

ACTION SHEET

OCTOBER 2019



On the borders, reality becomes denser. The Mexico-Guatemala Binational Border Strategy (EBF)

Line of action:
**TERRITORIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

Area:
GOBERNANCE

Scope:
MEXICO AND GUATEMALA

Cross-Border Cooperation as an accelerator of the 2030 Agenda

BACKGROUND: AGREEMENT BETWEEN PRESIDENTS

At the meeting held in Guatemala City, on April 8 and 9 2015, the Governments of Mexico and Guatemala, through the Ministries of Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development (SEDATU) and the Guatemalan Presidential Secretariat on Planning and Programming (SEGEPLAN) agreed to build a Binational Border Territorial Development Strategy (Binational Border Strategy-EBF), with the support of the EUROsociAL II programme. After the first binational workshop (Tapachula-Chiapas, May 2015), the first phase of work, which was carried out with support from the Programme, led to the preparation of a Technical Baseline Document officially presented in January 2018. The United Mexican States and the Republic of Guatemala share 956 kilometres of border; along which different phenomena can be observed such as migratory flows between the two countries, marginalisation and poverty related to low educational levels, insufficient infrastructure, the absence and deficiency of basic services, as well as a high degree of exposure to natural events. These problems demand the involvement of various sectors and players at different levels in both countries, in order to initiate a process of linking and cooperation in the border region that



allows an effective regional development policy to be developed to benefit its population.

SUPPORT FROM EUROSOCIAL+

The Strategy needs to establish a common view for the border area and define an initial package of joint actions to ensure greater and better security, economic development, social inclusion and sustainability conditions, in one of the most disadvantaged regions in Central America in terms of human development indicators.

The work process that was established in 2015 - initially with support from the

The **Strategy** aims to be a land-use planning instrument that drives the actions in both countries to achieve the development of one of the most disadvantaged regions

Consortium led by:

Eradicating poverty
- the basic goal
of the **2030
Agenda** - is
the underlying
and shared vision
between Mexico
and Guatemala for
regional and local
development in the
border area



Disaster prevention, civil protection and post-event management workshop. Tapachula (Chapas-Mexico).

EUROsociAL II Programme and latterly with that of EUROsociAL+ - was organised in different collaborative stages. The Face-to-face workshops gathered different representatives from local institutions from both sides of the border. The strategy was inspired by international experiences such as the “Go” European Grouping for Trans-border Cooperation (Italy - Slovenia), the Chaves - Verín Eurocity (Spain - Portugal), the Binational Plan for Border Integration Colombia - Ecuador 2014 - 2022 and the Trifinio Plan.

THE STRATEGY

The EBF establishes a common view on the processes that characterise the border area in Mexico and Guatemala. It proposes a strategic approach to the shared management of critical points and opportunities. The institutional players involved, who belong to different levels of government and administrative authorities in both countries, as well as representatives from relevant international experiences, were involved in a debate that allowed a shared knowledge base to be established that led to the establishment of the “terms of reference” for drafting the EBF. The EBF is structured based on five thematic axes, which are conceived as the structural axes for the region’s development:

- Urban - territorial networks and the integration of space in the border area (sustainability, risk management and land use planning); to strengthen urban and urban-rural cooperation networks in the border area, for a common integrated

management of the border space. Reduction in spatial imbalances

- Equity and social cohesion; to promote social cohesion in the border area, reducing poverty, improving public health, promoting gender and generational equality. Support for the most vulnerable social sectors such as migrants in transition
- Integrated economic development; to promote social cohesion in the border region by promoting economic development, job creation and poverty reduction through support for innovation and the development of integrated value chains
- Human, knowledge and technological resources for territorial development; to strengthen knowledge and skills held by human capital and enhance technological and service endowments for the unitary management of territorial information
- Establishment of governance mechanisms for EBF management

Four projects have been established in the strategy document, which will involve a further phase of implementation: 1. Functional regionalisation and definition of the future territorial organisation for the main places linked to border territorial development; 2. The identification and articulation of sustainable and viable value chains; 3. The strengthening of municipal management capacities and **4. The development of services for women and girls at the border:** Coordination and standardisation of care services for women and girls who live in and transit the border area, with emphasis on migration, education, health and violence against women.

Around **100 institutions** mobilised from all levels of government in both countries and 6 international experiences transferred

EUROsociAL TV



Gender Perspective-Video: Women in Guatemala-Mexico cross-border cooperation, the action had the support of experts from **SEPREM** in Guatemala and **InMujeres** from Mexico who provided the gender perspective in the different phases and as a tangible result, recorded a video on the situation for the women and girls at the border.