

### DTM Activities in the Region

### DTM REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The Central American, North American, and Caribbean region has been characterised by large migratory movements. The countries of the region see the emergence of those movements, act as transit countries, and at the same time form the destinations and the points of reception of many of the migrants. It is estimated that at the end of 2021, at least 130,000 migrants reached Panama through the Darién route.

During 2021, DTM activities took place in 13 countries in the region, including flow monitoring registries and surveys in 90 bordering locations, as well as surveys of resident populations, returned migrants, and displaced persons. According to the surveys, the most common drivers of migration were the lack of job opportunities, insufficient income, the impact of COVID-19, and violence. Drought in Honduras and the recent earthquake in Haiti also contributed to internal displacement. The main needs identified were: income or employment, food, access to basic services, health and education, and legal advice. The statistics produced through DTM activities show high numbers of cross-border movements, the majority of which were monitored between the border of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. There are also large numbers of returned individuals and persons internally displaced due to natural disasters.

Country	Movements counted*	Internally Displaced Persons	Flow monitoring surveys
Costa Rica	28,203		1,871
Dominican Republic	170,024		5,506
El Salvador	9,737		
Guatemala	69,392	4,507	
Haiti	954,833	25,429	
Honduras	50,545		
Mexico	37,613		
Panama	14,407		743
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,334,754</b>	<b>29,936</b>	<b>8,120</b>

Figure 2. Flow Monitoring (according to the registers and surveys) and internal displacement statistics. Note: these data do not include surveys on resident populations; these are presented later in this report.

\*usually at border points

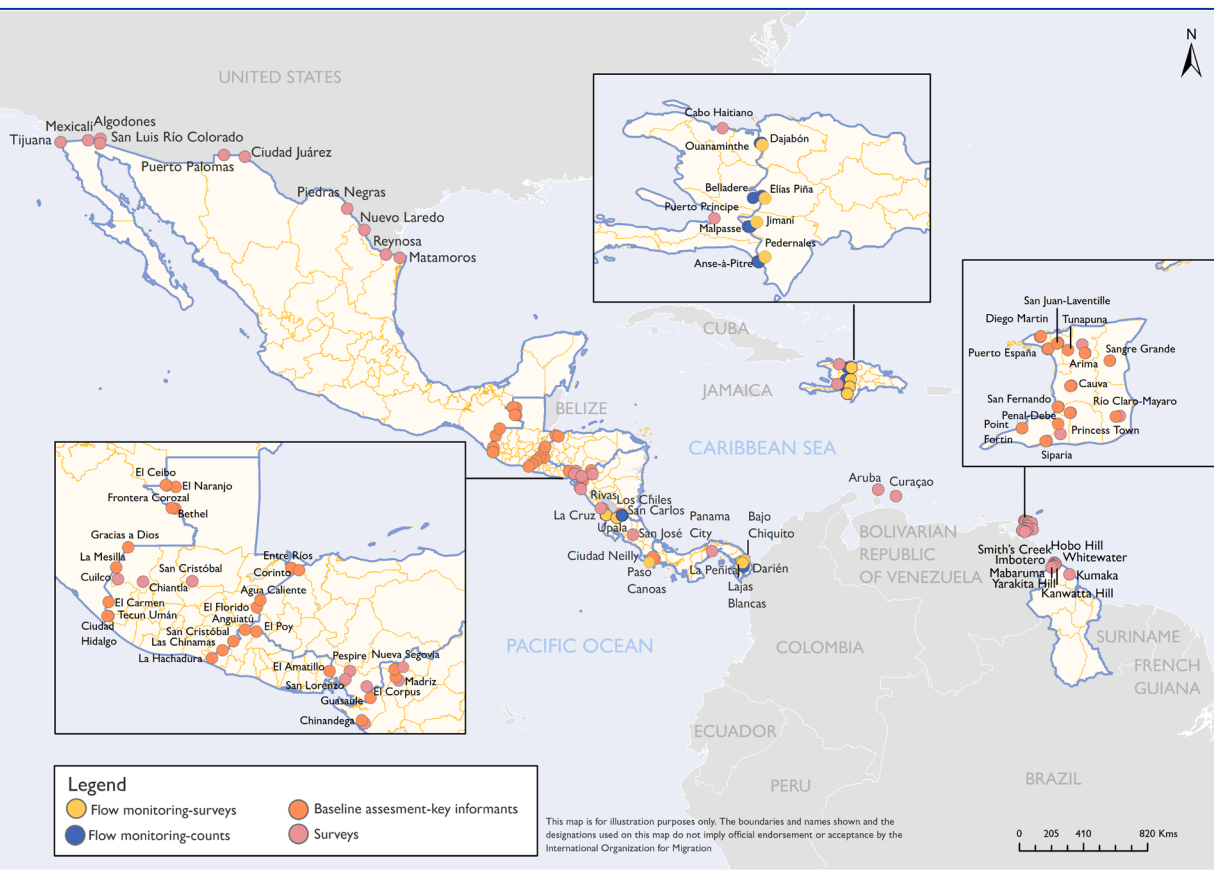


Figure 1. Locations where DTM activities were carried out in the Central America, North America and the Caribbean Region.

Other regionally produced DTM reports can be accessed through: <https://dtm.iom.int/>

# 1. Migrants on the Move in the North America, Central America and Caribbean Region

## 1.1 FLOW MONITORING SURVEYS

Flow monitoring surveys involve interviewing individuals who recently crossed certain borders and are migrating. They are briefly asked about their sociodemographic profile and other topics of interest such as their motivation for migrating, intended country of destination, if they are travelling in a group, with how many people they are traveling with, and other characteristics of interest which allow the migratory group to be profiled.

In 2021, flow monitoring surveys were carried out in different bordering locations in the region. Between November and December 2021, these were in Aruba, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, and Costa Rica. In Costa Rica two flow monitoring surveys were carried out, one near the Nicaraguan border and one near the border with Panama. In total 16,048 flow monitoring surveys were carried out in 2021.

### Characteristics of the Surveyed Population

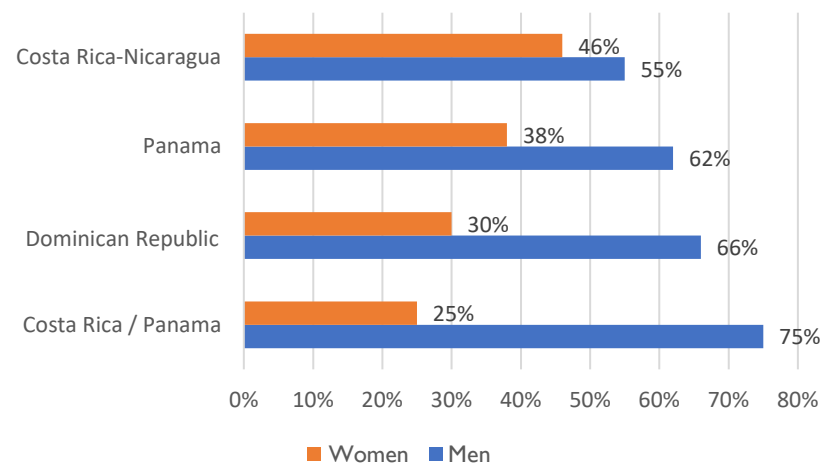


Figure 3. Flow monitoring surveys by country or territory and by sex

Figure 3 shows the proportional distribution by sex of those interviewed as part of flow monitoring activities in the region, by country or territory. The distribution shows that the majority of migrants were male, especially in the Central American area—with the exception of Nicaragua which is known for its high levels of women migrating towards Costa Rica. The cases of Trinidad and Tobago and the territory of Aruba also show a large percentage of women interviewed as part of flow monitoring activities in those countries. It is important to note that these data do not necessarily represent the true proportional distribution of sex, given that the data was only collected in certain times and days of the week and that the sampling method was of convenience sampling—as explained in the methodology table.

## METHODOLOGY

Figure 4. Methodologies of flow monitoring surveys

Country	Methodology
Costa Rica, North Zone	Convenience sampling was the sampling method used, and Nicaraguan migrants were the main population of interest and focus in the Flow Monitoring survey. 351 individuals were surveyed between 26 October and 26 November, while 239 individuals were surveyed between 26 November and 26 December.
Costa Rica-Panama	Enumerators surveyed travel group representatives, collecting data on gender, age, nationality, travel group characteristics, and country of habitual residence.
Dominican Republic	The sampling method used was stratified (by flow monitoring point) random sampling. 351 interviews were carried out with a focus on Haitian cross-border movements.
Panama	Travel group representatives were surveyed to collect data on gender, age, nationality, characteristics of the journey, migratory routes, and country of habitual residence.

# 1. Migrants on the Move in the North America, Central America and Caribbean Region

## 1.2 MOBILITY TRACKING (KEY INFORMANTS)

Mobility Tracking is done by interviewing key informants (individuals or institutions/organizations) of locations to approximate the number of individuals who have been returned, are stranded mid-migration, are stationary in a location, or are displaced in a shelter, as well as to approximate, among other things, the number of entries and departures. These data are useful for roughly estimating the number of persons and their distribution by sex and age.

	June	July	August
Costa Rica	✓	✓	✓
El Salvador	✓	✓	
Guatemala	✓	✓	
Honduras	✓	✓	
México	✓	✓	

Figure 5. DTM Mobility Tracking activities by country

In 2021, DTM completed Baseline Assessments in five countries in the region between February and December. Figure 6 shows that generally it is estimated that the majority of migrants who entered the different countries were men, according to key informants. In Costa Rica, there is a noticeably higher percentage of women than in the other countries due to a higher proportion of Nicaraguan women who cross the border towards Costa Rica.

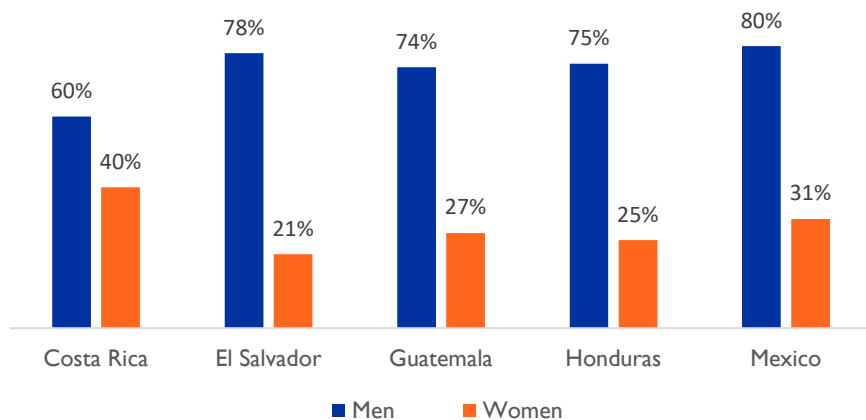


Figure 6. Distribution of individuals by sex who entered the country recently, according to key informants

## METHODOLOGY

Figure 8. Displacement Tracking Matrix methodologies

Country	Methodology	Source of Information
Costa Rica	Data was collected through in-person key informant interviews.	Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería (DGME), Agencia para el desarrollo de la zona sur, Coopalianza R.L, the Catholic Church (in Costa Rica), Transportes Costarricenses Panameños (TRACOPA), and hotel and restaurant comercial service providers
Costa Rica - BL 2	Data collection took place through remote key informant interviews (BL 2 and BL 3) as well as in-person ones (BL 4).	Baseline Assessment 2: la Fuerza Pública, la Dirección Nacional de Desarrollo de la Comunidad (DINADECO), local commercial service providers, civil society, and el Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (PANI); Baseline Assessment 3: the commercial sector, such as the soda industry, street vendors, libraries, market, telemarketing, Muelle Municipality (Golfito) personnel, hotels and cabins, and bus services of the Transportes Costarricenses Panameños (TRACOPA); Baseline Assessment 4: the commercial sector, such as the soda industry and the transportation business TRACOPA (Transportes Costarricenses Panameños)
El Salvador	Data collection was done through remote interviews with key informants.	La Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería (DGME), la Oficina Sanitaria Internacional (OSI), and la Junta de Protección del Consejo Nacional de la Niñez y de la Adolescencia (CONNA)
Guatemala	Data collection was done through remote interviews with key informants.	The records of the Consejo Nacional de Atención al Migrante de Guatemala, la Dirección Área de Salud del Ministerio de Salud y Asistencia Social, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).
Honduras	Data collection was done through remote interviews with key informants.	The records of el Instituto Nacional de Migración (INM), la Dirección Nacional de Servicios Policiales Fronterizos (DNSPF), el Centro de Desarrollo Humano (CDH), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).
Mexico-southern border	Information from interviews with key informants was used.	Dirección de Migración y Política Internacional del Ayuntamiento de Tapachula, the Jesuit Refugee Service, la Comisión de Nacional de los Derechos Humanos (CNDH), Ayuda en Acción México, the Mexican Red Cross, and el Hogar Refugio para Personas Migrantes - La 72, and civil society

# 1. Migrants on the Move in the North America, Central America and Caribbean Region

## 1.3 FLOW MONITORING REGISTRY

Flow monitoring registry activities entail the counting of border-crossing movements and their distribution by gender, as well as details on vulnerability such as whether they are children and adolescents, elderly individuals, pregnant women, etc. so that protection and assistance can be planned in relation to their basic sociodemographic profile. Given that this is done in usually unofficial points, a sense of the magnitude of migration flows at the bordering locations can be given.

Flow monitoring registries were carried in three of the region's countries. Haiti stands out with situation reports every 15 days, from February to November 2021. In the Dominican Republic, the flow monitoring registry was carried out from April to August 2021, while in Costa Rica from October to December 2021.



Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM),  
San José Regional Office, Costa Rica, July 2022

## METHODOLOGY



















Figure 9. Methodologies utilised in DTM Flow Monitoring Registry

Country	Place of application	Methodology
Costa Rica	Los Chiles, Upala, La Cruz	Counts were done through enumerators' direct observation of the number of persons and their distribution by sex, age, and vulnerable group status who crossed the border during the observation and registration period.
Dominican Republic	Dajabón, Elías Pina, Jimaní, Pedernales	Counts were done of the number of people who crossed the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.
Haiti – Dominican Republic	Anse-a-Pitre, Ouanaminthe, Belladere, Malpasse	Information comes from the SITREPs. The number of movements across the two countries was counted.
Panama	Estaciones de Recepción Migratoria (Immigration Reception Stations) San Vicente and Lajas Blancas	Enumerators carried out the flow monitoring registry by direct observation. They carried out a count of the number of individuals by age, sex, and vulnerable groups at specific places and times (8 PM to 3 PM, Tuesday through to Thursday).

## 2. Overview of Resident Migrants in the Region

For resident migrant populations (refugees and migrants from Venezuela, migrants and their families) the different countries conduct surveys to have a sociodemographic profile that allows the development of public policies. In 2021, surveys were carried out in 11 countries in the region. The lack of income to cover basic needs, domestic violence, community violence and gender violence, as well as family reunification were the main reasons for displacement for the interviewees. Figure 11 shows that among the main needs identified, the most frequent across different localities and countries are: food, employment, legal advice, health.

Figure 11. Main needs mentioned by surveyed migrants

	No. individuals surveyed	Main needs
ARUBA	412	Legal assistance, employment  
COSTA RICA	236	Legal assistance, employment, and health   
CURACAO	520	Legal assistance, work  
GUYANA	298	Food, job creation, and security   
NICARAGUA	1,641	Employment and salary, access to basic services, mental and physical health   
PANAMA	4,273	Documentation and legal advice, employment and resource generation  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	1,376	Food, medical assistance and education   

## METHODOLOGY

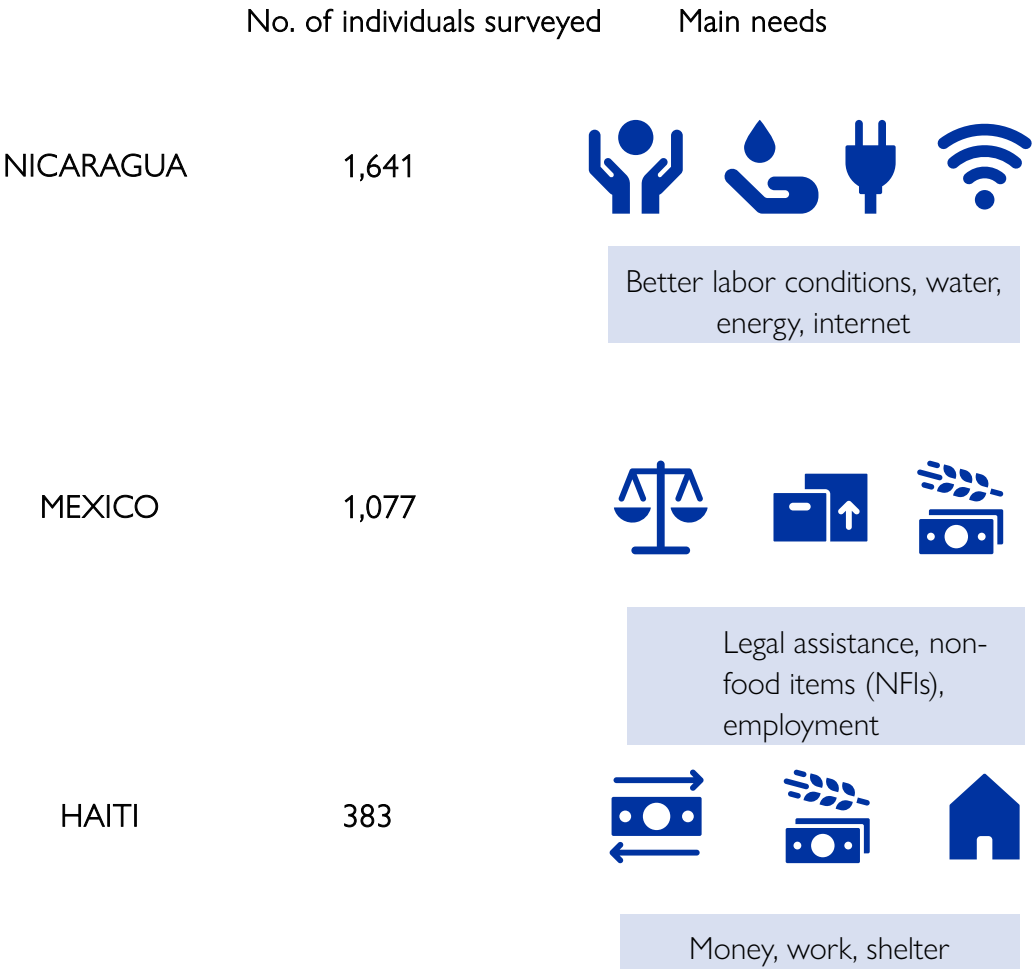
Figure 12. Methodologies used for surveys of migrants in residence

Country	Topic	Methodology
Aruba	Situation of Venezuelan migrants in the country	A migrant outreach portal was developed using MS forms and distributed through social media, allowing migrants to sign up to participate in data collection
Costa Rica	Adult Venezuelan individuals (i.e. of legal age)	The MSC database contains information on 1,592 persons of 1,335 family units. This forms a sampling frame of 1,335 without surveying two people from the same family or surveying the same person more than once. 516 numbers were contacted, with a response rate of 46 per cent.
Curacao	Refugees and migrants from Venezuela	Non-probability sampling was the sampling strategy, with it including snowball sampling in which an interviewee recommends an individual to be interviewed who in turn recommends another, and so on.
Guatemala	Households displaced by storms Eta and Iota	The respondents are individuals who continue to be displaced or who have returned to their communities of origin. Systematic probability sampling was used and data collection was carried out by community leaders. 1,084 displaced households were identified.
Guyana	The population increase of Venezuelan nationals in the country	Snowball sampling was the strategy used. The data collection itself—including by four IOM enumerators—took place within a 14-day period between January and February.
Haiti	Repatriated adults and children	IOM conducted a post-arrival telephone survey for adults who were recently returned by air and sea (without including returnees from the Dominican Republic).
Honduras	Drought-driven displacement	Data collection was done by community leaders and municipality personnel. The number of resident households and individuals was estimated.
Mexico	Title 42 of the United States Code	A structured survey was conducted for Mexican and foreign participants (with minor differences between them) from 3 May to 4 June 2021. A convenience sampling scheme was used.
Panama	Migrant population needs in the provinces of Panama and West Panama, in districts with the highest density of migrants	Face-to-face surveys in the provinces of Panama and West Panama were conducted, including 12 districts with a high concentration of migrants. The sample was composed of migrant adult men and women who entered the country since 2015. From 26 August through to 28 September 2021, 350 surveys per district were carried out, totalling 4,200 surveys.
Trinidad and Tobago	Venezuelan migrants and especially their situation during Covid-19	The surveys were carried out in September 2021, with data collection being through telephone interviews as well as an online form designed by DTM.
Nicaragua	Profile of migrant individuals and their households	Between 7 July and 9 July 2021 1,649 surveys were conducted on households of origin or households of return for migrants in the territories of Chinandega, Granada, Ometepe island, Madriz, Managua, Nueva Segovia, Rivas, and San Carlos (Río San Juan). From these, information was gathered on 1,248 external migrants, 505 internal migrants, and 291 migrant returnees, from December 2019 to 2021.

## 2. Overview of Returnees

The situation of returnees has been studied in several countries of the region. Surveys were conducted in Mexico for individuals who returned under Title 42. Similarly, these surveys were conducted for returnees in Nicaragua and Haiti.

Figure 11. Main motivations for migration and main needs mentioned by migrants



## 3. Overview of Internally Displaced Persons

Countries in the region have studied the characteristics of internally displaced persons in 2021. In Honduras, household surveys on vulnerability and drought were carried out. In Guatemala, livelihood surveys of households displaced by storms in Alta Verapaz and Huehuetenango. In Haiti, a Situation Report on the August 15 earthquake and a DTM report on displacement and earthquake damage assessment were conducted.

From these reports the needs of IDPs are identified, as covered in the following:

Country	Honduras	Guatemala	Haiti
Drivers of displacement and motivations for movement	Searching for work, violence and insecurity, and natural disasters.	Natural disasters and climate change.	The earthquake on 14 August 2021.
Main needs identified	Lack of income during the last drought, which was responded to with the coping strategies of using savings and lowering food consumption.	Standing out is the loss of income due to storms during the last season.	Humanitarian assistance, particularly: sanitation structure; reconstruction of schools, hospitals, roads, and houses. Access to potable water and food.
Number of surveys	713	4,507	It was a damage assessment report.

## 4. Main Findings

As a whole, it is possible to see a region that has been hit by natural disasters, violence and great economic challenges that lead to unemployment and inequalities, which have forced people to move internally or to migrate in search of better economic opportunities and fleeing of existing problems in their communities. However, on their migration route they are faced with multiple obstacles and risks, especially those who cross through the Darién Jungle, who must fight for their survival facing dangers that are magnified for the most vulnerable people. Finally, after a long journey and the crossing of several countries, many of these migrants are exposed to the risk of being returned to their country of origin.

**Stationary or resident migrants** reported their main needs as follows: access to formal employment, access to basic services, legal advice, documents, accommodation. Violence, including domestic, gender-based or linked to organized crime and gangs, constitutes the main trigger for Central American migration.

**Surveys of resident populations**, specifically in Costa Rica, a survey was conducted with Venezuelans and 93 per cent of this population surveyed has lived in Costa Rica for more than a year. Sixty-two per cent of the population indicated that they would not have enough income to cover basic household needs if they had to return to their country of origin.

**Panama City - Survey 2021**, in which more than 4,000 people were surveyed. The most frequent nationalities are Venezuelan (35%), Colombian (25%) and Nicaraguan (24%). The main reasons for arriving in the country are linked to employment and economic reasons, given the lack of opportunities in the job market in the country of origin. In case of return to their country of origin, one in three indicates that they would suffer from a lack of food and almost 30 per cent state that they would not have enough income to survive.

People displaced **by the impacts of natural disasters** mention as their main need access to economic income, since crops and homes were damaged, and they require access to food, basic services and employment.

**Returned migrants** indicate that their main needs are legal assistance for immigration processes, non-food items (NFIs), employment, Access to better working conditions, and access to the internet (in Nicaragua).

## 5. Limitations and Opportunities for Improvement for Future Studies

The barriers to achieving comparative studies between countries in the region lie in different measurements for sociodemographic variables such as age groups, educational level, or omission of certain sociodemographic categories. The lack of standardization during 2021 in terms of measurement, coupled with temporary differences in the timing of the different exercises and their various methodologies, creates great challenges for comparative analysis between countries. However, in general, very marked patterns or coincidences can be identified in terms of the motives and needs of the migrant and displaced populations in our region.

### REGIONAL DTM: COORDINATION AND SUPPORT TO COUNTRY MISSIONS

The Regional Data Unit is collaborating with the different missions to unify the same set of questions for surveys to monitor migratory flows and surveys of stationary populations of migrants. This will create a so-called regional dictionary, improving the comparability of questionnaires and results in the near future and allowing deeper analysis.

The dictionary consists of a set of questions selected as a result of a validation process by the thematic specialists of the region. The questions cover a variety of topics of great relevance for the creation of migration data, such as health, protection, livelihoods, labor migration, borders, sociodemographic profile, among others.

In addition, in 2021, the Regional Data Unit advised, supported and collaborated with the missions of the region in the review of concept notes, questionnaires, monitoring design, sampling, analysis and DTM reports.

Additionally, the unit collaborated in projects such as the monitoring of flows in Costa Rica on the northern border with Nicaragua, monitoring of flows in Darién (Panama), review of questionnaires in Mexico, review of survey reports from Curaçao, Guyana, Nicaragua, among others. In addition, it works collaboratively with the national offices, performing data analysis and field work to understand the context, and strengthen the methodology and data collection practices.

## 6. DTM Trainings: Improving the quality of data collection and analysis

In 2021, the Regional Data Unit in close work and coordination with the Global and Regional DTM and Protection Support Team developed the DTM, Information Management and Protection Webinar Series for colleagues from Latin America and the Caribbean, which were composed of training and support to country offices. More than 25 sessions were organized in order to address the technical topics of secure information management, data collection and analysis, information and analysis applicable to protection responses and specific DTM content (for example, the use of the Online Toolbox on DTM and its partners). The sessions were offered in English and Spanish, with high participation (more than 30 participants per session), with the assistance of colleagues from countries such as Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica, Colombia, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Venezuela, Ecuador, among others.

As part of this effort, since December 2021, the regional DTM meetings begin with a follow-up of the main DTM activities in the region, in which best practices are shared between countries, to increase the quality level of the studies and their respective reports.



To find out more activities and publications of the regional DTM, visit the data portal by clicking [here](#)



For any comments or questions, please contact the Regional Office for Central America, North America and the Caribbean: [rosanjose@iom.int](mailto:rosanjose@iom.int)

