

Mission UpReach Newsletter

Root causes of illegal immigration from the Northern Triangle

By: Phil Waldron
CEO, Mission UpReach

On June 10th, 2021, the NY Post published an article saying this: “The president of Guatemala says he places blame for the US’ border crisis on President Biden and the Democrats’ “lukewarm” rhetoric on illegal immigration — adding that he urged Vice President Kamala Harris during their meeting to impose harsher penalties on human smuggling. Guatemala President Giammattei’s remarks came as US Customs and Border Protection announced Wednesday that 180,034 migrants were encountered while trying to cross the border with Mexico in May. Insisting that the border was not facing a crisis, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said in early March that the problems the agency faced should be blamed on the previous administration. The data, however, overwhelmingly shows that migrants were flooding the border because they believed Biden would welcome them with open arms.”

In April the Brookings Institute published an article entitled, “4 Things the Biden Administration Should Pay Attention to with the Border Crisis.” In the article one of the authors states, “U.S. policy should promote economic growth in Central America, including infrastructure to



catalyze rural economies and policies to promote entrepreneurship in cities. Only when there is opportunity in home communities will the U.S. see a reduction in cycles of migration.” Both articles reflect some clarion truths that Mission UpReach has been talking about for years. We can do the best job possible of teaching young men and women about Jesus and helping them get their education, but if we cannot offer them access to economic opportunity it is often for naught. If the border appears to be “wide open,” they will always be drawn toward the US. In their defense, it seems logical to anyone here that is living in abject poverty that migrating north to the US, even though it is dangerous, expensive, and full of risk, is the best way to pay for a house and a car and other things that Americans

consider basic necessities and yet are in short supply for the average person in Central America.

Anecdotally, we are currently experiencing a labor shortage here in Honduras. Take for instance, our construction projects at the Moses Project that involve finishing our chicken processing plant and building a rendering plant for the viscera and other organic waste that it produces. We need a crew of 35 men working to meet our deadlines, but the best we can do is half that. And our story is not unique. We are hearing the same thing throughout our community.

The US Government needs to close the “wide open” border. It is a disastrous policy to follow for many reasons. If the US Government

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MUR Employee Spotlight



Meet **Katya Vanessa Lagos.**

She's 23 years old and was born and raised in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Katya graduated from Zamorano University in 2019 with a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Sciences and Production.

Katya interned with Alltech® testing their nutritional technology in dairy cattle, which helped her discover her passion for animal science and animal nutrition. She enjoys using her skills to contribute to the exciting challenges that agriculture presents today, especially in Honduras. After graduation, Katya started working with the United Nations in Honduras on projects based on improving the quality of life of Honduran citizens who work in agriculture. Currently at Mission UpReach she is the Tilapia Unit Supervisor at the Moses Project. Katya says, "I'm really thankful for the opportunity to be a part of this great team. I am impressed with the commitment, dedication and hard work that all my coworkers show each day with the goal of improving opportunities in our community."

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truly wants to help the poor and disenfranchised in Central America, they should follow the advice of people like Robert Lupton, author of Toxic Charity, who said, "I can't stress it enough: business growth is key to moving the poverty needle."

We recognize that the crisis and its underlying causes is a complex and multi-faceted issue. However, people on the ground here and many, many experts in the US recognize that shutting down the open border, strengthening the migrant worker visa program, and utilizing multi-national nonprofits as in-country partners to stimulate economic growth in the Northern Triangle are three relatively straight forward policies that could be implemented to make an immediate and lasting improvement to the situation. At present, the efforts by



our current Administration are focused on funneling aid to the Governments in the region. Unfortunately, precedent and statistics prove that Foreign Aid channeled through Governments of third world economies feed dependency

and corruption. If you want to read the truth by informed experts, you should check out this extract written by Moosa Elayah at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17550912.2015.1124519> or even better get a copy of Dambisa Moyo's book, Dead Aid.

I would encourage you to write your congressman or congresswoman and urge them to read these same articles requesting that they advocate for better laws and policies on immigration at our southern border. And don't forget to pray for us as we work towards helping to grow the economy in our region through our sustainable efforts.

Medicines to the most needy

As we mentioned in previous newsletters, we decided to use the remaining donated funds for hurricane relief to assist as many as possible with much needed medications, especially because we haven't been able to conduct our usual village medical clinics. We spent \$25,000 and because we got the wholesale price, it is equivalent to around \$40,000 dollars in basic medications. We selected five clinics in communities in which we are working to be the recipients of the gift.

It's hard to express in words how much the donations were appreciated. One of the clinics had a pharmacy with only a few dozen items on the shelves. We estimate that the donations per clinic will serve approximately 1000 patients. The economic impact of the pandemic plus the hurricanes has strained the already struggling public health sector. Most of the government funds for the past year have been directed at treating COVID, meaning the clinics are receiving hardly any support.

One clinic director told me with tears in her eyes how sad she

feels when a patient comes for a consult and needs a medication desperately, but the only thing she can do is write a prescription for them to purchase in a public pharmacy. She knows these individuals will likely not fill the prescription due to lack of funds

diabetes drugs because they simply can't afford to purchase them, and the clinics are not receiving supplies from the government. It was our pleasure and privilege to deliver these medications on behalf of those of you who generously donated to the cause.



to do so. People are doing without some of the most basic medications like high blood pressure and

We realize we are so blessed to be stewards of your generosity, and we sincerely thank you for giving.

Fundraising Highlight

Don't forget that in 2021 MUR is working to equip, motivate, and empower our supporters to partner with us in fundraising! So far this year we have raised almost \$2,000 from Facebook Birthday Fundraisers, which are so easy to set up!

If your birthday is in July, don't forget to promote your

Facebook Birthday Fundraiser to benefit the ministries of Mission UpReach!

Or if you want to get creative, check out other fundraising ideas in the toolkit on our website:

<https://missionupreach.org/fundraising-toolkit/>



A note from Donna

Here we are at the beginning of July when we would have normally already hosted 7-8 groups (with another 5-7 remaining for the year). It seems so bizarre not having U.S. visitors. The absence of visiting groups has certainly given me more time personally to focus on other areas of the mission, but at the same time, it has created a severe vacuum of unmet needs that are simply impossible for us to meet without visiting teams. We are excited to announce that we are beginning to book teams for 2022. If you or your church are interested in participating in a short-term mission trip that will greatly impact the needy, please write to me at donna.w@

missionupreach.org.

Phil and I are on the road in the U.S. for the month of July. Our first week will be devoted to caring for Harrison while his in-laws go on vacation. It is an honor and privilege for us to be able to do that. Harrison is very stable and content, thanks to the loving and amazing care he gets from Hayley and her family. We are truly blessed by them. The second week we will be taking care of my mother while my sister travels, another privilege and honor. The following two weeks will be dedicated to traveling in Texas where Phil has numerous speaking engagements. While we have all the Sundays and Wednesdays



booked, we are certainly open to some individual visits or even meeting with elderships or mission committees in and around the areas where we will be traveling. Our travels will take us to Belton, San Angelo, and Camp Wood. Feel free to call us on our U.S. number 706-534-7060 or email me at donna.w@missionupreach.org

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Mission UpReach is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We can assist you to designate MUR in a corporations' matching gifts program, or giving through a United Way campaign, or as you prepare wills for your estate.



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Please contact us:

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Please send all checks, donations and correspondence to this address.

You can correspond directly with Phil and Donna at:

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