



Facts and figures

Dominican migration

- In the year 2000 the Dominican population in the United States numbered around one million people including 91,000 of irregular migration status (8.7%).
- The 2000 Census reveals that most of the Dominican population living in the United States at that time was female (53.8%). These women earned on average 25% less than Dominican men. The average annual income of a Dominican woman in the New York area was US \$11,371, while that of a Dominican man was US \$15,139.
- The case study community of Las Placetas, receives the second largest percentage of remittances per capita in the Dominican Republic.
- Migration patterns between the community of Las Placetas and the United States are created by and through transnational networks of extended families. Migratory processes through family networks are often led by the male migrating first; however, migration for purposes of family reunification is also substantially promoted by women.
- Wives of migrant men who remain in the Dominican Republic are required to manage their households, perform all domestic chores, take in new family members who move in as a result of migration (in-laws, siblings-in-law, other relatives of the male migrant in vulnerable situations), attend to subsistence agriculture or other income-generating activities, and participate actively in social and community life.
- Dominican women in New York typically work as seamstresses, babysitters, cooks, teachers, industrial workers, and domestic employees. In addition, many become domestic employees in relatives' homes, where the remuneration is a token gesture (between US\$150 to 300 a month).

Remittances

- The Dominican Republic received US \$ 3.1 billion in 2008, which represents 9.3% of its GDP.
- The reported remittances sent by respondents ranged from US \$50-\$500 a month, with the majority being between US \$100-200.
- About 71% of adult Dominican immigrants in the US send remittances on a regular basis. The majority of wives that receive remittances do not participate in organizational processes within the community, as they are frightened of their husbands' reaction to their breaking away from the traditional domestic role.
- Family remittances have weak development potential, since the regular amounts received barely cover the basic needs of the family.
- In Las Placetas, remittances have had little impact on the generation of sustainable livelihoods, savings and business creation, or increasing agricultural production.
- Remittances are being used to pay for education, health and retirement benefits, thus compensating for existing weaknesses in the local social security system and for poor or non-existent public policies for children and ageing populations.

Recommendations

- Strengthen institutional capacities of existing groups such as the Mothers' Club (*Club de Madres*) through providing skills training on project management, offering credits, and increasing women's self esteem through empowerment programmes.
- Promote collective remittances. The transnational community and organizations abroad can collaborate directly with local communities to establish a solid and trustworthy relationship that will facilitate investment.
- Strengthen agricultural production in coffee and citrus growing areas which have development potential for the community. This would entail reviving defunct growers associations and coordinating capacity building with institutions such as Codocafé and INFOTEP that can assist with the cultivation of organic produce and medicinal plants as marketing of the products.
- Develop programmes and projects for female remittance recipients that contribute to transforming patriarchal cultural patterns and the subordination of women.
- Create sustainable projects that involve young people in Las Placetas through establishing agreements with the Secretary of Education and schools in order to develop technical courses in: agricultural sustainability, electrical training, renewable energy, ecotourism, management of flower and plant nurseries, and water management.
- Establish links with the transnational community of Las Placetas in the US to help implement local development projects in the community of origin.
- Develop municipal and state government agreements to take up infrastructural projects for the repair and maintenance of the main highway.

