



BLURRED BORDERS

Transboundary Issues and Solutions
in the San Diego/Tijuana Border Region

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Blurred Borders: Transboundary Impacts and Solutions in the San Diego-Tijuana Region

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Executive Summary

Blurred Borders:

Transboundary Impacts and Solutions in the San Diego-Tijuana Region

Over the years, the border has divided the people of San Diego County and the municipality of Tijuana over a wide range of differences attributed to language, culture, national security, public safety and a host of other cross border issues ranging from human migration to the environment. The 'us' versus 'them' mentality has become more pervasive following the tragedy of September 11, 2001 with San Diegans focusing greater attention on terrorism and homeland security and the need to re-think immigration policy in the United States as a means of fortifying the international border.

Irrespective of how "secure" the border ultimately does become, the fact remains that the border between San Diego County and Tijuana is increasingly becoming blurred as the impacts of globalization and human migration obscure political boundaries. Across the San Diego-Tijuana border region, the trans-boundary impacts and inter-connections of these two fast growing communities are ever present.

The ties that bind this binational sister city region in the areas of cross-border trade, commerce, and tourism are indisputable, and their combined comparative advantages have contributed to job creation and economic opportunity as well as increased cultural and ethnic diversity for the people and businesses on both sides of the border. But the inter-dependencies go beyond trade, commerce, tourism and recreation. Throughout the San Diego-Tijuana border region there are growing inter-dependencies in the areas of health, human services, education, the environment as well as arts and culture that requires pro-active binational solutions, greater investment and expanded cross-border civic participation by the private, public and non-profit sectors. San Diego and Tijuana are also inextricably tied through inter-personal and family ties with a growing number of San Diegans now living south of the border due to the high cost of housing in San Diego County.

Blurred Borders highlights the similarities, the inter-connections and the challenges that San Diego and Tijuana share, addressing the wide range of community based issues in what has become the largest binational metropolitan area in North America. Of particular interest is how the proximity of the border impacts the lives and livelihoods of poor and under-served communities in both San Diego County and the municipality of Tijuana as well as what can be done to address their growing needs.

"...terrorism and homeland security remain very high on the list of concerns among San Diegans but are viewed as unimportant by Tijuana residents relative to other issues, such as public safety, in spite of the direct impact that increased security measures at the border will have on cross-border commerce, trade and commuting delays."

Validating the growing importance of the border to both San Diego and Tijuana, **Blurred Borders** presents the findings of an unprecedented binational, bilingual survey of San Diego and Tijuana residents undertaken by *Cross Border Business Associates* (CBA) demonstrating the many shared and common interests that exist between residents of both communities. In particular, the survey found San Diegans and Tijuana residents have a lot in common, as residents of both communities are generally transitory with the majority being non-native. **The two communities share a common challenge in developing a sense of local pride amongst their respective citizenry.** Among residents of both San Diego and Tijuana, the three top issues of importance were **education & schools, health care, and jobs & the economy.** In spite of these shared public sentiments, few collaborative programs exist in the area of education and economic development/job creation, and more can be done jointly to address common trans-boundary health issues that impact residents on both sides of the border.

While the CBA study highlighted areas of common interest, it also pointed to areas where there is a greater need for consensus and cross-border dialogue. In particular, **terrorism and homeland security** remain very high on the list of concerns among San Diegans but are viewed as unimportant by

Tijuanenses relative to other issues, such as public safety, in spite of the direct impact that increased security measures at the border will have on cross-border commerce, trade and commuting delays. Urban sprawl was universally seen as the least important issue of concern among San Diegans and Tijuanenses even though sprawl is negatively impacting the quality of life of residents on both sides of the border.

While San Diegans and Tijuanenses did not universally agree on all issues, there was consensus that the border matters. According to CBA's findings, 69% of San Diego residents (English and Spanish speaking) and 68% of Tijuana residents felt that the border had a positive impact on their community. Less than 15% of San Diego residents and only 11% of Tijuana residents felt that the border had a negative impact on their community. Complementing a recent survey undertaken by KPBS/Competitive Edge, CBA's found that those San Diegans of Mexican descent had a more positive perception of the border than other residents. The study also found that among those Tijuanenses surveyed, over 40% had family and relatives in the United States. In this sense, the border is increasingly becoming blurred with a growing number of trans-border and trans-national communities in the San Diego-Tijuana region that are truly binational.

According to the US Census, over 26.7% of San Diego County's population was of Hispanic origin in 2000, with 22% speaking Spanish at home. As Hispanics are expected to be the majority in the County by the year 2040,¹ the ties between San Diego and Tijuana will grow even stronger over time, irrespective of the prevailing public opinion and perceptions by San Diego County's English only speaking population.

In spite of San Diego's growing Hispanic population, **Blurred Borders** highlights the present indifference in both San Diego and Tijuana to the region's emerging challenges due to the growing economic disparities that exist not only between these two sister cities but between the affluent and the poor within their respective communities. These disparities are further exacerbated by four interlocking problems impacting the San Diego-Tijuana border region, namely urban sprawl, human migration, racial and socio-

economic segregation and concentrated urban and rural poverty. In San Diego County, urban poverty is on the rise. In fact, according to a recent Brookings Institution report, San Diego now ranks 6th in the country in terms of metropolitan areas that have seen marked increases in poverty among census tracts in their respective regions.² A review of data from the Mexican Consulate--San Diego reveals a direct correlation between those areas experiencing increases in poverty with those that have high concentrations of Mexican migrant workers.³

In Tijuana, urban poverty is also rising in disturbing proportions with half of all new residents living in squatter communities without adequate infrastructure, limited or no clean water, and the prevalence of water borne infectious disease and other health risks. Left unattended, the consequences of these disparities and the region's growing pockets of poverty pose a threat to the quality of life, economic prosperity and long-term competitiveness of the San Diego-Tijuana region vis-à-vis other metropolitan areas of North America.

Finally, in spite of the divisions and challenges facing the San Diego-Tijuana border region, **Blurred Borders** illustrates the tremendous progress being made to build and strengthen the shared social capital that exist between our two communities. The report also highlights the shared assets in the San Diego-Tijuana region that are far

too often overlooked.

While binational collaboration in the region needs to be expanded, there are a number of committed non-profit organizations from both San Diego and Tijuana working together and forging partnerships on a wide range of issues of importance to the entire binational region including: affordable housing; health education, particularly in the areas of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and other preventable diseases; migrant youth and parental education; drug and alcohol prevention; trans-boundary environmental impacts to shared air and water, and cultural enrichment. If the San Diego-Tijuana Region is to be successful in strengthening its social capital, such binational collaboration needs to be further expanded.

Left unattended, ...[income] disparities and the region's growing pockets of poverty pose a threat to the quality of life, economic prosperity and long-term competitiveness of the San Diego-Tijuana region vis-à-vis other metropolitan areas of North America.

¹Maria Puente and Martin Kasindorf, "Blended races making true melting pot." *USA Today*, September 7, 1999.

²Jargowky, 2003, *Stunning Progress, Hidden Problems: The Dramatic Decline of Concentrated Poverty in the 1990s*, May 2003, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

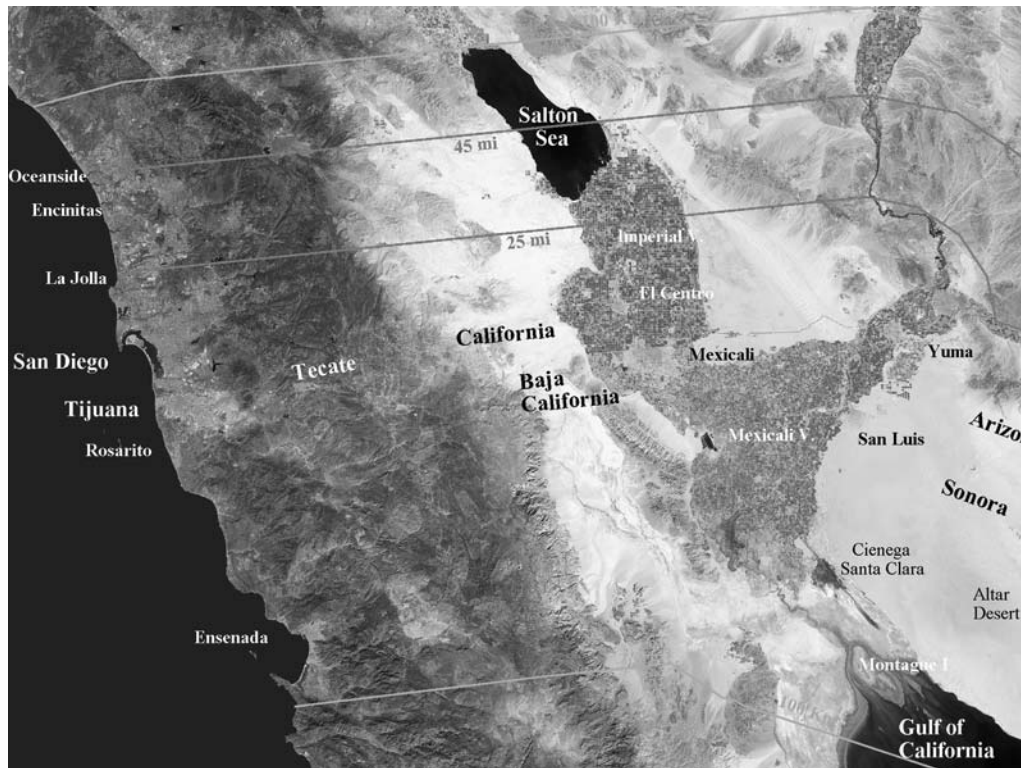
³Rungsten, David, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), "The Origin of Mexican Migrants in San Diego County: Information from Mexican Matricula Consulars," Preliminary research findings presented at workshop "Ties that Bind Us: Mexican Migrants in San Diego," UCSD Center for U.S.-Mexico Studies, November 14, 2003

Why Do We Need to Re-think the Border Now?

The San Diego-Tijuana region is in the midst of some significant demographic and socio-economic changes that will require coordinated action by civic and political leaders if our binational region is to prosper and stay competitive in the future. Yet, today concerns about terrorism and homeland security dominate the U.S. binational agenda, while a growing number of critical issues affecting both communities remain unresolved:

- **In spite of regional prosperity, concentrated urban poverty** is on the rise in San Diego and Tijuana. The economic disparities between the affluent and the poor are being exacerbated by urban sprawl, racial and socio-economic segregation.
- **Deficiencies in public education threaten the region's economic competitiveness.**
- **The region's high cost of living and doing business is causing a growing number of companies on both sides of the border to relocate.** Workers also struggle to make a living wage.
- **Housing grows more unaffordable on both sides of the border** and increasingly out of reach of area residents, threatening the region's ability to attract and retain a quality work force.
- **Traffic congestion and increased border waits are decreasing productivity, increasing the level of water and air pollution, and negatively impacting the region's quality of life.**
- **Natural resources are becoming scarcer**, requiring innovative binational solutions to address the region's long-term water supply and energy needs and the protection of critical habitats before they are lost forever.
- **San Diego's Latino population is growing** and by 2040 will represent a majority of the County's total population. Area migrants of Hispanic descent are increasingly requiring linguistically and culturally competent health and social service providers to address the region's wide-ranging problems such as diabetes, TB, obesity, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, depression, mental illness, sexually transmitted diseases, and child neglect and abuse.
- **Increased in-migration from migrant sending regions is putting additional strains on the region's social services network** with growing 'unfunded' mandates, particularly in the areas of health and education.
- **Emerging trans-boundary threats require increased levels of binational collaboration** as highlighted by recent regional challenges including the West Nile virus, HIV/AIDS, seasonal wildfires, and the threat to homeland security.
- **Border-related security issues (including organized crime, drug-trafficking, arms-trafficking, human-trafficking, drug use, sex tourism, and potential terrorism threats) need greater public attention and civic action** as these factors negatively impact public safety and undermine commerce, trade and tourism to the border region.

RE-DEFINING THE BORDER



The definition of "the border" has expanded from a physical line or wall separating two nations, to an amorphous binational region. Day visitors from Mexico may legally travel without a visa in an area extending to 25 miles (40 kilometers) from the international border, as defined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.⁴ Along the San Diego-Tijuana border, the border commercial zone, within which commercial vehicles from Mexico can travel, has been extended to 45 miles or to the city limits of Oceanside. The 1982 U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Agreement defined the border as a region encompassing 100 kilometers (62 miles) on either side of the U.S.-Mexico border.

(Continued on page 8)

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Due to heightened homeland security concerns, greater attention is now being placed on establishing the actual limits of the international line as demonstrated by the construction of the triple border fence along the final 3.5-mile stretch of the border before it reaches the ocean.⁵

Beyond legal definitions and limits, a growing number of municipalities across San Diego County, as well as its bordering Counties of Riverside, Orange and Imperial, are directly impacted from their proximity to the international border through increased migration and the resulting fiscal pressures due to un-funded mandates in the areas of education, health and social services. Among those hospitals located in California's border Counties (San Diego and Imperial), total uncompensated medical costs were over \$79 million in 2000 for emergency health care to undocumented immigrants.⁶

The interdependencies between San Diego, its neighboring Counties and Baja California are becoming much more intertwined due to the growing Latinization of the binational region's population and the increased levels of family and inter-personal ties that are weaving a complex geo-political tapestry between Southern California and Baja California that is increasingly becoming one. According to the US Census, 8.4 million Californians are of Mexican origin representing 25% of the state's population. In San Diego County, 26.7% of its 2.8 million permanent residents (or nearly 751,000 people) are of Hispanic origin. The majority is of Mexican descent, with this population not just concentrated near the border (South County) but also across the City of San Diego (Barrio Logan, Southeast San Diego, Central) and the

Eastern portions of North County (Escondido, Vista, San Marcos, and Carlsbad).

Of San Diego County's Hispanic population there are now an estimated 183,500 undocumented residents, or 63% of the Mexican foreign born population in the County (6.5% of the County's total population).^{7,8} A population of this size would not remain in San Diego County if it did not have gainful employment. The co-dependence that the regional San Diego economy and its employers have with undocumented Mexican workers is evident across the County particularly in the sectors that employ these workers the most: agriculture, construction, service, the tourism & hospitality industry and domestic employment.

Jobs alone will not keep San Diego's migrant labor force in the region. As highlighted by research undertaken by the University of Southern California, California's share of new immigrant arrivals dropped sharply between 1990 and 2000 compared to other regions of the country such as Texas, Georgia and North Carolina that offer would-be migrants employment opportunities coupled with more affordable housing and lower living costs.⁹

For those **transnational** Mexican migrants and their families opting to stay in San Diego County and without legal immigration status, the area's high cost of living has contributed to a growing incidence of poverty. Those **trans-border** residents that legally cross the border have, in turn, enjoyed an improved standard of living with a U.S. paycheck, more affordable housing and culturally competent education and health care options in Tijuana. In this sense, the border has increasingly become a blur with poverty and relative prosperity predicated, in part, by visa or migratory status.

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⁴ Regulation: 8 CFR 235. 1 (f)(iii) states that "any Mexican national in possession of a valid nonresident alien Mexican border crossing card, or a valid Mexican passport and a multiple-entry nonimmigrant visa issued under section 10.1 (a)(15)(B) of the Act, who is admitted as a nonimmigrant visitor at a Mexican border port of entry for a period not to exceed 72 hours to visit within 25 miles of the border" is not required to obtain Form I-94, Arrival and Departure Record.

As of December 2003, this change to the definition of the border had been approved by the Mexican Senate and U.S. House of Representatives. The reform is under consideration in the U.S. Senate. Information provided by Regina Montague, Communication Analyst, North American Development Bank, via email communication.

⁵ "Plan for U.S.-Mexico Border Fence Rejected," Cable News Network (CNN), February 19, 2004; Rogers, Terry, "Coastal Panel Rejects Plan for Last Leg of Border Fence," San Diego Union Tribune, February 19, 2004, A1

⁶ www.bordercounties.org/

⁷ Office of Policy Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, "Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigration Population Residing in the United States: 1990 to 2000," January 31, 2003.

⁸ Total foreign born residents in San Diego equal 658,437 or 23.4% of the County's population. Total foreign born Mexicans equaled 289,059 based on U.S. Census 2000 data.

⁹ Blood, Michael, "California No Longer Luring Lion's Share of Immigrants," San Diego Union Tribune, February 18, 2004, A4.

Trans-Border Residents



Trans-border residents near San Ysidro port of entry.

Today, the San Diego/Tijuana border region is one of the busiest border crossing in the world. Over 56.6 million people crossed the border in 2002, accounting for 17.2% of all land crossings in the United States.¹⁰ An estimated 150,000 California residents and some 40,000 **trans-border** Mexican residents make their way across the border each day, for jobs, school, housing, medical care, shopping, cultural enrichment, or to see family and friends.¹¹ According to a survey by San Diego's South County Economic Development Council (SCEDC), 14% of South County employers responded that over 61% of their employees reside south of the border in Baja California.¹² For these crossers, the border is increasingly becoming a blur.

According to Mexico's 2000 Census data, 27,386 residents of Tijuana and Rosarito self-reported that their primary place of employment is the United States.¹³ Some of Baja California's cross-border commuters are Mexican nationals with U.S. citizenship or authorized papers to legally cross each day to work or go to school. Others are U.S. families or retirees on fixed income pensions or restricted incomes that compel them to live in Mexico to maintain a decent quality of life. It is worth noting that the U.S. Consulate-Tijuana has a total of 196,000 Americans officially recorded as living in its Consular District (either full time or part time in an area that includes the entire Baja California peninsula)

and many of these individuals are part of the cross-border commuter population.¹⁴

Contrary to the stereotypical image of immigrants to the United States, the Mexican Census of 2000 shows that the Mexican trans-border residents who maintain their home in Tijuana or Rosarito and work in the U.S. have a relatively high level of educational attainment. More than two-thirds of these trans-border residents have a junior high school or higher education, and 40% of Mexican men and 47.5% of women who work in the U.S. have high school or higher levels of education. Over 70% use private health services as opposed to Mexico's public sector health services. Another interesting fact is the level of homeownership among those Mexican nationals living in Tijuana and Rosarito but working in the United States. Their level of homeownership is relatively high with 72.6% of men and 79.6% of females owning homes, appreciatively higher than those remaining to work in Baja California (67.1% for men; 68.2% for women).¹⁶ In this sense, the proximity to the border and the ability to earn a living in the United States provides many Baja California residents, including a growing number of former San Diego residents, with a strategic advantage over other Mexican nationals and San Diego County's non-homeowners that are unable or unwilling to cross.

¹⁰ US Department of Homeland Security, 2003; Morris, Kenn, "Moving Towards Smart Borders," San Diego Dialogue/Forum Fronterizo, June 2003.

¹¹ A 1994 "Who Crosses the Border Study" by San Diego Dialogue estimated that the cross-border commuter population was 50,000. With over ten years since the last major border crossing study, there is a pressing need for additional research in this area.

¹² South County EDC/Cross Border Business Associates, "San Diego/Tijuana Border Values, 2002" 2003

¹³ Mexico's XII Census Sample, 2000 (INEGI).

¹⁴ "Private Americans Citizens Abroad", U.S. Consular Service, July 1999. Total Americans living in Mexico was 441,680 at the time of the survey.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Trans-Border Profiles



Christián Gomar Beltran
Resident of Tijuana

"It sounds like a lot of time driving to school – two hours – but you get used to it," shrugs Christian Gomar Beltran (or "Chris" as he is called in the U.S.). He is one of a handful of Mexican students participating in a unique, dual-degree program

called MEXUS. In his case, he is an undergraduate student at both the Autonomous University of Baja California (UABC) and at San Diego State University, and will receive a degree in international business from both universities after he finishes. "I think it's a good opportunity to get a different perspective – two different perspectives – in the area I'm studying." A Mexican citizen, Christian has an F-1 student visa that allows him to study in the U.S.

"When school's in session, I usually cross three or four times a week depending on my class schedule. Also, once or twice a week for shopping or hanging out with friends." Next semester, Christian will have to leave his house in Tijuana at 6 a.m., drive to the San Ysidro border crossing where he expects to wait 30-60 minutes, then drive north up the congested 805 freeway to arrive at his 8 a.m. class on time. He currently isn't enrolled in the SENTRI program, and worries that not only are lines getting longer crossing into San Diego, "but, it's beginning to be a problem coming back into Mexico now. Sometimes, it can take half an hour just to return to Tijuana because of the traffic." (SENTRI is the acronym for Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection, a pre-screened inspection program currently used by approximately 50,000 individuals in the San Diego-Baja California region).

Christian is only one of many students that cross the border each day to attend schools and regional universities. "Some students have SENTRI cards, some carpool, some just rent an apartment in San Diego and live there during the week so they don't have to cross." Those that cannot afford the cost of the F-1 student visa are sometimes rejected during the application process.

He also worries that Mexico isn't offering stronger education programs, forcing some students to look for educational opportunities in other countries. "Every time a student leaves, Mexico loses something... someone to contribute to our country." He also worries about the number of people that come to Tijuana looking for opportunities: "Tijuana isn't developing as fast as it's growing."

But, he will continue his studies. "Why do I keep crossing? It's my interest to finish my studies, and get a degree."

José
U.S. Permanent Resident, Residing in
Tijuana and Working in San Diego

"Of course we'd like to live in San Diego; but for economic reasons, it doesn't make sense." Such is the critique of San Diego's housing problem from the perspective of "José" (not his real name), a 26 year old U.S. permanent resident currently living in Tijuana with his wife (a Mexican citizen) and child (a U.S. citizen). "I could've afforded a house back in 1998, but I was young and wasn't thinking about buying a house. Now, I can't – it's too much. That's why I live in Tijuana."

José crosses the border six times a week – five times to get to his job in South San Diego, and once a week for shopping: "We usually go to WalMart, Sears, to Chula Vista, National City, Spring Valley, Lemon Grove – those places." A native of Tijuana, he has been crossing since he was four years old. In 1991, "José" became a U.S. permanent resident – allowing him to live and work in the United States. He studied at Morse High School in Southeast San Diego, and would cross the border only periodically, primarily "to see friends and to party". Now part of San Diego's blue-collar workforce, José earns less than \$20,000 per year – one of the main reasons that he decided to move back to Tijuana.

"After I got married, my wife and I lived in San Diego for a while. We could afford it, but we'd be renting a small apartment or studio, and it wouldn't be a good life. Also, my wife would be living in the U.S. illegally, so we both preferred to move to Tijuana." José's plan: to save enough money to purchase a property in Tijuana and fix it up; in four years, he'd rent it out, and use the equity to purchase a home in San Diego. "In Tijuana, I can make a down payment for \$7,000 and monthly payments of about \$500. During the next four years, I plan to apply for U.S. citizenship and hopefully my wife can become a permanent resident before moving back to San Diego." José's plans, however, are tempered by worries that the fact he's living in Tijuana (i.e.: outside of the U.S.) violates his permanent residency requirements, and might make him lose his "green card" if he's caught.

"I'm not the only one doing this," he stresses. "I mean, look: I make more than minimum wage and I can't afford to live in San Diego – imagine all the San Diegans that are making minimum wage. The houses they're building in Tijuana aren't for the people of Tijuana: they don't have the credit. They're being built for the Americans."



Trans-Border Profiles

Eduardo Landeros U.S. Citizen, Residing in Tijuana and working in San Diego.



"San Diego is a major tourist destination – you think that Mexicans don't have something to do with that?" asks Eduardo Landeros, the San Diego County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's new President and CEO. "Between those that work in our hotels and restaurants, or those crossing over to visit and spend money, they help San Diego's economy."

Born in Tijuana, Eduardo moved to San Diego with his mother at the age of 10, and began attending school ("...my Mom wanted us to learn English..."). The grandson of a U.S. citizen, Eduardo became a U.S. permanent resident, and then a U.S. citizen in 1997. Although he has primarily lived in San Diego during the past 18 years, he also studied and received a degree in marketing from the prestigious Mexican university, *TEC de Monterrey*.

In 2002, however, he and his wife moved back to Tijuana. "I'm a numbers guy, and I didn't like the idea of having to pay for a house for the rest of my life. So, we built a home in Tijuana on a property that my family owned, and now we'll only be in debt for five to seven years. That's something that I couldn't have done in San Diego." Eduardo usually crosses the border northbound six times a week – five times during the weekdays for work, and once on the weekend to go shopping or see a movie.

His future plans are to stay in Tijuana – as long as the traffic in Tijuana or at the border doesn't get significantly worse. "It would be nice not to have the border – that way, everyone could cross, and live however they want. Of course, that's a fairy tale, though, I guess..."

The Bremer Family Trans-Border Family Live in San Diego with Children going to School in Tijuana



Claudia Bremer was born in the U.S. and grew up in Mexicali. She now lives in San Diego with her husband Alejandro, originally from Guerrero Negro and their three kids: Gabriela (9 years old), Alejandro (8 years old), and Ana Claudia (5 years old).

Every day she crosses the border to Tijuana to take her daughters to a private school run by the Catholic Church called "Colegio Alpes." This private school is part of "Colegio Cumbres," one of the most prestigious and highly respected schools in all of Mexico. Claudia tells us, "They go to this school for the education, the level of teaching, and because they study both English and Spanish, above everything else because of the school's excellent reputation." Her other son, Alejandro, is in second grade at Sacred Heart School in San Diego.

Trans-National Residents:

Beyond specific definitions of where the border begins and ends, what is becoming clear is that, with increased global mobility and human migration, the impacts traditionally found only along the border are now felt well beyond the international line. No one group better represents the blurring of the border than America's growing Mexican **transnational** community.

The Mexican transnational community in the United States has become a powerful economic force. Collectively, this community sent over US\$13 billion a year home to families and relatives in villages and towns across Mexico in 2003¹⁷ and is having a profound economic impact on migrant sending communities south of the border, helping to create employment and providing disposal income in otherwise impoverished regions of Mexico.

With a growing desire among the transnational community to become engaged in supporting community development oriented projects in

Indígenas Oaxaqueños (Community Coalition of Indigenous Oaxaqueño) or COCIO. COCIO now numbers over 200 members with representation from Oceanside, Carlsbad, San Marcos and Vista.

While Oaxaqueños now represent the largest group of new migrants to San Diego County, today the Mexican migrant community is actually quite diverse. According to an analysis of the Mexican Matricula Consular data by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), North American Integration and Development (NAID) Center, just over 50% of San Diego County's newly arrived Mexican migrants came from just 5 of Mexico's 31 states.

Without question, the transnational migrant community is unique in that its residents maintain strong ties to their native communities in Mexico but their degree of physical interaction with their hometowns is highly dependent on one's immigration status. Those transnational

...many of San Diego's migrant workers are saving their hard-earned cash to buy a piece of the quintessential American dream but back home in Mexico.

migrants with green cards and permanent residency come and go across the border freely, visiting family and friends in their communities of origin as often as their budgets and employment schedules permit. Many use their earnings in the United States to buy land and build homes in their communities of origin with a vision of eventually retiring in Mexico. In this sense, many of San Diego's migrant workers are saving their hard-earned cash to buy a piece of the quintessential American dream but back home in Mexico. Though many transnational migrants continue to work in San Diego's service and agriculture sector for very low pay, those with legal status in the United States have been able to secure higher paying jobs in other sectors of the economy.

Those transnational migrants without proper documentation face many challenges including occupational workplace hazards, employer abuses, and health risks arising from their living circumstances in either overcrowded housing or migrant worker camps. The human suffering of the region's transnational community is, by and large, overlooked by most San Diego residents. Yet these impacts nevertheless touch us all either directly or indirectly, as San Diego has come to rely so heavily on migrant labor for child care, landscaping, construction, food service and agriculture.

**The Mexican Migrant Community in San Diego
(Among those arriving between 1995 and 2002)**

Mexican State Name	Percent of Total
Oaxaca	11.69%
Guerrero	10.81%
Jalisco	10.08%
Michoacan	9.43%
Baja California	8.26%
Federal District (Mexico City)	7.37%
Guanajuato	5.02%
Sinaloa	4.28%
Estado de Mexico	4.05%
Nayarit	3.94%
Queretaro	3.02%
Morelos	2.93%
Puebla	2.71%

Source: Mexican Consulate-San Diego; UCLA, NAID Center

their communities of origin, Mexican Hometown Associations have sprung up that bring together immigrants who hail from the same village. Today, there are over 1,500 hometown associations (HTA) located across the United States including organizations in San Diego County.¹⁸ In San Diego, the Oaxaqueño community is represented by a budding grass roots organization called Coalición de Comunidades

¹⁷ US Treasury Department, Office of Public Affairs, October 1, 2003.

¹⁸ Leiken, Robert S. "Immigration: The Go-Between for U.S.-Mexico Harmony Along the Border," *Los Angeles Times*, February 25, 2001.

Trans-National Profiles

Melín Moreno de Kaufmman **Trans-National Resident** **Lives in San Diego**



A native of Guadalajara, Melín Kaufmann has lived in San Diego for 4 years with her American husband, Michael, and three children. Melín and her family ultimately settled down in the exclusive gated community of Fairbanks Highlands, in the North coastal section of the city, after several years living in her hometown as well as Los Angeles where her husband owned and operated shoe manufacturing and export businesses.

As a busy mom who works from home as an administrator for her husband's designer shoe business, Melín rarely goes to Tijuana except to go to the airport to catch a non-stop flight to Guadalajara or to the seaside resort of Puerto Vallarta where her family owns a vacation home. According to Melín, "Flying out of Tijuana is so much easier and more convenient than San Diego for designations like Guadalajara and Vallarta with more direct flights and, more often than not, better prices." Melín's only frustration are the long border delays upon her family's return home, "the wait can often be as much as 2 hours on a weekend and with three young children this can be very emotionally nerve-wracking." She continued, "I've thought about getting the SENTRI pass but we don't go down to Tijuana enough to justify the cost."

As Melín noted, "it is sort of a catch 22. If we had the (SENTRI) pass, I know we would go down more often as Tijuana has so many wonderful restaurants now and the cultural attractions advertised frequently in Spanish language radio and television are very inviting...but because we don't have SENTRI, again, we don't go."

While Melín's contact with Tijuana is limited to two to three trips per year, her connection and ties with Mexico are frequent and multi-faceted with a tight circle of friends who were all born in Mexico but now reside in their own suburban enclaves of La Jolla, Del Mar, and Carmel Valley. Melín's family members in Guadalajara travel to San Diego on a regular basis and when they are not here, they communicate on almost a regular basis through internet thanks to a new video teleconferencing package she recently got on her home computer.

Alejandra Ricardez **Trans-National Resident** **Lives in Encinitas CA**



A native of Oaxaca, Ale Ricardez has lived in San Diego for 15 years. Ale arrived to the area in 1987 settling in Encinitas with her mother and father who had been traveling back and forth for over a decade before between the small town where Ale was born in the Valle Central de Oaxaca and California's Central Valley.

Ale's initial challenges were many from building new friendships and learning a new language to being the first one in her family to complete college and graduate school. Collectively these represent the most significant challenges in building a life that reflects and embraces the "here" and "there" of a binational existence. "This part of the process seemed to be much more difficult because I used to think I had to choose between one or the other", Ale says.

Determination, hard work, family support, and a desire for a better life have collectively shaped Ale's drive and the way she confronts challenges. Ale graduated from Cal State San Marcos (CSUSM) with a Bachelor in Sociology in 1997. She later went on to earn a Master's degree in Urban Planning at UCLA. Ale is now looking to pursue a Ph.D. and a career in academia.

A co-founder of a grassroots organization called Indigenous Communities from Oaxaca, (COCIO in Spanish) based in North County San Diego, Ale is active in promoting issues impacting the life of her Oaxacan compatriots in San Diego. In Ale's words, COCIO creates a space that validates indigenous culture, instills pride for genuine indigenous ways, and constitutes a key element in building community for indigenous Oaxacans in San Diego. "It's like finding a space in our contemporary life for our traditions that teach us to embrace a good life".

Ale currently works at North County Health Services where she is actively serving the migrant agricultural community of the region. Though Ale agrees that the life and situation experienced by this particular segment of the population is very harsh, she trusts that through her work progress will be made to help her community. Ale points out that these efforts could be advanced tremendously if policymakers made an effort to better understand that many economic, social and other issues tie San Diego not only to Tijuana but also to other regions in Mexico like her native Oaxaca.

Trans-National Profiles

Gregorio Sanchez Transnational Profile

Lives in San Diego, Native of San Juan Cahuayaxi, Oaxaca, Mexico.

Gregorio, age 30, gets up early each day to cut lawns, pick up fallen leaves and plant trees with the hope of one day giving a better life for Diego, his six-month old son.

Goyo, as he is called by his friends, arrived to San Diego some 12 years ago from a small non-descript town in Oaxaca, called San Juan Cahuayaxi. He crossed the border in fear paying \$500. Now he legally drives a pickup truck that he uses to load the cut grass and leaves that he and another compatriot collect from the lawns and gardens around Carmel Valley.

Since 1992 Gregorio returned to his hometown at least once a year to visit his childhood sweetheart, Herminia, however, the letters, calls and annual visits were never really enough. Ultimately, Herminia made a one-way trip to the United States to be reunited with Gregorio. Herminia arrived just two years ago crossing the border without any problem thanks to the help of coyotes that charged her \$1,500. That's how she arrived in America in 2001, staying with Gregorio in hope of a better life. Sometime later, and thanks to her husband's medical insurance, Medi-Cal, she arrived at Mercy Hospital to have her first American son, Diego Sánchez, born in San Diego.

Now that Gregorio and his family live in the United States, his contact with México is more sporadic. He no longer returns to his hometown to visit his girlfriend and Herminia can not return home until she arranges her papers through an attorney so that she can legally stay in this country. Still, Gregorio sends \$500 every 2 or 3 months to his mother via "Giromex"---contributing his share to the money Mexicans remit back to their homeland.

Gregorio leaves his home in Clairemont each day to cut the grass that one day will allow his family to plant the seeds of a life that is better than the one they once had in San Juan Cahuayaxi.

Gregorio's story as told in his native Spanish

Con sus 30 años encima, Gregorio se levanta muy de mañana para cortar céspedes ajenos, recoger las hojas secas y sembrar los árboles que espera que algún día, puedan darle sombra a su hijo Diego, de apenas seis meses.

Goyo, como lo llaman sus amigos, llegó a San Diego hace 12 años desde Oaxaca, México, de un pueblo desconocido que lleva el nombre de San Juan Cahuayaxi. Cruzó la frontera con miedo y por \$500 dólares. Ahora maneja legalmente, una pickup donde carga la cortadora de pasto y alguno que otro paisano a quien le hecha la mano, si ellos lo ayudan a arrancar las flores secas de los jardines de Carmel Valley.



Desde el '92 y por costumbre, regresaba a su pueblo una vez al año a visitar a la novia de su niñez, Herminia. Las cartas, las llamadas y las visitas anuales acabaron por no ser suficientes y finalmente, antes de que la distancia hiciera estragos, el amor pudo más que los miedos y ella emprendió su viaje, sin retorno, a los Estados Unidos. Herminia llegó hace apenas 2 años, cruzó la frontera sin problemas, con la ayuda de algunos "cuates" que le cobraron \$1,500 dólares por pasarla; así llegó a América, un día cualquiera del

año 2001 y se quedó con Gregorio y la promesa de una vida mejor. Tiempo después y gracias al seguro médico de su esposo, el Medi-Cal, se internó en el Mercy Hospital para parir su primer hijo americano, Diego Sánchez, nacido en San Diego.

Ahora que Gregorio y su familia viven en Estados Unidos, su contacto con México se hace cada vez más esporádico, Goyo ya no regresa al pueblo una vez al año a visitar a su novia y Herminia no puede volver todavía sino hasta que termine de arreglar los papeles, por medio del abogado que contrataron, que le permitan quedarse legalmente en este país. Sin embargo, Gregorio todavía le manda dinero a su mamá "ahí cuando puede" a través de "Giromex" le envía unos \$500 dólares -cada 2 ó 3 meses- que se añaden al ingreso mexicano de las remesas.

La familia Sánchez vive cerca de Balboa Av. , por el rumbo de Clairemont y desde ahí, salen todos los días a cortar el "sacate" ajeno y a sembrarse la posibilidad de una vida mejor, que no se le parece a la que tendrían en San Juan Cahuayaxi.

San Diego-Tijuana: Comparative Advantages and Challenges

As the largest binational metropolitan area in North America, the San Diego-Tijuana region is truly unique with a gross regional product of \$125 billion (\$120B San Diego; \$5B Tijuana), that ranks 30th in the world, providing jobs in the manufacturing, biotechnology, agriculture, construction, defense, service and tourism related sectors. The San Diego-Tijuana border region is also the most prosperous along the U.S.-Mexico border.

However, this regional outlook masks several important facts. **First, the income disparity between San Diego and Tijuana is far greater than the disparity between other border twin cities.** In two Texas-Mexico border regions (El Paso/Juarez and Laredo/Nuevo Laredo), an average Texan earns a little less than 2.5 times their counter parts in Mexico. By comparison, the average San Diegan earns over 4 times more than the average Tijuanaense (See table 1).

Table 1: Gross Regional Product Per Capita, 1999

	Per capita GRP*		Per capita GRP*	Ratio
Mexicali	6,366	Imperial	17,550	2.76
Tijuana	6,800	San Diego	29,488	4.34
Juarez	7,074	El Paso	17,216	2.43
Nuevo Laredo	5,678	Laredo	14,112	2.48

*Gross regional product is the county or municipal equivalent of national GDP. Source: Jim Gerber (SDSU)'s calculations based on INEGI and Department of Commerce data.

Second, even though San Diego is the wealthiest county on the border, it also has the highest cost of living in the entire U.S.-Mexico border. As a basis of comparison, in 2003 San Diego had a cost of living that was 40% above the national average while El Paso, Texas had a cost of living that was 5.8% below the average across the nation according to the ACCRA cost of living index.¹⁹

**Cost of Living Index Comparison
1st Quarter-2003**

El Paso, Texas	94.2
Albuquerque, NM	99.3
Baton Rouge, LA	101.6
Cleveland, OH	103.9
Dallas, TX	96.4
Denver, CO	105.7
Los Angeles, CA	138.2
Minneapolis, MN	111.3
Tucson, AZ	97.5
San Diego, CA	140

Source: ACCRA Cost of Living Index, 1st Quarter, 2003

Third, in spite of San Diego's relative affluence, many communities across the County remain very poor, due to the higher housing costs and an increased cost of living relative to other U.S. border

cities. In the San Diego communities of Logan Heights and San Ysidro, for example, over 38% of families with children under 18 had incomes below poverty line. This percentage is higher than some counties in Texas.

These contradictions are readily visible across San Diego County. In this binational region there are some of the wealthiest and most expensive communities of the United States such as Rancho Santa Fe, Del Mar and La Jolla. At the same time, the region is also home to some of the fastest-growing squatter communities in North America built of cardboard and scrap materials immediately across the border in Tijuana. Across San Diego County, an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 Mexican transnational farm workers still live in migrant worker camps with no access to clean water, while nearby sits well-appointed housing developments and estates.

Fourth, disparities in income are not limited to just San Diego.

Across Tijuana there are vivid reminders of the huge gap that exists between the haves and the have nots in this increasingly divided city exemplified by thriving commercial districts, such as Zona Rio and Mesa de Otay, and affluent suburban neighborhood, such as Playas de Tijuana or Hipódromo, while a growing number of Tijuanaenses live in over crowded squatter settlements without basic infrastructure.

But the widening income gaps don't stop there. Due to rising public safety concerns, a sizable number of Tijuana's professional class now lives on the other side of the line, in suburban communities such as Bonita, East Lake, Otay Ranch or Coronado. While one may continue to work in Tijuana, these working professionals and their families, shop, go to school and enjoy recreational activities in San Diego. For these Tijuanaenses the level of appreciation and sensitivity to the growing economic and societal inequalities in their community of origin wanes over time as they can conveniently escape the daily realities of Tijuana each time they cross over to their adopted home on the other side of the international line.

Income disparity, both between and within San Diego and Tijuana, means that there are growing pockets of extremely underserved communities in this binational region. In both San Diego and Tijuana, these communities tend to have large populations of recent immigrants or migrants, with the majority coming from areas of extreme poverty from the interior of Mexico. How to meet the needs of these underserved communities is thus a common challenge that San Diego and Tijuana must face together.

One important element of the region's income disparity to consider is that labor costs, and the overall cost of living, is much lower in San Diego, but Tijuana remains among the most expensive cities to

¹⁹ ACCRA Cost of Living Index, 1st Quarter 2003

live in Mexico. Many California companies and residents have taken advantage of this disparity with several Southern California businesses having set up maquiladoras or in-bond assembly/manufacturing facilities in Tijuana over the last three decades²¹; workers with jobs in San Diego can much more easily afford a house in Tijuana; and many San Diego County residents take advantage of lower cost prescription drugs and medical services in Tijuana.

There are competitive advantages stemming from other unique characteristics of the region as well. Its proximity to the Greater Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, the port city of Ensenada and tourism-oriented Rosarito, have provided the region with a significant volume of trade and tourism, and prompted the region's visionary leaders to study the transportation potential of the port of Ensenada (and, for rail transportation, Tecate). The region also enjoys a vibrant arts culture that has contributed to Tijuana being recently recognized by *Newsweek* as one of the eight top emerging arts capitals of the world.²²

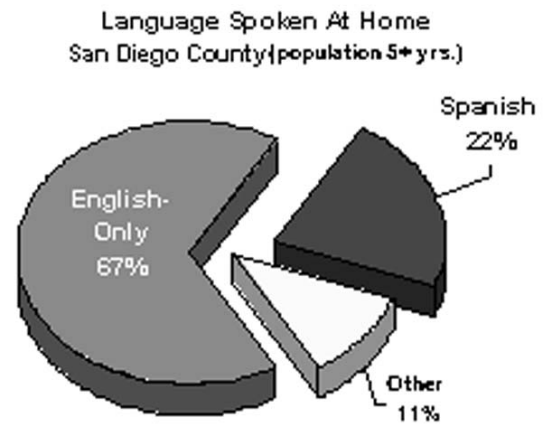
These advantages, however, have had some negative impacts on the region, or have remained under-developed. The maquiladora-led growth and the development of the energy sector on the border, albeit having some positive economic effects, has presented environmental challenges to the region. The development of factories on the border has brought with it rapid population growth, increase in hazardous and solid wastes, unplanned housing developments, and environmental degradation. Residents neighboring potential or actual sites of power plants suffer from, or fear, poor air quality and possible safety hazards. A greater integration of the economies of Baja California and San Diego has been hampered by the heightened security concerns in the United States after September 11th, 2001. In fact, a number of cross-border cultural exchanges have been disrupted or discontinued due to stricter homeland security measures.

There are challenges that are becoming more complex, difficult and costly to effectively solve as the binational region's population grows. The skyrocketing housing prices, urban sprawl and subsequent loss of natural and sensitive habitats, school over-crowding, use of scarce water resources, and transportation are some of the problems that need urgent attention from both sides of the border, and that can only be effectively solved by greater binational collaboration.

In some instances, San Diego has more experience than Tijuana in addressing the issues of mutual concern. For example, in fighting uncontrolled urban sprawl and protecting the natural environment critical for the region's endangered species, San Diego has taken steps that Tijuana is yet to seriously consider. San Diego has also engaged in long-term planning for transportation and smart growth

under the leadership of the SANDAG. Tijuana, and Baja California as a whole, can benefit from knowledge-sharing with San Diego planning agencies and NGOs to address these issues.

In other instances, it is San Diego that needs, and can benefit from, greater collaboration from Baja California. For example, Tijuana has taken recent steps to offer educational outreach to indigenous migrant students that San Diego's educational professionals could learn from. As San Diego's Latino population grows, it has



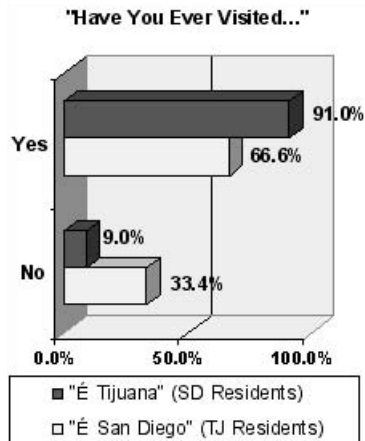
become increasingly clear that it has a shortage of culturally competent services for this growing population, especially in the areas of education, health and human services. This is reinforced by the fact that according to the 2000 US Census, nearly 22% of San Diego County's population speaks Spanish at home with over half (approximately 10.5% of all residents) reporting that they speak English "less than well."

A survey undertaken by ICF of 12 leading migrant serving non profit agencies across San Diego County has revealed the need for more culturally and linguistically competent staff and a desire for greater collaboration with counter-part agencies in Mexico if additional funding were available. In particular, ICF found that while most migrant serving agencies have a core group of linguistically competent Spanish speaking staff, the demands placed on these agencies has pushed many to rely on volunteers whose language skills can vary tremendously. Also, not all staff or volunteers have the cultural competencies to address the unique needs of the growing numbers of migrants with indigenous cultures (Mixteco, Otomi, etc) who, at times, do not even speak Spanish as their native language. Here, Baja California area non-profits as well as those from Mexican migrant sending communities such as Oaxaca, Guerrero, Jalisco or Michoacan are potential ideal partners in the provision of culturally competent care, outreach and support to Mexican migrants in San Diego County and beyond. Many San Diego area non profits surveyed expressed an interest in such collaboration

²⁰ Research by Dr. Bonnie Bade, California State University, San Marcos (2003).

²¹ The maquiladora (or in-bond industry) program allows foreign manufacturers to ship components into Mexico duty-free for assembly and subsequent re-export. Industry established under the maquiladora program is Mexico's second largest source of foreign revenue following oil exports.

²² Piore, Adam, "How to Build a Creative City" *Newsweek*, September 2, 2002.



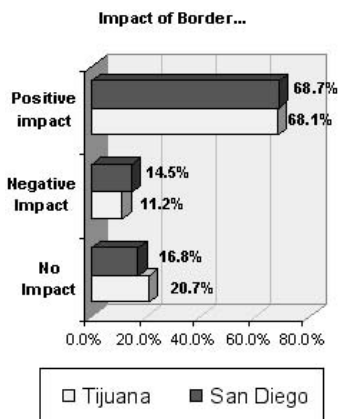
Source: Cross Border Business Associates, 2004

but funding remains an issue.

Thankfully, there is a growing consensus in the region that living in the border region is an advantage, and that closer collaboration across the border is important. According to an ICF- commissioned survey of San Diego-Tijuana residents by Cross Border Business Associates (CBA), the majority of San Diegans and Tijuana residents (about two-thirds on each side of the border) felt that having the border nearby had a positive impact on their community.

However, also notable is the fact that a small but still sizable portion of citizens from both San Diego (14.5%) and Tijuana (11.2%) feel that the border has a negative impact on their communities. While transboundary issues and concerns remain, people continue to cross the border. According to CBA's findings, 90% of San Diegans from across the County have visited Tijuana, with over 55% having visited in the last year. Among those San Diegans born in Mexico, 87.7% have visited Tijuana in the last year. In turn, 66% of Tijuana residents have visited San Diego.

Beyond general perceptions, the CBA and ICF asked San Diegans and Tijuana residents the mutual assets and challenges of the border, and, in particular their neighboring sister city. Here a vivid snapshot of key perceptions of area residents emerges.



Source: Cross Border Business Associates

Shared Perceptions San Diego-Tijuana

San Diego (as viewed by Tijuana residents)

Assets:

- Cultural attractions/amenities; binational cultural fusion
- Employment possibilities (the opportunity to work on the other side of the line)
- Economic impact of San Diego on Tijuana
- Variety and prices of goods and services in San Diego
- Enhances quality of life for those living in Tijuana (among those able to cross)
- Proximity to family and friends in San Diego
- Airport (for flights to the US/Europe/Asia)

Liabilities:

- Economic disparities between San Diego and Tijuana
- The aesthetic threat. The contrast in infrastructure, between green space and unplanned urban spaces makes you feel different—and threatened—when you cross.
- Mala influencia (bad influence of some American tourists in Tijuana including use of illegal drugs, drunk driving and under-age drinking; lack of respect for our culture and our laws)
- Racism
- Threat of Terrorism
- Border Delays

Tijuana

(as viewed by San Diegans)

Assets:

- Cultural richness and attractions
- Provides U.S. senior citizens on fixed incomes with more affordable prescription medicine
- More affordable health care and housing
- Mexicans come to San Diego to purchase U.S. goods and services
- Proximity to family and friends in Tijuana
- Airport (for flights to Mexico)

Liabilities

- Poverty
- Crime, drug trafficking and desperation
- Illegal immigration
- Official Corruption
- Border Delays
- Cross border health and environmental issues

Identifying San Diego-Tijuana's Shared Regional Assets

Beyond the general perceptions that San Diegans and Tijuaneños may have of each other, there is a common sense by most of those surveyed that the border brings positive benefits to their respective communities. While this is so, the surveys also reveal that San Diegans and Tijuaneños tend to focus more on the challenges of their neighboring sister cities as opposed to focusing on their shared collective assets.

Some of the shared assets of the San Diego-Tijuana region include:

- **A thriving binational business community** with a growing number of cross-border partnerships, joint ventures and alliances forming on both sides of the border.
- **Potential R&D linkages to manufacturing** with San Diego's thriving wireless telecommunications, software, and bio sciences sectors and Tijuana's large number of world class manufacturing facilities.
- **A growing binational work force** that is bicultural and bilingual with many of Tijuana's professional workers being U.S. trained. Expanded NAFTA professional visa provisions, as proposed by the current Administration, could further strengthen our regional advantage.
- **Specialized binational professional services in international trade** due to the presence of the border and the large number of multinational corporations operating maquiladoras in Tijuana.
- **Specialized binational medical services.** Because of Tijuana's proximity to San Diego (and the high demand for affordable health care from Southern Californians) the city has some of the best medical clinics in Mexico outside of Mexico City.
- **Cross border fiber optic network** with capabilities to provide expanded telemedicine and distance learning services both North-South and South-North.
- **Cross-Border rail infrastructure.** The region has an expanded San Diego-Imperial Valley cargo rail line via Tecate. The new rail line will connect San Diego and Tijuana to eastbound ports.
- **Potential cross-border airport connection.** With the proposed cross-border passenger crossing at Otay Mesa, the Tijuana International Airport could provide the region with more easy access to San Diego residents for travel throughout Mexico.
- **Expanded cross-border natural gas linkages** that will soon provide a cleaner, more cost effective energy supply to both San Diego and Baja California.
- **A vibrant binational arts culture** with a diverse community of artists, musicians and writers that are coming from around the world to make this region their home.
- **A talented and able migrant workforce.** The passion and ambition of our migrant workforce is the greatest untapped and neglected assets in the region.
- **A shared culture and history** with sites of great historical significance on both sides of the border.
- **A native indigenous community** with cultures, traditions and language that are unique but are under threat and dying out. Presently, there are less than 1,500 indigenous native people left in Baja California.
- **A superb binational educational infrastructure.** When looking at the region's educational resources, San Diegans tend to focus solely on its own educational assets and neglect the growing number of excellent educational institutions that are now located in the state of Baja California and collaborating closely with institutions in San Diego. These include: Colegio de la Frontera Norte, among the most highly regarded think tanks for immigration studies in Mexico which has strong ties with UCSD, USD and SDSU; Universidad Iberoamericana with its border pedagogy program that is being developed in partnership with California State University, San Marcos; Centro de Investigación Científica y de Educación Superior de Ensenada (CICESE), a leading center for marine biology, physical oceanography, geophysics, marine pharmacology, and aqua culture which works closely with Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO); and the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC) Tijuana campus that has recently developed a joint program with San Diego State University focusing on transborder public administration and governance.
- **Potential cross-border CONNECT opportunities.** In 1994 UCSD Connect and San Diego Dialogue proposed binational technology collaboration through regional research institutions that could lead to technological innovation in the private sector. With the Mexico peso crisis, that vision was shelved but should be re-visited in light of San Diego's high housing costs and the unique research in marine pharmacology already tak-

ing place at CICESE (See above). A potential La Jolla-Ensenada bio tech connection? It is worth further exploring.

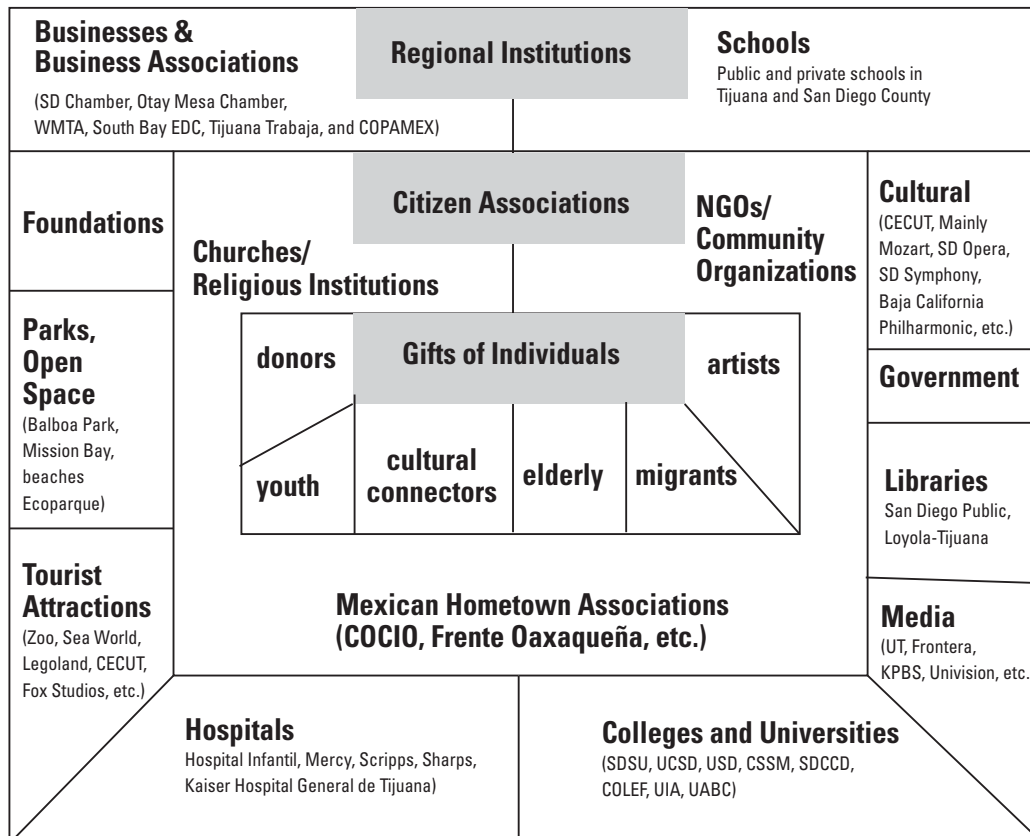
- **An emerging binational philanthropic culture** with institutions like the International Community Foundation, the San Diego Foundation and the Fundacion Internacional de la Comunidad (FIC) positioned to assist donors willing to support border related issues on both sides of the line.
- **Our elders.** In both San Diego and Tijuana there are a growing number of talented retirees who are living longer and who can contribute much to the region. Because of the idiosyncrasies of Mexico’s education system, there are a sizable number of former school teachers that have retired at 45 and 50 years of age that could contribute greatly the region’s growing educational needs.

- **Our youth.** A growing number of young people in San Diego and Tijuana are looking beyond the border that divides us and seeking to become part of a shared binational region. This remains one of the binational region's greatest untapped resources.

- **Our non-profits.** There are a growing number of innovative and successful binational partnerships already being forged by non profits on a whole range of issues including urban and regional planning, education, health and human services, the environment and arts and culture. These partnerships and collaborations are highlighted in the next section of this report.

The assets that San Diego and Tijuana share are unique and collectively provide us with a vision of the possibilities for working together towards a more prosperous future for our combined binational region.

San Diego-Tijuana Community Asset Map



Adapted from: The Asset Based Community Development Institute, Northwestern University

Regional Planning



What's the issue?

The San Diego/Tijuana Region is now the largest binational metropolitan area in North America. Today, the region has over 4.1 million people (2.8 million in San Diego and 1.3 million in Tijuana), and San Diego's population is growing at an annual rate of 2.8%. While the municipality of Tijuana has 1.3 million, if we add Tecate and Rosarito, the total regional population is 4.3 million. Overall, Tijuana is growing at an annual rate of 4.9%, almost double the rate of San Diego. It is expected that the region's population will reach 8 million by 2030. The consequences of rapid growth are already visible in the region: **housing costs are skyrocketing; urban sprawl and a proposed triple border fence** threaten rural communities and sensitive habitats of binational ecological importance; **transportation infrastructure is insufficient** to service the **growing traffic**; and **water and energy** supply is becoming an increasingly urgent and hotly contested issue. Increased **border crossing delays** due to heightened security concerns hamper the ability of the region's

trans-border commuting population to cross the border, resulting in decreased commercial sales and tourism. Such delays will be made worse if planned measures by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security are not well implemented to facilitate the soon-to-be implemented entry/exit visa processings at land border crossings such as San Ysidro and Otay Mesa.

Why should you care?

Without adequate binational regional planning on critical trans-boundary issues such as affordable housing, transportation, homeland security, water, and energy, our natural resources will diminish, urban sprawl and environmental impacts will increase, border delays will worsen and the region's quality of life will dramatically diminish. If San Diego and Tijuana are to stay economically competitive, improved binational coordination on urban and regional planning issues is absolutely critical.

ISSUES, IMPACTS AND SOLUTIONS:

Regional Planning

Issue	Binational Impact	Solution
Long Border Waits	Leads to increased air pollution; lost productivity and reduction in economic prosperity for business in both San Diego and Tijuana.	This issue remains unresolved and could get worse if US VISIT Program is not effectively implemented at the San Diego/Tijuana border. San Diego Regional Chamber; Otay Mesa Chamber and South Bay EDC are getting actively involved in public advocacy on this issue, however.
Rising housing costs and scarcity of housing options in San Diego push its residents further east, south and north in search of more affordable housing.	Longer commute, sometimes across the border; rising housing costs in Tijuana as San Diegans move there as well; businesses move out of the region.	This issue remains unresolved. Shorter commute times at the border could make Tijuana a more attractive alternative for many San Diegans that can not otherwise afford to buy a home on the US side of the border. Habitat for Humanity is also providing low cost housing options to a growing number of San Diego area Mexican migrant families in exchange for sweat equity.
Urban Sprawl	Unplanned development in Tijuana poses health and safety risks to region's residents, and also threatens the fragile binational ecosystem. Sprawl in San Diego has led to a loss of rural environment and smaller tax revenues and thus deterioration of public infrastructure in city centers.	Some civic and government leaders have been working to address this issue, including SANDAG, SDSU's Institute for Regional studies of the Californias, and UCSD-based Regional Workbench Consortium. Long-term planning, smart growth, sustainability and cross-border collaboration guide these initiatives. Envision San Diego is now being launched to explore similar issues in this binational region and Citizens for Century Three (C3) and the Urban Land Institute's San Diego-Tijuana Chapter are exploring ways to improve the level of planning binationally.

A Binational Partnership That Works—Urban & Regional Planning

The Regional Workbench Consortium (RWBC)

<http://regionalworkbench.org>



The RWBC is a collaborative binational network of university and community-based partners dedicated to enabling sustainable city-region development for San Diego-Baja California. RWBC promotes multidisciplinary research and service learning aimed at understanding how problems of environment and development interrelate across local, regional and global scales. Taking a forward-looking perspective, the RWBC focuses on the Southern California-Northern Baja California transborder region - especially the San Diego-Tijuana city-region and coastal zone with a mission to "create innovative research-learning partnerships, planning support systems, and educational tools to enable sustainable city-region development." Among its current projects is collaborative planning for the Tijuana and San Diego River watersheds. Led by the University of California San Diego (UCSD), RWBC's partners include: the San Diego Super Computer Center; the Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF); Centro de Investigación Científica de Educación Superior de Ensenada (CICESE); UC San Diego, San Diego State University, Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO), and the Telesis Corporation, among others. RWBC's Regional Planning Committee is providing advice for preparation and implementation of the San Diego Association of Government's (SANDAG) Regional Comprehensive Plan which addresses both local and interregional issues to promote the increased utilization of cutting-edge information and visualization technologies for regional planning and decision-making.

Education



Students at local Tijuana primary school.



Mentor Michael Inzunza atop One America Plaza in downtown San Diego with Rebecca Valenzuela, a Senior at the Preuss School and a fellow of the Las Californias Youth Leadership Program.

What's the issue?

The cross-border impact on education is often masked by the fact that the education systems of San Diego and Tijuana remain largely disconnected. Yet the high mobility of the region's migrant work force and trans-border residents presents primary and secondary schools in both communities with common issues and challenges: **school over-crowding, lack of resources, unique education needs of immigrant and migrant children and youth, drop out rates, educational performance**, and the degree of **parental involvement**. Additionally, the growing inter-dependence between San Diego and Tijuana demands a bicultural/bilingual workforce that has a greater appreciation for the binational region, so more must be done to **promote cross-border educational exchanges** aimed at better preparing the region's future leaders in the public, private and non profit sectors.

Why Should You Care?

Since the future economic prosperity for the San Diego-Tijuana region will depend greatly on a productive, globally competitive workforce, addressing the region's education needs on both sides of the border will be critical and should be a key priority for parents, educators, policymakers and funders alike. Given San Diego's changing demographics, particular attention needs to be placed in addressing the unique needs of immigrant and migrant students as these students are often the most underserved. As San Diego's present workforce ages, it will be heavily dependent on today's immigrants and their children. That makes the quality of their education, both before and after graduation, a lot more than an issue of fairness.²⁵ Just as important is preparing a future generation of San Diego and Tijuana leaders that are both bicultural and bilingual and have a broader appreciation of the importance of this unique binational region.

²⁵ Schrag, Peter, "Unequal education costs state dearly," *Sacramento Bee*, February 12, 2004.

ISSUES, IMPACTS AND SOLUTIONS:

Education

Issue	Binational Impact	Solution
Lack of investment in Tijuana public schools (K-12)	Increased drop out rate, lower levels of educational attainment making Tijuana less competitive and increasing the propensity of residents to migrate to the United States in search of higher paying "entry level" work.	Opportunities exist to sponsor schools, provide in-kind support and equipment to individual classrooms and scholarships for students.
Limited "After school" programs in Tijuana schools and San Diego's Mexican migrant communities	Increases the incidence of childhood/teen delinquency, drug use and gang involvement which has binational consequences	Investment in After-School Programs. Proposed Boys and Girls Club of East Tijuana is working to become a reality. In San Diego various non profits including MAC Project, The Boys and Girls Club and Barrio Station are working to make a difference but more support is needed.
Limited educational enrichment programs for Tijuana area children and youth in the culture & the arts and sciences. There is also an under-investment in public libraries	Creates growing inequities among youth in the region as those with fewer educational enrichment opportunities do not achieve their full academic potential.	Museo Interactivo del Trompo now under construction in Tijuana; CECUT also provides opportunities for enrichment but not scholarships. The Universidad Iberoamericana has recently opened the Loyola Public Library. Still other support, including more libraries and computer based learning, is critically needed.
Some Tijuana "Trans-Border" residents with a US address or friend/relative in San Diego provide ability for children to study in San Diego area public schools	Contributes to greater cross-cultural diversity but also leads to over-crowding of San Diego area schools, particularly those in the South County.	Problem Remains Unresolved. Improvements/greater investment in Tijuana's public schools will decrease the propensity of Trans-border residents to cross to San Diego to attend school.
Lack of trained bilingual teachers and cross cultural exchanges in and between San Diego and Tijuana area schools	Contributes to cultural and linguistic barriers in an otherwise growing binational region.	Scholarship programs at universities to increase the number of bilingual credentialed teachers. Investment in cross-cultural exchanges such as the San Diego-Tijuana Sister City Society's ArtBus- Xpress . Expanded cross-border teacher exchanges such as the efforts now being undertaken by California State University at San Marcos and the Universidad Iberoamericana in the area of "border pedagogy" with three annual conferences already having been held for San Diego and Tijuana teachers (K-12).
Increased migration from Mexico's migrant sending regions	Leads to unique cultural adaptation challenges for public schools in both San Diego County and Tijuana. For approximately 7.5% of these migrant students, Spanish is not their native language.	Culturally sensitive migrant education program including "parental education: Escuela Para Padres and Escuela Para La Familia . In San Diego, El Cajon-based EJE is meeting this challenge. Reading programs, such as San Diego Reads , should be promoted binationally. In the North County, the LISTOS program is bilingually providing parental education. Through Plaza Comunitaria, San Diego's Office of Bilingual Education is partnering with the Mexican Secretariat of Education too increase the literacy of migrant parents and adults.

Binational Partnerships that Work—Education:

Excellence and Justice in Education (EJE) and Escuela Para Familias

<http://www.geocities.com/enlaceje/>



Founded in 1991, **Excellence and Justice in Education (EJE)** is a Hispanic grass-roots community organization formed by parents, students, teachers and community members from the El Cajon Valley Union School District (CVSD) seeking excellence and equality in education for all children. EJE works to make a differ-

ence by reaching out to new immigrant families to teach them about the importance of parental involvement as a predictor of success for students.

To successfully carry out the parent involvement program in El Cajon and Lemon Grove, EJE has partnered with the Tijuana-based organization, **Escuela para Las Familias (EPF)** to develop and

administer courses to Latino parents in both El Cajon and Lemon Grove. The EJE/EPF partnership is an excellent example of a binational collaboration that is assisting San Diego's growing trans-national Mexican community succeed in their new adopted home.

With the support of San Diego Social Venture Partners (San Diego SVP) and San Diego State University's Entrepreneurial Management Center, a study was undertaken to measure the success of participating EJE students in terms of scholastic performance. The study compared the average performance level of 50 EJE children on the STAR test to Latino/Hispanic children in the CVUSD. The results show that the EJE children score startlingly higher in all subjects than the general Latino/Hispanic population and about equal to the student population at large.

Las Californias Youth Leadership Program ICF/FIC/ISTEP-SDSU/Lead San Diego

<http://www.icfdn.org/initiatives/lcylp.htm>

In May 2003, the **International Community Foundation**, in collaboration with the **International Studies Education Project of San Diego State University (ISTEP)**, **LEAD San Diego**, and **La Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad (FIC)**, initiated the "Las Californias Youth Leadership Program" (LCYLP), a binational youth leadership program, which aims to strengthen the social capital in the border region by empowering high school seniors from San Diego and Tijuana to improve their mutual understanding of the border region. The program was created to encourage young people to become leaders to help form solutions for complex border problems.

LCYLP seeks to engage the San Diego-Tijuana community, especially its civic leaders and emerging youth leaders, to better appreciate the need for collective action. The program provides participants with opportunities for community service, mentoring, job shadowing and a comprehensive educational enrichment program focused on the dynamics of the U.S.-Mexico border region.

Collaboration among the above-mentioned institutions has allowed for an interactive exchange of ideas which have strengthened, reinforced and positively impacted the LCYLP. The talents of each of the participating institutions have made this program a truly binational effort.

The selected high school students meet once a month at various universities in the border region to discuss relevant border issues such as immigration, environment, public policy, U.S.-Mexico rela-



Las Californias Youth Leadership Program students at the official residence of the Mexican President, Los Pinos, August 2003.

tions. One participant commented that, "LCYLP teaches me about things that neither my school nor my parents could teach me." Another student noted that, "I always thought I would go away to help people, but now I realize that there is much to do here and I want to stay in Tijuana to help my community."

The border region's future prosperity hinges on the ability to nurture a new generation of future leaders who embody individual responsibility, a greater appreciation for cultural diversity and possess a strong commitment to leadership both at home and beyond our international borders. Investing in young people and training them for leadership in their schools and communities is critical to our society especially along the border. LCYLP is one avenue to increase binational understanding and collaboration.

Health



What's the issue?

The San Diego-Tijuana border region faces a number of trans-boundary health challenges that are unique to this fast growing binational region. **Infectious diseases**, such as tuberculosis, hepatitis, and HIV/AIDS respect no political boundaries and are affecting residents on both sides of the international border. There is also a prevalence of certain ailments among Latinos, such as **cervical cancer, diabetes and obesity** and the demand to address these illnesses is growing in the San Diego-Tijuana region. Many San Diegans cross into Mexico in search of **culturally competent and affordable medical care** and medications. Absent such services, many are opting to go without medical care. Worse still, in California over 70% of migrant farm workers and their families are without any form of medical insurance coverage. Another long-standing trans-boundary issue is substance abuse which is a particular problem among San Diego area youth that travel to Baja California and engage in under-age drinking and the use of drugs.

Why Should You Care?

If the San Diego-Tijuana region is to prosper, we need to promote more livable and healthy communities. Yet, because of the growing impacts of globalization and human migration on our binational region—particularly the growing prevalence of squatter communities and overcrowded living conditions--infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and hepatitis are on the rise on both sides of the San Diego-Tijuana border, particularly among the region's migrant community. Many otherwise preventable diseases such as diabetes, obesity and cervical cancer are increasing among the region's Latino population and could be prevented with more pro-active health education. Trans-border health impacts are not limited to the working poor, as diseases do not discriminate difference in wealth, affecting vulnerable populations such as the very young and the elderly of all social classes. Nowhere is this more event present than in addressing cross border under-age drinking and drug use problem.

ISSUES, IMPACTS AND SOLUTIONS :

Health

Issue	Binational Impact	Solution
Increased human migration and the prevalence of a cross-border sex trade industry	Contributes to an increase incidence of HIV/AIDS in the San Diego-Tijuana area. In 2002, Baja California had the 6th highest incidence of AIDS among Mexican states, at 68.89 cases per 100,000. In the period 1999-2001, San Diego had the 6th highest incidence of AIDS among California counties.	In the San Diego/Tijuana region, the Binational AIDS Advocacy Project is working to improve binational HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. UCSD Medical School is also now exploring ways to increase their outreach and support to this critical area with plans to work collaboratively with UABC Medical School across the border. Additional HIV/AIDS related outreach is being undertaken by Project Concern's Border Health Initiative and Fronteras Unidas Pro Salud .
Growth of slums or colonia populares in Tijuana and migrant worker camps in San Diego County.	Increased incidence of water borne and infectious diseases including TB and Hepatitis. Poverty is a key driver in cross border migration. Rising migration results in an increase in cross-border transmission of infectious diseases.	Project Concern's Border Health Initiative (BHI) and San Ysidro Health Clinic have been working pro-actively to counter-act the spread of tuberculosis in the San Diego-Tijuana region.
Under investment in culturally competent health education in Baja California and in migrant communities of San Diego County	Increased incidence of otherwise preventable diseases on both sides of the San Diego/Tijuana Border.	Tijuana based Fronteras Unidas Pro-Salud is providing culturally competent health education to migrant communities in Greater Tijuana and is providing teaching materials to Planned Parenthood of San Diego and Riverside Counties .
Rising healthcare costs in San Diego	San Diegans purchase medicine and medical services in Tijuana. Results in "crowding out" of available medical services for Tijuansenses.	Hospital Infantil de las Californias in Tijuana is providing a growing number of San Diego Hispanic residents with cost effective, culturally competent care at its facility in Tijuana. In San Diego County, North County Health Services and San Ysidro Health Center provides health care and health education to low to moderate-income people including: Prenatal care, pediatrics, general medicine, AIDS care, seniors and health education.
Medi-Cal policies for uninsured creates growing unfunded mandates for San Diego area health care providers	For some uninsured, undocumented residents and Tijuana resident border crossers, Medi-Cal provides emergency medical services that would otherwise be unaffordable.	This issue remains unresolved with unfunded mandates growing for U.S. border counties like San Diego and Imperial.
Lack of enforcement against and promotion of under-age drinking in Tijuana/Rosarito bars/night clubs	Increased youth delinquency, substance abuse and driving under the influence impacts both sides of the border.	Public Strategies (National City) and the Drug-Free Border Coalition are two NGOs that are working pro-actively to address this binational problem.

Binational Partnerships That Work—Health

Planned Parenthood of San Diego and Riverside Counties

www.planned.org/

Fronteras Unidas Pro Salud

www.pro-salud.org/index2.html



Fronteras Unidas promotoras in Tijuana colonia

Fronteras Unidas Pro Salud (Pro Salud) provides basic medical service and education to low-income residents of Baja California. Its education program uses volunteers called *promotoras*, who receive 40 hours of family planning and reproductive health education, and take additional classes in other health-related issues. This program has proven so successful that it has been replicated through the **Planned Parenthood** in North San Diego County and Eastern Riverside County for their migrant farm worker populations. The health-related educational materials distributed by Pro Salud for its Mexican clients are now used by Planned Parenthood because they culturally resonate with their Mexican national clients and are more effective than the materials developed in the United States.

Project Concern International (PCI)'s Border Health Initiative and Programas de Medicina Social Comunitaria, A.C.

www.pciborderregion.com/



The Border Health Initiative (BHI) is a program of **Project Concern International**, a San Diego-based non-profit health and development organization with a presence in the region since 1961. BHI works to improve access to quality health services for border communities by supporting community-based organizations and public health agencies along the California-Baja California border. The BHI's program focus is to increase the capacity of community-based organizations to respond to the public health challenges of the border and to promote public awareness regarding border health, especially in the areas of tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse and reproductive health. PCI and its sister organization in Tijuana, **Programas de Medicina Social Comunitaria, A.C.**, work with over 30 organizations in the region to provide access to health resources, prevent disease, and promote development through dynamic partnerships that build local capacity.

Human Services



What's the Issue?

Although both San Diego and Tijuana are considered wealthy compared to other areas of the border, a closer look reveals that both have a serious problem of **urban and rural poverty**, and both continue to be plagued by growing economic and social inequality between the affluent and the poor. San Diego now ranks 6th among metropolitan areas marked by the increase in poverty among its census tracts.²⁶ These tracts generally match areas that have high concentrations of Mexican migrant workers including upwards of 10,000 to 15,000 living in migrant worker camps throughout San Diego County and many more living in **overcrowded living conditions**.²⁷ Among San Diego residents of Mexican origin the incidence of poverty is growing due, in part, to the **absence of affordable housing**, the high cost of living and the inability to earn a living wage.

The plight of the working poor is not limited to San Diego. In Tijuana, it is estimated that half or 40,000 of new arrivals to the city live in squatter communities with inadequate infrastructure, limited or no access to clean water, and overcrowded conditions, and are often located on land that is geologically hazardous, has a high risk of flooding and/or is located in close proximity to industrial pollution areas or industrial zones. These housing conditions serve to further exacerbate the plight of the region's working poor, and the prevalence of sub-standard living conditions south of the border have trans-boundary impacts, such as cross-border pollution, degradation of binational wildlife corridors and the spread of infectious diseases.

Why Should you Care?

Poverty, poor living conditions and the prevalence of squatter communities and migrant worker camps in both San Diego and Tijuana aggravates health problems, contributes to poor educational performance and higher drop out rates among children and youth, and increases the risk among residents of squatter communities of becoming susceptible to substance abuse, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect. The poor are also most susceptible to becoming exploited victims of crime, prostitution, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and the sex trade. Still in both San Diego and Tijuana there is a general apathy and indifference towards the plight of the region's working poor. Unless steps are taken to decrease the **growing economic inequalities between the affluent and the poor**, the long term economic prosperity and quality of the region will be adversely affected over time.

²⁶ Jargowky, 2003, *Stunning Progress, Hidden Problems: The Dramatic Decline of Concentrated Poverty in the 1990s*, May 2003, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

²⁷ Sifuentes, Edward, "City, Landowners Begin Removing Carlsbad Camps: Migrant Workers, Scatter to Find Shelter," *North County Times*, February 18, 2004, A1

Human Services

Issue	Binational Impact	Solution
<p>Increase in rural crossings from Mexico by undocumented immigrants, due to tighter checks at official crossing points</p>	<p>Increase in the use of emergency care by undocumented immigrants after suffering injuries or trauma in their attempt to cross into the U.S..</p>	<p>The San Diego-based NGO "Border Angels" is providing water stations for undocumented migrants crossing through the desert in the Imperial Valley. San Diego based, American Friends Services' Border Program focuses on the defense of migrant human and civil rights, farm labor rights, and the monitoring of federal Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Border Patrol policies and practices, and other law enforcement agencies. Casa YMCA del Menores Migrantes in Tijuana provides shelter and counseling for Mexican migrant youth that get deported back to Mexico.</p>
<p>Growing incidence of poverty and slums (colonias populares) across Greater Tijuana. Over 1/2 of all new growth in Tijuana is in squatter communities</p>	<p>Contributes to unhealthy living conditions that leads to substance abuse, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect.</p>	<p>This remains a very challenging problem but NGOs like Esperanza and Los Niños are promoting more livable communities through community empowerment programs including micro-credit availability among under-served communities in Tijuana. Esperanza, Project Mercy and several church based organizations in San Diego are assisting with the building of low cost housing and day care facilities. The Border Arts Workshop is providing arts enrichment programs for children and youth of the community of Maclovio Rojas in Tijuana and has helped in the construction of a women's center. Promocion y Docencias, A.C. is providing community outreach programs in Southern Tijuana.</p>
<p>Large numbers of two-parent working adults and single family households working multiple jobs in order to make ends meet in many under served communities of both San Diego and Tijuana.</p>	<p>Rising number of working poor in both San Diego and Tijuana, particularly among workers and families of Mexican origin. Increase in the number of latch key kids without meaningful after school programs on both sides of the border.</p>	<p>Family counseling to minimize the risks of child abuse/neglect. After School programs such as those of the Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, MAC Project, Casa Familiar go a long way to addressing the needs of San Diego's migrant families. Locally, the San Diego Living Wage Campaign is dedicated to securing livable wages for the thousands of low-wage workers in the San Diego regional economy.</p>
<p>Poverty leads to greater susceptibility among poor to becoming exploited victims of crime, prostitution, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and the sex trade.</p>	<p>The trafficking of humans, drugs and the prostitution are growing binational concerns with transnational organized crime syndicates exploiting the poor and disenfranchised from the United States, Mexico and third countries.</p>	<p>Support for abused women and children, particularly those that are victims of domestic violence, prostitution and the sex trade.</p>
<p>Lack of affordable housing in San Diego for the region's migrant working poor.</p>	<p>Leads to increased overcrowding and a growing number of migrants living in migrant worker camps. Also decreases the disposable net income that migrants are able to remit back to their communities of origin in Mexico.</p>	<p>Encinitas based Las Casitas has been providing more affordable adobe shelters for migrant workers and Carlsbad based La Posada Casa Guadalupe has been providing shelter to homeless migrant workers at their 50-bed facility. Carlsbad based Ecumenical Migrant Outreach Project has also provided advocacy for migrant workers made homeless from the dismantling of migrant worker camps.</p>
<p>Growing incidence of Mexican undocumented inmates in the California prison system</p>	<p>Deported ex-offenders lead to increased incidence of crime in Tijuana. Recidivism rate among these Mexican undocumented ex-offenders is also over 80%.</p>	<p>This issue is currently not being addressed by any non profit in either San Diego or Tijuana.</p>

Binational Partnerships That Work—Human Services

San Diego-Tijuana Border Drug Free Coalition & Boys and Girls Clubs of America

www.borderinitiative.org

The **San Diego-Tijuana Drug-Free Border Coalition** is an innovative binational partnership committed to reducing substance abuse in the San Diego-Tijuana region by linking groups and individuals engaged in prevention on both sides of the border and supporting them through activities including: cross border information sharing; training and technical assistance; increasing binational

awareness about substance abuse; engaging communities in substance abuse prevention; developing resources to support binational substance abuse efforts; and strengthening the coalition. Among its current initiatives is to assist the **Boys & Girls Clubs of America** in establishing similar clubs in Tijuana for at-risk youth.



San Diego - Tijuana Border Drug Free Coalition meeting at the border fence, Border Field State Park and Playas de Tijuana.

Fundación Esperanza de Mexico and Esperanza International, Inc (Solana Beach, CA):

www.esparnazainternational.org



Since 1990 **Fundación Esperanza de México (FEM)** and its Solana Beach, Ca. based counterpart, Esperanza International, Inc., have been working to promote community development in Tijuana by "empowering the poor to help themselves" in communities that lack urban infrastructure such as: paved roads, safe electrical connections, water, sanitation services, and housing. Esperanza assists communities that have the potential for becoming self-sustaining and bases its assistance on self-help principles. Their goal is to "plant the seeds, provide assistance as requested, then step back and let the community take its own course." In an effort to conserve water in Tijuana's growing colonias populares,

Esperanza's recently initiated their first primary treatment facility for gray water re-use and compost toilets in Southern Tijuana. Esperanza is also providing micro-credit to low income families to assist with housing finance and construction. Working closely with **Esperanza International**, FEM successfully recruits an average of 1,000 U.S. students and adult volunteers annually for work on community-based projects across Tijuana. In 2002, volunteers contributed over 45,000 hours of volunteer time.

Esperanza has also been instrumental in partnering with **Los Niños de Baja California, A.C.** towards initiating an advocacy program aimed at promoting community empowerment among emerging women leaders to provide community-based courses in nutrition, organic production, ecology, and preventive healthcare.

Environment



Squatter home in eastern fringe of Tijuana. Otay National Wilderness Area located on the U.S. side of the border in the background.

What's the issue?

Environmental impacts know no political boundaries. **Water and air flow** affect the environment on both sides of the border.

Hazardous waste can impact groundwater aquifers and have trans-boundary impacts. **Wildlife corridors** span the international border, which will be severely affected if the triple border fence is extended inland and westward to the coast. Rapid population growth, combined with the lack of planning and investment in infrastructure, continue to pose environmental challenges to the binational region. Without pro-active efforts to promote **environmental education** the negative trans-boundary environmental impacts to the San Diego-Tijuana region can only be expected to worsen.

In both San Diego and Tijuana, many under-served and disenfranchised migrant communities on both sides of the border are having to confront growing **environmental justice** issues due to the siting of industrial facilities in close proximity to their communities. Barrio Logan in San Diego and Colonia Chilpancingo in Tijuana are two such examples of neighborhoods having been subjected to un-due environmental health risks.

Why Should you Care?:

Across the San Diego-Tijuana region there are a number of emerging trans-boundary environmental issues. In Los Laureles Canyon rapid population growth and unregulated squatter settlements have increased the cross-border flow of sewage, refuse and sedimentation to the Tijuana River Estuary located across the border in Imperial Beach. Similar urban growth in Eastern Tijuana is having a negative impact on known wildlife corridors of binational biodiversity importance. Increased homeland security concerns have also recently led to proposed plans to extend a triple border fence which would have irreparable damage to fragile and threatened binational eco-systems in the Otay Mountain/Eastern Tijuana-Tecate region as well as sensitive coastal eco-systems near the coast. Aging infrastructure in urban areas is affecting sewage treatment facilities, resulting in spills throughout the year that cause beach closures and human health threats in both Playas de Tijuana as well as Imperial Beach. Power plants built in Mexico are destined to provide electricity for U.S. consumers but there are potential environmental impacts to coastal communities in Baja California. Water from the Colorado River serves communities in both San Diego and Tijuana.

Without pro-active binational initiatives in the area of environmental education, land conservation and watershed planning, the cross border environmental challenges (water and air pollution, sand mining, solid waste, fisheries) will only increase with adverse consequences to residents on both sides of the border.

ISSUES, IMPACTS AND SOLUTIONS:

Environment

Issue	Binational Impact	Solution
<p>Unplanned squatter settlements are leading to urban sprawl.</p>	<p>Environmental and health impacts to Imperial Beach residents and flora & fauna of the Tijuana River Estuary. Urban sprawl in the Tijuana-Tecate Corridor leads to the disruption of binational wildlife corridors and the degradation of the Tijuana River Watershed. (NOTE: 1/3 of the Tijuana River watershed is on the U.S. side of the border.)</p>	<p>A grant from the California Coastal Conservancy is helping Tijuana's IMPLAN to develop a plan to reduce stormwater runoff and promote community development in surrounding slums that contribute to groundwater pollution.</p>
<p>Siting of assembly/manufacturing facilities near under served communities in Tijuana and San Diego.</p>	<p>Contributes to binational environmental health impacts including exposures to air pollution, hazardous waste, and water pollution. Raises environmental justice concerns.</p>	<p>San Diego based Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) has focused its attention to environmental health and justice issues in San Diego and Tijuana, "providing technical and organizing assistance to populations adversely affected by toxic chemicals. Ensenada based Pronatura is developing a plan to identify priority binational conservation corridors and is working pro-actively with San Diego based Conservation Biology Institute (CBI) and the Nature Conservancy (TNC) on this effort.</p>
<p>Siting of Liquefied Natural Gas facilities along the Baja California coastline.</p>	<p>Will provide increased energy security for the San Diego-Tijuana region but will also have potential negative impacts on the region's threatened coastal habitats. There are also some underlying safety concerns.</p>	<p>Opportunities exist for the companies now considering LNG facilities (Sempra, Shell, Chevron-Texaco) to pro-actively identify win-win solutions to minimize the environmental impacts while providing positive net benefits to the communities where they will operate.</p>
<p>Mining of sand from Tecate riverbeds for export to San Diego's construction industry and beach restoration.</p>	<p>Permanent destruction of binational watershed and groundwater aquifers</p>	<p>Governor Elorduy has recently banned the exportation of Baja California sand but, sadly, sand is still being taken away.</p>
<p>Inadequate treatment of sewage from Tijuana in processing plants in San Diego</p>	<p>Beach closures in Imperial Beach after heavy rain; water pollution and negative impact on coastal habitat</p>	<p>Support for on-going citizen-based binational water quality monitoring on both sides of the border. Tijuana based Ja Jan is already undertaking such work with SWIA and San Diego Baykeeper.</p>

Binational Partnerships that Work—Environment:

Tijuana River Estuary Binational Conservation and Environmental Education:

http://www.tijuanaestuary.com/visitors_center.asp

The Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (TRNERR) in Imperial Beach, California lies directly adjacent to the Mexican border for almost three miles. The TRNEER provides winter habitat and stopover for at least 370 species of birds, but the rest of the watershed (of which two-thirds is in Mexico) have created challenges to the Reserve's conservation efforts. Nearby canyons have been inappropriately developed by squatters, depositing several feet of soil and trash in fragile wetlands each year.

For almost a decade, TRNERR staff has looked across the border to Tijuana for help in solving this problem, using environmental education and innovative projects to bridge political boundaries. The Ecoparque wastewater treatment and reclamation facility in Tijuana developed out of this outreach effort. Mexican NGOs, such as **Gaviotas** and **Proyecto Fronterizo de Educación Ambiental**, continue to collaborate with TRNERR staff on water quality monitoring and an ongoing teacher-training program. In 2003, binational partnership had further exciting developments: the municipalities

of Tijuana and Tecate became members of the TRNERR management authority, and the California Coastal Conservancy, in its first granting outside California, granted over \$200,000 through ICF to carry out a research and project feasibility study in Los Laureles Canyon in Tijuana. Municipal authorities in Tijuana are also seeking input on new parks and infrastructure projects that may impact the reserve.

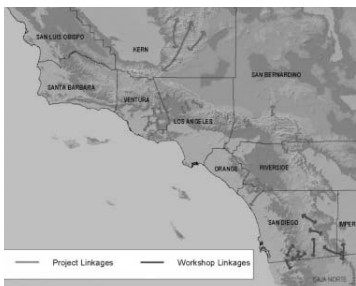


Tijuana River Estuary viewed from the Mexican side of the border looking north.

Conservation Partnership: Pronatura and Conservation Biology Institute (CBI)

www.pronatura.org.mx

<http://www.consbio.org/>



Missing Conservation Linkages in the San Diego and Tijuana Region.

In 2000, scientists gathered at a "Missing Linkages" conference to identify active and potential wildlife corridors in California. What they discovered was that many of the southernmost corridors extend into Baja California, especially for large mammals, such as the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep and mountain lion. The group resolved to continue studying these corridors and

hopefully protect them over the long term. **Pronatura Noroeste-Mar de Cortés (Pronatura)** and **Conservation Biology Institute (CBI)** agreed to bring their technical expertise and scientific knowledge together to benefit this large-scale initiative.

Three years passed before a concrete opportunity to collaborate appeared. In 2003, the San Diego Foundation and the International Community Foundation simultaneously funded **Pronatura** and **CBI** to implement the "Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative-Phase II," which is designed to identify potential binational conservation areas along the California-Baja California border. In addition, Pronatura will take a closer look at the rapidly-disappearing open space between Tijuana and Tecate to see if there is an opportunity to protect this corridor before it is too late. CBI published the first report from this initiative in July 2003, entitled "La Posta Linkage Portfolio: San Diego County, California." The **Nature Conservancy** is also contributing in-kind training in computer modeling to this effort.

Arts & Culture



"Toy and Horse" by Marco Ramirez Erre, Port of Entry-Tijuana/San Ysidro, inSITE97 (Photograph credit: Phillip Sholtz Rittermann)

What's the Issue?

One of the most important yet overlooked regional assets in the San Diego-Tijuana Border Region is the **vibrant arts and culture scene** emerging in Tijuana recognized by [Newsweek](#) as one of the top eight creative cities in the world. In the San Diego-Tijuana region, numerous arts and culture-oriented non profits have demonstrated how the arts can promote community beautification and empowerment, educational enrichment among children and youth at risk, provide therapy for the physically disabled, and political expression. The region's rich binational cultural heritage is also being protected. Yet, **funding** for arts and culture related initiatives remains a challenge in our border region and many of border area non-profits focused in this area struggle to sustain their programs year after year. The irony is that Tijuana is earning a reputation as an arts and culture center.²⁸ Across Europe, Tijuana's visual arts are being increasingly found in exhibitions and galleries. Tijuana's intrigue for a growing number of artists is its strategic location along the international border with San Diego, considered "one of the hottest interfaces between 'first' and 'third' worlds."²⁹

Why Should You Care?*

The conventional wisdom among many civic leaders is that support for arts and culture is a luxury that takes potential funding away from economic development. If one only focuses on the allocation of the available funds, it is true that a dollar spent on arts and culture programs means a dollar less available for economic programs, but equally true is the fact that arts and culture contribute to the regional economy. In San Diego County, an **Americans for the Arts** study found that total spending by local nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences reached \$326 million during fiscal year 2000. This spending, according to the study, supported the full-time equivalent of 6,462 jobs, generating \$135 million in household income, \$9.0 million in local government revenue, and \$12.4 million for the state.³⁰

One potential impact of arts and culture on economic development has attracted particular attention from government and civic leaders after the publication of Richard Florida's book, [The Rise of the Creative Class](#). The book's main argument is that knowledge workers, whom Florida calls the creative class, are crucial resources in today's increasingly information and knowledge-based economy, and that the creative class is "transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life."³¹ He then argues that the creative class needs a vibrant artistic and cultural environment to thrive, and thus communities with rich cultural environment will prosper while those lacking such an environment will fall behind.³² By this logic, fostering a vibrant arts and cultural environments is not merely complementary to economic development but rather necessary for knowledge-based economic development. Here then, the question to ask is: to what degree can Tijuana help strengthen San Diego's creative quotient?

²⁸ Piore, Adam, "How to Build a Creative City" [Newsweek International](#), September 2, 2002.

²⁹ Haus der Kulturen der Welt (September 2002).

³⁰ Cunningham, Kelly, San Diego Chamber of Commerce, Business Action Newsletter, Winter 2004, p. 20.

³¹ Florida, 2002, quoted from the subtitle of the book.

³² Florida, 2002, part IV.

ISSUES, IMPACTS AND SOLUTIONS:

Arts & Culture

Issue	Binational Impact	Solution
<p>Limited public awareness of border's impact on the quality of live in San Diego-Tijuana</p>	<p>Promotes mis-perceptions about the border impacting public policy, funding, trade, commerce and tourism</p>	<p>The San Diego-Tijuana Sister City Society and Artswalk is promoting binational cultural exchange and arts organizations such as the San Diego Reperatory Theatre, with their performances "Border Town" and "Las Californias" are bringing down the barriers that divide our two communities. The San Diego based Pacific Rim Foundation, in coordination with the Universidad Ibero-Americana School of Architecture and the Rotary Clubs of Mission Valley, Tijuana and Rosarito Beach, are now raising funds for a Tijuana Pacific Rim Park to be located near Playas de Tijuana as a symbol of our shared future in the Pacific Rim.</p>
<p>Limited arts related educational enrichment programs in Tijuana public schools as well as San Diego' Latino communities</p>	<p>Leads to fewer opportunities for youth to express themselves through art, limiting their creative potential.</p>	<p>Border Arts Workshop is providing arts educational enrichment programs in Maclovio Rojas, one of Tijuana's colonias populares. Mainly Mozart is providing binational music related educational enrichment. Thanks to the efforts of the San Diego-Tijuana Sister City Society, ArtsBusExpress is being expanded binationally to offer arts enrichment opportunities for Tijuana school children. In San Diego, the San Diego Media Arts Center is engaging Latino young through media, film and the arts; jart now!/The Voices Project is using contemporary art, technology and media to engage Southeast San Diego Latino residents in the creative process of exploring contemporary issues and topics of concern to them, their families and their neighborhoods.</p>
<p>A thriving arts and culture scene is critical to promote a "creative class" city yet ,for many San Diegans, Tijuana's creativity quotient is an unknown.</p>	<p>Under-investment in binational arts and culture programs that are critical to promoting thriving cross-border arts culture</p>	<p>inSITE is bringing artists from around the world to our border; The San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art and the San Diego Photography Musuem have made a commitment to highlighting emerging artists and photographers from Baja California; the San Diego Opera and Mainly Mozart are promoting cross-border cultural exchange and enrichment through music. Tijuana's Culture and Arts Center (CECUT) is bringing world-class arts and cultural exhibitions and performing arts programs to our region.</p>
<p>Limited special education programs in Tijuana schools. Tijuana schools, where the arts can offer opportunities for enrichment.</p>	<p>Leads to otherwise challenged children and adults not fully maximizing their potential contribution to society and limits the economic independence that these physically challenged individuals may have.</p>	<p>Asociación Pro-Autismo, A.C., a nonprofit organization founded by parents of children with autism, uses arts and crafts as a part of their educational activities. Taller Pro-Discapitados, A.C. (Workshop for the Disabled), works with all disabled youths and adults including those with Down Syndrome.</p>

Binational Partnerships that Work—Arts & Culture

inSITE

www.insite2000.org/



inSITE is a binational contemporary arts project of more than 25 nonprofit and public cultural institutions in Mexico and the United States. The project is based on artistic investigation and activation of urban space in San Diego and Tijuana. The heart of inSITE is the process of commissioning new projects by artists from throughout the Americas in the course of residencies in the binational region. For

inSITE2000, over 30 new works were commissioned - from new media and installation to performance and spectacle, film and video - with an emphasis on projects that enlisted the active participation of the public in their development. Education programming (artists onSITE and CoTA) intertwined the working processes of the artists selected for inSITE2000 with neighborhoods, schools, and cultural institutions throughout the region. Planning for inSITE-2005 is underway.

Mainly Mozart

www.mainlymozart.org/



Since May 1992, when the first concert was performed in a private home in Tijuana, **Mozart Binacional** has contributed to the cultural, economic and educational ties between San Diego and Baja California. The Mainly Mozart Guild in Tijuana succeeded in securing the Centro Cultural as a venue in 1993, and in adding the Catedral de Guadalupe the following year. Since that time, concerts have been performed in Mexicali, Ensenada, Rosarito, Mazatlán and Tecate as well. In addition to the summer festival, Mainly Mozart Spotlight Series concerts by some of the most acclaimed chamber ensembles in the world are produced in many of the same venues. In 2004, the Women of Mainly Mozart Spotlight Series features ensembles composed of musi-

cians from the Mainly Mozart family of artists. In an effort to promote greater cross-cultural exchange, Mainly Mozart's "Mingle in Mexico" provides San Diego audiences the opportunity to enjoy the Mainly Mozart experience in Tijuana.

Mozart Iluminado is the non-profit's Spanish-language program presented to 10,000 children in Tijuana by Mainly Mozart's Mexican actors to introduce elementary school students to the life and music of Mozart. Additionally, Mainly Mozart's program for top students in the youth orchestras of Baja California presents master classes by the internationally renowned artists who visit the San Diego area.

Building A Common Future: Promoting Binational Civic Participation and Building Social Capital in the San Diego–Tijuana Region

The San Diego-Tijuana region has many shared assets. While not immune to economic challenges, both communities have relatively low levels of unemployment compared to other metropolitan areas in North America. According to the 2000 Census, San Diego's poverty rate (12%) was below the California state average. The region is also strategically located next to one of the fastest growing consumer markets in North America—Southern California—and is within close proximity to the ports of Los Angeles-Long Beach and Ensenada to facilitate exports to Asia and beyond. Additionally, the region boasts fine educational institutions, recreational options, open space and a quality of life that is unmatched.

Tijuana, for its part, offers the region many key assets including an abundant pool of competitively priced and skilled labor, affordable housing (relative to San Diego), culturally competent and affordable health care (again, relative to San Diego), close proximity and accessibility to the port of Ensenada, and an airport with daily flights to all major cities in the Republic of Mexico and a critical mass of multi-national corporations with a manufacturing/assembly operation presence. Thanks, in part, to Tijuana's strategic advantages and proximity to San Diego, Sony came to this region in the early 1970s and is now one of San Diego's largest private employers, employing 3,500 people locally with another 4,500 professional and line workers in Tijuana.³³ Thanks to Tijuana's proximity to San Diego there are now several other companies that have a local San Diego presence including: Sanyo, Samsung, Kyocera, Altaris Medical Systems, JVC, International Rectifier, Avery-Dennison, Hyundai, and Pioneer Speakers. In the area of tourism, Tijuana's close proximity to San Diego continues to provide visitors with an additional reason to come to our region. Tijuana is now also considered to be among the most prosperous metropolitan regions in Mexico with a thriving arts and cultural climate that is attracting attention among the arts community around the world. Tijuana's civil society, while still nascent, is becoming stronger with over 300 non-profit organizations and a community foundation, *Fundacion Internacional de la Comunidad* (FIC), now serving the entire state of Baja California.

For its part, San Diego is ranked among the most livable cities in the United States. According to the fourth annual Forbes/Milken Institute survey, San Diego was ranked #1 as "the most diversified high-tech economy in the U.S.,"³⁴ San Diego and Boston also tied for third among America's most creative cities (with more than 1 million population). In 2002, San Diego ranked 4th nationally in

terms of net employment growth with a 17.8% rise in overall job gains.³⁵ San Diego's academic institutions, in particular UCSD and SDSU, have provided area employers with a ready pool of skilled workers as well as research that has spawned various locally grown companies in the areas of wireless communications and biotechnology. San Diego is also recognized the world over as a major tourism and convention destination. In 2002 San Diego received over 26.2 million visitors spending in excess of \$5 billion. 52 mega conventions and trade shows were also held in San Diego that year bringing in over 331,000 convention delegates to the region.³⁶

Beyond strategic assets, the private sector in both San Diego and Tijuana are also working together to collectively respond to regional issues such as border delays and the proposed US VISIT program. Here the *San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce* has provided real leadership to educate civic leaders in both San Diego and Tijuana about the potential risks of proceeding forward with a land border-based visa exit program without adequate funding and infrastructure. Civic organizations are also weighing in on issues related to energy security with the recent construction of a gas powered plant in Mexicali and the proposed plans for liquefied natural gas facilities near Ensenada. Here *Tijuana Trabaja* has provided leadership in highlighting the need for greater community dialogue on binational issues related to natural gas.

The level of civic engagement between San Diego-Tijuana has also been enhanced thanks to the work of the *San Diego Dialogue* over the past decade, particularly on the issue of border crossing delays. Significant strides have also been made by the *San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)* to convene key policymakers through its *Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO)* on a wide range of cross-border issues related to transportation infrastructure, border crossings, health, and the environment. *Sign On San Diego* and Tijuana's daily newspaper *Frontera* are also helping to improve the level of cross-border news and information through an innovative content sharing initiative aimed at improving outreach to the region's trans-border community.

Collaboration has also begun between the County of San Diego, the Municipality of Tijuana and their corresponding environmental agencies, including the U.S. EPA, specific to emergency planning and response for the San Diego-Tijuana border region, and there are future plans to include the collaboration of the non govern-

³³ *San Diego Business Journal*, The Lists, 2004, pages 130, 139, 142

³⁴ Morgan, Neil, "Fleeting chorus sings city's 'Finest' praises," *San Diego Union Tribune*, June 7, 2002

³⁵ Bureau of Labor Statistics, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, 2003.

³⁶ San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau. 2004.

mental sector specific to community responses for specific emergencies or crisis (e.g. chemical spill, bio-terrorism attack, or an earthquake).

While San Diego and Tijuana have many collective assets, all too often, the communities treat each other as distant neighbors. This is especially true since 9/11 as border delays, heightened security concerns, and increased binational tensions over U.S. immigration policy have increased the divisions between our two neighboring communities.

Because the region's binational issues are increasingly becoming intertwined, there is a critical need to have state and local governments and the non governmental sector from both sides of the border working together. If the San Diego-Tijuana Region is to be successful in strengthening its social capital, there are several critical ingredients.

Prejudices and perceptions must be overcome: As important as trans-border issues have become in the San Diego-Tijuana border region, prejudices and false perceptions of the border continue to impose artificial barriers that divide our communities and make binational collaboration more difficult. More often than not, there is a tendency among San Diegans to focus only on the problems of the border such as drug trafficking, illegal migration, public safety concerns of traveling in the region and trans-boundary health and environmental issue, as opposed to the positive strides that are being made by our two communities. On one hand, because of the perceived "fear factor," the majority of San Diegans rarely go across the border to Mexico. On the other hand, since 9/11 a growing number of Tijuans are increasingly viewing their proximity to San Diego with apprehension and growing concerns over excessive border delays. If progress is to be made, such prejudices and perceptions must be overcome.

Beyond the San Diego-Tijuana region, there is an erroneous perception in our respective capitals (Washington, D.C. and Mexico City), and among some major funders, that our border region is somewhat unique and privileged given its lower unemployment rate and incidence of poverty relative to other border sister cities along the U.S.-Mexico border. While it is true that in general terms the indices of unemployment and poverty are much higher in Texas border counties, what is often overlooked are the growing pockets of urban poverty across San Diego County in mostly Mexican migrant communities as well as the prevalence of squatter communities in Eastern and Southern Tijuana, again, attributed to migration from regions of extreme poverty in Central and Southern Mexico.

Cross-cultural human connectors bridge the gap: To overcome the existing divisions, cultural and language barriers must be overcome and, here, bilingual, bicultural individuals serving as cross-cultural connectors are becoming vital. Yet, today the number of

cross-cultural "connectors" in positions of civic leadership in the San Diego-Tijuana region remains limited. Here an investment needs to be made in promoting emerging new leaders who understand the uniqueness of the binational region and who can think across cultures and political boundaries.

While there are several important business, academic, governmental, and non profit organizations in San Diego County which serve as cultural interpreters today, the demands for culturally competent services in the areas of health, human services, education and the environment is also growing exponentially. And the fact remains that today across San Diego County linguistically and culturally competent social service providers remain in short supply as evidenced by a recent survey taken by ICF of migrant serving non-profits in San Diego County. Heightened security concerns on the border make the need for these cultural interpreters even more pertinent.

Cross-border civic ties need to be strengthened:

All too often the ties that bind San Diego and Tijuana are highly reliant on inter-personal relationships between elected officials and civic leaders interested and engaged in cross-border issues. While this is the current reality along the San Diego-Tijuana border, there is a need to further strengthen the institutional ties among the various local/regional governmental and civic organizations to ensure that relations between our two communities remain strong and vibrant. As we have witnessed over the past decade, political tides can change, local priorities can shift and local border champions can go or pass away. If we are to promote a stronger binational civil society in the San Diego-Tijuana region, institutions need to view themselves as part of a larger binational region that is highly inter-twinned and inter-dependent in order to insure that adequate financial and human resources as well as political capital is proportionally invested in the border region.

Greater sensitivity to the plight of the poor is needed. San Diego and Tijuana are prosperous communities with tremendous opportunity. Yet, there are growing pockets of poverty in both communities that are, in part, attributed to the region's dependency on migrant labor from regions of extreme poverty from the mainland of Mexico. If the San Diego-Tijuana region is to maintain its competitive edge and remain a livable community, it is critical that greater attention be placed on the plight of the poor. Increased charitable giving, volunteerism and public policy aimed at easing the burden of the region's underclass should be a focus for local civic leaders and businesses. Key issues that need to be grappled with include more affordable housing and living wages to decrease the number of the working poor.

Greater binational collaboration among non-profits is needed. As illustrated in this report, several existing non-profits in the region are already providing leadership and showing the way on how to make effective cross-border collaborations work. However, there

is a growing need for more collaborations on common issues of concern particularly on issues of education and health for the region's growing Mexican transnational communities. Also, there is a greater need for non-profit organizations to work across specific disciplines and get out of their traditional "stove pipes". As ICF's survey of migrant serving non-profits in San Diego County shows, there is an interest in such collaboration but, because of the current demands placed on most agencies, they are limited in both funding and staff to facilitate such alliances or partnerships.

Emerging opportunities also exist for US service providers to partner or align themselves with Baja California-based non-profits or those based in other Mexican states to provide skilled professionals with experience in addressing specific migrant needs. Curiously few Mexican non-profit professionals are currently taking advantage of the opportunities afforded them under NAFTA to obtain professional services or TN visas to procure services in the United States. Still, the TN visa has been restricted to a mere 5,500 people a year however this quota was due to be phased out effective January 1, 2004.³⁷

Transnational communities necessitate greater inter-jurisdictional cooperation. Just as there is a need for greater binational collaboration among non-profits, it is critical that municipal agencies throughout San Diego County and adjoining jurisdictions (Riverside, Orange, and Imperial Counties) share lessons learned and best practices on the unique needs of transnational migrant communities in their jurisdictions. Similar collaborations can also be invaluable between Tijuana municipal officials and those in other parts of Baja California (e.g. Mexicali, Rosarito, Tecate and Ensenada.). In the case of the Oaxaqueno and Mixteco communities, there is a compelling need for the educators, social service and health professionals serving Oceanside, Vista, San Marcos and Carlsbad to work more closely together as well as with other Southern California communities on common issues and challenges that they are confronting in addressing transnational migrant worker issues and needs. Here expanded binational sister city relationships can prove fruitful. In the case of Oceanside, a sister city relationship exists with Ensenada but little has been done to further this institutional relationship. While this is so, Oceanside has much that it can learn from the work of Ensenada-based non-profits and local agencies in addressing migrant worker needs in the San Quintin Valley.

Investment in migrant education and health care needs is critical. To address economic and social inequalities in the San Diego-Tijuana region, investments must be made in improving the quality of education and health care options for migrant populations. Today, a growing number of migrant workers and their families in

both San Diego and Tijuana originate from rural communities in extreme poverty, particularly the states of Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guerrero, Michoacan and Jalisco. As such, education based non profits in both San Diego and Tijuana are challenged by the constant movement of migrant youth as well as keeping them in school. Health related non profits face increasing demands to address many diseases and ailments that would otherwise be very preventable with effective health education. Here opportunities exist for San Diego and Baja California based groups to work in collaboration with non profits in migrant sending regions to undertake expanded family-oriented "cross-border case work" with a particular focus on parental education and health education to address the unique cultural and language needs of the region's transnational community.

Promote opportunities for cross-border trade, commerce, tourism and cultural exchange with migrant sending communities.

A unique opportunity exists to promote expanded trade, tourism and cultural exchange with the migrant sending communities of the San Diego-Tijuana region. Not only will strengthened ties with these communities help local civic leaders better appreciate the unique needs of the region's migrant workers and their families, but expanded economic development and tourism opportunities will, over the long run, decrease the compelling need for would-be migrants to leave their homes in the first place. In this sense, Carlsbad, Vista and San Marcos would be wise to consider establishing sister city relationships with communities in Oaxaca, Jalisco and Michoacan.

Philanthropy plays a critical role in addressing unmet border challenges and needs. Whether one is a regional funder or individual donor, the growing socio-economic pressures in the border region necessitate taking a harder look at how one can make a difference, particularly in the San Diego-Baja California region where the needs are so great. While the need for cross-border collaboration is growing, so too is the need for expanded philanthropy among the region's funders--including foundations (community, corporate, family), corporations, government and individuals--in addressing the region's emerging challenges and opportunities.

We need to focus on our collective regional assets:

Far too often it is easy to dwell on the wide-ranging problems and challenges of the border as opposed to focusing on our collective assets as a binational region. San Diego and Tijuana are both blessed with an ideal climate, geographical location along the Pacific Ocean, proximity to major port facilities, and a diverse economic base that continues to attract skilled workers from around the world. Each city also has their own unique assets and strengths that complement the relative weaknesses of the other. If

³⁷ The TN NAFTA Visa for "Professionals" is available only to citizens of Mexico and Canada. Under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) a citizen of a NAFTA country may work in a professional occupation in another NAFTA country provided that 1) the profession is on the NAFTA list, 2) the alien possesses the specific criteria for that profession, 3) the prospective position requires someone in that professional capacity and 4) the alien is going to work for a U.S. employer. The spouse and unmarried, minor children of the principal alien are entitled to the derivative status, but they are unable to accept employment in the United States. Aliens entering under this classification are considered non-immigrants. Currently, the United States imposes no limit on TN visas for Canadian professionals but restricts Mexican professionals to 5,500 visas per year. This limit was phased out January 1, 2004.

the collective region is to prosper it is critical that these mutual strengths and weaknesses are better understood by civic leaders promote the San Diego-Baja California region's competitive advantage.

Much more needs to be learned about the San Diego-Tijuana Border:

The U.S.-Mexico Border is the front line where the impacts of globalization and human migration collide along the geo-political fault line of the industrialized and developing world, and nowhere else on earth are the contrasts and contradictions of the two worlds so great as along the San Diego-Tijuana border. In this sense, the San Diego-Tijuana border region is a living laboratory for research on issues of urban poverty, migrant health and education, and class and socio-economic differences arising from growing levels of economic disparity.

The San Diego-Tijuana region is also blessed with a number of important academic and research institutions that are making significant contributions to increasing the collective knowledge and understanding of our border region including: ***San Diego State University's (SDSU) Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias; the University of California, San Diego's (UCSD) Center for U.S.-Mexico Studies; the University of San Diego's Trans-Border Institute and California State University, San Marcos's Border Pedagogy Literacy Institute, the Universidad Iberoamericana and the Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF).*** Collectively these institutions are undertaking research and initiating a wide range of border specific programs and initiatives in the areas of urban and regional planning, education, health, and the environment, and more needs to be done to support these programs through increased funding.

Benchmarking is critical:

In November 2000 the **San Diego Dialogue** released their study entitled "The Global Engagement of San Diego-Baja California" that provided a benchmark for the current state of our border region as well as recommendations for future binational civic engagement. The events of September 11th changed some of the underlying assumptions in the report but not its overall vision. As the San Diego-Tijuana border region continues to grow, so does the need to measure binational progress specific to the level of civic engagement, job creation, and the quality of life measured in the areas of education, the environment, health & human services, and arts and culture. Here it is recommended that a "*State of the San Diego-Baja California Border Region*" be undertaken every five years with the next comprehensive survey released by Fall of 2005.³⁵

³⁵ San Diego State University's IRSC has already started a study of quality of life in the San Diego-Tijuana Region. See <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~irsc/research.htm> for more detail.

Taking the First Step: A Collective Binational Call for Civic Action



Blurred Borders is intended to highlight critical issues and solutions in an effort to increase the level of cross border civic participation in the San Diego-Tijuana border region during the coming decade. The report has also sought to emphasize the growing inter-dependencies between San Diego and Tijuana as we share the same air, water, children and a common destiny. As the report has highlighted, numerous collaborative efforts are now underway, and many organizations in the private, public and non-governmental sector are actively engaged in working to strengthen the ties that bind San Diego and Tijuana. Still more must be done to strengthen the social capital in our binational region. There are many ways that one can get involved.



- **Invest in binational social change:** Contribute to local non profits and charitable causes in the San Diego-Tijuana region addressing migrant needs as well as greater cross-border collaboration in the areas of education, health, human services, urban planning, the environment and arts and culture. For donors wishing to support charitable causes in Tijuana and Baja California, the International Community Foundation is positioned to help.

- **Invest in future binational leaders and the region's cross-cultural connectors:** Support binational leadership programs aimed at shaping the region's future leaders as well as making existing civic leaders more sensitive to the importance of the border and trans-boundary issues.

- **Learn about the border and migrant issues:** Take a border tour, learn about the region's emerging issues. Learn about the growing challenges of migrant workers and their families particularly in the areas of health and education. Support research that will contribute to expanded knowledge about the border region in which we live. Get involved with the San Diego-Tijuana Sister City Society.

- **Look beyond the immediate border:** Assist migrant sending regions with ties to San Diego as a way to mitigate education, health and community development related issues here locally.

- **Help expand cross-border non-profit collaboration:** Support conferences, dialogues and collaborative exchanges between non-profits in San Diego and Tijuana as well as charities in Mexico's migrant sending regions with the strongest ties to San Diego-Tijuana, such as Oaxaca and Jalisco.



- **Increase the level of attention of our elected officials on border related issues:** Write letters and visit with your elected officials on border-related issues such as urban and regional planning, education, health, human services and the environment.

- **Expand the level of elder and youth engagement in border related issues.** Our elders have collective wisdom and now are now living longer. They have much expertise to offer non profits on both sides of the border. Similarly, our youth are our future. More can be done to invest in youth opportunities that will promote greater cross-border learning and cultural exchange between students of the region.



- **Visit Tijuana:** Tijuana and the surrounding communities of Baja California offers San Diego many strategic assets including a competitive workforce, world-class manufacturing operations, cultural and tourist attractions, a convenient airport for many Latin destinations, a rich biodiversity of binational importance and, for a growing number of San Diegans, affordable housing and health care options.

Top Center: ICF donors and San Diego Grantmakers members relaxing in a Tijuana restaurant after border tour.

Top Left: Esperanza volunteers involved in home building in Tijuana.
Top Right: ICF donors Loch and Claire Crane assisting Tijuana family to re-build home that had been burned down. The Cranes worked through ICF to fund the home rebuilding project through Project Mercy and then spent time in Tijuana providing additional "sweat" equity.

Bottom: ICF donor Leon Reinhart, donor Patrick Lannan and David Ungerleider of the Universidad Ibero Americana at the inauguration of the Loyola Public Library at Playas de Tijuana.

San Diego and Tijuana At a Glance

Demographics

	San Diego	Tijuana
Population	City (1,255,742 in 2002); County (2,918,254 in 2002)	1,292,993 (official)
Population Growth Rate	2.8%	4.9%
Median Age	33 years in 2000	24.8 years in 2000
Per Capita Income	\$33,883 in 2001	\$9,812 (on a purchase price parity basis)
Poverty Rate	12.4% (23.2% in Rainbow to 1.5% in Hidden Meadows) in 1999	18.4% in 2000 (those earning equivalent of 2 minimum wage or less)

Economy

	San Diego	Tijuana
Gross Regional Product (GRP)	\$126.2 billion in 2002	\$10.1 billion in 2002
Unemployment Rate	4.3% in 2002	0.95% in 2000
Leading Industries	Life sciences, defense, tourism, trade, high-tech	Trade, Services, Electronics, Tourism and some agriculture (less than 1% of total GRP).
Leading private employers	Qualcomm, SAIC, Sempra Energy, Sony, Kyocera, Pfizer Global Research & Development, Callaway Golf, Sharp Healthcare, Scripps Healthcare	Sony, Sanyo, Kyocera, Hitachi, Mashushita, Samsung, Hyundai, Mattel, Honeywell, Pioneer Speakers, Maxell, Douglas Furniture, International Rectifier

Government Spending

	San Diego	Tijuana
County/Municipal Government	US\$1,554,540,000 in 2002-2003	1,964,556,800 pesos in 2002 (US\$179.5 million) ¹
Education	\$26,896,000 in 2002-2003	
Health	\$264,530,000 in 2002-2003	33,972,000 pesos in 2002 (US\$3.1 million) ²

¹Tijuana does not have a government entity directly in charge of education. Human Development Secretariat is responsible for some educational programs. The Secretariat's total budget for 2002 was 2,335,800 pesos.

²Does not include expenditure for Baja California's Human Development Secretariat, which is responsible for some health programs.

Land Use/Regional Planning

	San Diego	Tijuana
Population Density	259/km ² in 2000 census	1,114/km ²
Urban Growth Rate	Will consume all land zoned for development by 2018	2.5 Hectares/day (will consume most ecologically sensitive and agricultural land by 2025)
Median Home Price	\$410,000	\$35,000. ³

³Estimate based on Tijuana classified advertisements, February 2004.

Sources: Data for San Diego derived from San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation's San Diego Book of Facts, last updated May 2003, available (last accessed 3/5/04) at(<http://www.signonsandiego.com/bookoffacts/2003/index.html>), and US Census 2000 (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06073.html>). Data for Tijuana derived from INEGI (National Statistics, Geography and Information Institute), 2001, Hispanic Marketing Council website (last accessed on 3/6/04), <http://www.sandiegoadclub.com/hispanic.html>, and the Municipality of Tijuana government annual report, 2003.

Definitions

Canasta Basica: Defined by the Mexican Central Bank (Banco de Mexico) as the cost of basic good and services for the average Mexican based on 80 essential items. A December 2000 hearing of the Mexican Senate put the cost of the official canasta basica at approximately \$3,300 Mexican Pesos (US\$330/month).

Culturally Competent Care: Health and human services are offered and delivered in a way that are sensitive to the language, culture and traditions of non-native immigrants, migrants and ethnic minorities with the goal of minimizing or eliminating long standing disparities in the health status of people with diverse racial, ethnic or cultural backgrounds.

Cultural Connectors: Individuals who have a deep understanding of two different cultures and are able to work as the bridge between these two cultures and people.

Hometown Associations (HTAs): Grassroots organizations that bring together Mexican born immigrants now living in the United States but hailing from the same villages, town or regions in Mexico. Today, there are over 1,500 HTAs in the United States with a growing number in Southern California.

Maquiladora: The term comes from the Spanish word maquila, which in colonial Mexico was the charge that millers collected for processing grain. Today, a maquiladora is an operation used for the production of goods based on the temporary importation of raw materials and equipment for transformation in Mexico with subsequent export to foreign markets including the United States.

Migrant Sending Regions: Refers to those regions in Mexico of extreme poverty from where the majority of migrants originate. In San Diego County, over 50% of all migrants came from just five Mexican states, Oaxaca, Guerrero, Jalisco, Michoacan and Baja California. Of these, all but one (Baja California) are considered migrant sending states. Baja California is a major migrant receiving state although many migrants arriving there ultimately do end up in the United States.

Poverty Line--Mexico: The level at which family income exceeds twice the cost of the basic food basket (Canasta Basica):

- Poverty: Family income is less than twice the cost of the basic food basket.
- Extreme Poverty: Based on the level of family income that is less than the Canasta Basica (See definition above).

Note: There are over 40 million Mexicans living on less than US\$2/day, a key factor driving human migration to the San Diego-Tijuana region.

SENTRI: The acronym for the Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection, a pre-screened inspection program currently in use by approximately 50,000 individuals in the San Diego-Tijuana border region. Along the southern border with Mexico, the SENTRI program is in operation at San Ysidro, Otay Mesa and El Paso, Texas ports of entry.

Social Capital: The degree to which a community or society collaborates and cooperates (through such mechanisms as networks, shared trust, norms and values) to achieve mutual benefits. There are many definitions and discussions about social capital, for more information see Robert D. Putnam's *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (Simon & Schuster Publishing, 2000).

Trans-Border Residents: For the purposes of this study, trans-border residents are defined as individuals of U.S. or Mexican citizenship or residency that live in either San Diego or Baja California and that cross the international border to work, attend school, shop or visit friends and family on a regular and periodic basis. (See page 9 for a detailed description).

Transboundary Impact: A health, environmental or socio-economic impact that has cross-border consequences across international or political boundaries. While some transboundary impacts are regional, as in San Diego-Tijuana, others can be more far reaching as is the case with the destruction or disruption of critical habitats for migratory bird species that come from to this region from as far away as Canada.

Transnational Residents: Immigrants/migrants in the United States with sustained two-way contacts and links to friends, family and relatives in their place of origin. (See page 12 for a detailed description).

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Above:

*Satellite image of the San Diego-Tijuana region
courtesy of the Regional Workbench Consortium (RWBC),
University of California, San Diego (UCSD).*

Back Cover:

Mural, Centro Cultural, Tijuana (CECUT)

Frost Cover:

*Border fence dividing the United States and Mexico at
Playas de Tijuana and Imperial Beach.*

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