

# MEXICO



## THE NEED

Mexico is the third-largest country in the Americas with a population of over 127 million people, where almost half of the country's citizens lives on less than \$4 per day. Seeking a better life for their families, many migrate to Mexico's urban areas, especially in the border states, only to end up living in makeshift communities that lack basic services like water and sanitation, and with no access to nutritious food. Families living in these conditions suffer from poor health, obesity and diabetes, diseases such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, and susceptibility to violence.



**REGIONAL FOCUS:**  
U.S./Mexico border

## OVERVIEW

In 1961, a young doctor from San Diego, California, traveled to Tijuana to volunteer his medical services and saved the lives of two small children that were gravely ill from pneumonia. Since that time, PCI has remained committed to improving the health and well-being of populations on both sides of the U.S./Mexico border. For five decades PCI has facilitated health and development programs throughout Mexico in areas spanning maternal and child health, infectious diseases (HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis), community and public health, violence prevention, and gender and masculinity, among others. Furthermore, PCI has extensive experience building and mobilizing local capacity to identify and respond to the challenges faced by communities, civil society and governments.

## PROMOTING HEALTHY CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN TIJUANA'S MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

True to its roots, for over 25 years PCI/Mexico's Well Baby Clinics have promoted the healthy development of families and children living in Tijuana's most vulnerable and difficult to access communities. Well Baby Clinics provide essential health services, including life-saving immunizations and growth monitoring for children; health education, including nutrition counseling and information on chronic diseases such as diabetes; and referrals to primary and specialty health care professionals. Critical to the success of the program is a local network of volunteer community outreach workers who are trained by PCI staff in health and nutrition promotion and disease prevention. In 2008, PCI joined forces with Sempra Energy to launch a mobile health clinic to extend the clinics' reach to additional families in need. Today, the mobile clinic travels to ten different neighborhoods each week and provides quality outreach, health education, and preventive medical services through house visits and community fairs.

PCI's Well Baby Clinics have reached nearly 70,000 children in Tijuana and have contributed to the decline of child malnutrition, the leading cause of child mortality in the region.

## A PERSON-CENTERED APPROACH TO DISEASE PREVENTION

Globally, one quarter of the world's population is infected with the bacterium that causes tuberculosis (TB). Even though the disease is curable and its spread is preventable, last year 1.6 million people died from TB worldwide. In Mexico, TB is a significant public health concern, particularly in the country's urban areas. In response, PCI has been collaborating with USAID and the Mexican Ministry of Health to improve TB prevention, early detection and management of TB nation-wide by building the capacity of health systems and staff at national, state and jurisdictional levels to take a coordinated, person-centered approach to TB screening and treatment which improves quality of care and mitigates stigma and discrimination.



**PCI's nation-wide TB control program reached over 8.2 million individuals with prevention messages and resulted in an average cure rate of 90% in participating states.**

## ABOUT PCI

PCI (Project Concern International), a Global Communities Partner, is a global development organization that drives innovation from the ground up to enhance health, end hunger, overcome hardship, and advance women and girls —resulting in meaningful and measurable change in people's lives. Founded in 1961, PCI impacted more than 21 million lives in fiscal year 2019 through programs in 13 countries spanning Asia, Africa and the Americas.

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PCI's work evolved to address TB-HIV and TB-Diabetes co-morbidities in five high-need states in Mexico. Mexico is now a leader in the management of TB-Diabetes, due in large part to PCI's efforts to improve coordination between the Mexican Ministry of Health's National TB and Diabetes Programs to improve screening, diagnosis and early detection of the disease. Currently, PCI is partnering with the San Diego County Department of Health and Human Services to increase the completion of TB treatment along the U.S./Mexico Border (San Diego, Tijuana, Rosarito and eastern Tecate regions).

### DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

For over a decade PCI has responded to emergencies caused by natural disasters throughout Mexico, including hurricanes, floods and earthquakes. PCI's responses have focused on mobilizing rapid responses to provide shelter and other basic necessities, as well as working with affected communities to restore livelihoods and begin the path toward long-term recovery. Recently, following the devastating earthquakes that struck southern Mexico in 2017, PCI improved the capacity of the Mexican Ministry of Health to identify and address the mental health needs of residents living in communities affected by the earthquakes. By engaging participants from all health jurisdictions in Oaxaca state, the project contributed toward improving future emergency mental health responses in the region.

## PAST PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Violence Prevention:** In 2012, PCI collaborated with TetraTech ARD and USAID to lead a community mapping initiative in Tijuana's and Monterrey's most violence-prone neighborhoods. This effort is part of a larger community mobilization effort that aims to reduce violence in Mexico's most vulnerable cities.
- **Rebuilding Livelihoods:** In the wake of Mexico's devastating floods in Tabasco and Chiapas in 2007, PCI didn't simply provide temporary relief, but engaged local communities in livelihood recovery that resulted in sustainable incomes at levels higher than prior to the floods. For every dollar of investment, \$4-12 dollars in earnings from improved agriculture, fisheries and livestock were produced.
- **Challenging Gender Norms:** Gender equity has been a cornerstone of PCI's work in Mexico. One of PCI's most influential projects effectively engaged four different audiences: physicians working in the public health system, community members from Tijuana's most vulnerable communities, police officers, and prison inmates. The project reached over 300 men and led to the publication of the manual "*Como Hacer un Hombre*" or "How to Make a Man," which was shared with hundreds of organizations working in the field.