



---

Project Title/Subject: Shared Challenges in Responding to Mass Migration Movements  
Project Type: Single Country Project  
NPA: Mississippi Consortium for International Development  
Project Dates: 08/26/2024 - 09/03/2024  
Point of Contact: Carmelina Herrera, Program Officer  
(619) 361 - 1047  
[carmelina@sandiegodiplomacy.org](mailto:carmelina@sandiegodiplomacy.org)

---

### Why San Diego?

San Diego had over 5,000 refugees from more than 30 different countries between 2021 to 2022. However, the refugees are facing some serious issues, such as severe mental health crisis, and job loss. Especially, the Covid-19 outbreak brought much impact on the refugees: for example, problems such as food insecurities, poor mental health, household violence, and substance misuse have increased since the start of the pandemic. As a border city with a large immigrant and refugee population, a city-stop in San Diego is ideal to explore the issues facing minority groups in the U.S. Protecting the rights of, and integrating minority populations into a multi-cultural society, is a core priority of the immigrant/refugee assistance organizations in the region.

---

### Governmental Resources

#### **U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) - San Diego Sector**

<https://www.cbp.gov/border-security/along-us-borders/border-patrol-sectors/san-diego-sector-california>

The San Diego Sector of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) consists of more than 7,000 square miles and 66 linear miles of international boundary with Mexico. The San Diego Sector encompasses coastal beaches and expansive mesas to coastal and inland mountains, rugged canyons and high desert.

Directly to the South of San Diego lie the Mexican cities of Tijuana and Tecate, Baja California - with a combined population of more than 2 million. Today, San Diego Sector is focused on addressing the continuously changing tactics of transnational criminal organizations as well as migration patterns affecting the Southern border. With the increase in smuggling activity in recent years along Southern California's coastal borders, additional Border Patrol agents have been assigned to combat the maritime smuggling of humans and drugs, and San Diego Sector's Primary Operational Domain has increased from 91 coastal border miles to 114.

*Meeting Focus: Discuss security measures and policy priorities along the U.S. Mexican Border, and CBP protocols for processing immigrants and asylees at the border.*

*Note - Meeting requests must go through NPA's gatekeeper*

### **San Diego Police Department (SDPD) Multi-Cultural Community Relations Office**

<https://www.sandiego.gov/police>

<https://www.facebook.com/sdpd.MCCRO/>

The San Diego Police Department (SDPD) is the primary law enforcement agency for the city of San Diego. The Multi-Cultural Community Relations Office was established by the SDPD in 1987 to address the specific needs of the growing refugee population in San Diego. Their mission is to maintain open communications with immigrant and refugee communities within the City of San Diego and contribute to the safety and security of these communities by offering crime prevention support and assistance.

*Meeting Focus: Examine the role of the police community liaison and the specific role the MultiCultural Community Relations office plays in the refugee community in San Diego.*

### **Non-governmental Organizations**

#### **San Diego Immigrants' Rights Consortium**

[www.immigrantsandiego.org/](http://www.immigrantsandiego.org/)

The San Diego Immigrants' Rights Consortium aims to support comprehensive immigration reform, prevent the spread of local policies that violate immigrant's human rights, educate immigrants about their rights, and enlighten the public about the important contributions immigrants offer to the community.

*Meeting Focus: Discussion with members on the Consortium's role in facilitating collaboration within, and advocating on behalf of, immigrant communities; Explore current humanitarian and human rights issues along the Southern Border.*

#### **Survivors of Torture**

<http://www.notorture.org>

Survivors of Torture, International is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to caring for survivors of politically-motivated torture and their families who live in San Diego County. Since 1997, SURVIVORS has helped more than 1,300 torture survivors from more than 70 countries to recover from their traumas. SURVIVORS empowers torture survivors to reclaim the strength and vitality that were stolen from them by brutal dictators and governments.

*Meeting Focus: Discuss holistic services provided to victims of torture from refugee and immigrant communities.*

### **International Rescue Committee**

<https://www.rescue.org/united-states/san-diego-ca>

The International Rescue Committee provides opportunities for refugees, asylees, victims of human trafficking, survivors of torture, and other immigrants to thrive in America. Each year, thousands of people, forced to flee violence and persecution, are welcomed by the people of the United States into the safety and freedom of America. These individuals have survived against incredible odds. The IRC collaborates closely with government bodies, civil society actors, and local volunteers to support refugees, asylum-seekers, and other immigrants in San Diego, as they work to rebuild their lives.

*Meeting Focus: Learn about the IRC's role as an international organization and how they work to address the refugee crisis in San Diego and collaborate with local non-profits, and the city of San Diego.*

### **Jewish Family Services – Refugee & Immigration Services**

<https://www.jfssd.org/>

<https://www.jfssd.org/our-services/refugees-immigration/>

Since 1918, Jewish Family Services (JFS) has offered resettlement services to newly arriving refugees and asylees from around the world. Today, their Refugee Resettlement department works with approximately 45 cases each month, helping refugee families adjust to their new lives here in the U.S. JFS helps them learn English and find jobs. They teach them how to navigate the medical system, banks, and public transportation. They provide: a fully furnished apartment, airport pick up, acculturation services, translation/ESL services, employment services, advocacy, and more.

*Meeting Focus: Explore the various services and resources that JFS provides to incoming migrant populations, specifically their housing support, translation services, employment services and advocacy with the government. In addition, how JFS is providing emergency humanitarian supplies at the border in with the current removal of Title 42, a policy put in place during covid-19 that allowed border patrols to turn away all and any migrant trying to seek asylum, which has recently flooded all Southern border entrees.*

## **Alliance for African Assistance**

<https://www.alliance-for-africa.org/>

The Alliance for African Assistance is a non-profit, which assists with the resettlement of 1,020 asylum seekers, individuals, and families from Afghanistan who began arriving on September 1st with a goal of resettling all in San Diego by the end of February, 2022. They have a partnership with Rancho Santa Fe Foundation to help their supporters maximize their support of the resettlement of Afghan families, the first \$50,000 of donations received will be doubled.

*Meeting focus: learn about Alliance for African Assistance and how they are able to support Afghan families, as well as if they were able to reach their goal of February 2022. In addition, meet with Afghan refugees that have gone through Alliance for African Assistance to get integrated in San Diego, and learn about their experiences.*

## **Borderlands for Equity**

<https://www.borderlandsequity.org/>

Borderlands for Equity is a pro bono civil rights 501(c)(3) nonprofit that serves those that have been discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity, gender orientation, race, religion within our borderlands region. The organization was born of a deep desire to create a safe and inclusive space to amplify the voices of our most marginalized siblings.

*Meeting Focus: Discuss San Diego's issues regarding migrants and refugees to build a safer environment for them and raise awareness of diversity.*

## **Academic Resources**

### **SDSU School of Public Affairs - Refugee Americans**

<https://spa.sdsu.edu/research/institute/refugee-american>

San Diego State University (SDSU)'s school of Public Affairs provides an initiative for refugees. This Initiative seeks to highlight refugee experiences at SDSU and beyond, because it is a timely and appropriate response to perhaps the most important current policy battle in the country. San Diego receives more refugees than any other California county – SDSU believes this is part of the school's job, and institutional responsibility, to take a public stance on the targeting of San Diego communities. In the longer term, the Initiative will build towards greater university resources on this campus for affected students and supports the work of non-governmental agency partners serving our surrounding community. The campus has a 13% Asian American student population, many of whom are Southeast Asian and may have families or friends impacted by the ongoing targeted deportation and detention of Vietnamese, Cambodian, and other refugees. Additionally, the Initiative also brings some focus to Mexican border issues and Chicano/a identities, as well as the long-standing Central American refugee population whose status as protected migrants has been evoked under the current presidential administration.

*Meeting Focus: Discuss some strategies that help and people understand more about refugees and raise more awareness of refugees among students on campus.*

### **UCSD Tala Al-Rousan Club**

<https://hwsph.ucsd.edu/research/programs-groups/al-rousan-lab.html>

Tala Al-Rousan Club is one of the research programs from University of California San Diego (UCSD). The Displacement and Health Research Center focuses on studying displacement as a social determinant of health. As forced migration increases at unprecedented rates globally due to conflict, climate change, and raised inequalities, the rates of forced displacement are at all-time high. The lab is the first-of-its-kind at UC San Diego to be composed of refugee, first-generation, immigrant, and other under-represented trainees diversifying the next generation of scientists in health research.

*Meeting Focus: Examine the health trend among migrants and refugees to conduct effective research and provide better health services.*

### **UC San Diego Center for Comparative Immigration Studies**

<https://ccis.ucsd.edu/>

The Center for Comparative Immigration Studies (CCIS) is an independent research unit at the University of California San Diego. The Center's global network of research associates has expanded to over 355 Research Associates based in 25 different countries. The Center also has 35 institutional affiliates, 12 of

which are located outside the United States. CCIS academic staff and Fellows appear frequently in the local and national media discourse on immigration issues, and their scholarly work informs immigration policy and practice worldwide. CCIS has long been a center for the training of undergraduate and graduate students, with unique academic programming both in La Jolla and through the Mexican Migration Field Research Program.

#### **David FitzGerald, CCIS Co-Director and Professor of Sociology, UCSD**

<https://ccis.ucsd.edu/people/co-directors-staff/fitzgerald.html>

David FitzGerald is the Theodore E. Gildred Chair in U.S.-Mexican Relations, Professor of Sociology, and Co-Director of the Center for Comparative Immigration Studies at the University of California San Diego. His research analyzes policies regulating migration and asylum in countries of origin, transit, and destination. FitzGerald's most recent books include Immigrant California: Understanding the Past, Present, and Future of U.S. Policy (Stanford University Press 2021), and Refuge beyond Reach: How Rich Democracies Repel Asylum Seekers (Oxford University Press 2019), winner of the American Sociological Association International Migration Section Best Book Award;

*Meeting Focus: Examine how the Center's research informs immigration policy and practice, with an emphasis on the Western Hemisphere region.*

### **SAY San Diego Crawford Community Connection & San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) Family Engagement Department**

<https://www.saysandiego.org/program/crawford-community-connection>

<https://sdusdfamilies.org/>

Established in 1990, the Crawford Community Connection (CCC) serves all students and families in City Heights (a city with one of the largest refugee populations in the nation) as a school-based family resource center located on the Crawford High School campus. CCC ensures that Crawford Cluster schools and their students are linked to a network of services and community resources to eliminate barriers to student access.

San Diego Unified School District serves more than 121,000 students in pre-school through grade 12 and is the second largest district in California. The student population represents ethnic groups with more than 60 languages and dialects. The Family and Community Engagement Team's mission is to support district families, staff, and community partners in engaging in highly effective practices that bring stakeholders together for student success.

*Meeting Focus: Discuss educational supports for refugee students and families at San Diego Unified School District and how their collaboration with Crawford Community Connection helps eliminates barriers to access for refugee students in City Heights.*

### **Borderless Scholars Program, San Diego Mesa College**

<https://www.sdmesa.edu/student-services/eops/borderless-scholars/index.shtml>

The Borderless Scholars' program is designed to provide a safe and welcoming environment for undocumented students and undocu-allies. They support these students to overcome personal and educational challenges due to their immigration status. They provide personal, career, and academic counseling, on-campus support services, and community resources including free legal services. Advocacy and social justice is their main passion and allows them to be the support students need. Their services include counseling, meal cards, California Dream Act application assistance, immigration consultations, etc.

*Meeting Focus: Learn about the Borderless Scholars Program and how it has continued to prosper and welcome undocumented students.*

### **San Diego County Office of Education Migrant Services**

<https://www.sdcoe.net/special-populations/migrant-education>

Migrant Education is a federally funded program designed to provide education and support services to identified migratory children and youth. Migratory youth are defined as children and youth who move periodically with their parent/guardians for seasonal agricultural work. This office serves about 4,000 migratory youth and children in 56 school districts across San Diego and Orange County. Migrant Education collaborates with school districts, charter schools, and community agencies to provide supplemental supports to ensure equitable education for migratory youth and children.

*Meeting Focus: Learn about the services that the office provides for students and parents who are integrating into the San Diego school system.*

### **Lexington Elementary**

<https://www.cajonvalley.net/domain/871>

Lexington Elementary is located in the San Diego Community of Cajon Valley. They have a huge refugee and immigrant population; in which they are considered a multicultural school with over 60 languages spoken at the school. Lexington Elementary has a special immersion program, where students will have a special class in addition to their other classes where they can ask questions in their native language, and learn English, and integration efforts within a small group of students. Lexington Elementary also offers a food pantry to parents, and translators for any language to have good communication with parents throughout the process. Teachers are also trained to teach with a multicultural focus, and works with each student individually to see where they are struggling to collaborate with the World Language Program.

*Meeting Focus: receive a tour of the elementary school as well as an opportunity to observe a few classrooms of different grades while in school, and servers the school offers refugee students and parents.*

Note: during summer there might not be classrooms for the participants to observe, however they can still receive a tour, and a meeting in case they can't observe a classroom.

### **Educational Integration Resources**

#### **Cajon Valley Union School District - Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Office**

<https://www.cajonvalley.net/Page/14398>

El Cajon, where they teach, is a national refugee resettlement destination. Their district has received over 850 newly arrived students in the 2016-2107 school year alone, from Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and a handful of African and Latin American countries. In total, refugee children comprise over 19% of their student body, nearly 1 in 5 students in our district. Their mission is to provide opportunities for Cajon Valley schools and families to build meaningful and productive partnerships committed to student learning. Their work is guided by the Dual-Capacity Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships. This Framework provides a roadmap for conceptualizing, designing, and implementing all of their initiatives.

*Meeting focus: Learn about the FACE Office and their initiatives to support immigrant and refugee students and families; specifically taking a deeper dive into the Power Up Refugee Student Support strategies and Newcomer Welcome Meetings.*

### **Chula Vista Learning Community Charter School (CVLCC)**

<https://www.cvlcc.org/>

The Chula Vista Learning Community Charter School operates three schools, a primary, middle, and high school. Its founders envisioned a school focused on challenging academics with a mindful approach to relationships and social change. CVLCC follows a 50/50 Dual Language Model in grades TK - 12th. This model is meant to connect theory to practice by developing bi-literacy with the goal of promoting multilingualism and multiculturalism in all CLVCC students. At CVLCC it is a core belief that language and bi-literacy are assets rather than a deficit - and that all stakeholders are language learners. They expect faculty, staff, and the community to give equal value to each language.

*Meeting Focus: Discuss how the education system can utilize different modes of operation in diversifying and including multiculturalism in children of all ages.*

### **Community Integration Resources**

#### **MAKE Projects**

<https://www.sdmake.org/>

<https://www.kpbs.org/news/local/2022/04/21/san-diego-immigrant-job-training-program-expands-cafe-and-urban-farm-business>

MAKE Projects mission is to create an inclusive San Diego by preparing refugees and immigrants to achieve their dreams. They are an employment social enterprise where they operate an urban farm, restaurant, and events/catering company to provide a paid, real-world work experience for low-income refugee and immigrant women and youth. They aim to provide trainees with job readiness skills to help them achieve their dreams. MAKE Projects vision is to see San Diegans cross social, racial, economic, and geographic lines as they gather over a common love of food, flavors, and cultures. They believe in the power of food to bring diverse populations together, unite a community, and educate each other about their history and differences, as well as their communities.

*Meeting Focus: Discuss MAKE Projects system of training and hiring migrants, as well as how their plates and urban farm are inclusive to the cultures represented in their staff and San Diego.*

**Note:** *a meeting with them can include an opportunity for the participants to join the community meals (on Thursday or Saturday), for about \$30-40 per person.*

#### **San Diego Gateway to College and Career, San Diego Workforce Partnership**

<https://workforce.org/gateway/>

The San Diego Gateway to College and Career program provides young adults who identify as immigrant, refugee and/or English language learner (ELL) with high-touch and intensive support, stipends and paid internships. Recognizing the strength of your diverse ethnicities and languages, students are also supported to achieve their language learning goals, no matter what language you speak. This program offers help in removing barriers to success, finding what

career is right, finding a long-term job, starting school, and learning new job skills.

*Meeting Focus: Explore the successes and challenges of the program and how the San Diego Workforce Partnership promotes this program and effectively supports migrant youth.*

### **Catholic Charities of San Diego Refugee Services**

<https://ccdsd.org/refugee-services/>

The Catholic Charities of San Diego works to build a pathway to self-reliance and sense of belonging for refugees and immigrants. Project REACH is a program that the refugee services developed in order for refugees to be integrated into society through Resettlement, Employment, Acculturation, Case Management, and Health. The resettlement part of the program provides opportunities for refugees to be resettled in a safe and stable location that is also affordable. It also helps with things like applying for social security, registering for school, and connecting them with community resources. Along with resettlement the program also helps refugees find employment which enables economic self-sufficiency, develops skills necessary for application and interview processes, and provides one on one case agents to empower and guide clients.

*Meeting focus: Discuss and learn about the REACH refugee resettlement and integration program.*

### **Legal Resources:**

#### **Casa Cornelia Law Center**

<https://casacornelia.org/>

Casa Cornelia Law Center is a public interest law firm providing quality legal services to victims of human and civil rights violations. It seeks to educate others regarding the impact of immigration law and policy on the community and the public good. Since 1993, more than 15,000 children, women, and men have turned to Casa Cornelia for critical legal assistance and humanitarian protection. Casa Cornelia is the only non-profit law firm in San Diego County to provide free legal services to detained unaccompanied children.

*Meeting Focus: Learn about how Casa Cornelia supports migrant youth in their legal cases.*

#### **Immigration Center for Women and Children, San Diego Office**

<https://www.icwclaw.org/>

The Immigration Center for Women and Children (ICWC) is a non-profit legal organization providing free and affordable immigration services to underrepresented immigrants in California and Nevada. ICWC strives to provide security and stability for children who are abused, abandoned or neglected and for immigrants who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and other violent crimes.

Using U.S. federal legislation, ICWC provides immigration legal services (U and T Visas, VAWA, and SIJS) to immigrants who are victims of crimes. The resulting immigration benefits allow individuals to permanently leave their abusers and create safe environments for their families. ICWC's overall goal is to assist these victims of domestic violence, human trafficking, sexual assault, and other violent crimes in escaping abusive relationships, live in safety, and become self-sufficient.

*Meeting Focus: Overview of migration law in California and how ICWC is able to provide free and affordable services to migrants, focusing on women and children.*

---

\*\*Home Hospitality can be offered for the group, as well as a volunteer activity (Saturdays only) \*\*

### **Cultural Activities**

#### **San Diego Zoo**

[San Diego Zoo | Home page](#)

Price: \$68-\$79 for one Adult Ticket

The 100-acre (40-hectare) Zoo is home to over 3,700 rare and endangered animals representing more than 650 species and subspecies, and a prominent botanical collection with more than 700,000 exotic plants. It is located just north of downtown San Diego in Balboa Park.

#### **Harbor Cruise**

[Flagship Cruises & Events | San Diego, California \(flagshipsd.com\)](#)

Price: Starting at \$24.75 for one Adult Ticket for one-hour tour

Their deluxe tour covers it all: Harbor and Shelter Islands, Point Loma, Cabrillo National Monument, North Island Naval Air Station, the Submarine Base, as well as the Coronado Bridge, and much more.

#### **Balboa Park**

[www.balboapark.org](#)

Home to 15 major museums, renowned performing arts venues, beautiful gardens and the San Diego Zoo, Balboa Park has an ever-changing calendar of museum exhibitions, plays, musicals, concerts, and classes—all in the beautiful and timeless setting of this must-see San Diego attraction.

## **Coronado**

Consistently voted one of America's finest beaches by The Travel Channel, Coronado's beaches glisten year round due to the mineral Mica in the sand, while gentle waves caress the shoreline. From the shores of Silver Strand State Beach to the tip of the Coronado Municipal Beach, you'll find plenty of wide open sand, gentle waves and gorgeous views.

## **SeaWorld San Diego**

[SeaWorld San Diego Theme Park - Aquarium, Zoo & Theme Park in California](#)

Price: Starting at \$71.99 for one single day Adult Ticket

Come celebrate the wonders of the sea at SeaWorld San Diego. Experience the Shamu show, One Ocean, and thrilling rides like Journey To Atlantis, Shipwreck Rapids and Wild Arctic. Feed and touch dolphins and get up-close to beluga whales, polar bears, sharks and penguins. Enjoy fascinating aquariums and exotic birds from around the world. Then dive into the world of sea turtles at the all-new Turtle Reef attraction.