



SYSTEMATIZATION OF BEST PRACTICES
**FILTER HOTELS IN MEXICO,
COVID-19 RESPONSE**



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Head of Mission: Dana Graber Ladek

Project Coordinator: Jeremy Michael Joseph Mac Gillivray

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Address: México, DF, Col. Barrio de Santa Catarina, Francisco Sosa #267

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Email: iommexico@iom.int

Contact email: kmhubregional@iom.int

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Coordinator: Vanesa Vaca, Knowledge Management Regional Office

Regional Office for Central America, North America, and the Caribbean

Email: kmhubregional@iom.int

Web site: <https://kmhub.iom.int/es>

ABBREVIATIONS

CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, United States of America
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services) United States of America
INM	National Migration Institute of Mexico (by its Spanish initials Instituto Nacional de Migración de México)
MPP	Migrant Protection Protocol
NFI	Non-Food Items
ODS	Sustainable Development Objectives
OIM	International Organization for Migration
WOFP	World Organization for Peace
WHP	World Health Organization
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
CBI	Cash Based Intervention
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

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BEST PRACTICE SUMMARY

Best Practice	Filter Hotel
Description	<p>During the COVID-19 pandemic, shelters for migrants in the communities of Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez limited their capacity to contain the contagion, leaving newly arrived migrants without accommodation options and exposing them to additional situations of vulnerability and risks. To mitigate these risks, IOM Mexico decided to implement the Filter Hotel, a space for quarantining persons under humane conditions. Their actions focused on the mapping, identifying, and adapting hotels/motels for selecting and establishing these Filter Hotels and providing integrated assistance for the migrant population, which after the quarantine were referred to as community hostels. The Filter Hotels provided comprehensive assistance to the beneficiary populations in coordination with strategic partners. After nearly completing a year of operations, filter hotels have provided temporary accommodation, food and health services, protection, and psychosocial support to more than 3,000 migrants.</p>
Objective	<p>Providing safe spaces to newly arrived migrants to Ciudad Juárez and Tijuana, in order to mitigate the COVID-19 spread in the community's migrant care shelters.</p>
Location	<p>Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez, México.</p>
Beneficiaries	<p>Migrant populations and recently arrived migrants to Ciudad Juárez and Tijuana in Mexico.</p>


MAIN ACTIONS

1.



Mapping and identification of existing spaces for Filter Hotels.

2.



Identification of personnel for the Filter Hotels.

3.



Partnerships with local government, federal government, private sector, and civil society.

INTRODUCTION

The Best Practices were developed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in México, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The mission implemented and operated a series of Filter Hotels, initiating the operations in 2020 first quarter, in the border communities of Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez. This project had more than forty stakeholders in each city or location (see [Annex 1](#)). The main stakeholders were the Federal, State and Municipal Government of Mexico, United Nations agencies, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, international agencies, academia, and the private sector. It was definitely a complicated mix of stakeholders, requiring significant coordination.

The initiative of Filter Hotels was to provide accommodation to migrant populations to quarantine for fourteen days (as

recommended by the Ministry of Health), to facilitate their access to existing shelters for migrants in Tijuana or Ciudad Juárez. Since this intervention would reduce and prevent community contagion in shelters while preventing newly arrived migrants from ending up as homeless, living in the streets. Additionally, it promoted the peaceful coexistence with host communities, which helped prevent xenophobia and discrimination associated with migration and the spread of COVID-19.

The documentation of this experience was made possible thanks to the support of Alex Rigol, Lujano Issac, Jeremy Michael Joseph Mac Gillivray, Rosa Mani, María José Juárez, Valeria Buelna and Dr. Pysche Calderón from IOM Mexico Office.

CONTEXT

The first coronavirus case was detected in Mexico on 28 February 2020, with a fast increase in the number of contagions from this date onward. To contain the spread of the COVID-19, the Mexican government-imposed set of measures, included items such as: physical distancing, lockdowns, temporary closure of businesses and non-essential services. In addition, on 21 March 2020, the border with the United States was temporarily closed, thus exacerbating the situation.

Despite the mobility restrictions implemented to contain the pandemic, Ciudad Juárez and Tijuana continued receiving significant migratory flows¹. Under the Migrant Protection Protocol (MPP)² and Title 42³, there continued to be many forced returns⁴ to Mexican

border communities, as well migrants arriving at these cities aiming to cross the border into the United States. In addition, due to the economic impact of the pandemic, some migrants lost access to housing, according to the Displacement Tracing Matrix (DTM)⁵, and more than half of migrants in Ciudad Juárez were unemployed or employed in temporary jobs in early 2020.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, many of the migrant shelters in both cities applied a closed-door policy and/or significantly reduced their occupation. Exposing the newly arrived migrants to vulnerable and risky situations, as they found themselves with no place to reside or being forced into uncomfortable quarantine⁶ situations.

¹ IOM. 2020. DTM Displacement Tracing Matrix. Población bajo los Protocolos de Protección a Migrantes en Ciudad Juárez.

² Also known as “Stay in Mexico” program, it is a program of the United States government for asylum seekers in this country, on the Mexican border, who must wait for the resolution of their cases in Mexican territory. Source: <https://www.iom.int/news/un-agencies-begin-registering-people-affected-mpp-program-matamoros>

³ In March 2020, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a regulation to implement a health law section 265 of Code title 42 that allows the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suspend the “introduction” to the U.S. of people from certain countries when it believes that there is a serious danger of introducing a contagious disease into the U.S.HHS, 2020. Order Suspending the Right to introduce certain persons from countries where quarantinable communicable disease exist. More information in this [link](#).

⁴ IOM defines forced return as: “The act of returning an individual, against his or her will, to the country of origin, transit or to a third country that agrees to receive the person, generally carried out on the basis of an administrative or judicial act or decision”. OIM. 2019. Glossary on Migration. Pag. 77.

⁵ The Displacement Tracing Matrix collects and analyses data to disseminate critical information at various levels on the mobility, vulnerabilities and needs of displaced and mobile populations, enabling decision makers and response teams to provide better context-specific assistance to these populations. For more information visit: <https://displacement.iom.int>

⁶ Quarantine consists of restricting the movement of healthy people who may have been exposed to the virus, but are not sick, to prevent the spread in communities. In most countries, a minimum 14-day quarantine has been established to contain the spread of COVID-19. World Health Organization (WHO). COVID-19 Glossary on Outbreaks and Epidemics. Page 10.

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kmhubregional@iom.int

