**"Building Partnerships for Development
Between Guatemala and the Diaspora"**

June 6 – 7, 2008
Venue: Casa Noj, 7A Calle 12-12, Zona 1. Xela, Guatemala

Workshop Report and Evaluation

The following is a report and internal evaluation of the workshop "Building Partnerships for Development Between Guatemala and the Diaspora", which took place June 6-7, 2008, in Xela, Guatemala. The dual purpose of this report is to share information about this workshop, its participants, methodology and findings; and to assess the workshop in order to apply the lessons of this experience to future workshops. It is intended for multiple audiences, including workshop participants, partners and speakers, as well as organizations and individuals interested in this specific initiative or working on similar transnational or homeland-diaspora activities. The conclusions drawn here integrate the organizers' assessments and participants' feedback shared through written evaluations, the concluding workshop session and various informal discussions held throughout the workshop. It also shares proposals about possible next steps that were discussed at the workshop.

I. BACKGROUND

The workshop "Building Partnerships for Development Between Guatemala and the Diaspora" is part of a broader initiative that the Center of International Migration and Integration (CIMI) is conducting to assist Guatemala and her emigrant communities to develop Guatemala-diaspora partnerships and projects. This overall initiative responds to a request of the Government of Guatemala in 2004 through the Guatemalan Embassy in Israel to help develop policies and approaches strengthening ties between Guatemalan migrants and Guatemala and direct diaspora resources towards Guatemala's long term socio-economic development. The government is particularly interested in learning from the models of Jewish diaspora-Israel partnership, and CIMI draws on this model as well as other cases of transnational partnership.

This was the third in a series of workshops focused on building the capacity of Guatemalan immigrants working with local Guatemalan counterparts to conduct [cooperative] aid and development projects in their towns of origin. The first two workshops took place in July 2007 and March 2008 with Guatemalan immigrant groups in Florida conducting projects to address social and economic problems in their communities of origin. This workshop took place in Guatemala in order to work jointly with the same immigrant participants and their local Guatemalan counterparts. The rationale is that this type of diaspora-homeland or transnational project requires close cooperation between both sides, and that capacity building efforts must

therefore focus on both groups jointly to increase the effectiveness of both their independent and joint operation.

Further reports and details on this initiative and previous workshops are available on CIMI's website at www.cimi.org.il, or upon request.

Partners
CIMI was the lead organizing institution working in partnership with: the Palm Beach Country Chapter of the American Jewish Committee (AJC); the Harriet L. Wilkes Honor College at Florida Atlantic University (FAU); and Hispanics in Philanthropy (HIP), and in close cooperation with the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County and the Government of Guatemala's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. See Appendix A for partner organization details.

II. ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

PLANNING AND PREPARATION
As above, this workshop was the third in a series of capacity building workshops which took place with Guatemalan immigrants in Florida. Participants at the March 2008 workshop agreed that the ideal next step on developing their projects and Guatemala-diaspora efforts was a workshop that would take place in Guatemala with their project counterparts. The June 2008 Xela workshop program built upon their input and the key issues that arose in the course of the first two workshops. The workshop organizers also conducted a preparatory scoping visit to Guatemala in May to meet with local partners and start to identify contact organizations whose areas of interest and expertise were relevant to the projects and issues at hand.

PARTICIPANTS
87 individuals participated in the workshop representing the following groups:

- Guatemalan immigrants in Florida working on diaspora-Guatemala projects;
- The local counterparts to the above mentioned diaspora-Guatemala projects living in Guatemala;
- Representatives from local Guatemalan NGOs involved in areas related to the project sectors;
- Governmental representatives from the Guatemalan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Guatemalan congress, and departmental and local representatives;
- Representatives from financial/donor institutions such as Banrural and Hispanics in Philanthropy.

Workshop organizers encouraged participants to come with their project partners (for example the immigrant groups would attend with their local counterparts) to ensure a concrete project focus. Other organizations or governmental representatives who were invited were selected on the basis of their interest or work in the area of migration, and migrant-Guatemala connections; their technical expertise in the project sectors; or their capacity to provide access to financial resources through grants or loans.

It should be noted that the participants independently covered their own expenses to participate in the workshop. In some cases the Guatemalan immigrants obtained funds to cover the travel and accommodation costs of their local counterparts. It should be understood that these are not individuals who have high levels of disposable income. The fact that they participated at their own expense and effort is indicative of the level of commitment that most participants have to the issues facing their communities, and of their hopes and confidence in their projects and this initiative.

METHOD AND CONTENT
The overall purpose was that the workshop would help participants develop skills and "actionable" ideas which they could apply directly to their own work and projects. The workshop also strove to engender a constructive can-do attitude to overcoming obstacles and difficulties they encounter in implementation, and facilitate discussion about a broader vision of Guatemala-diaspora partnerships.

Goals
The expressed workshop goals included:
- Facilitate communication and networking between Guatemalan migrant groups, their project partners, local and international NGOs and local authorities interested in working on joint aid and development projects between Guatemala and Guatemalan migrants abroad, also known as the diaspora.
- Explore and develop a vision for the potential possibilities of Guatemala-diaspora joint projects and partnership.
- Advance current and potential joint Guatemala-diaspora projects through providing a forum and means to develop detailed and practical plans of action which groups can immediately begin to implement.
- Address the impediments and obstacles to implementing joint projects, such as building organizational capacity, identifying and meeting needs for technical expertise, and leveraging financial resources.

The workshop organizers sought to achieve these goals through methods and approaches detailed below. Where relevant commentary is also provided on the implementation or results in the actual workshop.

Workshop program
The workshop consisted of the following main sessions, held over two days:

COSTS AND BENEFITS OF MIGRATION
Facilitated discussion analyzing the various costs and benefits of migration from different stakeholder perspectives (including the migrants, their families and communities, returning migrants, the Government of Guatemala and the US government and host community). (See Appendix B for details of findings in this session).

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VISIONS FOR A GUATEMALA-DIASPORA PARTNERSHIP
Facilitated discussion about participants' ideas of their hopes and vision of Guatemala-Diaspora partnerships. (See Appendix B for details of findings in this session).

WORKING GROUPS: PROJECT PLANNING AND PRESENTATIONS
Participants were divided into working groups according to their projects, with projects that were in the same sector grouped together. Each project group developed detailed project plans. Working groups then shared projects with each other and presented to the entire forum: brief summaries of their projects; key areas of strength and weakness.

DEVELOPING GOVERNMENT MIGRATION POLICIES
Guatemalan governmental representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Congressional National Counsel to the Attention of the Migrant presented current and developing policies.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES: FINANCIAL RESOURCES
      PART I: WORKING WITH DONORS
      PART II: DEVELOPING OUR OWN RESOURCES AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY
This two-part session focused on accessing specific donor resources, the on how to develop internal community-based diaspora and local resources. Representatives from HIP and the Guatemalan development bank *Banrural* shared information about grants/loans available and then consulted individually with groups; other information about funding possibilities was also available. A discussion was then held on developing diaspora resources for development, drawing on the Jewish diaspora-Israel partnership example and other models and focusing on how the Guatemalan community can strengthen its own diaspora resources.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES: TECHNICAL RESOURCES
In this session participants were able to consult with experts in the following areas: return and reintegration; youth, women, culture; economic development, microfinance; agriculture; and applied research.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES: INFRASTRUCTURE, TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY
Participants shared and discussed possible solutions to building trust, mutual confidence, and an infrastructure and mechanisms that ensure responsible and accountable financial management and monitoring of results. (See Appendix B for details of findings in this session).

WORKING GROUPS: IMPLEMENTING DIASPORA-GUATEMALA COOPERATION
Project groups developed 100-day action plans for their projects, determining what steps need to be taken within the next 100 days, with what expected results, who is responsible and according to what timeline.

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSIONS
Participants provided feedback on this workshop and discussed possible next steps for this overall initiative.

Workshop language
The workshop was held in Spanish, with some English-Spanish translation.

Conceptual framework
The key pillars of the conceptual framework of the workshop were:

1. Provide actionable knowledge;
2. Facilitate networking and exchange of ideas and experiences;
3. Contextualize efforts in a broader communal or national vision rather than a strictly local or individual vision, inspiring participants to see the greater potential of their personal efforts.

These are explained below.

1) Actionable knowledge:
The methodological approach to the workshop design was practice-oriented and project-focused. The knowledge shared should be actionable – meaning that participants can immediately apply the theories or experiences shared to their own work and efforts. Multiple methods were employed:

Project Focus
The project served as the focus and prism for the workshop pedagogy/methodology. This allows for the most concrete and actionable results. This was achieved through several means:

Participant selection:
Participants were encouraged to attend on the basis of their current involvement in projects between migrants and Guatemala, and to ensure that at least one representative came from both "sides" – that is, an immigrant and a local Guatemalan.

The Guatemalan immigrant participants coming from the US were building on a foundation of prior as they had attended the two workshops held in Florida in July 2007 and March 2008; this was the first workshop for their local counterparts. Two participants had also attended a 10-day CIMI course in Israel for Latino leaders in the US.

Information in advance about projects and obstacles:
Participants were requested to provide detailed information in advance about their projects and the main obstacles they face (through a written form they were asked to fill out) so that the workshop organizers could identity relevant organizations, experts and resources to help them address these obstacles.

Working groups focused on project and sector:
Several sessions took place in working groups consisting primarily of projects, so that the immigrant and local counterparts could work together on their project. Project groups were also clustered according to common sector areas such as coffee cooperatives; agricultural cooperatives and economic development; social issues around youth, women, culture and identity, etc.

Project Planning and 100 Day Action Plans:
Project planning was approached in two sessions. In the first working group session groups were provided with a written outline to help them plan their projects. At a later session they developed an Action Plan for the next 100 days detailing which actions they planned to take for the next 100 days; who would be responsible; the timeline; the intended results. This allowed each person to leave the workshop knowing his or her precise role and responsibilities

Discussions v. presentations:
The workshop design included relatively few frontal presentations and more discussion, exchange and thinking about application.   Facilitating discussions sought to engage participants in active exchanges, to draw clear connections between the ideas, methods, and groups, and illustrate how their ideas and examples from other models can be applied to their efforts; and to build upon the ideas shared throughout each session of the workshop

Overcoming financial, technical and operational obstacles to project implementation:
The experience of the first two workshops revealed that many of the groups experienced three critical barriers to project implementation: 1) lack of financial resources; 2) insufficient technical know-how or expertise to effectively achieve some of the project goals; and 3) underdeveloped infrastructure or methods to ensure accountability and transparency, as well as facilitate decision-making and planning. A session was therefore devoted to each topic area.   (See Appendix B for details of findings in this session).

2) Networking and exchange of ideas and experience:
An important goal was to facilitate networking and the exchange of ideas and experience. This is intended to offer individuals the opportunity to draw upon the technical expertise and practical experience of others, as well as to create a sense that there is a community of fellow practitioners committed to the same issues and goals. Techniques used included:

- Participants introductions at the beginning of the workshop.
- Working groups were comprised of project-groups which were then grouped with others in the same sector.
- Facilitators encouraged participants to identify which groups had areas of strengths or weaknesses which they could either learn from or offer their own expertise about.
- Semi-structured networking and consultation opportunities were provided through the "Overcoming Obstacles: Technical Resources" session, in which participants could go to stations on key topical areas and consult both with experts working on that area as well as with each other.

3) Vision of Guatemala-Diaspora Partnership:
The workshop sought to provoke thought, discussion and inspiration about a broader vision of Guatemala-Diaspora relations and the ways that they can maximize the benefits of migration even as they struggle to address its costs. This is premised on the assumption that they this will facilitate the vision and coordination necessary achieve projects of greater scope and longer-term impact than they can otherwise achieve independently. This was also intended to reduce the sense of isolation that many groups and individuals feel as they struggle with their own project

obstacles. Main ideas that people expressed about their vision for Guatemala-Diaspora partnership were: 1) Increase employment and investment in Guatemala; 2) Develop community and identity; 3) Increase the Guatemalan community capacity and willingness to help themselves. (See Appendix B for details of findings in this session).

III. EVALUATION

Feedback from participants was gathered through written evaluations, a concluding discussion about this workshop and next steps, and various informal discussions with participants. The overall response to the workshop was extremely positive. Ratings of each session in the written evaluation form were on a scale of 1 – 5, with 1 being least satisfied, 5 being most satisfied. Result averages per session were as follows:

Introduction:	4.3
Costs and benefits:	4.4
Visions:	4.2
Working groups:	4.1
Presentations:	3.7
Government:	4.0
Financial resources:	4.8
Technical resources:	4.0
Infrastructure, transparency:	4.5
Action plans:	3.8
Vision/next steps/conclusion:	3.8

The evaluation questionnaire also sought written comments. The four questions posed were:

1. What were the three most useful elements of the workshop?
2. What were the three things you suggest should be changed?
3. Did this workshop meet, fail or exceed your expectations?
4. Do you feel more able to conduct your project because of what took place in this workshop? If so, why? If not, why not?

Certain types of comments and suggestions appeared repeatedly in the written answers. They are summarized below:

- Networking: Strong appreciation of learning about and networking with other organizations; exchanging resources, ideas and experiences with other organizations present (32 written comments);
- Future workshops, website: Interest in further opportunities to work together through future workshops, and a suggestion that someone start a website through which the groups can maintain contact, and continue to learn about each other and their respective efforts (10 written responses and conclusion of "next steps" discussion);

- Concrete approach and tools: Appreciation of practical concrete approaches, tools and strategies, working groups, project planning, as well as a repeatedly expressed interest in a greater focus on project planning for future workshops (13);
- Learning about migrant/diaspora perspective and goals: Appreciation of the opportunity to learn about what diaspora/migrant groups are doing and can do to help in Guatemala; to learn about the costs, benefits and complexities of migration; and to consider the vision of what they can do in this area (9);
- Donor contacts: Appreciation for information about and contact with donors and financial institutions (6), as well as an appreciation for the idea of discovering internal resources within their own community;
- Jewish Diaspora-Israel model: Appreciation of the contributions, lessons and vision offered specifically by the Jewish Diaspora-Israel model (4 written comments, and multiple spoken comments/references during workshop sessions);
- Project planning: Of the 26 responses to whether they felt better equipped to conduct their projects (question 4) 21 confirmed that it had with the repeated request for and interest in more in-depth training on project planning;

All 25 respondents expressed that the workshop had either **met or exceeded their expectations**.

(The complete transcript of written comments can be made available upon request).

IV. MEDIA

Two articles on the workshop appeared in a paper in Florida and in Guatemala.   Fred Rivera wrote "Lideres Guatemaltecos en EEUU quieren apoyar a productores. Migrantes acuden a compartir experiencias" in the newspaper El Quetzalteco in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala on June 7, 2008. Ana Valdes wrote "Líderes de condado discutirán ayuda en Guatemala" in La Palma, a Florida paper, on June 6, 2008.

V. NEXT STEPS

In the workshop's concluding session abut next steps the following suggestions were made:

1) Follow-up Diaspora-Guatemala Workshop
Several suggestions were made regarding follow up efforts including:

- A follow up workshop after 100 days to share and assess progress made on the 100 Day Action Plan.
- A follow up workshop specifically in Huehuetenango, Guatemala (the department where many migrant groups are from and projects taking place). Participation should be opened to migrants in other areas of the US and their counterparts.   Suggested topic areas included: more detailed focus on projects implemented and progress made; training on project planning; gender and the role of women, women's empowerment.

- There were also suggestions to meet every six months so as not to lose momentum, and to train others to conduct these workshops in order to multiply the efforts.

2) Ministry of Foreign Affairs Workshop and Policy Consultation on Return and Reintegration of Guatemalan Migrants
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has asked CIMI to conduct a three-day workshop on return and reintegration of Guatemalan migrants. The purpose is to help them design their policy of return and reintegration which they hope to roll out in January 2009. Participants would include governmental representatives, non-governmental organizations, banks, etc. The Ministry is particularly interested in learning from Israel's immigrant integration policies and models, which address socio-economic issues in greater depth than their current policies do.

3) Maintaining connections
Many felt that the connections made at this workshop were extremely valuable. Several suggested establishing a website through which participants, and others, could share information about their projects and experiences, learn from each and maintain contact. Participants agreed that it was their responsibility, though who will act on this was not determined.

Some participants pointed out that accessing the internet was not so easy for everyone due to geographical distance from internet cafes. To overcome this barrier they suggested choosing a representative for each group/organization and having that person be responsible of relaying the information to the rest of the group, by phone, email, mail or appropriate means.

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July 10, 2008

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APPENDIX A

List of Partner Organizations and Facilitators

PARTNERS	FACILITATORS
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APPENDIX B

FINDINGS

More detailed findings are included for the following workshop sessions:

- **Costs and Benefits of Migration: Perspectives**
- **Visions for a Guatemala-Diaspora Partnership**
- **Overcoming Obstacles: Infrastructure, Trust and Transparency**

Findings for Workshop Session:
Costs and Benefits of Migration: Perspectives

The session "Costs and Benefits of Migration" had two purposes: to have participants analyze the various costs and benefits of migration, as well as to see that different stakeholders may perceive these costs and benefits differently given different interests, goals and concerns. For this session participants were divided randomly into six different groups representing: migrants; migrants' families who stay behind; the community of origin; returning migrants; the government of Guatemala; the US host community. Each group was supposed to delineate the profile of the group they represent, the costs and benefits of migration to that group; and the expectations of that group of the other groups.

While not necessarily surprising, their conclusions clearly delineate the critical issues of labor migration and are briefly summarized here. Key issues faced in the community of origin and reasons given for migration include extreme poverty; racial discrimination was also a factor. Migrants, their families and communities commonly desire the socio-economic improvement of the family and the community. Migration provides employment and therefore a means to improve the lives of their families and communities of origin through financial support and improvements in education, health and living conditions.

At the same time, remittances may be underutilized and many expressed a desire for more productive investment of these resources. In addition, remittances can replace the incentive to work given that the rewards of remittances are far greater and at a lower cost than the intensive labor many recipients would otherwise engage in.

The highest costs of migration are at a social and personal level: family separation risks family disintegration; there are villages comprised almost wholly of the elderly, women and children; migrants risk cultural displacement and loss of identity, as well as exploitation and abuse of their rights. Health issues such as HIV/AIDS, drug and alcohol addiction are a concern.

Ideally migrants who return voluntarily have satisfied their economic expectations, returning to property, with capital to invest in businesses, and skills to employ. However those who returned involuntarily generally did not achieve these goals. Likewise, even those who did return by

choice may not have the skills or knowledge to invest their earnings, or employment opportunities which match their skills and experience.

The government was perceived as lacking the structure or capacity to reduce unemployment or increase economic development. The issue of governmental changeover was also cited as a cause for lack of continuity of social projects and investment. Another issue cited was government lack of transparency. Expectations were that government would help address the issues of unemployment and economic underdevelopment, as well facilitate migrants' return and reintegration.

Many cited the desire that today's migration can lead to increased employment and improved economic conditions such that there is no longer for future migration.

Findings for Workshop Session:
Visions for a Guatemala-Diaspora Partnership

Key elements of the vision that many expressed about Guatemala-Diaspora cooperative efforts included:

Increased employment and investment in Guatemala:
That the financial resources and skills obtained through migration be invested productively in order to create jobs and an improved economic situation. Many expressed hopes that this would reduce the need for their friends and family to have to look outside of Guatemala for viable employment opportunities.

Methods to achieve this that were cited include:
- Migrants and their families who receive remittances should invest them in businesses and productive purposes;
- Invest in underdeveloped areas with the express purpose of generating jobs and improving conditions there;
- Remittances should be used not to help the chain migration of family members, but rather to create jobs so that they can remain in Guatemala;
- Establish agricultural cooperatives and establish a consciousness of the benefits of cooperatives;
- Ensure that education and vocational training match the labor market and vocational needs of individuals; modernize education to be relevant;
- Develop self-reliance and sustainable and self-sustaining communities;
- Guatemala is a country rich with natural resources but the government and its citizens have not taken advantage of these resources;

Develop community and identity:
Participants expressed concern about Guatemalan division and internal disagreement and the need to achieve greater unity and find common purposes. Projects and efforts to help should focus not just on migrants' particular town of origin but Guatemala as a whole. People should tap into Guatemalan culture and ancestral knowledge to strengthen their communities and

efforts. For example, they can draw upon the experience and wisdom of older Guatemalans to learn from the past and help people work together as communities.

Community self-help
Many stressed the importance of helping their own community and the need to increase such activities and attitudes within the Guatemalan community.

Findings for Workshop Session:
Overcoming Obstacles: Infrastructure, Trust and Transparency

Summary of elements essential to creating trust and accountability:

- Planning and infrastructure are essential. Enthusiasm alone will not be enough to work through operational issues.
- Train yourself in technical areas such as accounting.
- Communicate openly, frequently. Ask/answer all questions necessary.
- Auditing, oversight.
- Structures: boards of directors, committees, etc.

Points made in the discussion:

- Planning and infrastructure: People start projects with great initial enthusiasm but this is not enough. They need planning, processes, procedures and discipline. They have to discuss costs, how they will distribute the money, determine who will be responsible, how they will organize themselves. Consider organizing committees for decision making, fundraising, etc. The lack of procedures, infrastructure will be an obstacle to expanding your efforts or scaling anything up. If something starts as focused on, e.g., children and youth in the hometown, it may never have the opportunity for replication without more structure.
- Formalizing organizations can be an important element of ensuring transparency, regulation. However, at the same time, many formal organizations also have problems with transparency and accountability so by itself this is not enough.
- Communication, questions: Frequent open communication is an essential ingredient to creating trust and accountability. Ask questions. If you do not ask questions no one will explain. Those who are in charge are obligated to answer your questions but you are obligated to ask as well. Likewise, if you are in charge, you must never tire or providing the necessary answers. This is critical. You may tire of giving the same answer over and over but it is part of building confidence in what you are doing. Discuss issues, problems, even when it is difficult.
- Involvement: Everyone who has a stake must participate and be involved. Go, visit, see the projects, meet the beneficiaries, see how it works to verify that all is in order; arrange missions for your community or community reps to do this and report back. Superficial roles will not be sufficient.

- Training: Community does not always understand or have the knowledge and expertise to do things such as accounting, monitoring of budgets and expenditures. Some have a low level of education or lack the technical training necessary. We must prepare ourselves, teach ourselves, learn. We ourselves have to get involved.
- Perception about favors, benefits: Diaspora groups may need to cover their own expenses, such as travel, so that the community does not perceive it as self-serving. These projects are not about paying favors. They are about helping the community and results.
- Build trust and confidence: Take incremental steps to show that everything is well run and above board. For example, a Salvadoran immigrant group started by asking everyone in the community to contribute $10 to the projects they worked on. Everyone was expected to give so that everyone trusted they were not alone in giving. $10 was a manageable amount. After one year everyone was confident that it was well run and they could then go back and ask people to contribute more money.
- Working with government: Mexico v. El Salvador: Some 60% of Mexican HTAs have been willing to work with the government in the matching programs, though not everyone is wiling to work with the government. On the other hand, a Salvadoran group said they feel they work too hard to raise the money to be willing to risk giving their money to the government. In one example they can trust the govt, in the other they can not. There is no one answer neither across countries or within a country across localities. You have to see what works for you in your particular situation and location and if that is a viable option that you can trust.
- Publically sharing budget information: Example from Uganda(?): budgets are projected onto the town hall walls in a public meeting where it is presented, and everyone can come and review and discuss the information.
- Bank accounts: if possible, while only a few people have the power to withdraw money, everyone can see the account activities, or copies are distributed so that everyone can see what has come out and gone in and receive accounts of how the money is used.