WELCOME TO MEXICO
We are convinced that this is true, and for this reason we would like to give you the warmest welcome to the 5th Annual PAL Network Meeting. It gives us great pleasure to welcome you to Mexico so that we can learn together and from each other, by including more citizens, more communities, and more countries in our network, thus achieving the PAL Network mission.

Together with the Secretariat, the MIA team have been preparing for this meeting for months. We want to create more power for people. This means discussing and learning about how we can empower communities so that they can be more actively involved in education. We think it’s important to share our experience of citizen-led assessments to better understand how people are making a difference when facing difficult and uncertain environments, speaking out in order to create education that promotes justice, peace, citizenship and equality, where each one of us can count, read and be free.

Power to the people is the reason that we are here today. We come from 20+ countries in Asia, South America and Africa, speaking over 30 languages, with hundreds of thousands of citizen volunteers and one single aim: to make learning a focal concern for our communities, the government and civil society.

We hope that this meeting will be a success, and welcome to Mexico!

MIA Team
Medición Independiente de Aprendizaje [Independent Measurement of Learning]
We are excited to welcome you to Mexico. Upon arrival in Mexico City, you will be met at the airport by one member of the MIA airport arrivals team:

Brenda and Erendira will be wearing MIA T-shirts so you can identify them easily. If you have any problems upon arrival in the airport, or if you are unable to locate Brenda or Erendira, please WhatsApp or call them on the numbers listed above. Brenda and Erendira will ensure that you are transported from the airport to the hotel.

**Brenda Ceballos**  
+52 1 228 854 1787

**Erendira García**  
+52 1 228 108 1699
Accommodation

You will be staying at:

The Hotel Fiesta Inn Centro Historico
Address Av. Juárez 76, Cuauhtemoc, Centro, Ciudad de México.
+52 55 5130 2900
http://bit.ly/2kDTD6V
Emergency Contact Information

If you need to contact a member of the organizing committee in advance of the meeting, please do not hesitate to WhatsApp or e-mail us:

MIA Team

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Participants will be arriving in Mexico City between Thursday 9th March and Saturday 11th March. The below agenda gives an overview of scheduled meetings and activities in Mexico City.

Please note that if you are not a member of the Steering Committee or the PAL Secretariat leadership team, MIA have organized some tourist visits in Mexico City on Saturday 11th March.

**10 Friday March**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13:00 – 17:00</td>
<td>Steering Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Hotel Fiesta Inn Centro Historico</td>
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**11 Saturday March**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00 – 12:00</td>
<td>Steering Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Hotel Fiesta Inn Centro Historico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 – 16:30</td>
<td>Donor Conference</td>
<td>Hotel Fiesta Inn Centro Historico</td>
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</table>

**Tourist visit in Mexico City**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00 – 17:00</td>
<td>Tourist visit in Mexico City</td>
<td>Mexico City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PAL Network Welcome Dinner**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>PAL Network Welcome Dinner</td>
<td>Hotel Fiesta Inn Centro Historico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**12 Sunday March**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08:00</td>
<td>Travel from Mexico City to Xalapa via Teotihuacan</td>
<td>Team Bus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sightseeing recommendations

If you have some spare time in Mexico City either upon arrival or after the Xalapa meeting, the MIA team have made the following recommendations for places to visit in Mexico City:

**Centro de Coyoacán**

Centro de Coyoacán is a beautiful colonial neighbourhood in the south of the city, approximately 40 minutes from downtown. There is a big square with one of the oldest Catholic Churches in Central Mexico - San Juan Bautista Church. You can walk around the beautiful streets, have an ice cream or a drink in one of the many restaurants and bars. Along the Avenida Francisco Sosa you will find some of the most beautiful homes in Coyoacán. These have been restored to look as they did in the Colonial era.

**Centro de San Ángel**

Centro de San Ángel is another beautiful colonial neighbourhood 12km southwest of the centre and recently named a ‘Barrio Magico’ (Magical Neighbourhood) by the Mexico City Tourism Board. The cobblestone streets, plazas, gardens and elegant colonial estates are reminiscent of Mexico’s rich colonial history. There are several museums and colourful markets, art galleries, shops, restaurants and bars with open-air terraces. Saturday is the best day to visit as there is a lively handicraft market.
Xochimilco is best known for its canals, which are left from what used to be an extensive lake and canal system that connected most of the villages of the Valley of Mexico. Xochimilco is located in the very south of the city and takes between 1-1.5 hours to get there. These canals, along with artificial islands called chinampas, attract city residents to ride on colourful gondola-like boats called “trajineras” around the 170km of canals. Xochimilco is a World Heritage Site, preserving the area’s pre-hispanic past. In the “trajinera” you can eat typical Mexican food and pay for live Mexican music.

Condesa is an artsy, bohemian neighborhood located about 25 minutes southwest of the centre of the city, offering a pleasant change of pace from Mexico City’s busy downtown. The neighbourhood is full of beautiful Art Deco architecture, wide parks and welcoming plazas. Currently, Condesa is a trendy place with lots of cool coffee shops, restaurants, art galleries, shops and markets.
All participants will be travelling together to Xalapa on Sunday 11th March. Xalapa is the capital of Veracruz State. We will depart from the Hotel Fiesta Inn in Mexico City at 08:00am on Sunday morning on the PAL Network bus.

The drive to Xalapa will take approximately six hours from Mexico City. We will break up the journey with a visit to Teotihuacan.

We will arrive at the hotel in Xalapa at approximately 6:00pm on Sunday night. We will be staying at:

**Gamma Xalapa Nubara by Fiesta Americana**

Av. Ruiz Cortines 912 Col. Unidad del Bosque 91010

Xalapa Veracruz, Mexico

+52 (228) 8 42 34 00

Teotihuacan

Teotihuacan is an ancient Mesoamerican city located approximately 40km northeast of Mexico City, known today as the site of many of the most architecturally significant Mesoamerican pyramids built in the pre-Columbian Americas.

The city is thought to have been established around 100BC with major monuments continuously under construction until about 250AD. The site was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is the most visited archaeological site in Mexico.
The 5th Annual PAL Network meeting will take place from Monday 13th – Thursday 16th March 2017. All participants from within the network (full member countries, provisional member countries and new interested countries) will participate in all four days. As the final day, Thursday 16th, is an internal PAL Network business meeting, transport will be provided for all external participants to return to Mexico City on Thursday morning. The below agenda gives an overview of scheduled meetings and activities in Xalapa.

### Itinerary in Xalapa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meeting/Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Welcome, Introductions and Keynote speeches</td>
<td>Gamma Xalapa</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Sub-theme workshops and plenary discussion</td>
<td>Gamma Xalapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Fieldwork</td>
<td>Villages in Xalapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Group work and plenary discussion</td>
<td>Gamma Xalapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>All day</td>
<td>Academic Seminar organized by MIA team</td>
<td>USBI (Unit of Library and Information Services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Internal PAL Network Business Meeting</td>
<td>Gamma Xalapa</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Working Groups meet and plan, final dinner</td>
<td>Gamma Xalapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>All participants depart for Mexico City</td>
<td>Xalapa – Mexico City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is the time difference between here and Mexico?
The current time in Mexico is GMT -7

What should I pack?
The average temperature in Mexico City and Xalapa in March is mild - 16°C. Temperatures can reach up to 26°C during the day and early morning temperatures are generally cool with an average of 7°C. Please ensure that you pack plenty of layers. The Gamma hotel in Xalapa has a gym, sauna, heated swimming pool and running track should you wish to pack swimming wear and sports clothes. Please ensure that you pack comfortable clothes for the fieldwork.

What is the local currency?
The local currency is the Mexican Peso, known colloquially as ‘Peso’. It is best to exchange US dollar notes into local currency at bureaux de change / forex bureaus at the airport in Mexico City. Debit and credit cards (VISA, MasterCard) are usually accepted for payment and at ATMs although it is advisable to always have some cash with you.

Is it customary to tip?
It is customary to leave a tip to thank waiters, valets, gas station employees, bellboys and other service providers. At restaurants, bars and coffee shops, it is customary to leave 10% of the total amount of the bill; if the service was very good, you may wish to leave up to 15%. Some restaurants and bars include the tip in the final bill, so be sure to check this in order not to overpay. Not tipping is frowned upon.
Should I take any precautions when in Mexico City?

Travellers in Mexico City do not have to be overly concerned with their safety. However, it is necessary to take precautions whilst travelling in crowded areas. Due to the poverty in the surrounding areas of the city, the crime rate is usually quite high. It is advisable to keep important things like personal identification, valuable items and money in a safe place. The main targeted areas for pickpockets or bag snatchers is at the Subway Station and Metro. It is not safe to travel via free-range cabs available on the streets of the city.

Is there anything else I should be aware of?

The Mexican Police have the authority to ask for proof of legal status in Mexico. You should carry photocopies of the relevant pages of your passport and of the stamped ‘Forma Migratoria Múltiple’ (FMM) given to you on arrival in Mexico at all times.

For further information about Mexico, please visit:

http://bit.ly/2I0LHhe