



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



Mexico:
hope of a
new home

2023
Highlights
UNHCR Mexico



© 2024 United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees
All rights reserved. Reproductions and
translations are authorized, provided
UNHCR is acknowledged as the source.

Contents

Together, we go further	3
1. Context	4
2. UNHCR Mexico at a glance	12
3. Working together	16
4. Ensuring access to international protection and protection responses	22
4.1 Access to asylum	23
4.2 Access to legal orientation and representation	25
4.3 Access to information	26
5. Reception conditions and access to services focused on specific needs	30
5.1 Specific protection needs	31
5.2 Shelters	32
5.3 Preventing, mitigating, and responding to gender-based violence	36
5.4 Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse	38
5.5 Child Protection	39
5.6 Humanitarian Assistance	41
6. Solutions	42
6.1 Local integration	43
6.2 Access to education and opportunities	48
6.3 Naturalization	50
6.4 Resettlement	51
7. Fostering peaceful coexistence through communication, awareness raising and culture	52
7.1 Humanitarian-development Nexus	53
8. Internal displacement	58
9. Climate change and disaster-induced displacement	62
10. Funding	64
11. Looking ahead	68

2023
Highlights
UNHCR Mexico

Together, we go further

One in three people on the move in Mexico express their desire to make the country their permanent home, a finding that is also reflected in the record number of asylum claims in 2023. With support from UNHCR, the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) has quadrupled its response capacity since 2018. However, challenges in consolidating its structure and operational capabilities persist, alongside the need for a sufficient budget that can accommodate the surge of claims of those in need of international protection.

This year, there were times when the number of new people arriving exceeded the capacities of shelters and services, in many cases reflecting policy changes of the United States. Without doubt, we will continue to see variations in arrival numbers, requiring a flexible response from UNHCR and our partners. I am confident that we are equipped to adapt to these changes.

We will continue to work with the government to expand protection for people, explore legal stay alternatives, and uphold the integrity of the asylum system. We will continue to attentively follow the concerns of the people we serve, the challenges they face in obtaining Mexican documentation and the lack of clear information about their options.

With the support of shelters, civil society, and religious organizations, we will continue to work at the frontline of the humanitarian response. It will be essential to strengthen referral pathways to basic services and work with relevant institutions to expand access to rights.

Over 600 companies committed to employ thousands of refugees, who have now joined the workforce, contributing to the country's economy and forming the foundation on which we aim to further expand our Local Integration Programme. Together

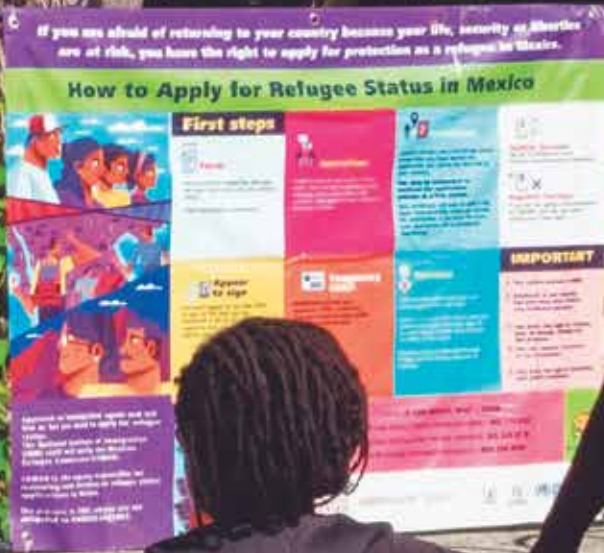
with our partners, we are now striving to broaden the financial inclusion of refugees.

Mexico's proactive participation in regional initiatives, such as the MIRPS and the North Capital Forum, has been instrumental in enhancing the protection of forcibly displaced people and strengthening shared responsibility mechanisms between countries. At the Global Refugee Forum, the Mexican government committed to eight formal pledges focused on the protection and integration of asylum-seekers, refugees, and internally displaced people. This year, we look forward to the Cartagena+40 process, which aims at strengthening protection for those displaced, including for reasons related to the climate crisis. Mexico will host the consultation process on protection, advocating for solutions for refugees and addressing the structural causes of their displacement.

I am proud of the progress we have made through teamwork, not least thanks to the professionalism of our staff. None of this would have been possible without the coordinated and close partnership with authorities across all three levels of the government, civil society organizations, UN agencies, the private sector, academic institutions, and especially, the refugees and internally displaced people themselves. The dedication and determination of all involved fuel every step we take, demonstrating that together, we go further.



Giovanni Lepri
Representative
March 2024



Chapter 1

Context

Asylum-seekers arrive at the Tapachula Eco-Park to submit their asylum claims at COMAR.

[🏠 Contents](#)

The number of forcibly displaced people in Latin America exceeded 22 million in 2023. Mexico ranked among the top five countries globally in terms of asylum claims in 2021 and 2022. In 2023, the numbers exceeded those of previous years, and Mexico is expected to remain one of the main destinations in 2024. Additionally, the country hosts hundreds of thousands of people in transit towards the northern part of the continent. More than half of the people on the move arriving in Mexico name violence, insecurity, and threats as primary reasons for leaving their country of origin, suggesting that a significant number may require international protection. Most come from countries in northern Central America, as well as Cuba, Haiti, and Venezuela.

Human mobility in Mexico is characterized by mixed movements, which means that people travel together, usually by irregular means, and use the same routes and transport methods, although for different reasons. Mexico received a record number of over **140,000 asylum claims** in 2023, representing a 17 per cent increase from the previous year and surpassing the 2021 peak of 130,000. This clearly shows that Mexico has evolved from being a country of origin and transit to also a destination country. This year, Mexico City experienced a consistent rise in arrivals. According to UNHCR's [protection monitoring report](#), over 50 per cent of those arriving in Mexico mention violence as the main cause of their displacement. In addition, 66 per cent of people surveyed stated that their life, security, or freedom would be at risk if they were to return to

their countries of origin, underscoring the importance of international protection. This is further shown by Mexico's high refugee recognition rate of almost 70 per cent. The diversity among those seeking asylum in Mexico this year was remarkable, encompassing nationals from over 100 countries, with Haitians (31 per cent) and Hondurans (30 per cent) forming the largest groups, followed by people of Cuban origin with 13 per cent, and people from Guatemala and El Salvador each representing four per cent.

Since 2018, the **Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR)** has been able to increase its asylum application processing capacity by four times with support from UNHCR. The digitalization of its archive and adoption of biometric recognition technology are among the main achievements to improve efficiency in 2023 [[see chapter 4](#)]. Despite these improvements, COMAR's budget remained insufficient, limiting its ability to process claims and support refugee integration. Throughout the year, the increase in human mobility and a lack of legal stay alternatives within the context of mixed movements, has pushed the asylum system beyond its capacity. To manage the increasing demand and uphold the integrity of the asylum system, COMAR introduced expedited procedures for people with specific needs and those seeking destinations other than Mexico. Since November 2023, asylum-seekers experienced challenges in obtaining the Humanitarian Visitor's Card (TVRH). The lack of documentation limited access to essential services and increased the protection risks for people on the move, including fraud or extortion.

COMAR facilities at the Ecological-Park in Tapachula, Chiapas



© ACNUR/Isabel Mateos Hinojosa

Who is a refugee

Refugees are people who are outside their country of origin and cannot return due to a well-founded fear of persecution, conflict, violence, or other circumstances that have seriously disrupted public order. As a result, they require protection in other countries.



Mixed movements include both refugees and migrants. These are two distinct groups that are subject to separate legal frameworks. Only refugees are protected under the international protection regime, which includes fundamental principles, such as non-refoulement. Even if every person who moves across countries

deserve full respect of their human rights and dignity, refugees are not a subcategory of migrants, but a specifically defined group protected by international law. Mixing these categories may have serious consequences for the lives and safety of those fleeing persecution or conflict.

[🏠 Contents](#)

UNHCR has 15 field presences in Mexico and supports four states with liaison officers for issues related to internal displacement. In addition, the agency collaborates with 38 partners to address nationwide needs and promote durable solutions for refugees and their communities [See Chapter 3].

UNHCR Mexico presence



Country office

1. Mexico City

Sub-Offices

2. Monterrey

3. Tuxtla Gutiérrez

Field Offices

4. Tapachula

5. Ciudad Juárez

6. Tijuana

Field Units

7. Tenosique

8. Palenque

9. Guadalajara

10. Aguascalientes

11. Saltillo

Presence

12. Querétaro

13. León

14. San Luis Potosí

15. Villahermosa

UNHCR liaison officers on internal displacement

16. Michoacán (Morelia)

17. Sinaloa (Culiacán, Mazatlán, Choix)

18. Chihuahua (Chihuahua, Cd. Juárez, Parral)

19. Chiapas (Tuxtla Gutiérrez)



Antonini and his children walk towards a rented room they will share with other relatives and Haitians in Palenque, Chiapas.

© ACNUR/Nicolo Filippo Rosso

Most people on the move enter Mexico through its **southern border** with Guatemala, particularly through the border town Tapachula. The southern states of Chiapas, Tabasco, and Veracruz accounted for over 70 per cent of the asylum claims processed in Mexico, with Chiapas alone receiving over 60 per cent.

In response to these challenges, UNHCR strengthened its collaboration with COMAR, local authorities, and partners to mitigate pressure on the asylum system, services, and local communities. We actively contribute to the “Area-Based Approach (ABA) Tapachula” initiative, a comprehensive

territorial strategy of the United Nations System to address the needs of people on the move and their host communities by fostering sustainable development [\[see Chapter 7\]](#). Another step forward is the planned development of a multiservice centre in Tapachula, designed to bring together all essential services for refugees, asylum-seekers, and other people on the move under a single roof¹. Strengthening the network of shelters run by civil society and religious organizations has been essential in providing humanitarian aid, legal and psychosocial orientation, identifying specific needs, and offering support to survivors of gender-based violence and children at-risk among others.

¹ The construction began in January 2024 on land donated by the government of Chiapas to the Ministry of the Interior for the use of COMAR.

[🏠 Contents](#)

UNHCR recognizes that these organizations are the backbone of the humanitarian response in Mexico.

Due to the termination of Title 42 by the United States government in May 2023, the dynamics of human mobility experienced significant changes in **northern Mexico**. This policy, which had been facilitating the expedited repatriation of people at the border since the COVID-19 pandemic, was replaced by a regulation restricting access to asylum for those who enter the country irregularly having transited through another country and not sought international protection before reaching the United States. The United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) launched the **CBPOne** digital application in January to schedule migratory appointments with the United States border

authority. During the first months, people surveyed by UNHCR reported that it was impossible to use the app which had several glitches. By the end of 2023, it had improved to processing an average of 1,400 daily appointments. Nonetheless, a significant percentage of those surveyed reported not being able to secure an appointment leading to long waiting periods at the Mexican side of the border, often under precarious conditions. This situation was exacerbated by misinformation and the risk of exploitation by traffickers, disproportionately affecting unaccompanied children, women, LGBTIQ+ people, and others with specific needs [\[see Chapter 5\]](#). So that people can make informed decisions, UNHCR and its partners organized “Know Your Rights” workshops along the northern border.

Families spend the night at a shelter in Tijuana, Baja California, in the northern border of Mexico.

In 2023, the north of Mexico hosted thousands of people in transit in shelters, informal settlements, and rented accommodation. Internally displaced people in Mexico accounted for nearly half of the population in shelters in the north of the country. In view of these complex and dangerous conditions, UNHCR redoubled its efforts to strengthen support for shelters with staff providing information and legal guidance, referrals to basic services, infrastructure projects, and the provision of food and essential goods [see Chapter 4]. Shelter interventions are coordinated with other United Nations agencies, primarily the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Mexico City witnessed a significant rise in asylum claims in 2023, with numbers reaching 30,500, representing 22 per cent of the country's total

numbers and almost twice the claims recorded in 2022 (16,000). The capital became not only a transit point but also a destination for many people who had to flee from Haiti, Venezuela, Cuba, among other countries. The surge in people on the move severely impacted the capacity of shelters, often run by religious organizations and civil society. For instance, one of the city's main shelters, CAFEMIN, operated at five times its capacity. The government shelter in the Tláhuac neighbourhood, constructed for 150 people, ended up hosting more than 800 people in addition to 3,000 people camping at its doorstep. The overcrowding led to an increase in the number of homeless people, including girls, boys, pregnant women, elderly people, and people with disabilities, heightening risks such as gender-based violence. Following pressure from residents, COMAR was compelled to relocate part of its operations. Amid these challenges, UNHCR provided technical support facilitating access to

People on the move awaiting breakfast time in CAFEMIN shelter in Mexico City.



[🏠 Contents](#)

asylum and basic services and promoting peaceful coexistence between refugees and the local community [\[see Chapter 7\]](#).

UNHCR's integration programmes included assistance to people in obtaining documentation, job opportunities, education, and promoting environments that foster peaceful coexistence in collaboration with the Government of Mexico, the private sector, and civil society. UNHCR continued to promote its Local Integration Programme (PIL), in partnership with the Mexican government and the private sector. This initiative aims to support refugees wishing to relocate from southern Mexico to central and northern cities, where better employment opportunities are available, enabling tens of thousands of people to contribute to the national economy. UNHCR works closely with all levels of government to promote inclusion. One notable achievement in 2023 was the Memorandum

of Understanding between UNHCR and the government of Guadalajara, which became a City of Solidarity, along with other cities like Saltillo and Mexico City. The Government of Mexico played a key role in global processes, setting an example in the protection and inclusion of refugees, as demonstrated by the eight pledges (at federal, state, and municipal levels) presented at [the Global Refugee Forum](#) (GRF) held in Geneva in December 2023.

Since 2019 and upon request of Mexican authorities, UNHCR has been supporting the response and the development of normative frameworks and public policy for the protection of internally displaced people. 2023 witnessed an increase in forced displacement in at least seven federal states. In response, UNHCR collaborated in draft legislation, public policies, and reliable data analysis to incorporate insights into the government's statistical assessments.

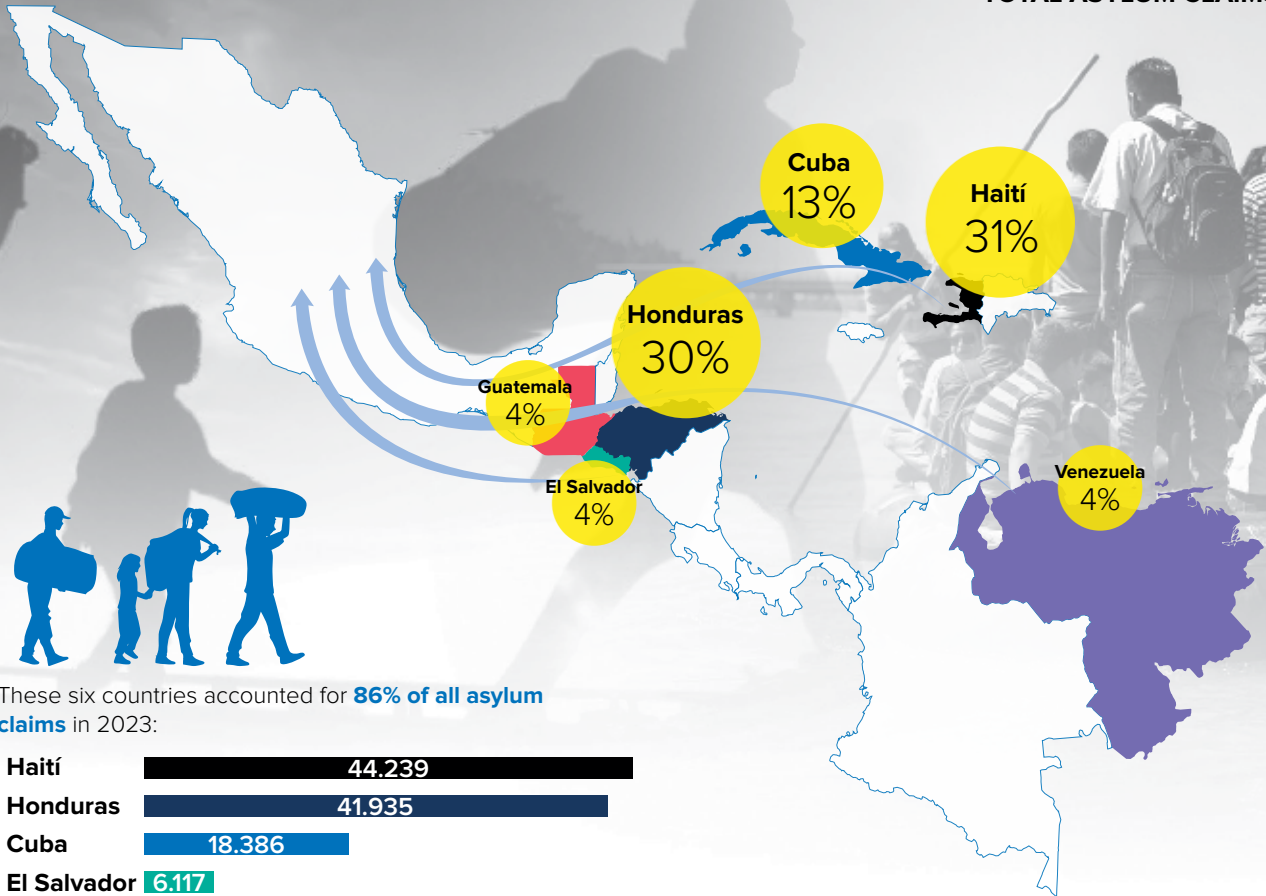
UNHCR provides assistance to families forced to flee their homes, helping them integrate into a safe environment

Chapter 2

UNHCR Mexico at a glance

Over **60% of all asylum claims** were submitted in Chiapas

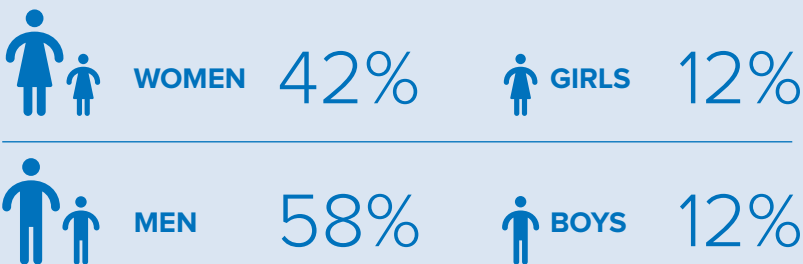
118,756
TOTAL ASYLUM CLAIMS



These six countries accounted for **86% of all asylum claims** in 2023:

Haití	44,239
Honduras	41,935
Cuba	18,386
El Salvador	6,117
Guatemala	6,111
Venezuela	5,517


POPULATION DISTRIBUTION




21,485

RECOGNIZED REFUGEES
in 2023

COMAR'S EFFORTS


51,468
INDIVIDUAL RESOLUTIONS
by COMAR


COMAR has nearly
quadrupled its processing
capacity since 2018


69%
Global Recognition
Rate (as of July 2023)

UNHCR REGISTRATION AND ASSISTANCE



+35,000
INQUIRIES
were responded to
through the UNHCR
Helpdesk


386,000
MONTHLY USERS
of the Facebook page
“Confía en el Jaguar”


+412,000
VISITS to UNHCR's
Help page, which is the
highest number of visits
since its creation


LEGAL ASSISTANCE


+238,000
ASYLUM-SEEKERS
received legal advice
in +30
CITIES


7,000
ASYLUM-SEEKERS
were represented by
UNHCR's network of jurists
for the first time

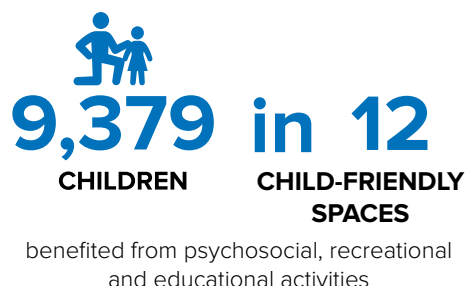
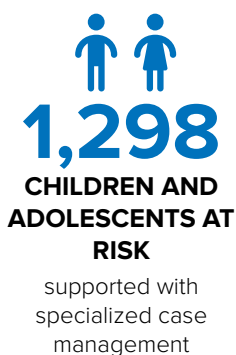

89 **54**
LAWYERS **ARALEGALS**
43 **17**
PUBLIC DEFENDERS **LEGAL AID CLINICS**
focusing on
human rights at
universities
provided legal assistance

COMMUNITY-BASED PROTECTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED PEOPLE


1,086
PEOPLE
women, men, children, elderly people,
refugees, asylum-seekers, internally
displaced people and members of
host communities joined **UNHCR's**
participatory assessments


206
REPORTS
were filed through
the Community-based
Complaint Mechanism,
99% of which were
resolved by UNHCR

CHILD PROTECTION



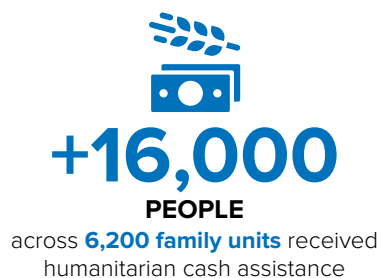
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: PREVENTION, MITIGATION, AND RESPONSE




RECEPTION AND SUPPORT CONDITIONS AT SHELTERS



HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE



LOCAL INTEGRATION


7,790
REFUGEES

decided to be relocated from the south to the centre of the country as a part of UNHCR's Local Integration Programme (PIL)


+20,700
REFUGEES

benefitted from in-situ integration support


+600
PRIVATE SECTOR COMPANIES

are employing refugees


+680
REFUGEES

initiated their naturalization applications, and **more than 600 obtained citizenships**

EDUCATION


+3,000
ASYLUM-SEEKING AND REFUGEE CHILDREN

supported with school enrolment


348
ASYLUM-SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

enrolled in technical training or certification programs for work competencies

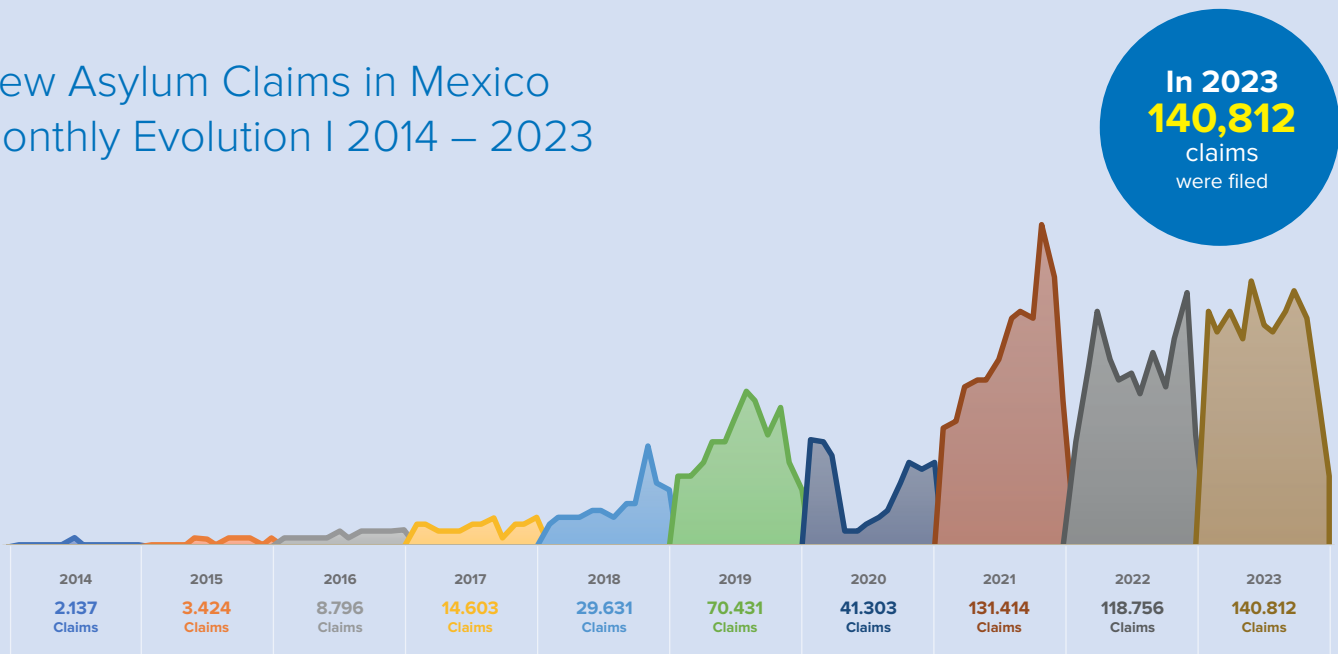

120
REFUGEE STUDENTS

received scholarships to study at university


+190
PEOPLE

received support for the homologation of their academic degrees

New Asylum Claims in Mexico Monthly Evolution | 2014 – 2023



Source: COMAR 2014-18, SIRE 2019-2023

Chapter 3

Working together

Shelters represent the frontline in humanitarian response for people on the move, providing them with basic care and protection. UNHCR collaborates with the shelter network to safeguard forcibly displaced people.

[Contents](#)

UNHCR works closely with refugees, asylum-seekers, beneficiaries of complementary protection, internally displaced people, stateless people, and their host communities, as well as the Government of Mexico, national and international civil society organizations, UN agencies, the private sector, and academia. Together, they work to expand spaces for protection and inclusion, ensuring that people on the move can exercise their rights.

To address the needs and expectations of displaced people and their host communities, and to respond to the specificities of each local context, involving those who serve in planning and collaboration processes is crucial. This approach aligns with our Accountability to Affected People (AAP) policy and includes the participation of all people, regardless of their location, legal status, gender, identity, or other distinctive characteristics.

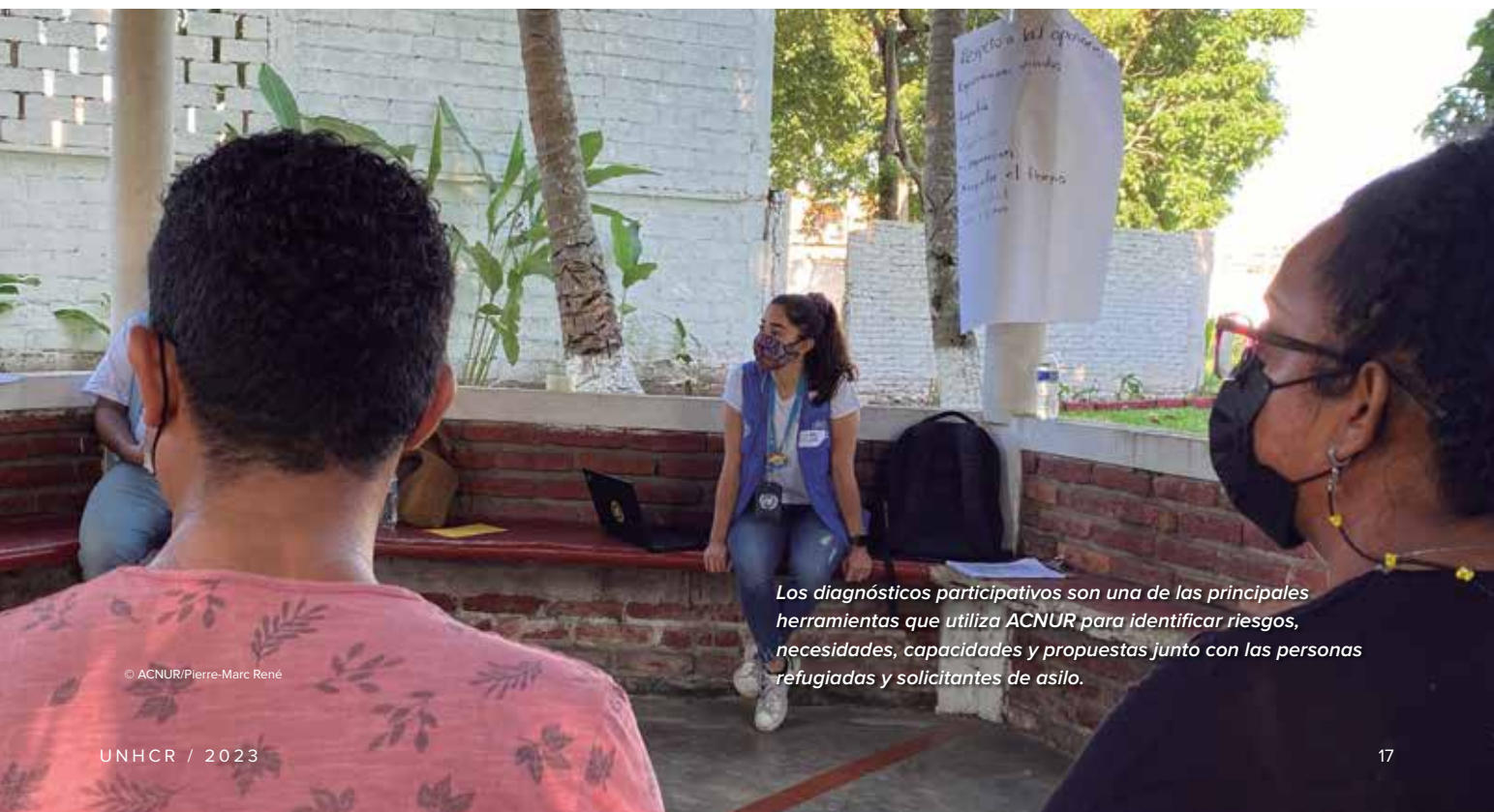
In 2023, UNHCR organized participatory assessments involving more than 1,000 refugees,

asylum-seekers, and internally displaced people, along with protection monitoring conducted through over 6,000 surveys, yielding several key findings:

- More than half of the people consulted reported fleeing their country due to violence.
- The majority highlighted the protection risks they face when crossing Mexico irregularly.
- Almost all mentioned the issue of false information and rumours about the asylum process, both in Mexico and the United States.
- Participants showed a high interest in sports and cultural activities to promote community integration.

Participatory assessments are one of the main tools UNHCR uses to identify risks, needs, capacities and proposals in collaboration with refugees and asylum-seekers.

- Participants pointed out obstacles in seeking



Los diagnósticos participativos son una de las principales herramientas que utiliza ACNUR para identificar riesgos, necesidades, capacidades y propuestas junto con las personas refugiadas y solicitantes de asilo.

[🏠 Contents](#)

employment and opening bank accounts due to a lack of adequate documentation, as well as high living-costs.

UNHCR offers technical and financial assistance to Organizations Led by Refugees or Displaced People (RLO) to strengthen their organizational structure and sustainability.

Another key focus is the support to the Mexican government and other national actors in implementing the Comprehensive Regional Framework for Protection and Solutions (MIRPS) in Mexico. This regional initiative, led by countries in Central America and Mexico, aims to find joint strategies to promote protection and sustainable solutions for refugees and displaced people within the framework of shared responsibility that involves society. Since 2022, Mexico has been leading the MIRPS Regional Technical Group on Reception, Admission, and Case Processing. In 2023, Mexico hosted an exchange of best practices on the registration and asylum process in Tapachula with

MIRPS member countries and COMAR counterparts from other countries.

To coordinate efforts related to populations on the move in a complex context of mixed movements, UNHCR and IOM lead the UN Interagency Group on Human Mobility (GIMH) in Mexico. The GIMH fosters spaces for dialogue and presents regular reports to the international community. It includes ten thematic groups that work to enhance protection, socioeconomic integration, shelter coordination, prevention of gender-based violence, and human trafficking, smuggling, and disappearances, among others.

UNHCR and IOM co-lead the Response for Venezuelans (R4V), a platform that brings together the efforts of international organizations, governments, and civil society. It focuses on various areas such as protection, food assistance, access to educational and health services, as well as support for the socioeconomic integration and accommodation of the Venezuelan population in Mexico.



UNHCR and COMAR working together to provide protection for asylum-seekers in Mexico.



The Global Refugee Forum is the most important global platform dedicated to refugees.

This high-level meeting is held every four years to make progress towards the goals of the Global Compact on Refugees (GRF).

The second edition, which took place in December 2023 in Geneva, Switzerland, allowed states, the private sector, and organizations to present pledges and specific contributions towards the protection of and solutions for refugees. At this event, over 1,600 pledges were announced globally. The Government of

Mexico made eight pledges: four at the federal level and four at state and municipal levels. The Forum attracted over 4,000 attendees, including 300 refugees.

Mexico was represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, COMAR, as well as authorities from the states of Baja California, Guanajuato, and Nuevo León. Additionally, the company FEMSA, a key ally, participated as a speaker and committed, alongside UNHCR, to benefiting more than 27,000 refugees in Mexico by 2027.



© ACNUR/José Cerdón

Cecilia, Venezuelan refugee in Mexico and DAFI scholarship holder, participates in the second day of the 2023 Global Refugee Forum as one of the 70 experts in tertiary education.

Summary of Mexico's pledges at the Global Refugee Forum

Through four federal-level pledges, the Government of Mexico committed to strengthening and implementing public policy for addressing the needs refugees and asylum-seekers, promoting their socioeconomic inclusion through health services, employment, and education. It also pledged to promote tools to make the refugee status recognition procedure faster, fairer, non-discriminatory, and more efficient. Furthermore, Mexico will lead a regional commitment under MIRPS and establish a four-party mechanism among the Government, UNHCR, civil society organizations, and refugees, to promote their meaningful participation.

The Government of Baja California pledged to formalize the Multiservice Centre for refugees by 2025 and to make regulatory adjustments to increase protection and integration services for asylum seekers and refugees by five per cent by 2027.

The Government of Guanajuato pledged to develop the State Protocol for the Attention of Refugees and an Interinstitutional Board to provide more effective and coordinated support that promotes access to services and the socioeconomic inclusion of refugees.

The Government of Nuevo León pledged to promote the inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers by providing information, creating spaces for equality, and implementing interinstitutional mechanisms by 2025.

The Municipal Government of Tapachula pledged to promote the inclusion of asylum-seekers and refugees in health, education, employment, and housing services by five per cent annually until 2027, through coordination with state authorities, timely issuance of documentation, and a public policy for local care and integration².

² For more detailed information on the pledges of Mexico and other participants, please refer to the Global Compact on Refugees website: <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/>

[🏠 Contents](#)

Luis Gerardo Méndez has been named Goodwill Ambassador for UNHCR

“

Being a Goodwill Ambassador is an honour and a privilege for me. I am convinced that from my position, I can help more people understand the reality of those who were forced flee and contribute to increasing support for them.

”



© ACNUR/Toya Samo Jordan



© ACNUR/Toya Samo Jordan

The Mexican actor and producer has a long history of engagement with refugees. In 2023, he visited Aguascalientes, his hometown, and Tijuana, where he learned about the stories of people who have successfully integrated into a new country.

Chapter 4

Ensuring access to international protection and protection responses

The shelter "Hospitalidad y Solidaridad" is the first shelter in Tapachula, which is exclusively for refugees and asylum-seekers.

4.1 Access to asylum

Over half of the people on the move in Mexico cite violence, insecurity, and threats as the reasons for fleeing their homes, with 66 per cent fearing for their lives, security, or freedom if they were returned to their countries of origin. This highlights the risk that their deportation could violate the principle of non-refoulement, a fundamental aspect of international refugee law. Recognizing the need for international protection and the challenges that Mexico faces as a host country, UNHCR has worked closely with relevant authorities to ensure the asylum system's integrity and the proper processing of refugee status claims.

Over 140,000 people applied for international protection with COMAR in 2023, a record number that overwhelmed the national asylum system, operating with limited resources. UNHCR provided structural, technical, and financial support to COMAR to prevent a system collapse, which would pose risks to the lives of people forced to flee their countries.

SUPPORT TO THE MEXICAN COMMISSION FOR REFUGEE ASSISTANCE (COMAR)



172

PEOPLE

recruited as COMAR staff to increase its registration and processing capacity



21

OFFICE

strengthened (including through mobile units, renovation and adaptation)



16

INTERPRETATION SERVICES

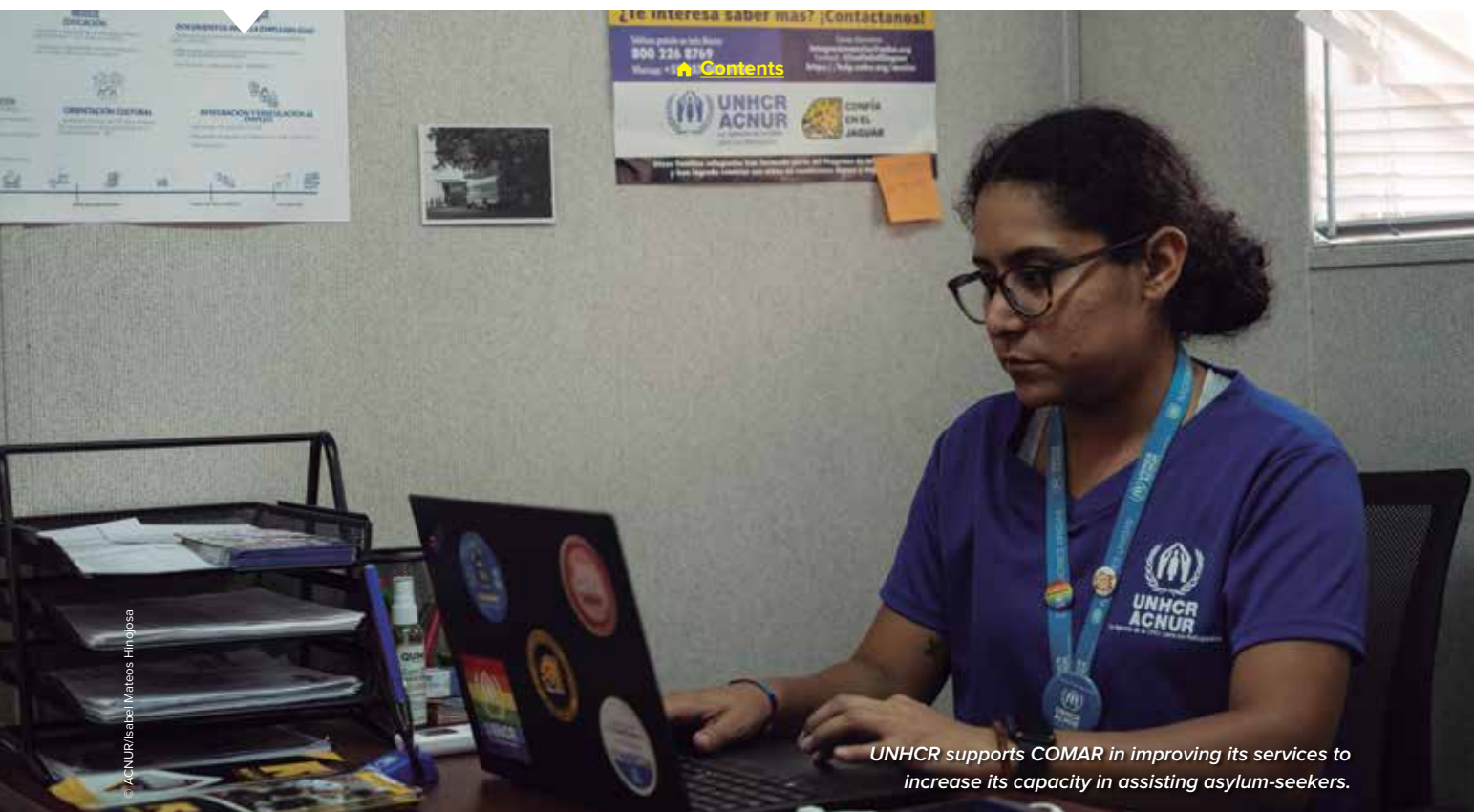
for asylum interviews delivered



51,468

INDIVIDUAL RESOLUTIONS

by COMAR



UNHCR supports COMAR in improving its services to increase its capacity in assisting asylum-seekers.

The digital transformation driven by UNHCR under the Quality Asylum Initiative (QAI) was pivotal in enhancing COMAR's capacity by 400 per cent between 2018 and 2023. In 2023, the implementation of the Refugee Information System (SIRE) was consolidated, which standardized and automated the registration system and database, ensuring digital file interoperability. This enhancement streamlined data collection, facilitated the analysis of current trends and statistics, and enabled easy access to Country of Origin Information (COI) through automated queries and responses between COMAR and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These innovations have been essential in equipping the Mexican asylum system with the agility to effectively respond in the current context. Additionally, 2023 saw the completion of the digitalization of COMAR's national physical archive. This marks a significant milestone as it speeds up the asylum process, from managing new asylum claims to adopting electronic signatures.

In December 2023, a tripartite collaboration between UNHCR, COMAR, and the National Population Registry (RENAPO) was formalized under the Cooperation Agreement with the Ministry of the Interior, which aims to ensure the right to identity for refugees and asylum-seekers. The agreement facilitates the implementation of a biometric identification system, including identity verification services throughout the asylum process.

Thanks to the interoperability enabled by the SIRE, along with UNHCR's infrastructure support and the donation of biometric equipment, RENAPO can perform identity verification services, address duplicate records, and expedite the issuance of the Unique Population Registry Key (CURP) for refugees. The CURP is the key that gives access to basic services such as education and healthcare. In the medium term, this system aims to enhance access to additional services, such as financial inclusion.

 [Contents](#)

© ACNUR/Isabel Mateos Hinojosa



COMAR staff working together with UNHCR across the country

The SIRE is also interoperable with the system of the National Institute of Migration (INM), which can access certain information from COMAR. This allows for the verification of whether someone has a pending refugee status application and helps prevent instances of refoulement (forced return).

UNHCR continues to provide technical and financial support to COMAR across critical areas such as the accurate interpretation of Refugee Status Determination (RSD) standards, the improvement of the quality of interviews and legal assessments, as well as in preserving the overall integrity of the asylum process. Through technical and operational assistance, including the provision of interpretation services, the development of guidelines for managing case abandonment, and the implementation of procedures differentiated by nationality and applicant profile, UNHCR has fostered a fair and efficient asylum process to meet the specific needs of all people.

4.2 Access to legal orientation and representation

To ensure refugees and asylum-seekers have access to legal guidance, UNHCR facilitated advice through an extensive network of legal partners across more than 30 cities. This network, consisting of 88 lawyers, 54 legal assistants, and 43 public defenders, has facilitated access to the asylum process and essential services for those with international protection needs.

In 2023, the network provided over 238,000 services, ranging from general advice to legal consultations and representation. Furthermore, it took part in litigation concerning non-admission to asylum procedures, ensuring access to national territory, preventing arbitrary detentions, and upholding due process in refugee status recognition.

LEGAL ADVOCATES NETWORK RESULTS



+113,000
LEGAL ORIENTATIONS

+118,000
CONSULTATIONS

+7,000
LEGAL REPRESENTATIONS

+500
LITIGATIONS

The network of allies, comprising 12 law firms, provided training on migration regularization and legal protection for legitimate interest to UNHCR staff, their partners, and civil society organizations. Additionally, it provided consultancy services in family reunification processes for people from Venezuela, Afghanistan, and Honduras.

The Federal Institute of Public Defense, a partner with a network of 300 advisors specialized in human mobility across 26 cities, enabled the expansion of the coverage of legal services to areas that are beyond UNHCR’s direct reach. One key achievement was the case against the detention of people with international protection needs in Matamoros, Tamaulipas, leading to a Supreme Court decision limiting detention in migration centres for administrative reasons to a maximum of 36 hours.

In the academic realm, UNHCR strengthened its ties with university legal clinics, doubling the number of partnerships from eight to 17 in 2023. These clinics not only contribute to raising awareness among new generations about international refugee law but also provide legal assistance focusing on mobility and human rights. In October, the first meeting with the legal clinics was held at the Iberoamericana University in Mexico City, where successful administrative, academic, and legal practices were shared. This pioneering initiative has activated an important network of legal assistance for asylum seekers and refugees, while also establishing for the first time a working group of legal clinics on national territory.

4.3 Access to information

To ensure displaced people and refugees have access to updated and reliable information that allows them to make informed decisions, UNHCR and its allies use a wide array of innovative and interactive communication channels. These range from printed materials, such as posters and brochures, to digital platforms, including social media and audio-visual content, alongside spaces for discussions and social events. This strategy aims to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers to reach a broad and diverse audience, including people of various ages, educational backgrounds, people with disabilities, or non-Spanish speakers.

DERECHOS y OBLIGACIONES de las personas solicitantes del reconocimiento de la condición de refugiado en México

DERECHOS

- 1. No devolución.** Ninguna persona refugiada o solicitante de la condición de refugiado podrá ser devuelta a su país mientras su solicitud es analizada.
- 2. Confidencialidad.** Lo que nos cuentes no será compartido con nadie sin tu permiso, ni siquiera con las autoridades de tu país.
- 3. No discriminación.** No será posible discriminarte por motivos de raza, sexo, religión o nacionalidad.
- 4. Derecho a la información.** Como una persona solicitante, tienes derecho a recibir información sobre tu procedimiento, y a tener acceso a tu expediente.
- 5. Entrevista personal.** Tienes derecho a ser entrevistado por un funcionario de la COMAR, de manera individual y en condiciones adecuadas.
- 6. Intérprete.** Si no hablas español, tienes derecho a contar con un intérprete de tu idioma.
- 7. Gratuidad del procedimiento.** El procedimiento para solicitar el reconocimiento de la condición de refugiado es gratis. Ninguna autoridad debe exigirte pago alguno.
- 8. Revisión.** Si recibes una respuesta negativa tienes derecho a pedir que alguien revise tu caso (dentro de 30 días), incluso 15 días hábiles después de recibir la respuesta para hacerlo.
- 9. Contacto con el ACNUR.** Todo solicitante podrá contactar a la Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados (ACNUR) para recibir información y orientación.
- 10. Representante legal.** Las personas extranjeras tienen derecho a solicitar, en persona o a través de su representante legal, el reconocimiento de la condición de refugiado. Si tienes el procedimiento a través de un representante legal, en los siguientes tres días hábiles debes confirmar tu solicitud.
- 11. Solicitud individual o conjunta.** Si quieres en compañía de tus familiares puedes iniciar tu procedimiento en grupo o por separado. En caso de hacerlo como grupo todas y todos recibirán la misma respuesta.
- 12. Desistimiento.** En cualquier momento tienes el derecho de decir que no deseas continuar con el trámite. Dejamos ayudarte por escrito.

OBLIGACIONES

- 13. Obligación de proporcionar información verídica y completa.** Hazlo con la verdad, y con el mayor detalle posible. Recordá que COMAR no lo conoce.
- 14. Firma.** Si eres el titular del caso debes presentarte a firma mientras estés en el procedimiento. En caso de faltar a Firma la solicitud será dada por abandonada.
- 15. Permanencia dentro del área donde se dio inicio a tu trámite.** Deberás quedarte en el estado (Entidad Federativa) en la que iniciaste tu procedimiento.

GOBIERNO DE MÉXICO GOBERNACIÓN COMAR

[🏠 Contents](#)

To ensure displaced people and refugees have access to updated and reliable information that allows them to make informed decisions, UNHCR and its allies use a wide array of innovative and interactive communication channels. These range from printed materials, such as posters and brochures, to digital platforms, including social media and audio-visual content, alongside spaces for discussions and social events. This strategy aims to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers to reach a broad and diverse audience, including people of various ages, educational backgrounds, people with disabilities, or non-Spanish speakers.

[UNHCR MEXICO. Helps refugees and asylum seekers](#)


In 2023, UNHCR revived its Community Promoter programme that is made up of refugees from different regions who, after attending training workshops, disseminate essential information with other displaced people. These promoters act as crucial links within refugee communities, ensuring more effective two-way communication and understanding of key messages.

Social media presence, notably the Facebook page “Confía en El Jaguar”, broke its audience record. Through videoblogs, live broadcasts, and informational cards, the page reached 4.5 million users (386,000 monthly) and received more than 7 million visits (619,000 monthly), a 460 per cent growth from 2022. Additionally, audience interaction surged by 300 per cent, with over 300,000 annual interactions (28,000 monthly).

To meet the informational needs of those forced to flee, UNHCR and its partners hold information sessions in shelters and community centres, offering materials in various languages. These sessions cover topics like asylum access and protection in Mexico, access to rights, and details on specific processes involving the using of CBPOne and the United States humanitarian parole programme.

[Confía en el jaguar. Facebook](#)


Displaced people made over 35,000 inquiries to the UNHCR Help Desk’s telephone advisory team, of which 99 per cent of were addressed, marking a 140 per cent increase in response capacity compared to the previous year.



Registration centre of COMAR offices in Tapachula, Chiapas state

As part of its digital communication strategy, UNHCR continues to work with the help.unhcr.org website, which facilitates access to essential information about the asylum application process, as well as directories for services and shelters. A notable initiative is the Mexico City “Rights Passport” designed in partnership with other United Nations agencies to inform refugees and migrants about their fundamental rights and where to obtain support.

[Pasaporte de derechos de la Ciudad de México](#)



[Manual de Orientación y Atención](#)



[Contents](#)

Incorporating art into communication has proven to be an innovative, creative, and effective way to convey complex information to a diverse audience in a simple way. To engage children and their families with topics such as exile and enforced disappearance, UNHCR presented the play **“Cosas Pequeñas y Extraordinarias”** (Small and Extraordinary Things) in the south of the country. Similarly, the opera **“De Grillos y Chicharras”** (Of Crickets and Cicadas) invited over 2,000 people to reflect on the plight of displaced people through music.



Photo: Proyecto Perla

These initiatives not only help raise awareness and create spaces for peaceful coexistence but also inform refugees and displaced people about their rights.

© ACNUR/Alejandra Leyva

Chapter 5

© ACNUR/Iwan Stepiens

[Reporte de Monitoreo de Protección en México 2023](#)



Reception conditions and access to services focused on specific needs



UNHCR staff participate in an activity with children during the “Days for Inclusion” event in Monterrey, Nuevo León state.

© ACNUR/David Peinado

The demographic profile of the population in human mobility has shifted from being predominantly working-aged men who arrived or transited through the country, to families leaving their countries in search of protection and a dignified life. Four out of ten people who apply for asylum in Mexico are women, and nearly a quarter are children, which entails greater vulnerabilities and needs.

5.1 Specific protection needs

According to UNHCR’s [protection monitoring report](#)³, 32 per cent of people on the move reported having specific protection needs. These predominantly include single mothers/caregivers (13 per cent), survivors of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse (six per cent), people with

chronic medical conditions (six per cent), pregnant women (four per cent), and people with disabilities (two per cent).

Acknowledging the diverse challenges groups of different origins, genders, ages, and identities may face during their displacement and integration, UNHCR adapts its interventions to meet specific needs. The cross-cutting Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) policy facilitates the development and implementation of accessible responses for those who may be most at risk of discrimination and violence. This is complemented by a Community-Based Protection (CBP) approach that leverages communities’ capacity to identify and address their own challenges, thereby promoting meaningful participation of displaced populations and supporting their empowerment.

³ The protection monitoring report offers a snapshot of the situation of people on the move throughout Mexico in 2023. For this, more than 6.000 representative surveys were conducted, encompassing 15.000 people of various nationalities who are on the move across the country.



© ACNUR/Ivan Stephens

Children participate in the Clowns Without Borders show in CAFEMIN Shelter, in Mexico City

[HelpDesk de mapa de albergues y casas de refugio](#)



5.2 Shelters

In Mexico, shelters frequently operate at full capacity. By the end of 2023, there were nearly 400 shelters across the country. These are in addition to informal settlements that pose significant protection challenges, including insecurity, lack of access to basic services, and health risks. Over the year, UNHCR conducted over 1,800 monitoring visits to almost 130 shelters and delivered around 300 information sessions in roughly 50 shelters, benefiting over 10,000 people. Additionally, about 250 individual consultations were held in 46 shelters, addressing the needs of more than 1,300 people.

Shelters led by civil society and religious organizations play a crucial role, as they offer much more than temporary housing for asylum-seekers and refugees. They provide a roof and protection to those escaping danger while ensuring access to information and essential services such as food, drinking water, and medical care to meet basic needs. In part thanks to the support of UNHCR and its partners, shelters have evolved into

comprehensive resource hubs that offer information, legal advice, and guidance on asylum procedures, along with educational and vocational training opportunities that pave the way to self-reliance. Furthermore, they are also the first step towards achieving durable solutions via local integration.

[How UNHCR supports shelters in Mexico](#)



[Contents](#)

UNHCR co-leads the Interagency Shelter Working Group that comprises the ICRC, IOM, and UNICEF. The group ensures a coordinated approach to shelter management across different reception regions within the country using a digital platform to coordinate interventions and gather information on the characteristics and needs of each shelter. Additionally, it sets interagency protection standards. Based on data collected through monitoring and coordination instruments, UNHCR implements infrastructure improvements, provides training for shelter staff, and donates relief items. UNHCR has formal agreements with several shelters and supports them with staff, work supplies, and operational funding.

To bolster the protection environment in shelters, the “Shelter Protection Standards Traffic Light” was implemented. This tool evaluates adherence to essential standards, including Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), gender-based violence prevention, and child protection. It also provides a standardized method for assessing shelter conditions through a traffic light system, enabling UNHCR and partners to formulate targeted strategies for enhancing protection and allocating resources to where they are most needed. In 2023, UNHCR applied this tool in 102 shelters, focusing on those with the most urgent needs.



accessed comprehensive services in shelters, including accommodation, meals, psychosocial support, legal guidance, and referral to specialized institutions through 16 partner shelters.



received financial support from UNHCR



received support for infrastructure improvement projects

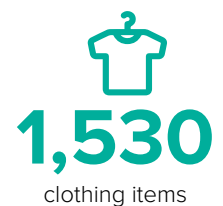


participated in 40 training sessions on international protection, mental health, durable solutions, protections for human right defenders and volunteer programmes



across the country were trained in preventive security tools

UNHCR DONATED EQUIPMENT AND ITEMS TO 89 SHELTERS



Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

To address the psychological consequences of forced displacement, in 2023, UNHCR ramped up its efforts in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS). This initiative has strengthened collaboration with its partner network, including psychologists and social workers, to provide comprehensive support across various locations through specialized teams. UNHCR's experience in emergency contexts enabled it to provide training to subnational state authorities assisting internally displaced people in the states of Michoacán, Sinaloa, and Guerrero, and to offer psychosocial tools to volunteers in the response to Hurricane Otis in the city of Acapulco. Psychological support remains a critical issue that demands increased resources and efforts, given the trauma experienced by those who had been displaced by violence.

Supporting People with Disabilities

Dedicated to the inclusion of people with disabilities, UNHCR has pinpointed the challenges they may face in order to reduce barriers and ensure all work areas are accessible. In 2023, the Mexican Coalition for the Rights of People with Disabilities provided training on inclusion and awareness to UNHCR's team. UNHCR strives to ensure that all people with disabilities have access to vital services and can apply their skills for their own benefit, their families', and their communities'.



© ACNUR/Sergio Ortiz

[Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity Accountability](#)

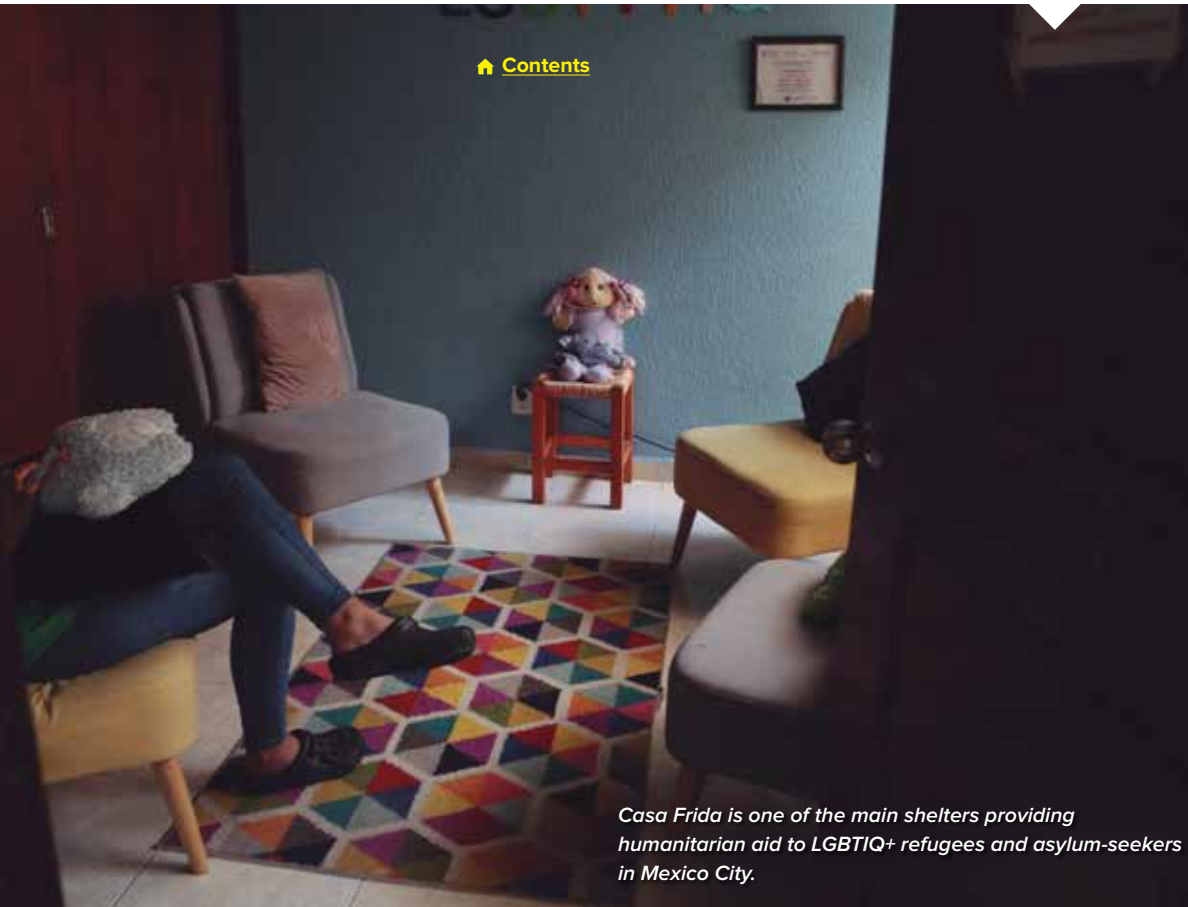


[Informe Discapacidad y Movilidad Humana 2021](#)



[🏠 Contents](#)

© ACNUR/van Stephens



Casa Frida is one of the main shelters providing humanitarian aid to LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum-seekers in Mexico City.

Innovation in Support for LGBTIQ+ people

LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum-seekers encounter specific challenges in their quest for protection and safety in host communities, due to their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). These challenges encompass discrimination, violence, and barriers to accessing essential services.

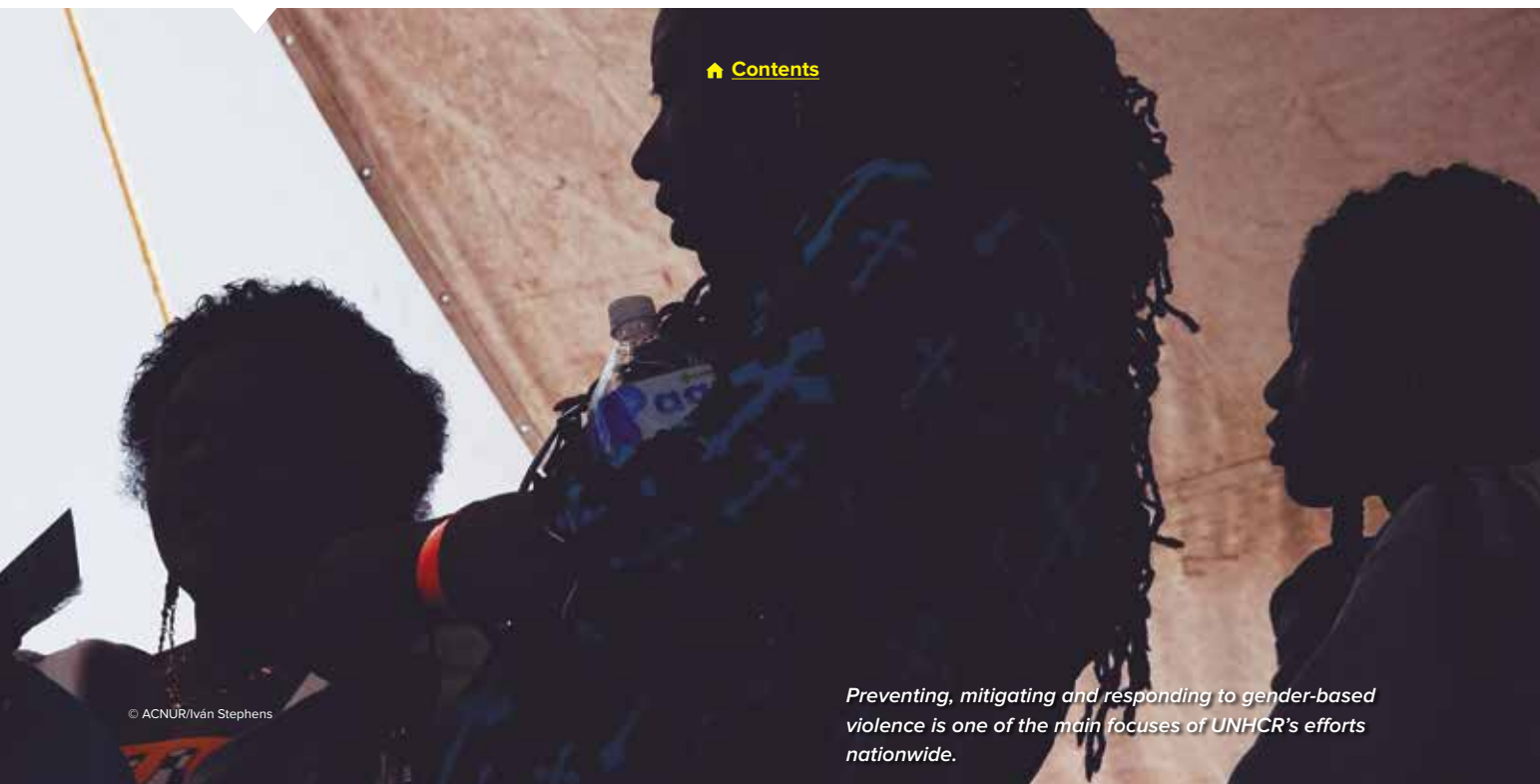
In response, UNHCR and Casa Frida shelter initiated a pilot project and facilitated the relocation of 21 LGBTIQ+ refugees from Tapachula to Mexico City. Through Casa Frida's network of supportive landlords and health centres, the project promotes successful adaptation, ensuring access to essential services and dignified employment in the capital.

[De Refugiado a Refugiado Personas LGBTIQ+](#)



[Protecting persons with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities](#)





[🏠 Contents](#)

© ACNUR/Iván Stephens

Preventing, mitigating and responding to gender-based violence is one of the main focuses of UNHCR's efforts nationwide.

5.3 Preventing, mitigating, and responding to gender-based violence

In Mexico, over half of refugee women reported violence and direct threats as the main reason for fleeing their home countries, which also includes domestic violence. Displacement exacerbates the risk of gender-based violence, particularly when compounded by factors like poverty, the lack of support networks, and xenophobia. In response to the widespread occurrence of gender-based violence in the country, UNHCR employs a response founded on three critical pillars: prevention, mitigation, and response.

1. Prevention targets the underlying causes of the issue: gender inequality, systemic discrimination, and power imbalances between men and women to transform the sociocultural structures that perpetuate gender-based violence. In 2023, 440 staff members of UNHCR, partners, and government officials received training on gender-based violence prevention, ethical case management, and interview techniques to prevent revictimization.
2. Mitigation strategies aim to reduce the risks of gender-based violence across all UNHCR programmes and are therefore incorporated into all collaborative agreements with partners. In 2023, as part of these efforts, over 1,000 dignity kits were distributed that address the hygiene needs of women and help mitigate gender-based violence by supplying resources that enhance the autonomy of women and girls, thereby lessening their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.
3. Finally, the approach of addressing and responding to gender-based violence centres on delivering comprehensive and tailored support to survivors. Services provided include legal assistance, psychosocial support, and medical care, all rendered with the explicit consent of the survivors, prioritizing their needs and well-being. A notable achievement in 2023 was the completion of the Multisectoral Mapping project, which pinpoints available

[🏠 Contents](#)

services for survivors. This facilitated the efficient referral of survivors to services through specialized partners.

Interagency collaboration is essential for the prevention, mitigation, and response to gender-based violence and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation

and Abuse (PSEA) towards people on the move. We strategically advance these issues as chair of the Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Protection Working Group in shelters, co-chairs of the Gender-Based Violence Response Theme alongside the United Nations Population Fund, and through our participation in the Interagency Gender Group.



+700

PEOPLE

sensitized about gender-based violence prevention



+350

ACTIVITIES

aimed at mitigating gender-based violence risks



+1,000

DIGNITY KITS

and service maps



1,528

SURVIVORS of GBV

received comprehensive care

16 Days of Activism

During the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, a global campaign aimed at combating and raising awareness about this issue, Mexico stood out as the UNHCR operation with the highest number of activities worldwide, conducting over **40 events during the 16 days, reaching over 5,500 people.**





“Behind the Scenes” de Sofía sobre lo que hace una persona punto focal de género en ACNUR



© ACNUR/Argentina

5.4 Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

In 2023, UNHCR intensified its commitment to the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) by implementing comprehensive training for staff in all its offices. To broaden the reach and impact of these efforts, the “training of trainers” workshops were conducted in various cities. Additionally, UNHCR took steps to ensure that its partners adhered to the eight fundamental PSEA standards. These actions are part of the “Yo Actúo” (“I Take Action”) strategy, which is designed to heighten awareness among UNHCR staff and partners regarding their responsibilities to prevent, address, and report any incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse.

A total of 750 people received PSEA training from humanitarian actors, who subsequently carried out direct awareness-raising activities within communities and shelters.



Example of a brochure distributed in shelters.

 [Contents](#)


Children participate in the Clowns Without Borders show in Belén shelter, in Tapachula, Chiapas.

5.5 Child Protection

Children in contexts of forced displacement face not only the trauma of fleeing their homes but also the risk of separation from loved ones and support networks, and disruption of their education. These factors make them more vulnerable and exposes them to a range of risks, such as abuse, exploitation, and violence. UNHCR is committed to protecting these children by facilitating their access to essential services and durable solutions, always prioritizing their best interests to secure a brighter future for them, their families, and their communities.

In 2023, UNHCR intensified its efforts to integrate refugee and asylum-seeking children into the Mexican child protection system. A key initiative was the “Global promotion of best practices for children in mobility” project, implemented in collaboration with UNICEF. This project facilitated the exchange of knowledge and best practices among South Africa, El Salvador, Mexico, and Zambia. Additionally,

UNHCR collaborated with partners to provide alternative care services to over 60 unaccompanied children who could not be reunited with family and established a partnership with Fundación Resilis to support independent living programmes for refugee children.

Together with its partners, UNHCR provides case management services for unaccompanied, separated, or asylum-seeking and refugee children at-risk, connecting them to Child Protection Agencies. This partnership facilitated the implementation of a series of psychosocial and recreational activities in 12 child-friendly spaces across Baja California, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Tabasco and Tamaulipas. In these spaces, mothers, fathers, and caregivers not only receive psychosocial support but are also equipped with tools in positive parenting techniques to help prevent family violence.




1,738

MOTHERS, FATHERS
and caregivers received positive parenting tools and psychosocial support



9,378

CHILDREN
received care in safe environments



1,298

CHILDREN
who are unaccompanied, separated and at risk, received support



1,168

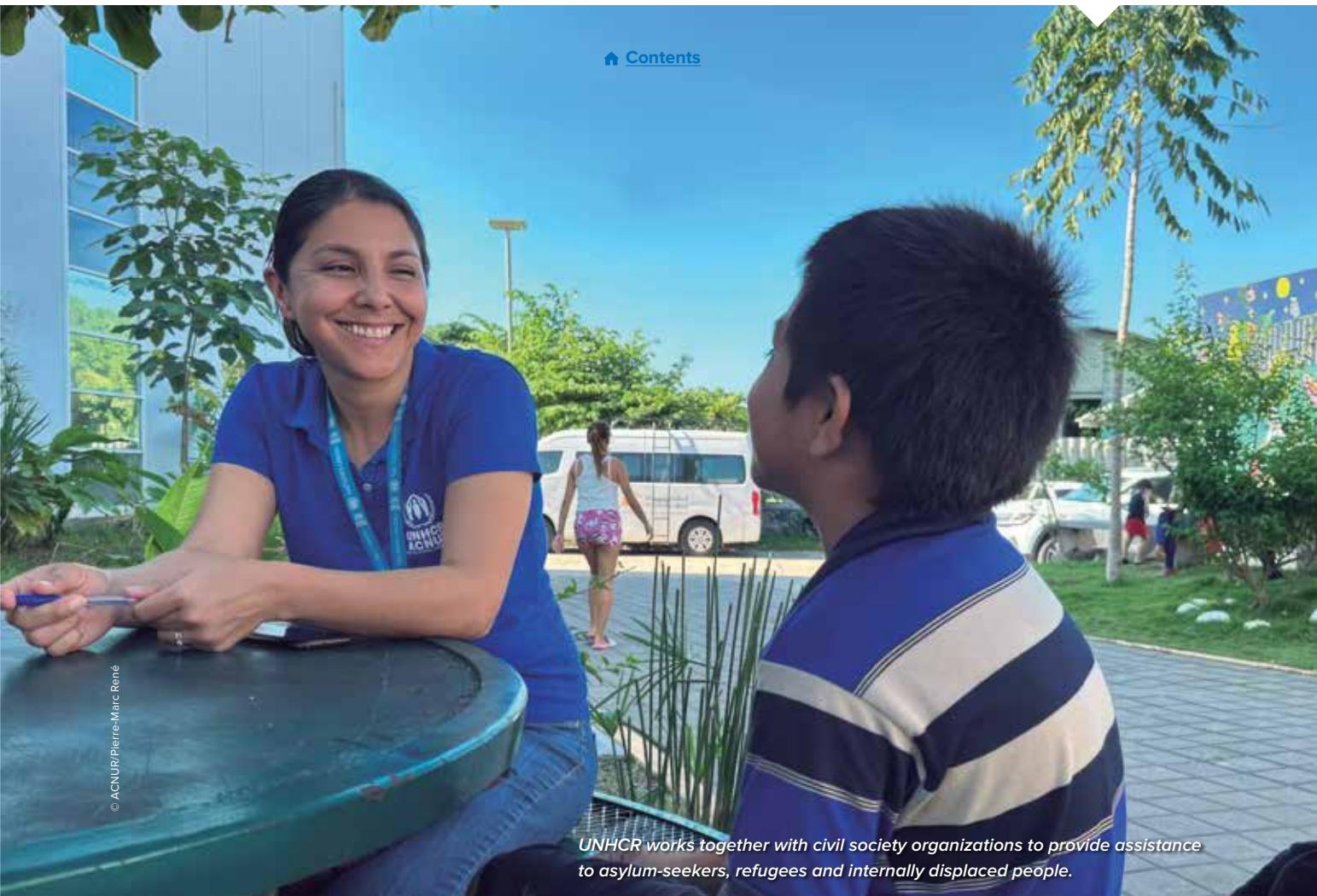
PEOPLE
trained in child refugee protection

[ACNUR – Nuevo Marco para la Protección a la Niñez \(2023\)](#)



[Trabajo de ACNUR en protección a la Niñez](#)





UNHCR works together with civil society organizations to provide assistance to asylum-seekers, refugees and internally displaced people.

5.6 Humanitarian Assistance

In Mexico, UNHCR provides cash-based humanitarian assistance to some asylum-seekers who are in situations of extreme vulnerability. This enables them to independently cover a significant portion of their specific basic needs. Due to the limited availability of funds, only a very small number can access this type of support, that is specifically targeted at those intending to stay in Mexico and who meet the criteria set by COMAR, including remaining within the federal entity where their asylum procedure was initiated.

In 2023, this aid, which can extend up to four months and is subject to monthly on-site assessments, benefited over 16,000 people.

UNHCR maintains strict controls over the eligibility system. Resource utilisation has been optimised through cooperation with other organizations and government entities such as the Ministry of Welfare, using UNHCR-designed tools to prevent duplication of aid and ensure that assistance is allocated only to those not enrolled in government programmes. The Cash-Based Humanitarian Aid Working Group, which expanded its membership from six to 11 organizations in 2023, marks another milestone in improving implementation, as it facilitated the harmonization of aid amounts, promoting coordinated resource management and preventing duplications in assistance provided by different organizations.

UNHCR staff interview a young Honduran mother studying accounting at a technical and vocational training centre in Tapachula.

© ACNUR/Antoine Tardy

Chapter 6

Solutions





6.1 Local integration

UNHCR strives to develop solutions that allow refugees to rebuild their lives with dignity and peace, including through voluntary repatriation, resettlement, and local integration.

True to its tradition of being a host country, Mexico contributed to offering solutions for people forced to flee their countries through local integration programmes that are promoted by UNHCR in collaboration with authorities and the private sector. Within this framework, over 35,000 refugees have found sustainable solutions through UNHCR's Local Integration Programme (PIL), that enabled them to integrate into the formal economy, enhancing their access to educational and healthcare services, and initiating naturalization processes.

The programme aims to relocate and support refugees wishing to move from the south of the country, where the majority of asylum claims in Mexico are filed, to cities in the central and northern regions, which are better equipped to meet their needs. The PIL has revolutionized integration as it fosters effective social, economic, and cultural inclusion, enabling refugees to contribute to the development and well-being of local communities and the country.

The relocation initiative from the southern areas of Mexico to the central and northern regions is crucial as it helps alleviate pressures from labour systems and the limited services in states like Chiapas or Tabasco, while also addressing human resource shortages in central regions. UNHCR provides personalized follow-up for those choosing to relocate, from initial assessment and documentation through to their occupational, social, and educational integration into their new homes. The cities for relocation are strategically selected based on each person's needs and capabilities. The PIL involves preparatory workshops, assistance in finding accommodation, access to education, and support in entering the labour market.

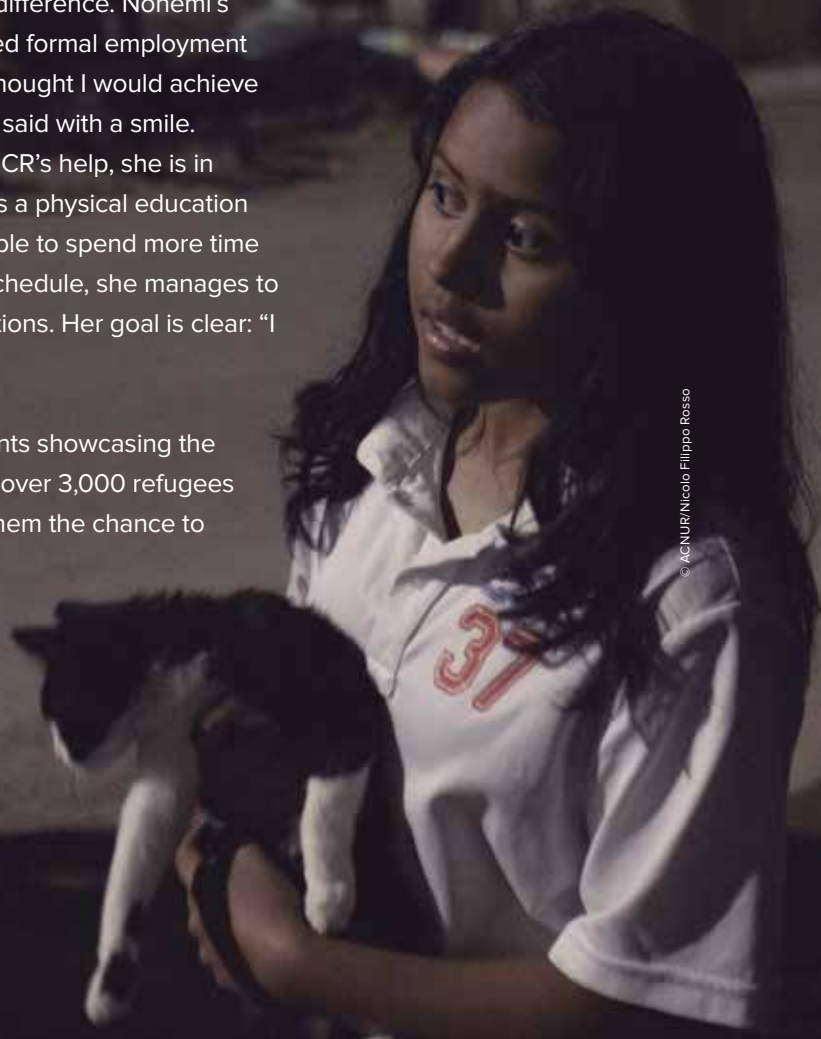
Since its inception in 2016, refugees integrated into the formal economy through the PIL have contributed 187 million Mexican pesos (approximately USD \$11 million) annually in taxes. The first 35,000 people alone generated 178 million in tax revenue, surpassing nearly three times COMAR's budget for 2023. In 2023 alone, over 7,700 refugees embarked on a new beginning thanks to the efforts of UNHCR, its partners, and federal and local authorities.

“ Towards a Better Tomorrow: The Impact of the PIL on Nohemí and Melly’s Lives ”

In Aguascalientes, Nohemí Enamorado and her 13-year-old daughter Melly found protection and a fresh start thanks to the PIL. Fleeing gang harassment after the devastating hurricanes in Honduras in November 2020, Nohemí sought a safe heaven for herself and her daughter. “I heard that Aguascalientes was safe and thought: ‘That’s the place.’ Security was a hundred per cent my top priority,” Nohemí shared.

With UNHCR’s support, they relocated from southern Mexico to this central city, bringing with them hopes, dreams, and the burdens of a past defined by fear and uncertainty. Adjusting to their new home in Aguascalientes was not easy, but the support from the PIL made all the difference. Nohemí’s perseverance was soon rewarded when she secured formal employment at a pharmacy, which filled her with hope. “I never thought I would achieve such a good quality of life in such a short time,” she said with a smile. However, Nohemí has higher aspirations. With UNHCR’s help, she is in the process of getting her credentials recognized as a physical education teacher in Mexico. “If I work in education, I will be able to spend more time with my daughter,” she explained. Despite a busy schedule, she manages to coach Melly in athletics and support her at competitions. Her goal is clear: “I want to stay in Mexico.”

Nohemí and Melly’s story is just one of many accounts showcasing the transformative impact of the PIL. In Aguascalientes, over 3,000 refugees have found a home and a community that offered them the chance to rebuild their lives and pursue new dreams.



© ACNUR/Niccolò Filippo Rosso



© ACNUR/Archivo

In its seventh year, the PIL launched the **#TúSíPuedes** (#YouCanDoIt) initiative in alignment with its Age, Gender, and Diversity policy [[see Chapter 5](#)], aiming to support single-parent families, internally displaced people, LGBTIQ+ people, non-Spanish speakers, elderly people, and persons with disabilities. Over 5,500 people from vulnerable groups have participated in this initiative. Thanks to the collaboration with various entities, specific services were mapped in every integration city to promote more effective inclusion.

- Specialized services, psychosocial support, and opportunities for formal employment and adaptive education were provided to over 760 people with disabilities, in close cooperation with the Mexican Coalition for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (COAMEX).
- Spanish language classes were expanded to seven locations, benefiting 230 people, including those of Haitian origin.
- A specialized integration pathway was designed for elderly people in Aguascalientes that helps them live independently and access medical, economic, and cultural services, directly benefiting them.
- Displaced women within the country were able to join the PIL, which provided them with opportunities to access formal employment, support for their children, and psychosocial assistance.

In-Situ Integration

UNHCR supports those who are already in their desired place of integration. Alongside its partners, it offers assistance that includes home visits and support to accessing relevant services and programmes. Since 2021, over 100,000 displaced people received assistance in more than 20 cities through 300,000 interventions. In 2023 alone, over 74,000 support actions benefitted 20,000 people in cities such as Aguascalientes, Mexico City, Monterrey, Palenque, Saltillo, Tapachula, Tenosique and Tijuana.

To bolster integration, UNHCR strengthened its collaboration with key actors at both federal and state levels, particularly with the National Employment Service (SNE). Three UNHCR-funded positions enabled the SNE to train employees across the country and expedite the process of including information about hiring refugees and asylum-seekers in national-level materials and programmes. In 2023, the SNE and the Resource Centre for Migrant Workers (CRTM) began having a weekly presence at the UNHCR-led multiservice centre in Tijuana to offer job placement opportunities. In all our labour inclusion interventions, we collaborate closely with the International Labour Organization.

[Contents](#)



75%

HOUSEHOLDS

reported access to employment within the first month after arrival



90%

HOUSEHOLDS

indicated that at least one adult is working within six months of integration



88%

HOUSEHOLDS

reported job satisfaction after one month (+8% compared to 2022)



88%

HOUSEHOLDS

Satisfaction remains at six months into the job



50%

PEOPLE

registered by the Mexican Social Security Institute (+14% compared to 2022)



92%

HOUSEHOLDS

reported that all school-aged children were out of school prior to the programme



31%

HOUSEHOLDS

indicate that all are enrolled in school one month into the programme



82%

CHILDREN

of school age are still enrolled in school after six months of the programme



48%

ARTICIPANTS

lived in poverty before relocation. Within the first month after relocation, the poverty rate decreased by 25%



0%

RELOCATED HOMES

had a bank account before the programme



51%

PARTICIPATING HOUSEHOLDS

have a bank account after one month of the programme (+25% compared to 2022)



66%

PARTICIPATING HOUSEHOLDS

have a bank account after six months of the programme



Working with the private sector

Over 600 companies have joined the PIL, marking a 25 per cent increase compared to 2022. Companies committed to the rights of refugees and employing them report lower turnover rates, a diverse pool of talent, and an enrichment of corporate culture. This programme sets an example for collaboration that brings together the public and private sectors, civil society, and the international community.

On 21 November 2023, this synergy was bolstered with the launch of the “Alliance for Inclusion”, in collaboration with MABE, one of the programme’s pioneer partners. The alliance is a platform for dialogue between businesses and organizations, ensuring the private sector’s collective voice champions the cause for refugee inclusion. Its aim is to spotlight and recognise companies committed to adopting and adhering to good-practice inclusion policies, serving as an example to encourage others

to embrace good practices. In collaboration with the United Nations System in Mexico, the Alliance seeks to extend its reach to more companies, aligning its efforts with the principles of the Global Compact on Refugees.

UNHCR has stepped up its collaboration with banks like Banorte, BanCoppel, and Banco Azteca to enable refugees and asylum-seekers to open bank accounts using INM documents instead of passports. This progress is crucial as it allows them to access formal employment, comply with tax obligations, and receive state benefits. Together with the World Bank Office and the International Finance Corporation, we advocate for greater financial inclusion, highlighting the economic benefits of integrating refugees and asylum-seekers into the financial system, while sharing relevant Mexican legislation.



© ACNUR/Toya Sarno Jordan

6.2 Access to education and opportunities

Mexican legislation ensures the right to education for all residents, regardless of their origin or migration status.

Within this context, UNHCR continued to work with partners to facilitate school enrolment of refugee and asylum-seeking children in 2023. Financial support was provided to nearly 3,000 people to cover enrolment costs. Additionally, overseas qualifications of over 190 people were validated, enhancing their employment prospects in fields that align with their previous education.

In June 2023, UNHCR and the Ministry of Education office in Chiapas state formed a partnership to improve educational access for refugee children, which also benefited local communities. Together, we developed training programmes, distributed educational materials and improved educational infrastructure, thereby addressing the specific needs of a region at the

forefront in the response to forced displacement. UNHCR helped over 120 young refugees (53 per cent women) access higher education in Mexico through the Tertiary Education Programme. This year, 38 scholarship recipients completed their studies, and ten new DAFI scholars began their university education in various Mexican cities.

In 2023, UNHCR and the Industrial Work Training Centres (CECATI) strengthened their partnership through collaboration agreement in San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Tapachula, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, and Villahermosa. This initiative boosted continuing education through technical training and the recognition of vocational skills of refugees and asylum-seekers, providing them access to preferential rates for CECATI programmes and promoting employment opportunities and sustainable economic integration into Mexican society.

 Contents


Rahildaris

Roxana



Adriana



Cecilia



Krista



30 YEARS
OF
DAFI

In 2023, **Adriana and Rahildaris, graduates of the DAFI programme in Mexico**, founded the Latin American chapter of the Tertiary Refugee Student Network (TRSN). Founded in Berlin in 2019 by young refugee university students, this network strives to improve access to higher education so that more young people like them can enrol and support the “#15by30” goal. This initiative aims to increase the enrolment rate of refugee youth in higher education institutions from the current seven per cent to at least 15 per cent, representing 90,000 students.

These pioneering young women have expanded the national TRSN, adding 30 scholarship recipients. Among the network’s activities, **Krista, a DAFI student** participated in a workshop on young people in human mobility in the Dominican Republic organized by UNHCR. In December, **Cecilia, a DAFI graduate**, represented young refugees’ concerns at the Global Refugee Forum in Geneva. **Roxana, a Venezuelan graduate in Accounting from the University of Guanajuato**, leads outreach projects at her university, organising talks, awareness workshops, and cultural events to foster understanding of refugee issues within the student community.



Antonio and his family found a new opportunity thanks to the the Local Integration Programme in the city of Saltillo, Coahuila, northern Mexico. In 2023, he and his family became Mexican citizens, thanks to the guidance provided by UNHCR.*

6.3 Naturalization

For refugees, acquiring Mexican nationality marks a significant step towards integration. In 2023, UNHCR and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE) signed a Collaboration Agreement that enabled UNHCR and COMAR to expedite the naturalization processes that had been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. A key advancement was the introduction of a new online pre-registration system. Over

the year, more than 680 refugees initiated their naturalization procedures, while over 600 obtained their naturalization certificates, with UNHCR and its partners directly supporting 222 of these cases. Reducing the fees associated with this process would be a significant gesture, reflecting Mexico's commitment to providing permanent solutions for refugees.

A new home for Antonio

After being forced to flee their homeland of Honduras, Antonio* and his family, were recognized as refugees and decided to participate in the PIL. In Saltillo, the family found new opportunities and a place to call home. Antonio is a dedicated Business Administration student, while his siblings are enrolled in primary school. Their parents have found stability and recognition in their formal employment at the MABE company, thanks to support from UNHCR.

In 2023, they reached a milestone in their integration journey by obtaining Mexican citizenship, solidifying their inclusion in the Saltillo community. This achievement marks not only the conclusion of a chapter filled with challenges but also the beginning of a new phase of active participation in the society that has welcomed them. In 2024, they will have the opportunity to exercise their right to vote in the national elections.

© ACNUR/Archivo



6.4 Resettlement

Resettlement is an option UNHCR pursues for refugees who cannot safely remain in Mexico due to threats to their safety or lives. Aligned with the Global Compact on Refugees and the principle of solidarity between nations, countries such as the United States, Canada, and Australia allocated quotas in 2023 to welcome those in urgent need of protection. In an agreement with these countries, UNHCR identified, interviewed, and

processed the cases of 480 people. The majority of the refugees considered for resettlement were from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. Of these, 54 per cent were women and girls in high-risk situations, including gender-based violence; 22 per cent were survivors of violence or torture, and 27 per cent had other severe legal or physical protection needs. This year, 41 people departed Mexico for resettlement.

Chapter 7

Fostering peaceful coexistence through communication, awareness raising and culture

© ACHUR/Isabel Mateos, Hinojosa

Community mural titled “Tapachula, home, path and shelter” at the Railway Station Community Development in Chiapas.





The student community in Palenque and Tenosique uses computer equipment and educational materials donated by UNHCR.

7.1 Humanitarian-development Nexus

Working hand in hand with host communities, UNHCR aims to promote the acceptance and integration of refugees, encouraging their positive contributions to the societies where they have found protection and hospitality.

Providing the necessary resources and tools to promote resilience and community well-being is particularly important in the south of the country. Here socioeconomic inequalities are more pronounced, especially in Chiapas, the main entry point into Mexico, where the pressure on local services is higher. In this context, it is vital not only to address immediate needs but also to lay the groundwork for refugees to actively contribute to the local economy and social life to foster peaceful coexistence.

The Tapachula Area-Based Approach (ABA) strategy, an inter-agency initiative led by the UN Resident Coordinator with technical support from UNHCR, stands out as a model of multisectoral collaboration that seeks comprehensive solutions for the needs of refugees and host communities, promoting sustainable development. In 2023, a work plan

consisting of 20 new projects was developed in collaboration with local authorities. These projects span initiatives in education, healthcare, reception, employment, integration, and social cohesion.

In 2023, UNHCR donated over 500 computers, along with equipment and furniture, to schools in Ciudad Hidalgo, Palenque, Tapachula, and Tenosique to enhance the educational infrastructure in the southern region. Furthermore, the agency constructed four classrooms and two sanitary facilities in schools.

To bolster support for refugees and the local community in Tapachula, UNHCR conducted five training sessions for 170 social workers, nurses, and doctors at health centres and hospitals. Additionally, together with its partner, UNHCR raised awareness among private sector employers in Palenque, Tapachula, Tenosique, Tuxtla, and Villahermosa about the benefits of integrating refugee workers.

UNHCR promotes harmony between local communities and refugees through awareness

[🏠 Contents](#)

projects and intercultural dialogue. In response to xenophobic incidents in Pakal-Ná, Chiapas, UNHCR's team conducted workshops with 41 local leaders on international refugee protection. The project culminated in a solidarity event and the installation of tourist signs, designed by community leaders and refugees, commemorating World Refugee Day.

Cultural exchange activities serve as a positive force that strengthens bonds of solidarity. Projects involving music, dance, or theatre, as well as activities related to visual arts, enhance community resilience by promoting interculturality as a means for cultural enrichment and social cohesion. In 2023, UNHCR donated a state-of-the-art cinema and multimedia room, complete with internet and air conditioning, to the "Territorio Joven" community space in Tapachula. This meeting space offers a safe environment for entertainment and collective learning, promoting positive social interactions among local young people and those in situations of mobility. In this new room, cinema forums are held

where topics related to forced displacement are discussed, fostering coexistence and intercultural dialogue.

In the north of the country, the agency implemented several activities to promote peaceful coexistence, including donations of materials and furniture to support a community centre in Ciudad Juárez and the Citizen Cultural Laboratory (Laboratorio Cultural Ciudadano) in Monterrey, Nuevo León. At this cultural production centre, both refugees and people from Nuevo León can express their art. The public library in Monterrey, which UNHCR equipped with air conditioning, serves as another gathering place where refugee and local women engage in literary sessions. In Saltillo, Coahuila, UNHCR donated 100 lockers and industrial lamps to the municipal sports field, contributing to a safe and suitable environment for sporting activities of local and refugee athletes.

One of the most impactful initiatives aimed at promoting peaceful coexistence are the



[Contents](#)

“Days for Inclusion and Non-Discrimination” organized by the National Council to Prevent Discrimination (CONAPRED), COMAR, UNHCR, and local governments. These events took place in Aguascalientes, Mexico City, Monterrey, and Tapachula, featuring a wide range of cultural activities, including dances, as well as training sessions for local police, and medical and educational staff to prevent biases.

UNHCR recognizes the transformative potential of the arts as universal mediums to foster coexistence. Accordingly, film screenings, dance shows, concerts, workshops, a digital exhibition, and a multidisciplinary performance were organized in Mexico City.



© ACNUR/Maria Stephane

Teams Without Borders: Sport Unites Communities and Refugees

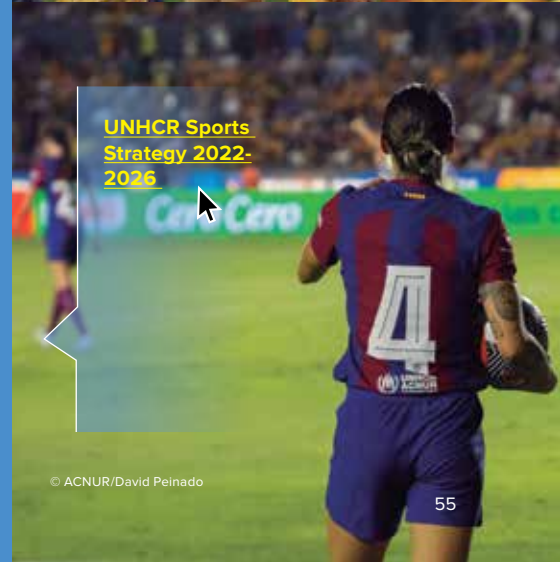
Sport offers unique pathways to strengthen a sense of belonging, overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers. In 2023, UNHCR launched a series of sporting activities and found strategic allies to encourage the participation of refugees, asylum-seekers, and displaced people in sports. Various teams across disciplines joined the initiative, including football teams (Tigres, Rayados, Necaxa and Powerchair), baseball teams (Sultanes, Rieleros, Saraperos and Algodoneros) and basketball teams (Fuerza Regia). These teams integrated refugee children into training sessions

and sporting events, which is crucial for skill development and helps steer them away from risky influences and behaviours.

In Aguascalientes and Saltillo, UNHCR promoted the inclusion of refugees in baseball games, while in Tijuana, it provided opportunities for them to participate in athletic races. Engaging in sports together helps find common ground, reduce prejudices, and forge friendships. Additionally, these sporting events also serve as platforms to raise awareness about the issues of forced displacement in Mexico.



© ACNUR/David Peinado



**UNHCR Sports
Strategy 2022-
2026**

© ACNUR/David Peinado

[🏠 Contents](#)

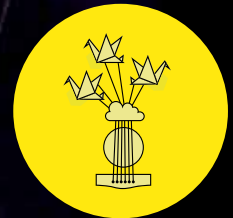
Joined by **Paté de Fuá**, Mexican singer-songwriters **Léiden** and **Ximbo**, and refugee artists **Adriana Figueredo** and **Sayd Hortúa**, UNHCR celebrated World Refugee Day with the traditional “Palomazo for Refugees”. Launched in 2020, this project aims to raise awareness about refugees through music for diverse audiences. In 2023, the Palomazo evolved into a live concert at the Simon Bolivar Amphitheatre of the Old College of San Ildefonso in the Historic Centre of Mexico City. The event attracted 400 attendees and reached thousands more through live broadcasts on IMER and W Radio radio stations, as well as on television on Canal 22.

“

Mexico is a refuge, a country that opens its doors wide and immediately offers you the warmth of home as soon as you set foot on this blessed soil. I would love for the Mexican people to continue this beautiful tradition, and for generations to come, for Mexicans to maintain that generosity that makes this country so great

Yayo González

”



PALOMAZO
por los Refugiados

**Palomazo
for
Refugees
2023**



Sayd Hortúa

© ACNUR/Iván Stepien

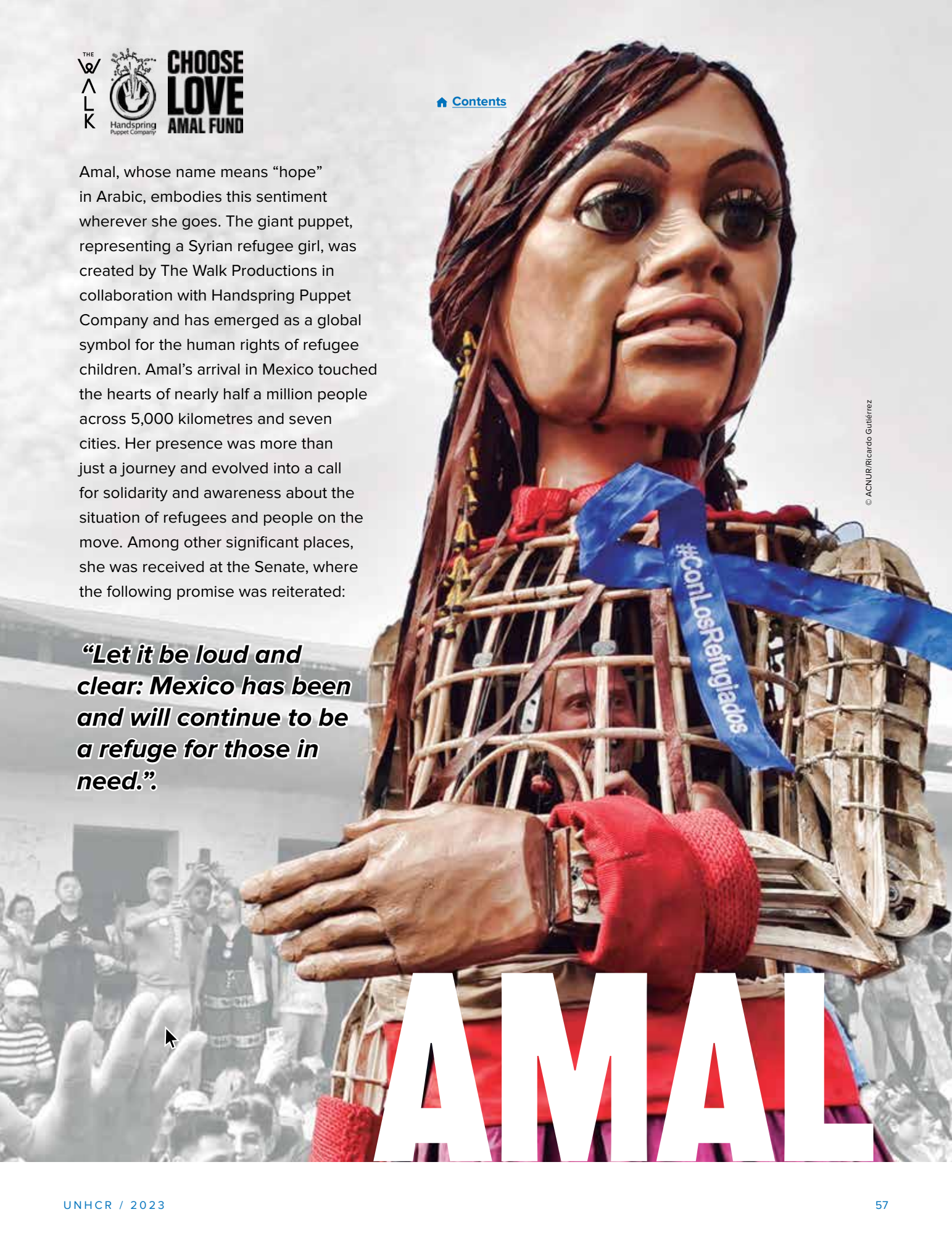
Before performing the popular Venezuelan song “Tonada de Luna Llena,” Venezuelan refugee and internationalist Adriana Figueredo, residing in Saltillo, shared, **“As refugees, we have managed to move forward, and here we are and will continue to be.”**



Adriana Figueredo

Amal, whose name means “hope” in Arabic, embodies this sentiment wherever she goes. The giant puppet, representing a Syrian refugee girl, was created by The Walk Productions in collaboration with Handspring Puppet Company and has emerged as a global symbol for the human rights of refugee children. Amal’s arrival in Mexico touched the hearts of nearly half a million people across 5,000 kilometres and seven cities. Her presence was more than just a journey and evolved into a call for solidarity and awareness about the situation of refugees and people on the move. Among other significant places, she was received at the Senate, where the following promise was reiterated:

“Let it be loud and clear: Mexico has been and will continue to be a refuge for those in need.”



© ACNUR/Ricardo Gutiérrez

AMAL

Chapter 8

Internal displacement

UNHCR's efforts in Mexico also include providing support to internally displaced people who have not crossed any international borders after fleeing their homes.

UNHCR's commitment to providing protection and assistance to internally displaced people (IDPs) spans over fifty years and was consolidated through General Assembly resolutions and its leadership role in the protection sector globally. At the request of Mexican authorities, since the late 2019, UNHCR has worked on the following areas related to internal displacement:

1. Technical assistance for the development of normative frameworks, public policy, and operational tools for the comprehensive support of IDPs;
2. Information management to understand the profiles, needs, and intentions of the displaced population, as well as advocacy for their inclusion in official data;
3. Capacity building of authorities, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders;
4. Encouraging and strengthening coordination spaces both locally and with UN agencies and international actors; and
5. Promoting operational responses and community protection initiatives.

In the absence of specific official data, according to the organization “Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights” (CMDPDH), over 386,000 people were forced to flee their homes due to mass violence events by the end of 2022. This trend worsened in 2023 with approximately 47 mass displacement incidents recorded. According to estimates from the National Survey on Victimization and Perception of Public Security (ENVIPE) in 2023, nearly 700,000 people were forced to relocate due to violence in 2022. In 2023, UNHCR provided technical assistance in developing over 20 tools aimed at addressing internal displacement. At the federal level, the agency collaborated with the Unit for Migration

Policy, Registry, and Identity of Persons (UPMRIP) to create a methodological guide for registering internally displaced people. This guide is designed to facilitate their identification, registration, and case management according to international standards.

In the central state of Michoacán, authorities responded to massive internal displacement events in the communities of Apatzingán within just 48 hours, a significant improvement from previous incidents where immediate response coordination was lacking. This prompt response was possible thanks to the technical assistance from UNHCR and UNICEF. UNHCR provided emergency action standards, helping to establish support pathways, accommodation protocols, meeting basic needs, and initiating psychosocial support strategies. In 2023, UNHCR also continued to offer technical support in drafting the Law to Prevent, Address, and Fully Repair Internal Forced Displacement, which the Interinstitutional Committee unanimously approved for submission to Congress. Alongside the Regional Observatory for Human Security of Apatzingán, CMDPDH, and UNICEF, we trained the Michoacán Human Rights Commission to prepare a report on the issue and develop internal support pathways. In partnership with the Morelia Women's Institute, UNHCR provided training for government and civil society actors on preventing and responding to gender-based violence and PSEA. Additionally, the agency worked with the State Executive Commission for Victim Assistance to create support pathways for internally displaced people, asylum-seekers and refugees.

In north-western state of Sinaloa, UNHCR assisted the Ministry of Welfare and Sustainable Development to create and implement a participatory methodology that aimed at engaging displaced populations in discussions about the legal

framework and assistance programmes related to internal displacement, so as to include their views and concerns. UNHCR provided technical support in developing the registration tool for internally displaced people, in partnership with the Autonomous University of the West, UPMRIP, and COMAR.

In the northern state of Chihuahua, at the request of the State Population Council, UNHCR conducted a mapping of reception and registration procedures for refugees and internally displaced people. The agency also provided assistance in strengthening support pathways and referral processes, as well as for identifying needs and managing data. Additionally, UNHCR and its partners provided training to 13 municipalities in the state to improve their identification and assistance channels.

In north-western Guerrero state, following a request from state authorities, UNHCR provided

technical assistance to improve the regulatory framework, in collaboration with ICRC and UNICEF. Following the damage caused by Hurricane Otis in Acapulco and Coyuca, UNHCR initiated a collaboration with the government to develop support pathways for people at risk of internal displacement.

At the request of authorities in Chiapas, UNHCR and the ICRC developed a participatory methodology to strengthen instruments related to internal displacement in the state. Together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Mexico, we also provided feedback on legislative initiatives concerning the state of Oaxaca.

In the area of information management, UNHCR worked with the National Population Council at the federal level and submitted a proposal to the National Institute of Statistics and Geography



[Contents](#)

(INEGI) to include the identification of internally displaced people in the 2025 Intercensal Survey. This initiative aims to produce official statistics in accordance with the International Recommendations on Statistics of Internally Displaced Persons (IRIS).

In 2023, the Report Characterisation Exercise of Internal Displacement in Chihuahua was launched, featuring the first survey conducted by INEGI on this topic. This report, produced by UNHCR, the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS), and 20 stakeholders from federal and local governments and civil society organizations, highlighted that the majority of displaced people are victims of crime or threats and live in great fear of violence. It also identified that access to accommodation, food, and transportation are critical needs for these people. The report underscored the psychological impact resulting from job loss, lack of income, and separation from loved ones.

Indigenous communities are the most affected by internal displacement, which impacts their culture, identity, and community cohesion.

UNHCR trained over 1,200 people, including authorities, civil society organizations, academia, and others, on the protection of internally displaced populations. The training covered topics such as prevention, durable solutions, gender-based violence, and mental health and psychosocial support at the national level.

UNHCR and OHCHR supported the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced people in conducting an academic visit in 2023.

Finally, UNHCR promoted community protection activities. In Sinaloa, along with partners, efforts were made to strengthen community structures and leadership to enhance their local integration environment.

[Informe de la Relatora Especial](#)

[Informe del Ejercicio de caracterización del desplazamiento interno en Chihuahua](#)

[Política sobre la participación de ACNUR en situaciones de desplazamiento interno](#)

[Principios Rectores de los Desplazamientos Internos](#)

Refugee and local communities join forces in a reforestation initiative in Xochimilco, Mexico City.

Chapter 9

**UNHCR
Operational
Strategy for Climate
Resilience and
Environmental
Sustainability**



Climate change and disaster-induced displacement

[🏠 Contents](#)

Climate change and disasters not only cause forced displacement but also heighten the risks and vulnerabilities faced by displaced people, deteriorate living conditions, and intensify other drivers of displacement, such as violence and human rights violations. Every year, climatic events such as floods, storms, and extreme temperatures displace up to 32 million people. 60 per cent of the world’s refugees and displaced populations originate from or reside in countries most vulnerable to the climate crisis. In collaboration with other humanitarian and development organizations, UNHCR provides assistance to affected communities to increase their resilience and adaptability.

In Mexico, climate change intensifies the factors leading to displacement and can also be a direct cause. Rising sea levels and coastal erosion have destroyed over 60 homes in El Bosque, Tabasco. In response, UNHCR is working with local organizations to develop mitigation strategies in partnership with IOM and OHCHR. According to estimates by civil society organizations, Hurricane Otis **displaced more than 23,000 people**. UNHCR, along with other UN agencies, strengthened the humanitarian response by providing support in temporary accommodation and protection for the most vulnerable. This disaster also shed light on the phenomenon of the double impact whereby people may first be forced to flee due to violence and subsequently due to disasters.

A cross-cutting priority of UNHCR’s work is environmental protection, which sometimes extends to restoration efforts. One such initiative was the reforestation project in Xochimilco, Mexico City, where 200 participants, including displaced people and locals, planted 450 trees as part of the “Days for Inclusion” activities [\[See Chapter 7\]](#).

As part of our efforts related to disaster risks and the resulting displacements, under our 2023 Climate Action Plan, UNHCR advocates for the creation of additional legal frameworks to enhance the protection available to displaced people. To this end, we participate in various forums, sharing our vision on international protection and the effects of climate change. Furthermore, the Internal Displacement Working Group of the Human Mobility Inter-Agency Group provided training to over 100 people, including authorities and journalists, on internal displacement and the applicable regulatory framework.

We are committed to reducing our carbon footprint. To achieve this, we have transitioned our offices to clean energy and adopted eco-friendly practices in our procurement processes. Through the “Green Box” initiative, we installed meters in offices to optimize energy consumption. We also monitor our carbon emissions, waste, and water usage, contributing to the UN’s annual “Greening the Blue” report, which assesses the organization’s environmental impact.

[¿Cómo escapar del cambio climático?](#)





Chapter 10

Funding



© ACNUR/Ziyad Alhamadi

UNHCR team distributes hygiene kits, blankets and essential items to displaced families.

The programmes described in this report, through which UNHCR informs and supports hundreds of thousands of refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced or stateless people, and others on the move, were made possible thanks to the generous donations from governments, funds, the private sector, and individuals who supported UNHCR's work. **In 2023, USD \$61 million were raised**, which were used to save lives and help build dignified futures for people forced to flee their homes.

Funding for UNHCR primarily consisted of contributions from governmental donor partners this year, **representing 83 per cent of the total funds, with the remaining 17 per cent provided by private sources**. Among governmental donors, the most significant contribution came from the United States government. In Mexico, **contributions from private donors reached a significant total of USD \$1.7 million**, thanks to the generosity of individuals, corporations, and religious organizations, including Avon, Soriana, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Donor Testimonial:

“

I started donating to UNHCR out of empathy and solidarity with refugees. Everyone deserves a better future, and many do not have the elementary conditions for it. UNHCR's work worldwide is essential in enabling those in danger to find protection in another country. It is very satisfactory to see the result of its work.

Paola Navarrete, donor since February 2021

”

Thanks to the generosity of people like Paola, we have been able to assist thousands of refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced people this year. You too can make a meaningful difference in the lives of refugees.

Please **DONATE** now



© ACNUR/Andrew McConnell





[Contents](#)

© ACNUR/Nicolo Filippo Rosso

Daysi, a refugee from Honduras, works in a textile factory in Aguascalientes.

The US Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM)

“ In 2023, UNHCR Mexico's efforts were critical in strengthening access to international protection, enhancing durable solutions, and delivering assistance to forcibly displaced populations. Through UNHCR's steadfast support, the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) provided a record number of asylum-seekers with the meaningful opportunity to start a new life in Mexico. UNHCR's Local Integration Program helped thousands to find stability in Mexico's thriving industrial hubs, which welcomed newcomers into their communities. UNHCR advocated with over 600 employers in Mexico, convincing them of the many benefits of hiring refugees, and worked tirelessly with local governments to ensure refugees could



access education and health services. UNHCR's partners provided crucial support to survivors of gender-based violence and helped raise awareness around risk factors. They installed child-friendly spaces in shelters so migrant children could find joy and mental health support through play and educational activities. They shared accurate and reliable messages to combat mis- and disinformation. UNHCR also collaborated closely with the Government of Mexico to develop its ambitious commitments at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, which included innovative efforts to work with local governments on inclusion and protection. For all of these reasons and the results UNHCR has delivered, PRM is proud of its longstanding partnership with UNHCR. ”

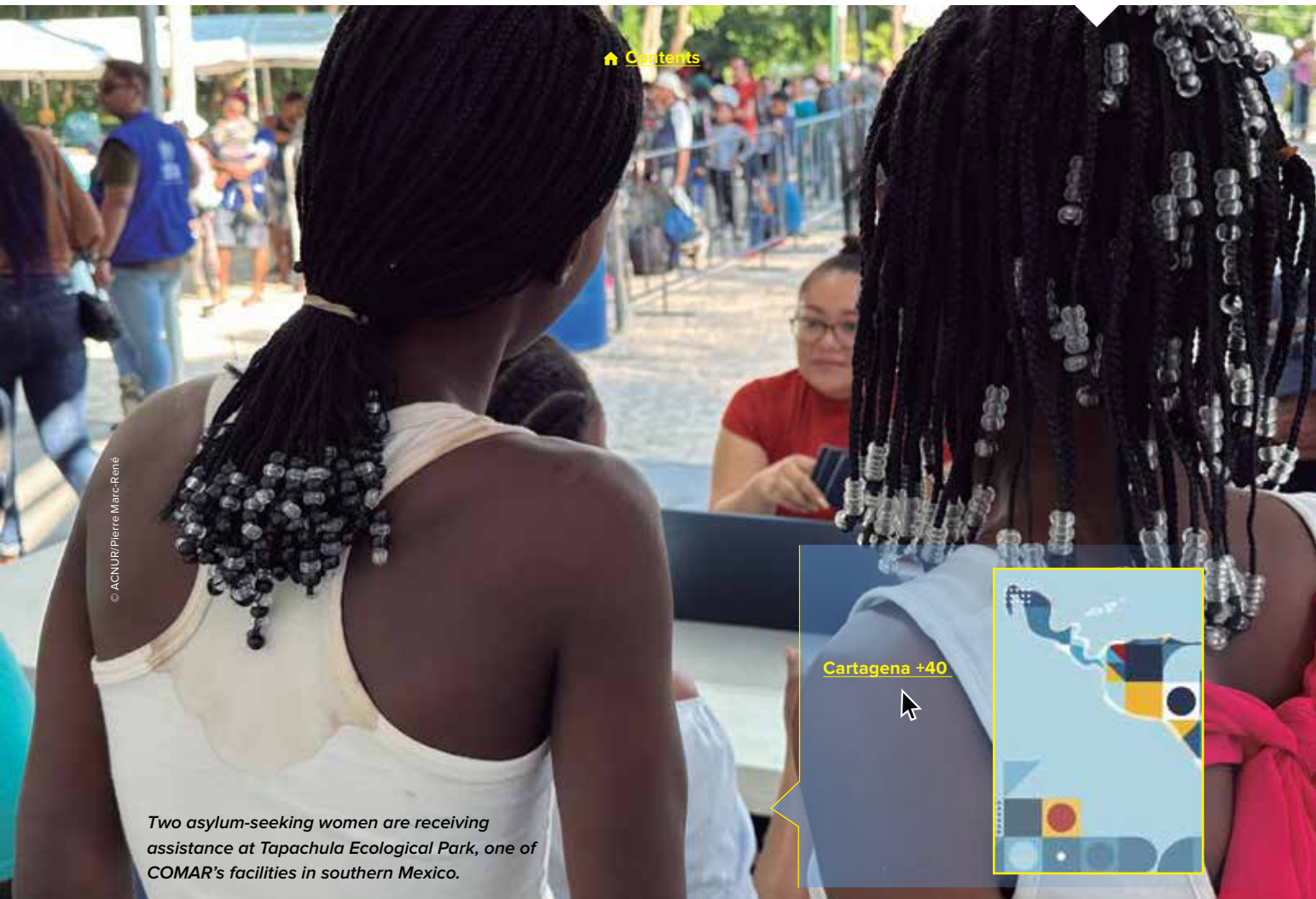
Emily White, PRM, Refugee Coordinator, Political Section, US Embassy in Mexico

Familias reciben atención en un albergue en la frontera norte de México, en Tijuana, Baja California.

© ACNUR/Troya Samo Jordan

Chapter 11

Looking ahead



© ACNUR/Pierre Marc-René

Two asylum-seeking women are receiving assistance at Tapachula Ecological Park, one of COMAR's facilities in southern Mexico.

In 2024, we will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, a pioneering process of regional collaboration and shared responsibility in Latin America and the Caribbean that broadened the refugee status definition and emphasizes the promotion of durable solutions for those needing international protection. As part of the Cartagena+40 framework, countries across Latin America and the Caribbean will convene throughout the year to develop a new regional strategic plan for 2024-2034: the Chile Declaration and Plan of Action.

This forthcoming ten-year plan, which follows the 2004 Mexico Plan of Action and the 2014 Brazil Plan of Action, will seek to tailor the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees while

preserving the spirit of solidarity, cooperation, and the pragmatic vision that has characterized the Cartagena Process from its inception. Mexico will take a leading role by hosting the first round of consultations, beginning with a dialogue on protection. Cartagena+40 represents an opportunity to enhance protection for people on the move, including those displaced by climate change and disasters, thereby reaffirming the commitments made in the Brazil Declaration. This process highlights the need to address emerging challenges and promote coordinated action in the region. UNHCR will support the Cartagena+40 process by providing technical assistance in the drafting of the Plan and through financial support to ensure the presence of key regional representatives in the planning sessions.

In line with this regional effort, UNHCR will continue its close collaboration with COMAR, providing structural, financial, and technical support to boost its capabilities and ensure effective access to asylum. A key priority will be working with the National Population Registry (RENAPO) to implement a biometric identification system that includes identity verification services.

One of the flagship projects for UNHCR in 2024 is the Tapachula Multiservice Centre. This facility will centralise essential services for refugees, asylum-seekers, and others on the move, offering a single location where those who need can apply for refugee status with COMAR, and get information on economic integration, documentation, access to healthcare and education, and more. This will require coordinated efforts from both public and private entities. Additionally, we will continue to enhance support for other multiservice centres like

those in Monterrey and Tijuana, among others. In response to the increasing number of asylum-seekers in Mexico City, which now accounts for 20 per cent of the national total, UNHCR established a field unit at the start of the year, in order to consolidate efforts in the capital and provide a coordinated, localized and effective response.

The third National Survey of the Refugee Population in Mexico (ENPORE) conducted by COMAR, the Government of Mexico's Unit for Migration Policy and UNHCR, will offer a deeper understanding of the demographic and socioeconomic profiles of refugees in the country. This initiative aims to assess their needs, their participation in public programmes and services, and their level of integration within host communities. The findings will provide valuable insights to tailor operations to the specific contexts of those seeking protection.

© ACNUR/Iván Stephens



[🏠 Contents](#)

Amid growing concerns over the global and national climate crisis, UNHCR will enhance its collaboration with COMAR and the National Population Council to ensure the protection of those forced to flee due to disasters, which includes reviewing the legal framework on asylum. Additionally, UNHCR will continue to provide technical and operational support to local and federal authorities to address internal displacement caused by disasters and the climate crisis.

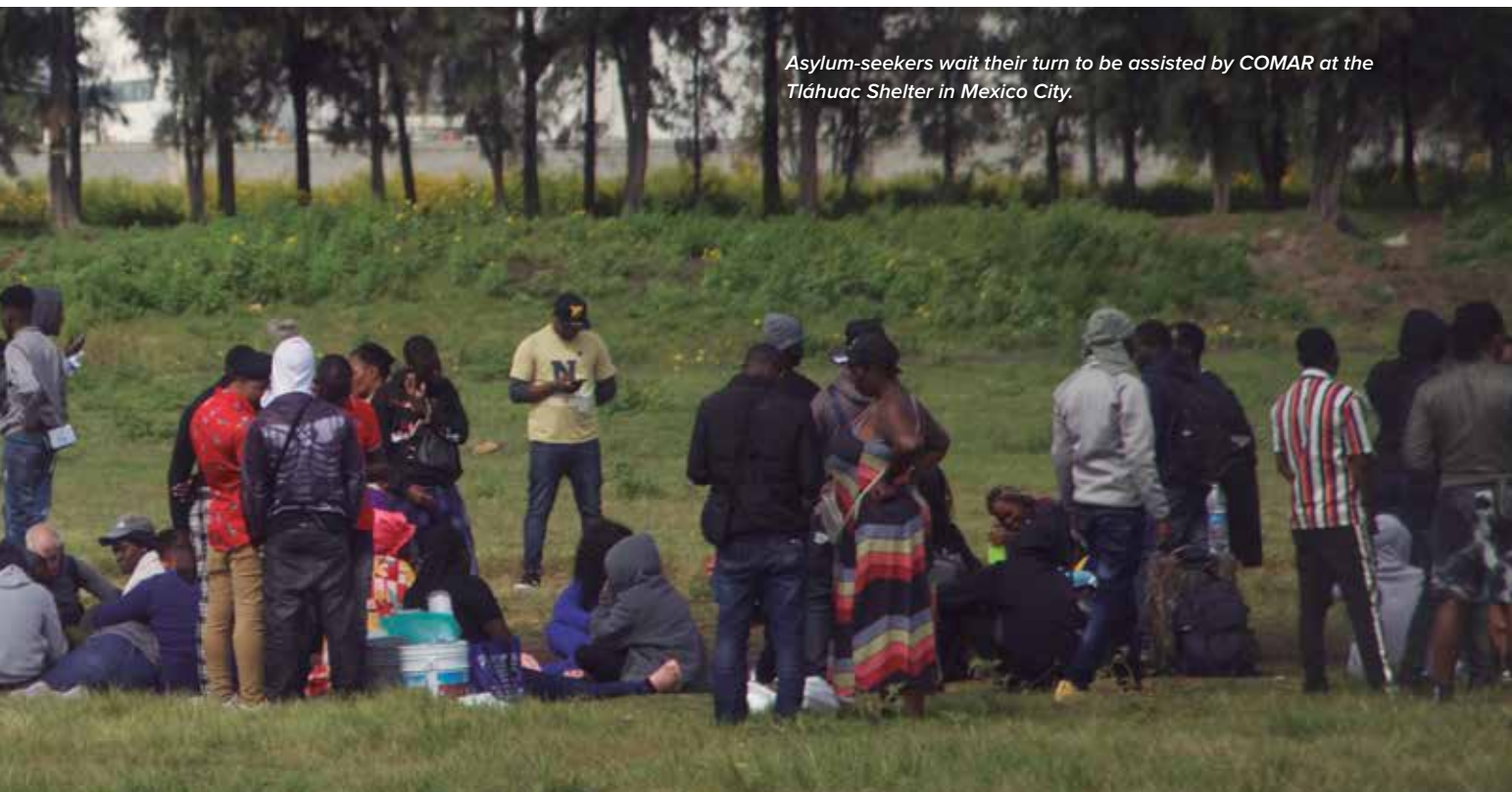
The consolidation of the durable solutions strategy in 2024 will involve expanding programmes to encompass more internally displaced people within the country. It will also strengthen the #TúSíPuedes initiative to offer lasting solutions for people with specific needs, formalizing the expansion of the PIL to LGBTIQ+ people, non-Spanish speakers, elderly people, and those with medical conditions and/or

disabilities. UNHCR will continue collaborating with the Mexican government to gradually transition the integration programme to state authorities, ensuring its sustainability and consolidation as a public policy.

As part of our protection and integration efforts, the Cátedra Sergio Vieira De Mello will formalize the commitment of academic institutions to incorporate the protection and inclusion of displaced people into their academic activities, research, teaching, and community outreach.

This work would not have been possible without the collaboration of all three levels of government, as well as our partners from civil society, academia, UN agencies, and the private sector. We are grateful for the ongoing support as we reaffirm our commitment to continuing collaborative efforts in the future.

Asylum-seekers wait their turn to be assisted by COMAR at the Tiáhuac Shelter in Mexico City.



UNHCR is grateful for the generous support provided by donors globally, as well as those who contributed with earmarked and unearmarked funds to Mexico Operation and its programs in 2023



Private donors Germany | Private donors Australia |
Private donors China | Private donors Spain |
Private donors United States of America | Private donors Italy | Private donors
Japan | Private donors Mexico |
Private donors United Kingdom | Private donors Republic of Korea | Private
donors Sweden

Likewise, UNHCR thanks all our individual donors that every month contribute to our mission.

2023 Highlights UNHCR Mexico

Produced by UNHCR
(April 2024)

Olga is a refugee from Honduras. In Tijuana, Baja California, she has managed to integrate and live safely. Thanks to the “Refugee Kitchen” initiative, she participated as a chef in a restaurant preparing Honduran dishes to commemorate World Refugee Day.

© ACNUR/Toya Sarno Jordan

