the composition of a nonprofit’s board of directors.

3. For discussion of the binational dimension of migrant civil society, see Fox 2007 and Fox and Bada 2008. When seen in a binational context, migrant organizations tend to emerge either through the newcomers’ civic engagement with their destination societies or through links with their homelands. The public sphere can therefore refer either to the (e)migrant wing of a sending society or to (im)migrant communities within a receiving society. These distinct spaces sometimes overlap, and one major question is where, when, and under what conditions migrants engage both locally and transnationally. These cross-border and multilevel forms of active membership represent one dimension of the broader process of forming a transnational civil society.

4. Migrants in earlier historical periods faced similar issues. For a comprehensive review of the historical literature, see Moya 2005.

5. For a rare theoretically informed analysis of these coalitional dynamics in the European context, see García Agustín and Jørgenson 2016.

6. The total number of Mexicans with consular ID cards is not clear since official public data record the number issued each year without accounting for renewals or changes

of address. The number is large; according to the 2010 *Informe de Gobierno*, Mexican consulates issued 9.4 million from 2000 to 2010. For further discussion of the politics of the ID cards, see Délano 2011, Varsanyi 2007, and Waldinger 2014.

7. In part to address the ID challenge, the Mexican public interest group Be Foundation led a small but influential campaign that produced a constitutional amendment in Article 4 guaranteeing the “right to identity,” specifically the right to birth certificates for the millions of Mexican citizens who lack such documentation. The constitutional reform eventually led Mexico’s extensive network of consulates to begin helping nationals acquire birth certificates in spite of the long-standing reluctance of the Foreign Ministry to get involved (Asencio 2012).

8. See, for example, Bacon 2013a,b.

9. For a long-term strategic vision from the Mexican Foreign Ministry, see González Gutiérrez 2009.

10. On Latino immigrant worker organizing in the United States, see Bacon 2008, Fine 2006, and Milkman 2006.

11. For an ethnographic analysis of simultaneous multiple migrant identities, see Stephen 2007.

12. For a summary of the theoretical debate on this concept, see Dannreuther and Hutchings 1999. Will Kymlicka offers a variation on this theme in his acclaimed 1995 work, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*.

13. For a list of Radio TexMex’s strategic partner organizations, see its webpage at <http://radiotexmex.fm/category/alianzas-organizaciones/>.

14. For different definitions of civil society, see Howell and Pearce 2001.

15. Headlines on the Univision News website at the end of January 2017, the week-end after Trump issued his immigration executive orders, were “Both Sides Lose in Falling Out between Mexico and United States”; “A List of Obama’s Immigration Programs Now under Threat by President Trump”; “Trump to Preside Over an English-Only White House?” All were posted at Univision, <http://www.univision.com/univision-news>.

16. That said, many service-providing nonprofits are much more cautious about engaging in advocacy than the law actually requires, as spelled out in a public education initiative led by the flagship legal rights organization Alliance for Justice. See the alliance’s website, <http://www.bolderadvocacy.org>.

17. For organizations in Los Angeles, see the websites of the Central American Resource Center, <http://www.carecen-la.org/>, and the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, <http://www.ndlon.org>. For Chicago, see Alianza Américas, <http://www.alianzaamericas.org>, and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, <http://www.icirr.org>. For New York, see the New York Immigrant Coalition, <http://www.thenyic.org>. For the DC area, see Casa Maryland, <http://wearecasa.org>.

18. For a list of member organizations of COMPA, see its webpage OSC Integrantes, <http://migracionparalasalamericas.org/osc-integrantes/>. Many other prominent advocacy organizations are not included in the COMPA network. An example is Hermanos al Rescate, a shelter for Central American migrants in Oaxaca run by Father Solalinde; he is featured in the *New York Times* (Malkin 2012) about his work with Central American migrants crossing through Mexico.

19. COMPA’s capacity to influence the implementation of the government’s policy commitments was much more limited. See official details of the policy at its government webpage, http://www.politicamigratoria.gob.mx/es_mx/SEGOB/Programa_Especial_de_Migracion_2014-2018_PEM. For independent analysis of the government’s migration-related spending, see Córdova Alcaraz 2013.

20. COMPA's objectives are described at its webpage, <http://migracionparalasamericas.org/objetivos>. Many of the Mexican institutions that support Central American transmigrants, notably through the network of safe houses, were quietly funded by religious orders and philanthropic organizations associated with the social teachings of the Catholic Church.

21. The discussion of this proposition draws on Fox 2001, 2002, and 2010.

22. For a full list of member organizations of the Red Mexicana, see its webpage, http://www.redmexicanamigrante.org/organizaciones_miembros.

23. In the case of Mexican migrants' impact on public policy in general, see Duquette 2011 and Rodríguez Ramírez 2012. The Three-for-One program has explicitly institutionalized the participation of hometown federations in its rules of implementation. The official rules of implementation for 2016 determined that in order to be eligible to participate in Three-for-One, the main requirement is "to be Mexican migrants residing abroad, organized into a migrant club or organization that has an up-to-date consular registration" (*ser migrantes mexicanos radicados en el extranjero, organizados en un Club u Organización de Migrantes que cuente con Toma de Nota vigente*) (SEDESOL 2015:4). Full participation in and evaluation of the federally funded co-investment Three-for-One program were the main demands of the Zacatecan Federation, an immigrant-led organization representing dozens of hometown associations from Zacatecas, as the policy was developed (Rodríguez Ramírez 2012). Annual reviews and changes to the rules of the program require direct consultations with migrants.

24. In a comparison of migration and development initiatives in Mexico and Morocco, Natasha Iskander (2010) contrasts the failure of top-down efforts to channel migrant investments into poorly conceived business ventures with more successful, migrant-led social infrastructure initiatives.

25. For overviews of remittances and development issues in Mexico, see García Zamora 2009 and Fernández de Castro, García Zamora, and Vila Freyer 2009. For Latin America more generally, see García Zamora and Orozco 2009. In 2008, after several years' effort, the share of Mexico's Three-for-One projects considered "productive" reached 4 percent of the total number of projects (100) and 6.4 percent of federal program funding (only \$2.6 million). Thanks go to Xóchitl Bada for these data.

26. See Bada 2014, Burgess 2016, Duquette-Rury 2014, and Duquette-Rury and Bada 2013. Participants have incentives to be politically cautious and avoid controversy that would cause one of the three levels of government involved to exercise their veto power. The Three-for-One program involves federal, state, and municipal government contributions—and therefore signoff power. Mexican states that have been slow to go through transitions to democracy have lagged noticeably behind in their inclusion of independently organized migrant citizens in Three-for-One projects, as in the case of Oaxaca.

27. David Ayón argues that the Mexican government's multifaceted strategy for engaging the diaspora successfully depoliticized the relationship: "Mexican authorities had outmaneuvered and ultimately overwhelmed opposition-minded migrant activists with the state's power to reach out and even reshape the organized diaspora. Over the course of three [presidential] administrations and a fundamental regime change, the underlying interest of the Mexican state in deflecting transnational migrant activism away from domestic politics had prevailed" (2010:245). See also Déllano 2009, Iskander 2010, and Smith 2008.

28. In a detailed geographic analysis, Raul Hinojosa-Ojeda, Maksim Wynn, and

Zhenxiang Chen (2016) have found that Trump's support was inversely correlated with the presence of Mexican immigrants.

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