



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

LET'S BE HOME

FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T RETURN TO THEIRS

2025
Highlights
UNHCR Mexico



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FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T RETURN TO THEIRS

2025

**Highlights
UNHCR Mexico**

Letter from Chiara Cardoletti

Looking ahead, together with Mexico

Assuming the representation of UNHCR in Mexico in March 2026 is, above all, a profound honour.

I arrive in a country whose work on displacement and asylum is truly exemplary, and alongside a team that faced one of the most difficult periods for the Agency in many years, yet never gave up. My recognition and gratitude to my predecessor, Giovanni Lepri, and to all those who sustained the operation throughout this time are absolute.

I arrive in Mexico at a pivotal moment, one in which we must reconfigure our presence and rethink how to effectively protect forcibly displaced people in a context of limited resources. A country where human mobility dynamics in the region continue to evolve, and where people continue to arrive in search of protection. A country that maintains its position as a destination that offers protection, solutions, and dignity to those who have been forced to flee. At the same time, a country where challenges related to internal displacement, local integration, and humanitarian needs persist. In parallel, the Mexican government remains committed to strengthening its asylum system and to a solidarity-based vision that values the contributions of refugees to their host communities.

As we begin this new year, our operation finds itself in a phase of consolidation. After a year of profound adjustments, our responsibility is now twofold: to reaffirm the stability of our presence and to project a UNHCR that is supportive, agile, and close to forcibly displaced people. To this end, we will continue strengthening partnerships with authorities, civil society, communities, academia, and the private sector, actors who proved in 2025 to be fundamental pillars for protection and integration.

We are also tasked with promoting new forms of cooperation and resource diversification, incorporating innovation, non-traditional partnerships, and sustainable models that allow us to expand the reach of our responses. In a world marked by growing humanitarian crises, creativity and collaboration will be indispensable.

During my first weeks in the country, I had the opportunity to listen to the testimonies of refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced people. Their stories of courage, reinvention, and hope reaffirm why our work matters. They will continue to be at the centre of all our decisions.

2026 represents a new chapter for UNHCR Mexico, one that is built on solid foundations: the dedication of our team, the commitment of the Mexican State, the support of our partners, and the strength of the people we assist. This year also invites us to reflect on the 75th anniversary of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, a reference point that continues to guide our mission to protect and promote the rights of refugees in a global environment where forced displacement persists and underscores the importance of this instrument. My conviction is clear: together, we can continue to strengthen pathways to protection and build more inclusive and resilient communities. I am deeply committed to working hand in hand with all of you to advance durable solutions, expand opportunities, and ensure that no displaced person is left behind.



Chiara Cardoletti
Representative
March 2026

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Chapter 1

Context and regional processes

*Luna and her husband are refugees
from Haiti; today, they've built a life
in San Luis Potosi*



1.1 Context

The year 2025 was marked by unprecedented challenges for the humanitarian response at the global level. Hundreds of thousands of civil society organisations and international organisations, such as UNHCR, were affected by historic reductions in funding for humanitarian assistance. This tested the operational capacity and resilience of those working to protect forcibly displaced people. Mexico was no exception: amid high numbers of asylum applications and growing needs among people forced to flee their countries of origin, budgetary constraints required UNHCR, its partners and key counterparts to concentrate efforts and make the most of available resources in order to ensure the safety and integration of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people.

In recent years, Mexico has evolved from being primarily a country of origin and transit to consolidating itself as a country of destination for refugees and asylum-seekers. Since 2019, the country has registered more than 600,000 asylum-seekers, making it one of the main receiving countries worldwide. Mexico maintains a progressive legal framework in favour of refugees, while strengthening the asylum procedure, promoting local integration and advancing responsibility-sharing in the region. In 2025, more than 70,500 asylum-seekers were registered, almost 50 per cent of which were concentrated in the south of the country, particularly in the state of Chiapas. Mexico City and its metropolitan area also experienced a significant increase, accounting for around 30 per cent of total asylum applicants nationwide.

The operational context was shaped by changes in United States (U.S.) human mobility policies, which led to an increase in deportations and returns to Mexico. In response, the Mexican Government implemented the “[México te abraza](#)” reception strategy, focused on assisting Mexican nationals who were returned to the country. By early December 2025, more than 152,500 Mexican nationals and over 12,000 third-country nationals were [returned](#) to Mexico, mainly to Tapachula and Villahermosa in southern Mexico, according to official Government data. UNHCR stepped up efforts to prevent the exacerbation of existing risks faced by third-country nationals, such as chain refoulement¹. While some individuals opted for voluntary return to their countries of origin, many others decided to seek asylum in Mexico.

In 2025, the number of irregular entries into the country [decreased](#) significantly (87.5 per cent fewer compared to 2024), while the number of asylum applications remained similar to 2024 levels. This indicates that international protection needs remain high and that staying in the country continues to consolidate as a trend. In this complex scenario, Mexico maintained its commitment to solidarity at the global and regional levels, once again positioning itself among the ten main receiving countries for people forced to flee.

According to UNHCR’s Protection Monitoring, 80 per cent of people in human mobility surveyed reported fleeing due to persecution or generalised violence, and the same percentage indicated that they would face serious risks if required to return to their country of origin. Through participatory consultations, they shared that the main challenges

¹ Chain refoulement occurs when a person is expelled to a country from which they may subsequently be transferred to another territory where their life or freedom would be at risk, or where they may face persecution or serious human rights violations. This practice contravenes the principle of non-refoulement recognised under international refugee law. Read more at: <https://help.unhcr.org/global/rights-and-duties/>

they face are access to the asylum system, delays in procedures, and barriers to accessing documentation and, consequently, basic services. They expressed greater concern regarding risks of discrimination, gender-based violence and insecurity.

The reduction in UNHCR funding resulted in decreased support to the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR), directly impacting its operational capacity. The Government of Mexico increased COMAR's budget, demonstrating a commitment to the protection of people fleeing their countries. Even with this unprecedented measure

and UNHCR's prioritised support, resources remain limited to respond to the thousands of people seeking international protection in the country. Asylum-seekers reported long waiting periods and delays in accessing documentation, which can expose them to security risks and limit access to basic services and rights, such as formal employment. This particularly affects people in vulnerable situations and non-Spanish speakers due to language barriers. Delays affecting asylum-seekers and refugees contributed to prolonged stays in shelters in southern Mexico, where opportunities are limited and protection risks are heightened.



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.

Refugees and migrants often travel together. However, these two groups are governed by different legal frameworks and refugees have more far-reaching rights, e.g. the right of non-refoulement. Treating both groups the same could have serious consequences for the lives and safety of those fleeing persecution or conflict, as refugees are protected under international refugee law.

UNHCR Mexico presence



Country Office

1. Mexico City

Sub-Offices

2. Monterrey
3. Tapachula

Field Units

4. Mexico City
5. Aguascalientes
6. San Luis Potosi
7. Tijuana
8. Villahermosa
9. Saltillo

UNHCR Presence

10. Guadalajara
11. Ciudad Juarez
12. Tuxtla Gutierrez

UNHCR liaison officers on internal displacement

- Chihuahua (Chihuahua, Cd. Juarez, Parral)
- Guerrero (Acapulco & Chilpancingo)
- Michoacan (Morelia)
- Oaxaca (Oaxaca de Juarez)



© UNHCR/Pierre-Marc Rene

2025 was marked by the largest funding cuts in UNHCR's history, which led to a reduction of nearly 60 per cent in its operational capacity, limiting the humanitarian response and the availability of essential services, and affecting those facing specific protection needs, such as children, women, older persons and persons with disabilities. By the end of the year, UNHCR had reduced its presence to 11 locations and its support to 10 partners, compared to 13 locations and 34 partners in 2024. As part of the internal restructuring, four field offices closed and hundreds of colleagues lost their jobs, resulting in additional challenges in direct service delivery capacity and in the continuity of protection programmes.

The south of the country continued to be the main reception point for asylum-seekers, while also becoming the primary destination for deportees and returnees, with an unprecedented concentration in Chiapas and Tabasco. In 2025, it was reported that more than 30,000 Mexican nationals received assistance at the Centres for Assistance to Repatriated People (CAPRE) in Tapachula and Villahermosa as part of the México te Abraza strategy. In the case of returned foreign nationals, UNHCR emphasised the importance of conducting individualised protection assessments to prevent situations of chain refoulement. In addition, the region accounted for 58 per cent of all asylum applicants nationwide in Mexico, from more than

70 nationalities. Pressure on shelters, public services and local communities remained high, while the reduction in operational staff and delays in documentation increased protection risks for newly arrived individuals, particularly unaccompanied children, pregnant women, older persons and persons with disabilities. The complexity in Chiapas is even greater when considering that it is the state with the highest number of internally displaced people in Mexico, accounting for more than 60 per cent of the national total.

Central Mexico consolidated its role as a reference region for the local integration of refugees. Through work with state and municipal governments, universities, civil society organisations and nearly 180 solidarity-based companies, local capacities were strengthened, enabling access to rights (documentation, education, health, employment and housing) to take place in an agile and organic manner. States such as Aguascalientes, Guadalajara and San Luis Potosí provided substantial support in essential procedures such as driver’s licences, access to school enrolment, recognition of studies and access to specialised health services, as well as the formal hiring of refugees. This was made possible through strategic agreements signed with state governments, municipalities, educational institutions and public bodies, as well as through the promotion of UNHCR’s private-sector engagement strategy under the Alliance for Inclusion. Despite these positive advances, UNHCR had to close its office in Guadalajara, leaving a reduced presence in the city, which translates into lower assistance capacity.

In Mexico City, a 65 per cent increase compared to 2024 was observed in the number of asylum-seekers and in the length of stay of the population, consolidating the capital as a destination city due to its availability of services and employment opportunities. This change, together with funding cuts, placed significant

pressure on the asylum system, the shelter network, legal accompaniment and access to housing, and highlighted the need for a coordinated, protection-based response to prevent risks such as exposure to trafficking networks, extortion and theft.

In the north of the country, a decrease was recorded in the number of new arrivals of people in an irregular situation. However, in locations such as Monterrey and Tijuana, the number of asylum applicants increased by more than 50 per cent compared to 2024. These are people who see Mexico as the only solution to save their lives. According to figures from the Migration Policy, Registration and Identity of Persons Unit (UPMRIP), Tamaulipas was the state that received the highest number of returnees (more than 39,300), followed by Sonora (17,500), Baja California (16,500), Chihuahua (16,100) and Tabasco (13,100), which increased pressure on local systems in a region that also received internally displaced people. In addition, budget cuts forced the closure of legal assistance, protection and education programmes.

1.2 Inter-agency coordination and regional processes

UNHCR’s inter-agency work in Mexico has had a significant impact on strengthening the national and territorial response to human mobility, through sustained coordination among humanitarian and development actors and government authorities. Within the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2026–2031, UNHCR provides technical support to key processes aimed at strengthening the asylum system, improving inter-institutional coordination along priority routes and territories, and promoting differentiated protection responses for refugees, asylum-seekers and other populations in mobility. This inter-agency approach has made it possible

to integrate human mobility as a cross-cutting development priority, aligning actions with the Government of Mexico's National Development Plan and the 2030 Agenda, and facilitating the adoption of sustainable solutions based on rights, social cohesion and socio-economic inclusion.

UNHCR plays a strategic role in Mexico by co-leading the Inter-Agency Group on Human Mobility (GIMH, for its acronym in Spanish) together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), coordinating efforts among 10 United Nations Agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), non-governmental organisations and multiple working groups on protection, internal displacement, violence against women and girls, shelters, integration and socio-economic inclusion. Inter-agency work has enabled a shift from fragmented responses to more comprehensive and territorial models, maximising the collective impact of the United Nations in Mexico and reinforcing the humanitarian-development nexus in contexts of high mobility.

a. Comprehensive Regional Protection and

Solutions Framework (MIRPS)

Countries participating in the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) continued to strengthen national and regional capacities to provide a comprehensive response to displacement in Central America and Mexico. This year, Mexico led the Regional Technical Team on Employment and Livelihoods, which updated an analysis of profiles and specific needs of refugees and displaced people, with the aim of facilitating their inclusion in public employment systems. In addition, in partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO), progress was made in strengthening training, certification and skills recognition services managed by the relevant governing bodies.

The Association of Nicaraguans in Mexico led the regional coordination of the MIRPS Civil Society Dialogue Mechanism. In 2025, the MIRPS Dialogue Mechanisms for Academia and the Private Sector were established.



Comprehensive
Regional Protection
and Solutions
Framework (MIRPS)



At the Global Refugee Forum, Krista Rivas, representative of the Tertiary Refugee Student Network, highlights the leadership of refugees and displaced people in Latin America.

To learn more about the progress on the pledges presented at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum



© UNHCR/Anne-Laure Lech

b. Global Refugee Forum Progress Review

The Global Refugee Forum Progress Review (GRF) was the second high-level officials’ meeting and brought together 1,500 participants from around the world.

The meeting made it possible to monitor progress on the pledges presented to the GRF in relation to the Global Compact on Refugees. It also provided a platform for dialogue among governments, international organisations, civil society, the private sector, academia, faith-based organisations and forcibly displaced people. Discussions focused on strengthening support for refugees and host communities, as well as accelerating the implementation of existing commitments under the Global Compact on Refugees.

The Government of Mexico shared experiences on responding to and managing mixed

movements, highlighted the importance of responsibility-sharing, and presented asylum and integration strategies implemented at both the federal and local levels. Key civil society actors and refugee-led organisations participated, including the Dialogue Mechanism between Refugee-Led Organisations and UNHCR Mexico (MERLOS Mx, for its acronym in Spanish), the Tertiary Education Refugee Student Network (TRSN) in Latin America, and the Articulating Group of Refugee-Led Organisations in Latin America (GARLOS, for its acronym in Spanish).

The MIRPS Civil Society Dialogue Mechanism presented a commitment to design a regional strategy to document good practices and evidence in asylum, focusing on economic inclusion and access to asylum procedures, with the aim of developing recommendations for States.

The Mexican private sector was placed in the spotlight, as UNHCR awarded the Nansen Refugee Award for the Americas to Pablo Moreno Cadena, a senior executive at the Mexican company MABE, who has expanded opportunities for the labour inclusion of refugees in Mexico. This milestone highlights the significant transformative potential of the private sector to generate innovative and sustainable solutions in contexts of forced displacement.

Winner of the 2025 Nansen Award



“

Receiving the Nansen Refugee Award is a great personal honour and a profound recognition of the journey we have travelled together—refugees, institutions, governments and those in the private sector who chose not to look away and instead believe in second chances

”

Pablo Moreno, General Director of Corporate Affairs at Mabe



© UNHCR/Amé-Laurie Lech

NANSEN REFUGEE AWARD

Pablo Moreno Cadena receives the Nansen Refugee Award for the Americas.



© UNHCR/Jeoffrey Guillamaid

c. Cartagena +40

The Government of Mexico assumed the Vice-Presidency of the Monitoring and Coordination Mechanism of the Chile Action Plan (PAC, for its acronym in Spanish) for the 2025–2027 period, committing to carry out this role with the professionalism and spirit of integration that characterise it. Mexico’s participation will strengthen existing ties and contribute significantly to achieving the regional objectives set for the 2024–2034 decade.

In November, the First Meeting of the Support Platform for the PAC was held virtually, bringing together more than 200 participants to address issues related to protection, comprehensive solutions and displacement caused by disasters. Mexico was represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, COMAR and the Government of Mexico City, alongside civil society, academia and refugee-led organisations.

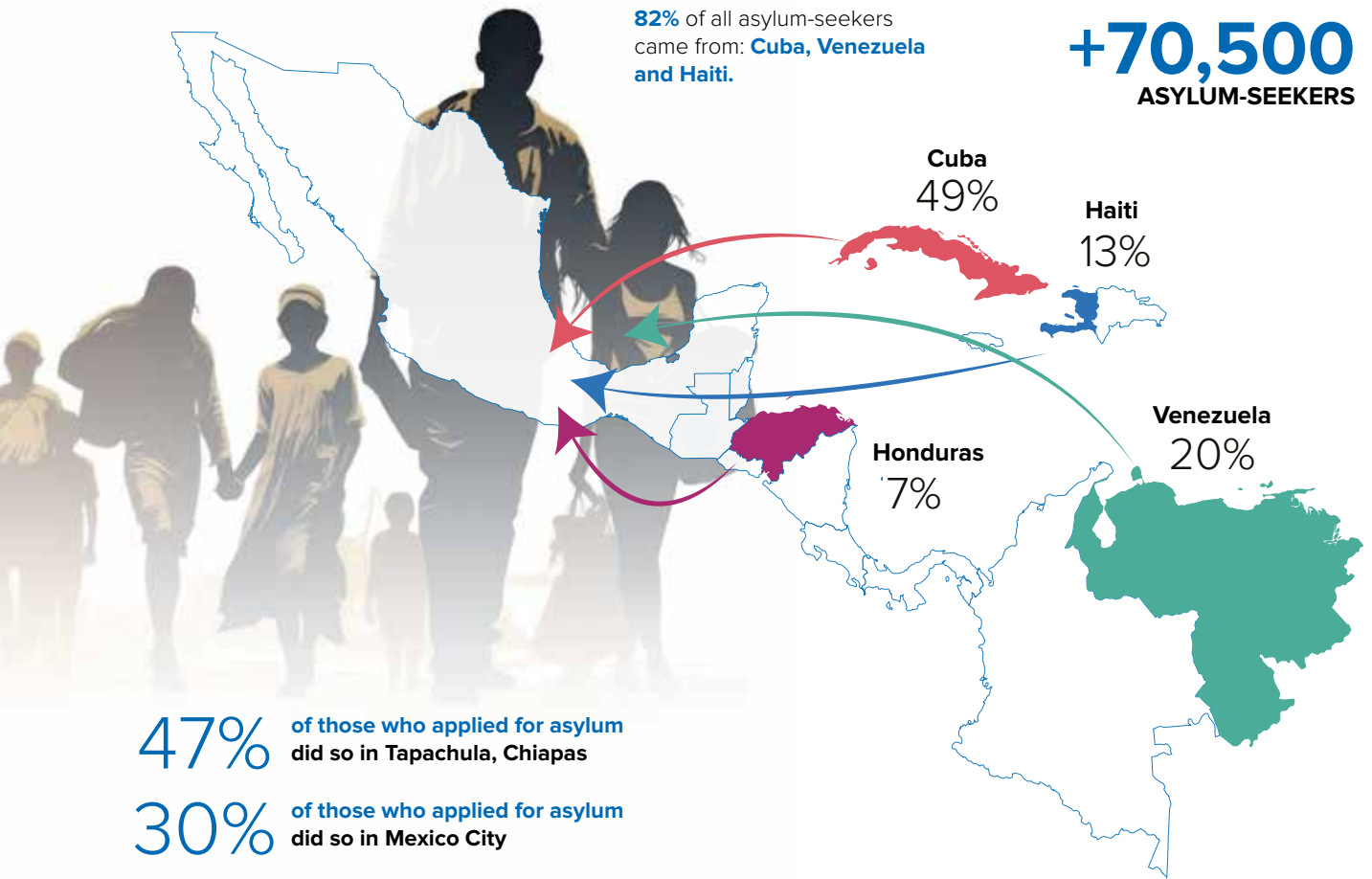
FEMSA and MABE, private sector companies that participated in the preparatory process for Cartagena +40, reaffirmed their commitment to support the PAC’s “Inclusive Employment” and “Solidarity Enterprises” programmes. These initiatives aim to promote access to labour markets, employment opportunities and decent work. Both companies shared their technical experience in the

recruitment of refugees in Mexico and the potential replication of these models in other countries of the region, in support of the Regional Network of Solidarity Enterprises initiative.

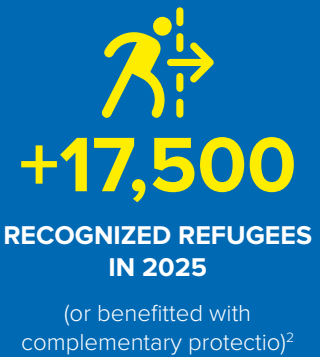
d. UN Cooperation Framework 2026–2031

The United Nations Cooperation Framework 2026–2031 is the final framework before the target date for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Within it, human mobility is operationalised through specific actions aimed at strengthening the asylum system and international protection in Mexico. In this context, UNHCR leads and provides technical support for strengthening institutional capacities for registration, refugee status determination and effective access to rights; improving inter-institutional coordination mechanisms along priority routes and in priority territories; developing information systems and data analysis for evidence-based decision-making; and implementing differentiated protection responses for refugees, asylum-seekers and other populations on the move with specific needs. In addition, UNHCR promotes coordination among humanitarian and development actors and local authorities to advance sustainable solutions, socio-economic inclusion and social cohesion, in line with the principle of non-refoulement and Mexico’s international commitments.

1.3 UNHCR Mexico at a glance



PROFILE OF NEW ASYLUM-SEEKERS



² Of the cases assessed by COMAR this year, these accounted for 70 per cent of substantive decisions.

COMMUNICATION WITH COMMUNITIES



+15,700

INQUIRIES

were handled through UNHCR's
Help Desk



+166,900

USERS

per month were reached through the
"Confía en el Jaguar" Facebook page



+6.5 M

CONTENT VIEWS

during the year



+61,300

INTERACTIONS

during the year



+241,200

VISITS

to the UNHCR help page

LEGAL ASSISTANCE



100,000

LEGAL ACCOMPANIMENT SESSIONS

provided (including legal orientation,
counselling and legal representation)



+4,000

PEOPLE

received **140 capacity-building sessions**, delivered by **10 lawyers**
and more than **20 allied law firms**



130

LEGAL CONSULTATIONS

on tax, administrative, labour, criminal
law, among other areas



470 CASES resolved
4 LEGAL GUIDES were created
+10 awareness-raising **EVENTS**



8 PARALEGALS
+40 PUBLIC DEFENDERS
specialized in human mobility



35 active **LAW CLINICS** that
supported more than **+3,600**
CASES involving people with
international protection needs

COMMUNITY PROTECTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED PEOPLE



+680

REFUGEES, ASYLUM-SEEKERS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOST COMMUNITY

formed part of UNHCR's participatory assessments



+320

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE

participated in participatory assessments in Baja California, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Guerrero, Michoacan, Oaxaca and Sinaloa



+75

REPORTS

received through the community feedback and complaints mechanism, of which **+95%** were resolved by UNHCR



38

ORGANISATIONS

including those led by women (WLOs), refugees (RLOs) and internally displaced people (IDP-LOs), were identified and supported nationwide, with **5 SUPPORTED** through grant agreements and one organisation led by internally displaced people supported in its legal establishment



26

COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS

with a displacement background carrying out local-level community and protection actions, supported by UNHCR

CHILD PROTECTION



+470

CHILDREN AT RISK

received support through specialised case management



+3,300

CHILDREN

participated in psychosocial and recreational activities in safe spaces



+1,060

MOTHERS, FATHERS AND CAREGIVERS

received positive parenting tools and psychosocial support



+1,000

UNHCR STAFF, GOVERNMENT PARTNERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS

received specialised training in child protection

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: PREVENTION, MITIGATION AND RESPONSE



+1,800

WOMEN AND GIRL SURVIVORS

of violence received specialised assistance from UNHCR and partners



+1,200

STAFF MEMBERS

from partners, the government and UNHCR received training on gender-based violence prevention and response mechanisms and on PSEA



+1,100

ASYLUM-SEEKERS, REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE

were sensitised on the prevention of violence against women and girls

RECEPTION CONDITIONS AND SUPPORT FOR SHELTERS



+24,000

PEOPLE

accessed comprehensive assistance and accommodation in **28 SHELTERS** supported through funding provided via partner organisations



+13,500

PEOPLE

received legal assistance in partner shelters



+200

IN-PERSON UNHCR MONITORING VISITS

were conducted in shelters, during which protection risks were identified and comprehensive information was provided to the people we serve



+400

SHELTER WORKERS

participated in training initiatives on international protection, mental health and durable solutions



+110,000

CORE-RELIEF ITEMS

were distributed in **48 SHELTERS** nationwide

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT



50

INSTRUMENTS

including laws, public policies, protocols and identification tools on internal displacement, were supported by UNHCR in 2025.



+14,900

PROTECTION SERVICES

were provided to internally displaced people by authorities and civil society organisations



5,000

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE

received assistance from the Government of Chihuahua during 2025, thanks to the Emergency Response Protocol, which facilitated coordination among government institutions

LOCAL INTEGRATION



+4,000

REFUGEES

chose to relocate as part of Mexico's Local Integration Programme (LIP) in 2025, bringing the total to **+53,300 PARTICIPANTS** since the programme's inception in 2016



+5,300

REFUGEES

already present in their cities of integration received support, reaching a total of **+119,000 PEOPLE** supported since 2021



240

PRIVATE COMPANIES

partnered with UNHCR and employed refugees in 2025



320

REFUGEES

initiated their naturalisation process and **360** received their certificates in 2025



260

ASYLUM-SEEKERS

received support to facilitate the processing of their Federal Taxpayer Registry in coordination with the Tax Administration Service



+13,170

BANK ACCOUNTS

opened for refugees and asylum-seekers

EDUCATION



+1,020

ASYLUM-SEEKING AND REFUGEE CHILDREN

received support to enrol in school



+50

ASYLUM-SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

enrolled in technical training or labour skills certification programmes



+70

REFUGEE STUDENTS

received scholarships for university studies, and **+30 RECEIVED SUPPORT** to initiate their university degree completion process



180

PEOPLE

received assistance for the recognition of their academic credentials



+80

SUPPORTS

for technical training, including **+60 SCHOLARSHIPS** for Spanish language courses with UNAM’s Teaching Centre for Foreigners



+160

PEOPLE

received support for the recognition and validation of studies

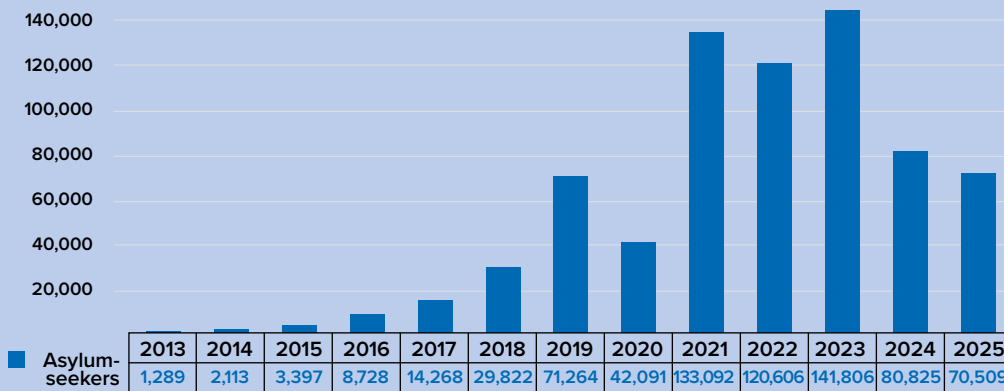


4

MEETINGS AND DIALOGUE SPACES

were held with refugee scholarship holders in Mexico City, Guadalajara, Monterrey and Tapachula

Asylum-seekers, 2013 - 2025



In 2025
+70,500
asylum-seekers were registered

COMAR 2026

Preliminary figures. Prepared by COMAR’s Analysis and Statistics Unit, based on SIRE 2013–2025.



Chapter 2

Ensuring the right to international protection, **legal assistance and information**

Greissy, a Venezuelan refugee, watering the plants in her living room at her new home in Guadalajara.

© UNHCR/Karla Torres



2.1 Access to asylum

By mid-2025, the Americas were home to 21.8 million forcibly displaced people, representing one in every six worldwide. Of this total, 9.5 million were internally displaced people, 4.6 million were asylum-seekers, 1.4 million were refugees, and 6.1 million were other people with international protection needs.³

In this context, Mexico consolidated its role as a key country of asylum for those seeking international protection, reinforcing its commitment to ensuring access to this right. By the end of the first half of the year, the country ranked as the eighth largest recipient of new asylum-seekers worldwide and the first in Latin America.

In collaboration with partners, UNHCR conducted the Protection Monitoring survey and interviewed more than 2,500 refugees and migrants in Mexico to better understand their profiles and protection needs. Eight out of ten reported having fled due to persecution or generalised violence, representing a significant increase in this trend compared to previous years, and stated that they would face serious risks if they were to return to their country of origin, primarily due to direct threats or persecution (69 per cent). For the first time, Mexico was identified as the main country of destination by more than half of those interviewed (55 per cent), surpassing the United States (41 per cent). At the same time, risks remain significant: 40 per cent reported having been victims of crimes such as kidnapping, robbery, extortion or threats within the country.

The year 2025 presented new challenges for the Mexican asylum system, stemming both from changes in the regional context and from funding cuts, which resulted in COMAR having approximately half the staff it had in 2024 by mid-year. This constrained assistance capacity and refugee status determination (RSD) processes, despite efficiency measures that have been consistently implemented since 2023.

Despite this context, the reception of asylum applications by COMAR remained at levels similar to the previous year, with more than 70,500 individuals registered as new asylum-seekers. Unlike the previous year, when Honduran nationals constituted the main nationality seeking asylum, in 2025 Cubans accounted for the highest number, with more than 34,600 applicants, followed by Venezuelans with over 14,300 and Haitians with more than 9,000. Honduras ranked fourth. The cancellation of the CBP One application by the Government of the United States left nearly a quarter of a million people stranded in Mexico without the opportunity to enter U.S. territory to seek asylum, many of whom turned to COMAR to pursue recognition as refugees.

These challenges were compounded by obstacles to accessing identity documentation and regular migratory status, as the issuance of the Temporary Visitor Cards for Humanitarian Reasons (TVRH, for its acronym in Spanish) for asylum-seekers has remained suspended

³ Other people with international protection needs’ include stateless people, returnees, or those who, due to persecution, armed conflict, violence, or serious human rights violations, are unable to receive protection from their country of origin.

since October 2023. This has hindered access to basic services and rights, particularly formal employment.⁴ In addition, interpretation needs to support non-Spanish-speaking individuals, such as Haitian nationals, and the growing presence of asylum-seekers in states where COMAR lacks representation offices capable of processing claims⁵ further complicated procedures.

The geographical distribution of asylum applications shifted compared to 2024. Although Tapachula remained the location receiving the highest number of asylum-seekers, its share of the national total decreased from 65 to 46 per cent, reflecting a downward trend in new arrivals at the southern border. Conversely, the centre and north of the country experienced increases. In Mexico City and its metropolitan area, COMAR went from receiving 17 per cent of the total number of new

asylum-seekers in 2024, to around 30 per cent in 2025. Likewise, northern states recorded an estimated 56 per cent increase compared to 2024. Despite limited resources and thanks to the continued support of Canada, UNHCR maintained its collaboration with the Mexican asylum system by strengthening human resources and institutional capacities, including interpretation services, specialised advisory support and technical accompaniment, with the aim of contributing to the quality and continuity of procedures. UNHCR also supported digital transformation efforts, the strengthening of information and orientation mechanisms for asylum-seekers, refugees and other people on the move, as well as the management of service delivery spaces and inter-institutional coordination mechanisms, such as the Multiservice Centres—established with UNHCR support—in Tapachula, Monterrey and Tijuana.



⁴ According to data from the Migration Policy, Registration and Identity of Persons Unit (UPMRIP), 94,829 Temporary Visitor Cards for Humanitarian Reasons (TVRH) were issued to asylum-seekers in 2023. In contrast, only 618 were issued in 2024 and 1,918 up to July 2025. This represents a reduction of approximately 99.3 per cent from 2023 to 2024, and around 98 per cent for 2025.

⁵ It is estimated that in 2025 the National Migration Institute (INM) received 12 per cent more asylum applications than in 2024.



Silvia, along with her sons Justin and Carlos, rests and drinks water at a park near their new home in Aguascalientes.

© UNHCR/Edgar Gallegos

2.2 Access to legal assistance

Legal assistance is essential to ensure that people can fully exercise their rights and have access to integration pathways and legal solutions.

Both general guidance on procedures and legal representation constitute fundamental rights. In 2025, UNHCR worked with civil society organisations, university law clinics, pro-bono partners and the Federal Institute for Public Defence (IFDP, for its acronym in Spanish) to make this possible.

Nearly 100,000 refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people received legal assistance through UNHCR’s partner network. More than one million people were assisted free of charge between 2021 and 2025. Legal assistance provided by partner civil society organisations and law clinics was concentrated in Chiapas (+21,400 people), Mexico City (+15,100) and Tabasco (+10,200), reflecting the territorial distribution of people with international protection needs. These figures underscore the importance of strengthening

and expanding legal assistance services at key points of entry, transit and destination in order to ensure effective access to rights and international protection procedures.

Funding for legal assistance projects was also drastically reduced. From a network of 180 lawyers and paralegals in 2021, only 18 remained in 2025, representing a decrease of more than 90 per cent and a significant reduction in the presence of legal partners in the field. By 2026, UNHCR will have no legal partners in the southern region, and only one will remain in the north. This increases the risk that asylum-seekers will resort to costly and uncertain private services or even to fraudulent networks. Given that legal assistance is an essential component for integration and protection for asylum-seekers and refugees in Mexico, UNHCR diversified its strategies to secure access to these services by strengthening the pro-bono network, reinforcing collaboration with university law clinics, and consolidating cooperation with the IFDP, with which UNHCR has maintained a formal agreement since May 2019.

UNHCR expanded from having a single pro-bono partner to consolidating more than 20 partnerships with law firms across the country. With the support of the Mexican Pro-Bono Centre, a network of 50 lawyers was established for field-based work, benefiting more than 200 people through information sessions. Collaboration with pro-bono partners has been a cornerstone of UNHCR's protection response. During the year, 140 training sessions were delivered to more than 4,000 individuals from academia, shelters, civil society, government, the humanitarian sector, and refugee and displaced communities. In addition, 130 legal consultations were provided in areas such as tax, administrative, labour and criminal law, and direct support was extended to 470 people with international protection needs. These efforts were reinforced through the development of four specialised guidance tools and nearly 40 awareness-raising events, strengthening access to justice and the promotion of international protection standards in Mexico.



Elba Gutierrez



© Photo: Courtesy of Greenberg Traurig

“

Pro-bono work is not an act of charity, but a fundamental ethical duty, particularly when defending one of the most vulnerable sectors of the 21st century. Throughout these eight years of collaboration with UNHCR, at Greenberg Traurig we have demonstrated that the private sector can make a meaningful contribution to the protection of human rights, strengthening access to justice and generating a positive impact on the lives of refugees.

”

Elba Gutierrez, Manager, Global Pro-Bono Programme, Greenberg Traurig

© UNHCR / Jeffrey Guillemaud



After fleeing violence in Haiti, Giovanni is rebuilding his life in Mexico with the dream of becoming a nurse.

the infographic developed by UNHCR and the Federal Administrative Justice Court



Event for the Tenth Edition of the Award for Judgments on Human Mobility



In 2025, more than 1,000 people referred by UNHCR [obtained](#) legal solutions through the partnership with IFDP.

UNHCR also works closely with the Judiciary and administrative courts. In 2025, informational materials and spaces for exchange were developed with the Federal Court of Administrative Justice, which has issued more than 1,200 rulings related to human mobility since 2017 with UNHCR support (over 60 per cent concerning refugee status determination procedures). In collaboration with the Judiciary,

UNHCR co-organised the Tenth Judgments Award on Human Mobility, recognising landmark rulings in the region.

During the year, UNHCR conducted more than 200 visits to detention centres, informed over 1,200 individuals about their rights, and referred more than 400 people who expressed an interest in seeking asylum. The National Human Rights Commission, a UNHCR partner since 2023, carried out 225 visits, assisted more than 1,700 individuals, and opened 1,330 [case files](#) related to human rights violations against people on the move.

Law clinics

University law clinics supported by UNHCR seek to ensure free legal assistance for people with international protection needs while training new generations of students through an educational model that combines theoretical learning with practical experience. In 2016, UNHCR worked with

only one partner law clinic. By 2025, this network had expanded to 35 projects across key states in the north, centre and south of the country, providing more than 16,000 free legal assistance services. These clinics also strengthened access to specialised legal assistance and reinforced academic training in international protection and human rights.

© UNHCR/Daniel Siktos

UNHCR's
law clinics



2.3 Access to information and communication with communities: pillars for protection and accountability

Providing timely and verified information is a priority for UNHCR. Access to reliable data enables refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people, deportees, returnees and other people on the move to make informed decisions and reduces their exposure to risks such as misinformation and fraud.

UNHCR’s Help Desk provides key information on the process for seeking asylum in Mexico, as well as guidance on accessing essential services that support effective integration. In 2025, the Help Desk responded to more than 15,700 enquiries through phone calls, WhatsApp, email, in-person assistance and private messages via the *Confía*

en El Jaguar Facebook page. The centralisation of services made it possible to maintain nationwide coverage, even after a 50 per cent reduction in Help Desk staff and the closure of UNHCR field offices. In Monterrey, a local referral pathway was maintained, addressing more than 3,200 enquiries. Most individuals seeking information and support were from Venezuela, Cuba, Honduras and Haiti, with enquiries focused on refugee status determination procedures, documentation, humanitarian assistance and access to services. In response, UNHCR launched nationwide information campaigns on access to asylum procedures, fraud prevention, financial inclusion and documentation. Disseminated through the *Confía en El Jaguar* platform, these campaigns reached 6.5 million views. In the final quarter of 2025, an increase in enquiries related to naturalisation was observed.



© UNHCR/Archive

Read more about the *Confía en El Jaguar* page



“Confía en el Jaguar”



+2M

PEOPLE

viewed the content of the “Confía en el Jaguar” Facebook page



+219.400

FOLLOWERS

on the “Confía en el Jaguar” Facebook page



**CONFÍA
EN EL
JAGUAR**

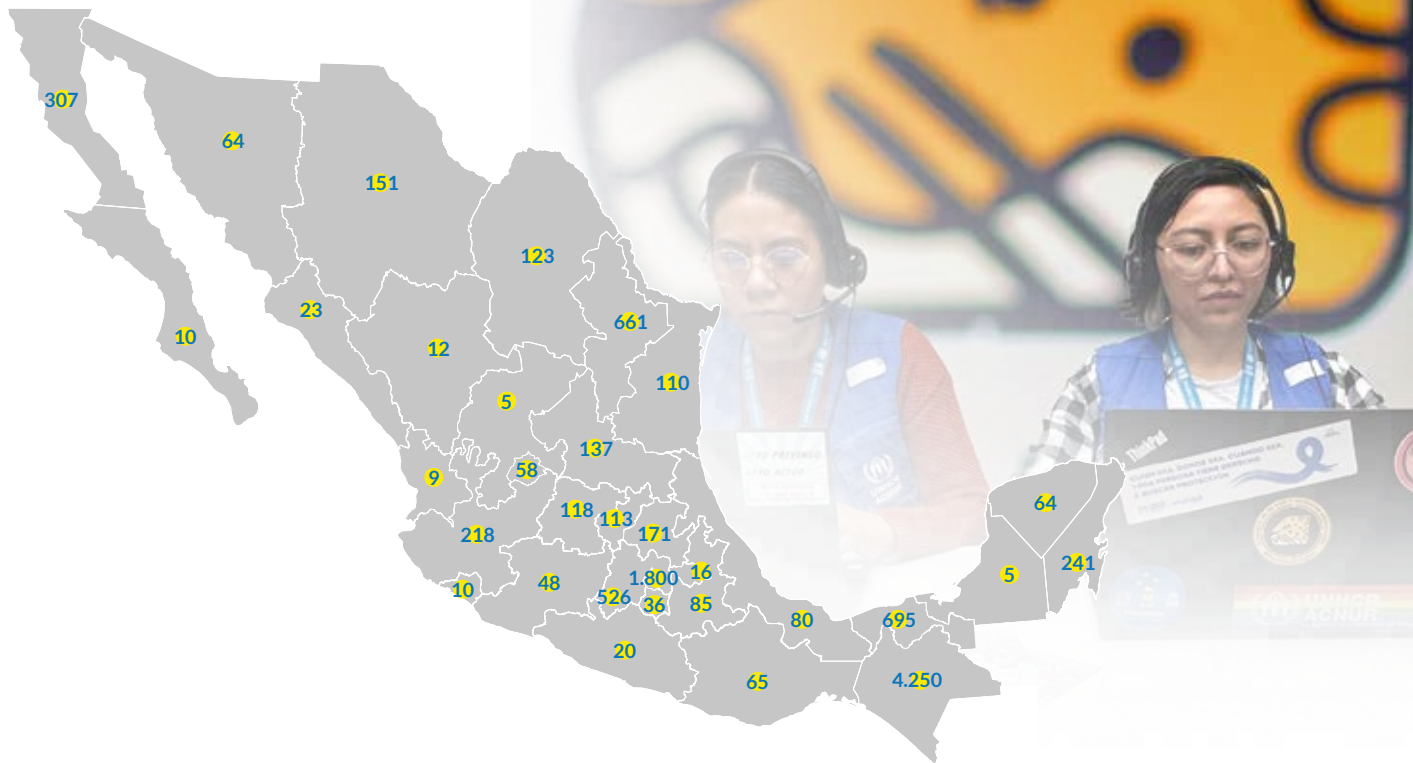
UNHCR Mexico’s [help.unhcr.org website](https://help.unhcr.org), which provides information on contact numbers, available services and programmes for people forced to flee, recorded more than 240,000 visits, primarily from within Mexico (80 per cent), followed by visits originating from the U.S., Cuba and Colombia. The sections on the asylum procedure (nearly 40,000 visits) and contacts with COMAR (more than 18,100 visits) were the most frequently consulted. In addition, frequent searches related to the Federal Taxpayer Registry (RFC, for its acronym in Spanish) and access to employment were recorded, reflecting the importance of socio-economic integration for displaced populations. During 2025, the website incorporated technical improvements to optimise navigation on mobile devices, enhancing accessibility and the overall user experience.



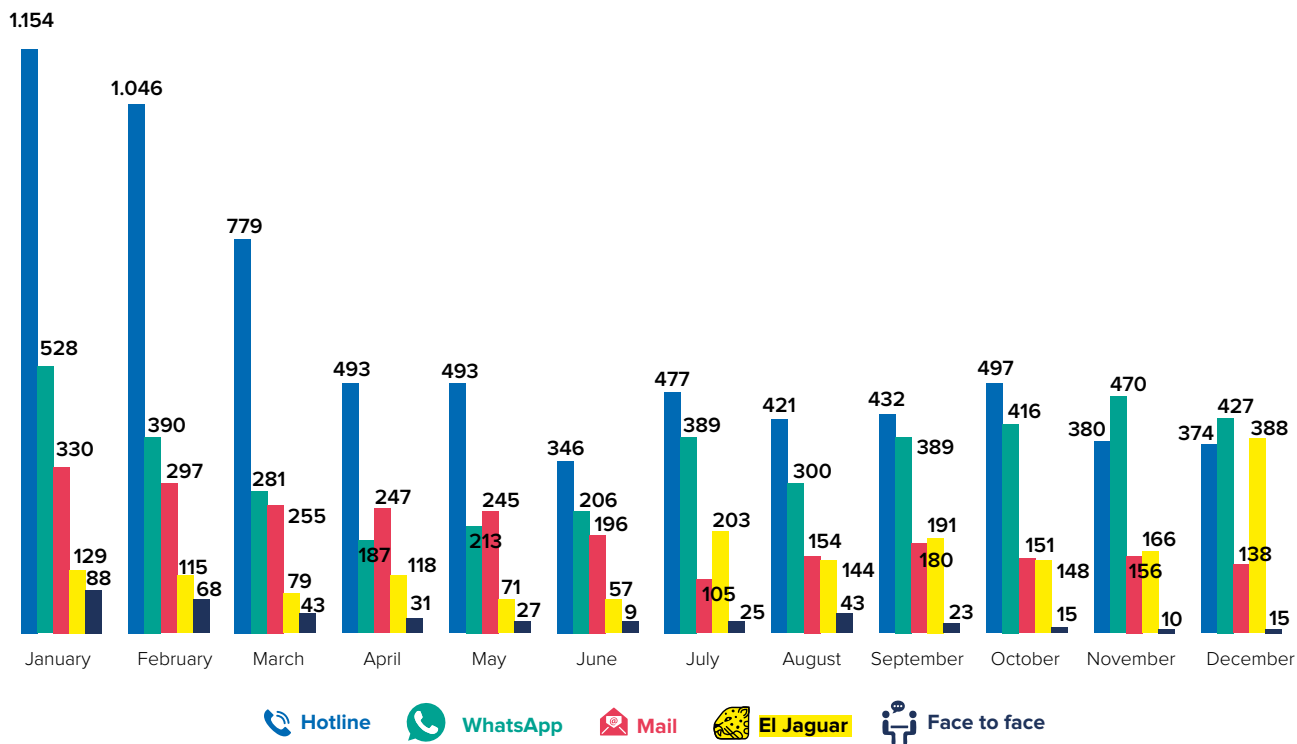
©UNHCR/Isabel Mateos

Refugees and asylum-seekers wait their turn to be attended to in Tapachula, Chiapas.

Location of information queries



Monthly evolution by communication channel





Chapter 3

Shelters

Shelters are the first line of humanitarian response for refugees and asylum-seekers in Mexico.



© UNHCR/Brenda Aguirre





In Mexico, shelters are mostly run by faith-based organisations and civil society

Shelters are a fundamental pillar for the protection and assistance of asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees, deportees and internally displaced people. Beyond providing a safe space, they offer reliable information, basic services and specialised support. However, in a year marked by budgetary cuts, increasingly complex protection profiles and shifts in mobility patterns, these spaces, including those supported by UNHCR and partners, faced significant limitations in their response capacity.

In 2025, a significant change was observed in shelter-use dynamics nationwide, with marked regional variations. In northern Mexico, several shelters transitioned towards a role more akin to community centres, expanding their function beyond accommodation. In contrast, shelters in Mexico City maintained high occupancy levels,

characterised by prolonged stays, while shelter occupancy decreased in the south, with the exception of Tapachula, which continued to register high demand for accommodation and protection services.

Changes in human mobility flows, such as an increased preference among people on the move to rent rooms within communities, often linked to decisions to remain rather than continue in transit, led shelters to evolve from accommodation spaces into key protection and safeguarding hubs, functioning as access and referral points for essential services. The dispersed settlement of individuals in peripheral and unsafe areas complicated risk identification, the delivery of humanitarian assistance and referrals to specialised services. A similar dynamic was observed among

internally displaced people arriving in cities such as Tijuana and Chihuahua in search of protection, who often remained invisible within urban environments.

Despite a 40 per cent reduction in staffing and financial support to partner shelters, UNHCR teams carried out more than 1,200 in-person and remote monitoring visits across 100 shelters nationwide. These actions enabled the identification of trends in shelter occupancy dynamics and rates, ensured sustained presence in key contexts, and preserved response capacity to protection risks.

Complementing these efforts, more than 100 protection-focused capacity-building sessions were delivered to shelter staff, strengthening mechanisms for assistance, referral and accompaniment for people with international protection needs, as well as the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. UNHCR also continued its support to the Volunteer

Programme of the Hospitalidad y Solidaridad shelter in Tapachula, where 36 volunteers were trained and deployed over six months across 11 shelters nationwide.

A key advancement was the integration of an internal displacement approach into humanitarian assistance and the management of temporary shelters, with the support of UNHCR and local governments. In Guerrero, an inter-institutional coordination space was established to define the role of Civil Protection in emergencies, including the management of temporary shelters. Municipal authorities were trained, and the Temporary Collective Shelters Coordination and Management model was presented. In Chihuahua, UNHCR worked with the Executive Commission for Victim Assistance to adapt the municipal shelter in Guadalupe y Calvo, providing technical support, furniture and a staff training plan for 2026.

Refugees help out with daily chores at CAFEMIN, one of the main shelters in Mexico City.



UNHCR DONATED EQUIPMENT AND ITEMS TO 48 SHELTERS:



+76.300

PERSONAL HYGIENE ITEMS

distributed to people staying in shelters



+13.900

ITEMS

to equip dormitories, such as mattresses, bunk beds and sleeping mats



+13.200

FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS

to support adequate nutrition



+10.200

CLEANING

items



The Hospitalidad y Solidaridad shelter is the first facility in Mexico dedicated to assisting refugees and asylum-seekers.



Opened in 2025, the Tapachula Multiservice Centre is a facility of the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR), dedicated to meeting the primary needs of refugees and asylum-seekers in southern Mexico.

© UNHCR/Pierre-Marc Rene

Chapter **4**

Multiservice **Centres**



Refugees and asylum-seekers receive assistance from COMAR (Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance) staff at the Multiservice Centre in Tapachula.

© UNHCR/ERIC Castellanos

Read more about Multiservice Centres



the inauguration of Tapachula's Multiservice Centre



Multiservice Centres are integrated spaces that bring together essential services for refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people and other people on the move in a single location. To provide comprehensive, human rights based assistance, strong coordination is in place among government institutions at the local level, COMAR, UNHCR, civil society organisations and other UN agencies. This coordination enables individuals to receive guidance and support to access the asylum system, essential services, and employment opportunities. The model seeks to ensure orderly and coordinated processes across all stages of refugee status determination, in collaboration with authorities at the federal, state and municipal levels, international organisations and civil society, while also strengthening the humanitarian response. This approach complements broader efforts by the Mexican Government, such as the “México te Abraza” strategy, which provides dignified and safe assistance to Mexican nationals returned from the U.S.

Tapachula

To respond to the needs of asylum-seekers in Tapachula, which receives half of all asylum applications in Mexico, the Multiservice Centre was established in this location. The Centre brings together COMAR’s operations in a single space, integrating all processes related to the asylum system and humanitarian assistance. This “one-stop shop” model enables individuals to complete all asylum-related procedures with COMAR and access assistance from government institutions, civil society organisations, UNHCR and other UN agencies, thereby reducing travel, mitigating risks and streamlining referrals to specialised services. Since its opening, more than 20,000 people have been assisted, and UNHCR has provided over 5,000 counselling sessions and direct referrals, including registration support, legal assistance, cash-based interventions (CBI), individualised assistance for gender-based violence cases, child protection services, and support for local integration either in Chiapas or through relocation to cities with



greater employment opportunities, contributing to a comprehensive response within the Centre.

However, the reduction in UNHCR-funded staff combined with the sustained flow of people at the Multiservice Centre has placed pressure on response capacity, leading to longer waiting times, particularly for non-Spanish-speaking individuals.

Tijuana

The Baja California Frontera Solidaria Multiservice Centre was established as an inter-institutional collaboration between COMAR, UNHCR and the organisation Proyecto Salesiano Tijuana, with the aim of providing a sustainable, free and comprehensive response to the protection and integration needs of asylum-seekers and refugees. In 2025, the Centre doubled the number of services provided compared to 2024, delivering more than 24,000 services to individuals primarily from Haiti, Cuba and Venezuela. It also assisted twice as many Mexican nationals as in 2024 and tripled the assistance provided to children and adolescents.

The Centre strengthened its capacity through partnerships with approximately 30 institutions across the three levels of government, civil society, academia, international organisations and the private sector. Improvements to the registration

and georeferencing systems expanded the range of services available by 80 per cent. In addition, 1,500 people participated in 20 community-based activities conducted at the Centre. Infrastructure upgrades, together with the establishment of a medical consulting room made possible through donations from academic institutions and the private sector, as well as urban improvements in the surrounding area implemented by the local government, enabled the provision of safer, more accessible and better coordinated assistance for people in situations of human mobility.

Since its establishment in July 2021 through December 2025, the Centre has delivered more than 61,700 services, including information provision, legal counselling, documentation support, employment and education services, child protection, physical and mental health support, and integration activities.

Monterrey

In 2025, Monterrey recorded an increase in the arrival of asylum-seekers and refugees.

The Space for Equality and Inclusion created by the Ministry for Equality and Inclusion of Nuevo León and COMAR, in collaboration with UNHCR and other partners, made it possible to support more than 19,000 people in mobility, the vast majority of whom



Refugee children take part in activities during the Integration and Coexistence Event at the Baja California Frontera Solidaria Multiservice Centre.

were asylum-seekers and refugees, benefiting from more than 50,000 services related to access to the asylum system, legal identity, access to employment, education and health services. This year, UNHCR carried out more than 120 visits to the centre, provided information and counselling to more than 2,150 people, delivered individual assistance to more than 700 individuals, and facilitated the referral of more than 1,100 people to its programmes, including integration programmes. UNHCR also supported infrastructure works and interpretation services for Haitian individuals.

Ciudad Juarez

The Comprehensive Migrant Assistance Centre, operated by the State Population Council (COESPO, for its acronym in Spanish) in Ciudad Juárez, is a key multisectoral service hub for people on the move, including refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people. The Centre brings together multiple institutions, including COMAR, the National Employment Service, municipal and state authorities, civil society organisations and UNHCR. UNHCR’s weekly presence enables the identification of international protection needs, the provision of information and the referral of individuals to relevant services. In 2025, the Centre registered more than 32,400 requests for assistance, reflecting both the high demand and its strategic role in the local response.

Mexico City

In response to the increasing number of displaced people, asylum-seekers, refugees and others in mobility who decided to remain and integrate in Mexico City, the Government initiated the design of a comprehensive care model with technical support from UNHCR.

As part of this Multiservice System, the Violeta Parra Humanitarian Assistance Centre was inaugurated this year as the main first point of contact, serving more than 1,300 people between August and December by providing guidance, referrals and access to services. UNHCR provided equipment for the centre and technical assistance, with an emphasis on the early identification of protection needs and the definition of referral pathways, particularly in health and gender, with financial support from Islamic Relief USA. In 2026, the opening of the Hortensia Bussi Multiservice Centre is planned, which will strengthen the identification and response to needs and will incorporate accommodation spaces for people with specific protection needs. This centre will be part of the Utopía Intercultural complex, a space for coexistence and inclusion aimed at promoting peaceful coexistence between refugee and migrant populations and host communities.



© UNHCR/Edgar Gallegos

Chapter **5**

Solutions to build a **new home**

Yaniers, a refugee from Cuba, talking with members of his church community in Mexico, with whom he plays sports in San Luis Potosi.





UNHCR staff assist refugees who will take part in the Local Integration Programme

5.1 Local integration

The pursuit of durable solutions for refugees is a core component of UNHCR’s mandate. In Mexico, local integration is the primary solution, supported by a favourable legal framework and the country’s willingness to promote inclusion in employment, education, health care and family reunification. Since the arrival of forcibly displaced people in Mexico, UNHCR has worked in coordination with COMAR, authorities and civil society organisations to identify needs, provide early assistance and refer individuals to essential services. In 2025, UNHCR carried out more than 15,000 accompaniment actions to facilitate the integration of asylum-seekers and refugees, while also strengthening local mechanisms that enable access

to employment, documentation, basic services and Spanish-language classes, with financial support from the people of Japan and the European Union.

Through collaboration with federal institutions, local governments, civil society and the private sector, more than 9,300 refugees were supported to integrate in their cities of reception or through relocation, and received accompaniment to access housing, employment, education, skills certification, family reunification and naturalisation. In total, more than 172,000 people have rebuilt their lives in Mexico with UNHCR’s support, including over 119,000 who have been residing in their cities of integration since 2021 and more than 53,300 participants in the Local Integration Programme (PIL), established in 2016.

Read more about Haldo on the Move



Camila, a refugee from Venezuela, studies on the benches at her secondary school in Aguascalientes.



© UNHCR/Edgar Gallegos

5.2 Access to education and opportunities

Ensuring access to education as a protection and integration mechanism is a priority for UNHCR. However, challenges persist, including delays in the issuance of documentation, such as the Unique Population Registry Code (CURP, for its acronym in Spanish) and TVRH, which affect the recognition of studies and the continuity of education for asylum-seeking children and adults.

UNHCR and Save the Children presented “Haldo on the Move”, a study that highlighted learning gaps in reading comprehension and arithmetic among adolescent asylum-seekers and refugees. In response, school support was provided to more than 730 children and adolescents. UNHCR also supported more than 70 young people through its university scholarship programme, in addition to the 140 refugees who have already completed higher education.

250 people received support for the recognition of studies, skills certification and vocational training. The “Education without Borders” programme of the National Institute for Adult Education continued to provide learning alternatives for displaced people with educational gaps or no prior schooling. With UNHCR’s support, more than 1,500 refugees in Aguascalientes, Nuevo León and San Luis Potosí obtained certification in basic education. In response to the increase in asylum applications from Haitian nationals and other non-Spanish-speaking populations, the provision of Spanish-language classes was strengthened through partnerships with civil society organisations, government institutions and academia, to support their educational and social integration in Mexico.

The Tertiary Education Refugee Student Network (TRSN), created by refugee youth in Mexico, expanded to include scholarship recipients from Ecuador and Colombia. Its objective is to open pathways for more refugee youth to access higher education.



Valencia



© Photo: Courtesy of Valencia

Valencia fled Haiti due to insecurity and widespread violence and arrived in Guadalajara in February 2025 with UNHCR’s support. Her first job was with Menzies Aviation, a partner company recognised for being one of the largest employers of refugees in the city and for its inclusive recruitment policy for non-Spanish-speaking individuals. In Haiti, Valencia studied nursing and recently obtained recognition of her qualifications through the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology of the State of Jalisco. She is also attending Spanish-language classes at the Teaching Centre for Foreigners (CEPE, for its acronym in Spanish) of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) in order to re-enter the health sector. As part of her labour-market integration process, she participated in the first Refugees in the Health Sector Meeting in Guadalajara, where she learned about employment opportunities and strengthened her professional network. Valencia’s journey exemplifies successful multidimensional integration, grounded in employment, education and language acquisition.



Pablo Moreno and Mary, a refugee from El Salvador, in conversation during a tour of Mabe's distribution facilities.

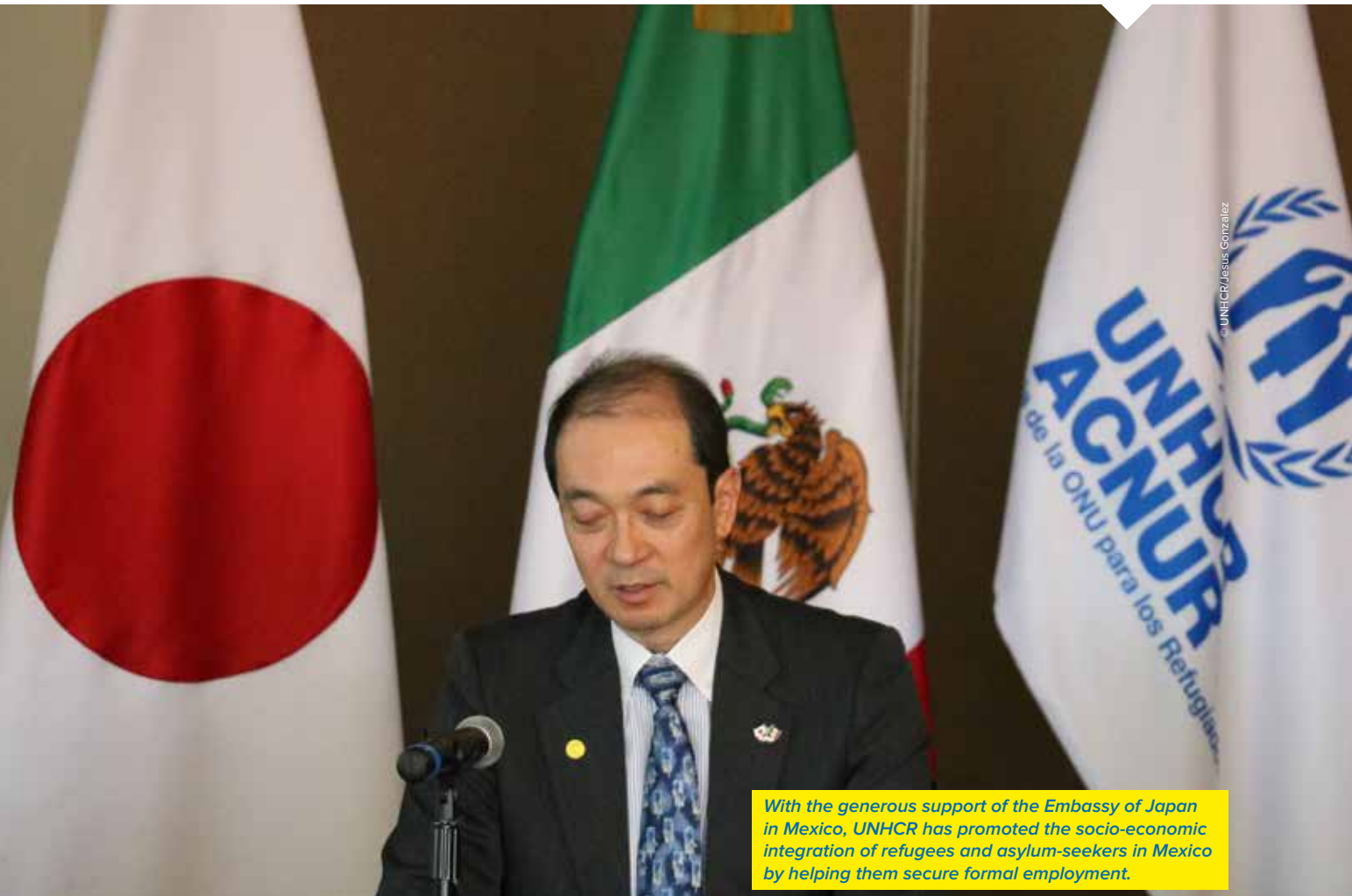
© UNHCR/Jeffrey Guillemand

5.3 Labour inclusion and collaboration with the private sector

More than 4,000 refugees joined the Local Integration Programme (PIL) in 2025 and, with UNHCR's support, were relocated to cities with strong prospects for accessing formal employment and achieving effective integration. In these cities, the programme has built public- and private-sector partnerships to support and facilitate the integration process through tailored assistance, support in securing housing, access to education opportunities and employment with fair wages. The initiative helps reduce pressure on local services in southern states such as Chiapas and Tabasco

while addressing labour shortages in central regions. Coordination and financial support from companies such as FEMSA have been key to the programme's sustainability.

Since its inception, more than 53,300 refugees have participated in the programme, generating an estimated annual fiscal contribution of MXN \$275 million (approximately USD \$15 million), thereby supporting the country's economic development. Persistent challenges include the suspension of the issuance of TVRHs, which prevents asylum-seekers from accessing formal employment while they await a decision on their application by COMAR, affecting their labour market insertion and autonomy.



Financial inclusion also remains a challenge. Although regulations permit the opening of bank accounts using the CURP and migratory documents, in practice many bank branches do not recognise this documentation. Nonetheless, some financial institutions have made notable efforts to advance financial inclusion: Banco Dondé has opened more than 1,500 accounts for refugees, while Banorte has opened nearly 12,000 accounts since 2022.

UNHCR maintains partnerships with Mexican and multinational companies to facilitate

access to formal employment opportunities for people forced to flee. More than 650 companies are committed to the inclusive hiring of refugees, particularly along the central and northern industrial corridor. Since 2023, the “Alliance for Inclusion”⁶ has strengthened engagement with the private sector through training and awareness-raising activities for human resources teams, promoting more accessible recruitment processes, safe and discrimination-free workplaces, and the exchange of good practices for sustainable integration.

⁶ The Alliance for Inclusion, launched by UNHCR in 2023 within the framework of the Global Compact on Refugees, highlights companies that employ refugees, shares successful inclusion policies, and in its first year incorporated 48 new companies committed to inclusive hiring. Learn more at: <https://alianzaporlainclusion.org/>.



© Photo: Courtesy of Sirlena

Sirlena

Sirlena fled Colombia due to violence and arrived in San Luis Potosí in May 2024 through the PIL. During employment fairs organised by UNHCR, she connected with SILGAN, a company that is part of the Alliance for Inclusion. One week later, she began working with the company. She initially joined the assembly line and was later promoted to Quality Supervisor. In November 2025, after one year and seven months of formal employment, Sirlena received the keys to her first home through a mortgage granted by the National Workers' Housing Fund Institute (INFONAVIT, for its acronym in Spanish), for which she obtained the required authorisation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Her story reflects a successful integration process that combines labour inclusion and access to housing, one of the areas of greatest need for refugees who choose to build their lives in Mexico.

5.4 Local integration as public policy

Beyond having a favourable regulatory framework for the integration of refugees, it is essential that this framework is translated into the inclusion of this population in social protection programmes, an approach that is already being implemented through various federal and state-level initiatives. In December 2025, during a meeting of the Advisory Council on Migration Policy, UNHCR, COMAR and UPMRIP presented the Refugee Population Survey (ENPORE, for its acronym in Spanish). The survey assessed the integration of refugees who settled in Mexico between 2018 and 2023. The findings show that three quarters of respondents are of working age and that more than half of children

and adolescents are attending school. ENPORE serves as a baseline for the design of new inclusion strategies within federal and local public policies.

Baja California advanced in this direction by amending regulations within the Ministries of Education, Welfare, Economy and Culture to enable refugees and people in human mobility contexts to access state programmes. The State Ministry of Welfare included more than 970 asylum-seekers and refugees in initiatives such as the [Violet Card](#), which provides financial assistance to cover personal and/or household expenses for beneficiaries, rental support for older persons, service vouchers, school uniforms, food parcels and/or Spanish-language classes.

Martha Guadalupe



Martha Guadalupe arrived in Tijuana from El Salvador with her daughter. As an asylum-seeker without documentation, she has been unable to access formal employment, placing her in a vulnerable situation with regard to rent, food and education expenses. Thanks to social programmes run by the State Ministry of Welfare, she has been able to cover her weekly food needs and her daughter’s school costs, support that has provided her with greater security and stability. Over time, she was able to invest in a small doughnut-selling business, allowing her to generate an income and achieve greater economic independence. Martha feels more integrated and recognised, and she values the fact that Mexican institutions take refugees into account. She also wishes to continue participating in workshops and training opportunities offered by the Ministry of Welfare, as she firmly believes that capacity-building is key to achieving full and sustainable integration.



© UNHCR/Angelica Montes

5.5 Family reunification

Many forcibly displaced people spend months or even years separated from their families; safeguarding the right to family reunification is therefore a priority for UNHCR. In 2025, interest in this procedure increased, alongside growing demand for specialised counselling. UNHCR and partners provided legal accompaniment to initiate applications before COMAR, and some 20 families received direct support for procedures with authorities in Mexico and in countries of origin or transit, airlines, and other international agencies. These efforts enabled the arrival of more than 40 people who were reunited with their families in Mexico.

In addition, actions were taken to provide comprehensive support to unaccompanied children stranded in transit countries, with the aim of ensuring safe family reunification. UNHCR also promoted the strengthening of family reunification procedures by supporting COMAR's rejoining of the [Global Family Reunification Network \(FRUN\)](#)⁷. During the third annual FRUN conference, held in November 2025, Mexico presented progress in improving the quality of its procedures and reaffirmed its commitment to prioritising the pro-persona principle, as well as regional and global standards, to guarantee this right.

5.6 Naturalisation

As a definitive durable solution, naturalisation facilitates full integration by improving access to education, employment, financial inclusion and housing. During the year, 320 naturalisation applications submitted by refugees were supported by UNHCR and partners, an achievement despite budget cuts that halted support for seven months. The main nationalities initiating the process were Venezuela, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador, while the states with

the highest number of applications were Mexico City, Baja California, Nuevo León and Aguascalientes. In addition, 360 refugees received their naturalisation certificates, and more than 1,200 individuals were provided with guidance on the procedure. However, key obstacles to expanding access to naturalisation persist, including the cost of the procedure (close to one monthly minimum wage per person), the centralised nature of the process, and the difficulty of gathering the required documentation.



© UNHCR/Stephanie Galeang

⁷ The Global Family Reunification Network (FRUN), established in 2020, is the first global platform dedicated to facilitating the reunification of refugee families. At the Global Refugee Forum 2023, FRUN promoted the pledge to reunite one million families by 2030. Learn more at: <https://familyreunificationnetwork.org/about/who-we-are>

5.7 Resettlement

Resettlement is a durable solution through which UNHCR supports refugees with urgent protection needs to relocate from the country of asylum to a third country that grants them permanent residence and protection.

In 2025, UNHCR interviewed and submitted 90 individuals for resettlement consideration to Canada. Of the total cases processed, 79 per cent involved survivors of violence and torture, 15 per cent concerned women and girls at risk, and six per cent involved individuals with legal and/or physical protection needs. In addition, 21 per cent of the cases were processed under the urgent resettlement modality. The majority of people were from Honduras (34 per cent), Guatemala (17 per cent), El Salvador (17 per cent) and Colombia (8 per cent).

SOLUTIONS



72%

OF HOUSEHOLDS

reported access to employment within the first month after arrival



97%

OF HOUSEHOLDS

indicated that at least one adult was employed six months after integration



92%

OF HOUSEHOLDS

reported job satisfaction after one month



89%

OF HOUSEHOLDS

job satisfaction was maintained six months after starting work



52%

OF INDIVIDUALS

were registered with IMSS one month after starting work



77%

OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

were enrolled in school six months after the start of the programme



68%

OF PARTICIPANTS

were living below the poverty line prior to relocation. One month later, this figure decreased to **11%**



87%

OF PARTICIPATING HOUSEHOLDS

had a bank account one month after the start of the programme (+40% compared to 2024)



94%

OF PARTICIPATING HOUSEHOLDS

had a bank account six months after the start of the programme



Maria Luz Perez, a refugee from El Salvador, holding a photo of her late daughter as she remembers the violence that compelled her family to flee in search of safety and a new life in Mexico

© UNHCR/Daniela Volpe

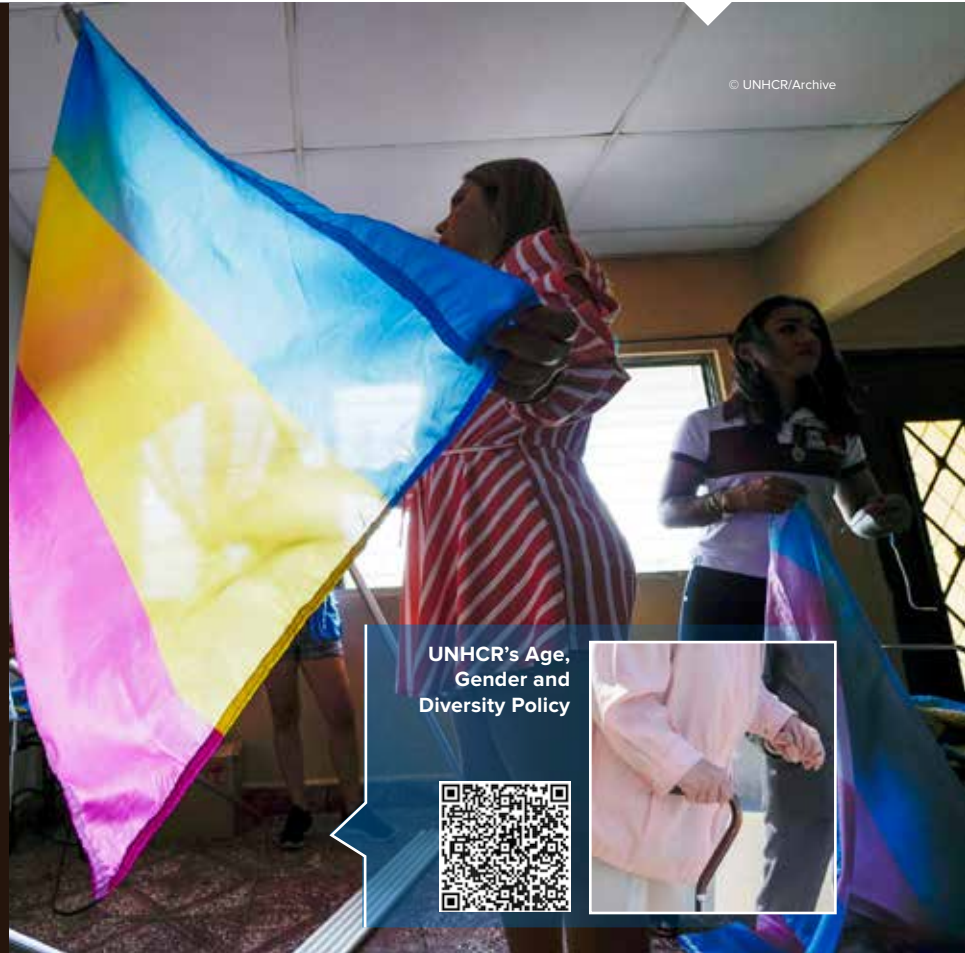


Chapter 6

Inclusive response for people with specific needs



UNHCR prioritises tailored responses for people and groups at heightened risk, including LGBTIQ+ persons, people with mental health needs, persons with disabilities, older persons, children and survivors of gender-based violence, in coordination with public institutions, community-based organisations and shelters. To guide these interventions, UNHCR’s Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) mainstreaming policy supports the identification of differentiated risks and the implementation of accessible measures for those most susceptible to discrimination and violence.



UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity Policy



6.1 Mental health as a pillar of protection

Participatory consultations and community dialogues showed that access to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) is among the greatest needs of refugees. Emotional distress resulting from displacement affects their well-being, their ability to make informed decisions and their integration processes.

Uncertainty regarding documentation, prolonged asylum procedures and the limited availability of services in certain areas created a highly unstable environment, increasing the need for psychological and psychiatric support at a time when these programmes were scaled back due to funding constraints. Compared to the previous year, UNHCR reduced its MHPSS interventions

by nearly 50 per cent, maintaining eight partners who provided services to nearly 12,000 people.

In June, UNHCR and the Ramón de la Fuente Muñiz National Institute of Psychiatry signed a cooperation agreement to provide tools for emotional self-care, stress management and the prevention of compassion fatigue. As a result, more than 600 public servants and civil society organisation staff received capacity-building sessions in self-care, essential mental health support for first responders facing significant emotional demands and contributing to the creation of safer environments. In addition, through the Sergio Vieira de Mello Chairs, UNHCR signed cooperation agreements with seven universities to establish Psychosocial Services Clinics to support displaced populations.



6.2 LGBTIQ+ displaced people

UNHCR provides targeted assistance to LGBTIQ+ asylum-seekers, refugees and internally displaced people. Although more than 300 LGBTIQ+ individuals received specialised counselling, vulnerabilities persist, particularly in southern Mexico, where discrimination, socio-economic exclusion and the limited availability of specialised services heighten protection risks. Discriminatory practices increase exposure to exploitation, trafficking and violence, and may encourage harmful coping mechanisms. These vulnerabilities are further exacerbated for people living with HIV, who face barriers to continuous access to medical care due to lack of documentation and limited resources for transportation.

Despite a reduction in UNHCR's operational capacity, part of the response was maintained through strategic partners. In Tapachula, UNHCR supported the organisation "[Una Mano Amiga en la Lucha contra el Sida](#)" to provide case management for LGBTIQ+ persons at risk, health

promotion, prevention of gender-based violence and community-based activities. However, funding constraints for 2026 will prevent the continuation of this support, potentially leading to closure risks and a critical reduction in specialised services. In Tabasco, the closure of UNHCR's office in Tenosique and the lack of funding to sustain specialised partner activities in 2026 created a protection gap for cases of high vulnerability.

6.3 Displaced persons with disabilities

In response to funding constraints, UNHCR focused its efforts on strengthening the capacities of humanitarian actors, public institutions and community-based organisations through the implementation of the Humanitarian Response Guidelines for Persons with Disabilities in Human Mobility Contexts, developed by the Mexico Coalition for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with UNHCR's support. In addition, UNHCR provided accompaniment to persons with disabilities to facilitate their access to employment opportunities through the National Employment Service.



Edwin Dionisio



© Photo: Courtesy of Edwin Dionisio



Edwin Dionisio is a Honduran refugee with a physical disability who arrived in Aguascalientes with his family in July 2025 through the PIL. Edwin was hired by LIXIL, a Japanese company specialising in building materials and housing equipment. Upon learning of his disability, the company implemented reasonable accommodations to enable him to carry out his work, including support for the replacement of his prosthesis and the use of lighter footwear. These measures have strengthened his labour market integration as well as his physical and emotional well-being. In December 2025, Jafed, Brenda’s son, was able to join the programme through family reunification. Thanks to the accompaniment received, the employment opportunities made available, and the sense of community fostered through interaction with other participating families, Edwin and his family have decided to settle permanently in Aguascalientes.

6.4 Displaced older persons

Older persons who are forcibly displaced face heightened risks and specific barriers to exercising their rights. Limited mobility, diminished vision and chronic illnesses hinder their access to essential services and increase their vulnerability during displacement. UNHCR implemented strategies to identify and map needs and followed up on urgent cases related to health, housing and documentation. However, challenges persist, including the lack of high-quality registries to more effectively identify needs and the limited capacity to issue temporary CURPs, which delays access to specialised services and other essential protection components.

© UNHCR /Daniela Velpe



Challenges faced by displaced older persons and UNHCR’s actions





An asylum-seeking mother and daughter arrive in Mexico in search of protection.

© UNHCR/Ginette Riquelme

Chapter 7

Gender perspective in displacement





Forcibly displaced women and girls face heightened risks of discrimination and gender-based violence⁸, which intensify throughout the displacement cycle. Many flee threats, domestic violence, rape, sexual exploitation and discrimination that prevent them from returning to their countries of origin. In situations of internal displacement, women and girls also leave their communities due to attacks and gender-specific risks. Throughout displacement, they are more likely than men to face kidnapping, extortion, sexual and domestic violence, trafficking, forced unions and, in some cases, abuse by assistance providers. These risks are further compounded by overstretched services, discrimination, xenophobia and lack of documentation. UNHCR’s Policy on the Prevention, Mitigation and Response to Gender-Based Violence

guides actions with survivors and individuals at risk, in line with the principles of safety, confidentiality, respect and non-discrimination. UNHCR works with governments, partners, universities, women-led organisations and local communities to prevent gender based violence, mitigate risks and strengthen responses to overcome barriers that hinder the full enjoyment of women’s and girls’ rights.

7.1 Prevention, mitigation and response to gender-based violence

More than 1,800 women and girls who were survivors of psychological, physical and sexual violence received specialised assistance from UNHCR and its partners. In addition, over

⁸ UNHCR adopts the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) definition of gender-based violence (GBV) as “an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females. It encompasses acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private.”



Refugee families participating in activities to celebrate Children's Day in San Luis Potosí.

© UNHCR/Lilia May Zalazar

1,100 asylum-seekers, refugees and internally displaced people participated in gender-based violence awareness-raising activities and self-defence workshops, while more than 1,000 staff from partner organisations, government institutions and UNHCR took part in capacity-strengthening sessions on prevention and response mechanisms.

In southern Mexico, refugee women, asylum-seekers and migrant women continue to face high levels of risk, particularly those aged 15 to 49 who travel alone or are single caregivers. The presence of organised crime groups and the use of irregular routes increase incidents of kidnapping, where sexual violence is used as a means of coercion. During the year, an increase in incidents affecting Haitian women was observed in peripheral areas of Tapachula, exacerbated by linguistic and cultural barriers that limit access to services.

Survivors reported that accessing health

and justice institutions without specialised accompaniment is not viable due to experiences of discrimination and xenophobia. In response, UNHCR supported the opening and equipping of a Safe House within the Tapachula Prosecutor's Office for Migrants, the only shelter with a specialised gender-based violence component. In addition, community-based awareness-raising activities and specialised groups for Haitian women were implemented, creating safe spaces for guidance and accompaniment.

In Michoacan, to strengthen the response to gender-based violence in contexts of internal displacement, more than 300 members of the Inter-Institutional Committee for the Attention of Forced Displacement, authorities from Apatzingán, municipal women's institutes from over 80 municipalities, and civil society organisations participated in capacity-strengthening sessions. In Mexico City, UNHCR contributed to the development of the



Rossmary and Rossaly, a refugee mother and daughter, speak with UNHCR staff in Monterrey.

© UNHCR/Roberto Tellez

Protocol for the Assistance of Asylum-Seeking, Refugee, Migrant and Internally Displaced Women, led by the Ministry of Women and the General Coordination for Attention to Human Mobility, with the aim of ensuring quality, non-discriminatory assistance for women and girls on the move.

UNHCR and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) co-lead the Gender-Based Violence Thematic Pillar within the Inter-Agency Group on Human Mobility. During the year, the mapping of multisectoral services was updated, and issues such as contingency preparedness, life-saving interventions, and the application of the [Murad Code](#)⁹ on ethical interviewing of survivors of sexual violence were addressed. UNHCR also participated in the XVI Regional Conference on Women, highlighting the risks and needs of refugee and

displaced women, promoting their inclusion in care policies, and facilitating the direct participation of refugee women leaders in regional forums.

7.2 Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

UNHCR maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian personnel, in line with its [Policy on Addressing Sexual Misconduct](#). In January, the operation received a visit from the [Inspector General](#), who reviewed progress in the prevention of and response to this issue by both UNHCR and partners. At the national level, more than 170 volunteers, partners and state counterparts participated in PSEA sessions organised by UNHCR and other UN agencies.

⁹ The Murad Code is an international standard that ensures the ethical and safe documentation of sexual violence in conflict settings, placing the protection, dignity and rights of survivors at the centre of all processes.



16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is a global campaign held annually from 25 November to 10 December to raise awareness, mobilise action and strengthen commitments to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls worldwide. During this period, UNHCR promoted around 50 activities focused on the empowerment of refugee women and girls, including sports and cultural activities, menstrual health management workshops, and digital violence prevention initiatives across the country, benefiting more than 1,000 asylum-seekers, refugees and internally displaced people.



© UNHCR/Elias Campos



+1.800

WOMEN AND GIRL SURVIVORS

of violence received specialised assistance from UNHCR and partners



+1.200

STAFF MEMBERS

from partner organisations, government institutions and UNHCR received training on gender-based violence prevention and response mechanisms and PSEA



+135.300

VIEWS

of the digital violence prevention campaign for refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls and the general public, across social media platforms

Darline, a refugee living in Mexico, leads an organisation in San Luis Potosi dedicated to helping refugee and asylum-seeking women claim their rights.



© UNHCR/Elias Campos



© UNHCR/Mayumi Kimura

*UNHCR works together
with communities so that
children receive the
support they need for
their full development.*

Chapter 8

Child **protection**



© UNHCR/Aurora Herrera

Refugee and asylum-seeking children participating in participatory assessments in Tijuana, Baja California.

More than half of the world’s refugees are children and adolescents. They experience childhood far from home, many of them separated from their families and exposed to risks such as abuse, gender-based violence, exploitation or forced recruitment. In this context, UNHCR, guided by its [Policy on Child Protection](#), works with authorities and civil society organisations to safeguard their rights to life, safety and development, while promoting their access to Mexico’s national child protection system.

UNHCR and partners provided specialised support to more than 550 children and adolescents at risk, ensured safe spaces for over 3,300 of them, and supported more than 1,000 parents and caregivers through positive parenting training.

Funding shortfalls led to the closure of agreements with specialised child protection partners, prompting UNHCR to intensify efforts to strengthen strategic alliances. This resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to support



Mexican children participating in peaceful coexistence activities in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon.

© UNHCR/Mayumi Kimura

public child protection systems. Collaboration with the National System for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents (SIPINNA, for its acronym in Spanish), as well as with federal, state and municipal authorities, was strengthened, improving referral pathways and institutional coordination to support children and adolescents on the move.

Across southern, central and northern Mexico, these efforts translated into updated referral pathways, inter-institutional coordination platforms and case accompaniment mechanisms that reinforced the

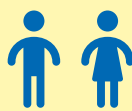
protection of children in human mobility contexts. More than 1,000 public officials participated in training sessions on international protection and child-sensitive approaches.

UNHCR also donated equipment and furniture to six Child Protection Offices in southern Mexico. In addition, UNHCR supported the transfer of unaccompanied children returned from the U.S. to safe shelters or facilitated family reunification. It should be noted, however, that the absence of a specialised case management partner, due to funding cuts, continues to limit comprehensive follow-up.

CHILD PROTECTION


+3.300
CHILDREN

benefited from child-friendly safe spaces established by UNHCR and partners in shelters across the country


+550
REFUGEE AND ASYLUM-SEEKING CHILDREN

at risk received case management services from UNHCR and partners

Djouvens y Widza Faustin



In Baja California, two refugee brothers from Haiti, Djouvens and Widza Faustin, were appointed as Advisory Councillors to the National System for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents (SIPINNA), becoming the first representatives of refugee children within this body. This marks a significant step forward in ensuring the participation of refugee children in decision-making spaces and that their voices are heard on issues that affect their present and future.

Read more
about
Djouvens and
Widza Faustin





© UNHCR/Regina de la Portilla

Chapter **9**

Internal **displacement**



At the request of the Mexican authorities and in fulfilment of its mandate, UNHCR has been providing technical assistance and material support since 2019 to strengthen national and state-level mechanisms for the prevention of and response to internal displacement. The governments of Baja California, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Mexico City, Coahuila, Durango, Guerrero, Jalisco, Michoacán, Morelos, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Sinaloa and Tamaulipas have requested this support.

According to the 2025 [National Survey on Victimization and Perceptions of Public Security \(ENVIPE\)](#) conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), at least 248,360 households were forced to leave their homes in 2024 in order to protect themselves from crime. Media monitoring carried out by the Human Rights Programme of Universidad Iberoamericana, with UNHCR’s support, identified 69 internal displacement events in 2025, affecting more than 15,700 people across 11 states. In most cases, displacement was linked to violence generated by organised crime groups. However, these figures do not capture the full magnitude of internal displacement, as they only reflect incidents reported in the media.

Who is an internally displaced person?



According to the [Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement](#), internally displaced people are persons who have been forced to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, human rights violations, or disasters, and who have not crossed any internationally recognized state borders.



© UNHCR/Jesus Gonzalez

The Human Rights Programme of Universidad Iberoamericana also recorded 19 return events, mainly in Sinaloa, Chiapas and Oaxaca. In the latter two states, authorities coordinated return processes with technical support and the provision of supplies from UNHCR. These actions were complemented by community-based processes that enabled risk identification and facilitated dialogue to support the safe and dignified return of families. In Oaxaca, visits and meetings were held with community authorities, and the return of more than 60 families was accompanied—the first returns carried out following the adoption of the new state law.

The 2025 [Intercensal Survey](#) included, for the first time, a question to identify internally displaced people, made possible through joint efforts by INEGI, the National Population Council (CONAPO, for its acronym in Spanish) and UNHCR. The results will allow for the generation of official figures on this

population. In addition, UNHCR collaborated with the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation and IFDP in the development of “Notes for the Defence of the Human Rights of Internally Displaced People”, a tool aimed at internally displaced people, public officials, specialists and accompanying organisations to inform them of their rights and how to seek protection.

The Coordination for the Attention of Human Rights of Oaxaca (CADH, for its acronym in Spanish) and UNHCR organised the Second National Meeting on Inter-Institutional Coordination for the Response to Internal Displacement, with the participation of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced People, 12 state governments, federal institutions and international organisations.

The Governments of Oaxaca and Michoacán took part in the Third Interregional Forum on the



Implementation of Legislation and Public Policies Related to Internal Displacement, held at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo, Italy, and organised by UNHCR and the Special Rapporteur. UNHCR also provided scholarships and specialised training courses to strengthen the technical capacities of state and federal officials, and supported the fourth edition of the Course on Internal Displacement, delivered in collaboration with UN agencies, ICRC and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.

At the local level, progress was made in legal frameworks and public policies with the support of UNHCR, the European Union’s Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), and other United Nations agencies. In Oaxaca, the Congress unanimously approved the Law to Prevent, Address and Provide Comprehensive Reparations for Internal Forced

Displacement. This law was the result of more than 50 meetings and dialogues with Indigenous and Afro-Mexican communities, including internally displaced people, carried out by CADH using UNHCR’s methodology.

In Guerrero, UNHCR supported the Ministry of Interior in strengthening its regulatory framework and designing response pathways. In Chiapas, technical assistance was provided to advance the draft State Law and its Regulations, as well as the initial development of an operational protocol for the State Human Rights Commission.

In Chihuahua, the State Commission on Internal Displacement approved an [Emergency Response Protocol for Internally Displaced People](#), developed with UNHCR and allies’ support, which establishes clear pathways for responding to both individual and collective displacement, including cases without



prior complaints. In Michoacán, UNHCR supported the drafting of the Internal Regulations of the Inter-Institutional Committee, the development of a return proposal in the municipality of Apatzingán together with the Ministry for Migrants, and the first state-level report on internal displacement. In Nuevo León, UNHCR provided technical accompaniment for the development of a Protocol for the Response to Internal Displacement, consolidating progress as a receiving state. In Sinaloa, the municipality of Culiacán incorporated internal displacement response strategies into its 2025–2027 Municipal Development Plan, with UNHCR’s support.

UNHCR contributed to strengthening tools to identify and assist people affected by internal displacement, as well as to the detection of protection needs. One of the most significant advances was the launch of the first phase to design a modular registration system for internally displaced people. In Chihuahua, a virtual platform was developed to document cases and monitor the response. In Michoacán, the Inter-Institutional Committee adopted the [Guide for the Registration of Internally Displaced People](#) to strengthen its

referral and response pathways. In addition, UNHCR supported the governments of Chiapas, Chihuahua, Guerrero, Michoacán, Oaxaca and Sinaloa through the dissemination of state-specific information leaflets on available services for internally displaced people and for returnees unable to return to their communities of origin in Mexico.

With UNHCR’s support, nearly 4,000 people strengthened their capacities on internal displacement. Notable efforts included workshops and working sessions with state and municipal officials, as well as the participation of collectives of internally displaced people in processes related to protection standards, referral pathways and case management tools. These actions were complemented by the provision of supplies, furniture and technological equipment to enhance field level responses, including support for the establishment of the first municipal shelter for internally displaced people in Guadalupe y Calvo, Chihuahua, scheduled to open in 2026. With UNHCR’s support, state authorities and civil society organisations delivered more than 14,900 protection services to internally displaced people.



INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT



50

INSTRUMENTS

including laws, public policies, protocols and identification tools on internal displacement, were supported by UNHCR in 2025



3

LAWS AND PUBLIC POLICIES

were approved to prevent and address internal displacement in Mexico



7

PROTOCOLS AND EARLY DETECTION TOOLS

were developed with UNHCR’s support to protect internally displaced people in Mexico



+14.900

PROTECTION SERVICES

were provided to internally displaced people by authorities and civil society organisations



5.000

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE

received assistance from the Government of Chihuahua during 2025, thanks to the Emergency Response Protocol, which facilitated inter-institutional coordination



A law built by communities to address internal displacement in Oaxaca



To incorporate the voices of Indigenous and Afro-Mexican peoples, the CADH conducted more than 50 community consultations using UNHCR’s methodology, with technical accompaniment from UNHCR, IOM and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The information gathered through this process informed the Law for the Prevention, Assistance and Comprehensive Reparation of Internal Forced Displacement in the state.

It was months of intensive fieldwork, “of very little sleep and a great deal of commitment,” recalls Flor Estela Morales, Head of the Coordination for the Attention of Human Rights Attention of Oaxaca and a driving force behind the law. Today, one of the most significant advances resulting from this process is the accompaniment of the return of families displaced from Guadalupe Victoria, in the Sierra Mixe region, who are returning home after nine years of displacement.

© Photo: Courtesy of the Government of Oaxaca



© UNHCR/Karla Torres

With Oaxaca's Law to Prevent, Address and Comprehensively Redress Internal Forced Displacement, the state became the first in the country to formally include climate change among the causes of internal displacement.

Chapter 10

Climate, disasters and displacement





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Refugees, internally displaced people and stateless people are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis. As floods, droughts and storms intensify, risks multiply: livelihoods deteriorate, security weakens and tensions emerge that may lead to new displacement. In this context, UNHCR works with government institutions and civil society organisations to generate evidence, strengthen capacities and support responses aimed at protecting these communities.

The [Law to Prevent, Address and Provide Comprehensive Reparations for Internal Forced Displacement](#) adopted in Oaxaca marks a milestone, as it is the first local legislation in Mexico to recognise the adverse effects of climate change as a cause of internal displacement. UNHCR contributed to this achievement through its technical accompaniment throughout the entire legislative process.

UNHCR and the CONAPO conducted the first national diagnosis focused specifically on internal displacement caused by climate change and disasters in Mexico. Through state-level case studies, the analysis, scheduled for publication in 2026, demonstrates how environmental impacts can exacerbate situations of violence and will provide authorities with a solid evidence base to design public policies aligned with the realities faced by people at risk of displacement and those already displaced.

UNHCR also contributed inputs to Mexico's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) 3.0, the country's commitment under the Paris Agreement to address climate change and define its mitigation, adaptation and protection goals for the most vulnerable populations. This inter-agency contribution ensured that human mobility and internal displacement were comprehensively incorporated into the updated NDC.

In San Mateo del Mar, Oaxaca, members of the Ikoots community engaged in dialogue with UNHCR on the challenges they face as they rebuild their social fabric following community conflicts, exacerbated by the effects of climate change. At least 100 families require urgent relocation, illustrating how environmental risks can intensify pre-existing vulnerabilities.

In Guerrero, joint work between UNHCR and state authorities focused on improving the response to displacement caused by disasters. Throughout the year, technical meetings were held with the Ministry for Integrated Risk Management and Civil Protection and the General Ministry of Government to review emergency response pathways and define common criteria for identifying internally displaced people, thereby strengthening the protection-centred approach within the state response.



Chapter **11**

Refugees as protagonists **of** **their own protection**



Strengthening the autonomy of refugee and internally displaced communities lies at the core of UNHCR’s community-based protection strategy. Through spaces for meaningful participation created by UNHCR and supported by accountability and feedback mechanisms, refugees are able to influence decisions that affect their lives, access key information, and become central actors in the development of solutions that safeguard their rights and security.

In 2025, UNHCR supported the strengthening of 60 community-based initiatives and organisations led by refugees and internally displaced people across 17 states. In addition, UNHCR delivered a workshop for its staff aimed at integrating participatory approaches and ensuring effective accountability processes. However, reductions in UNHCR’s budget and staffing affected the scope and continuity of support to community-based interventions, limiting the organisation’s capacity to carry out in-person activities and accompany support groups inside and outside shelters, particularly in southern Mexico.



© UNHCR/Pierre Marc-Rene

11.1 Participatory consultations and accountability with refugees and internally displaced people

UNHCR and its partners conducted nearly 70 participatory consultation sessions, bringing together 680 people from more than 20 nationalities. Participants identified barriers to accessing asylum procedures and documentation, basic services and integration opportunities, as well as experiences of discrimination, gender-based violence and insecurity. Participants’ recommendations included expanding accessible and multilingual information, strengthening legal and psychosocial accompaniment, reinforcing community-based initiatives, improving referral pathways, including access to specialised services,

and expanding spaces for participation. The consultations highlighted shelters, community-based organisations, community outreach workers, support networks, universities and authorities as key actors in protection and integration efforts. The findings were publicly presented during a live session on the Confía en El Jaguar platform.

In work with internally displaced people, UNHCR carried out 47 participatory diagnostic sessions in Baja California, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Guerrero, Michoacán, Oaxaca and Sinaloa, with the participation of nearly 530 individuals. Of these, more than 320 were internally displaced people, alongside local authorities and civil society organisations. These findings informed emergency preparedness plans, contributed to

state-level internal displacement instruments, and strengthened the capacities of public officials. In Choix, Sinaloa, a community-strengthening process led by UNHCR and its partners consolidated local structures, created a group of more than 20 volunteers, and promoted the participation of women, youth and older persons. This improved coordination with local authorities and laid the foundations for sustainable community organisation.

UNHCR received 75 communications through its Feedback and Response Mechanism, 95 per cent of which were addressed within an average of five days. Most reports were submitted by individuals from Honduras, Haiti and Cuba, and physical suggestion boxes continued to be the most widely used channel (87 per cent of the total), underscoring the importance of maintaining accessible and trusted feedback mechanisms for displaced populations.

11.2 Strengthening refugee-led organisations and community structures

[The Dialogue Mechanism between Refugee-Led and Forcibly Displaced-Led Organisations and UNHCR Mexico \(MERLOS Mx\)](#) was consolidated as the main platform for engagement with refugee-led organisations (RLOs). The mechanism has been present at the High-Level Officials Meetings in Geneva, and its role was instrumental in the organisation of the Second National Meeting of Community Activists.

Another example of meaningful participation in 2025 was the First Ordinary Session of COMAR's Quadripartite Mechanism, which brings together representatives of refugees, COMAR, UNHCR and civil society organisations. In its role as Technical Secretariat, UNHCR facilitated the review of priority



Members of Refugee-Led Organisations participate in a meeting of community promoters.

© UNHCR/Angelica Gonzalez

areas of work related to the exercise of rights, positive narratives and internal organisational strengthening, promoting the inclusion of refugee perspectives in the evaluation and formulation of public policies.

UNHCR also promoted five capacity-building processes that benefited close to 150 refugees and internally displaced people. These included workshops on meaningful participation, organisational strengthening and advisory support for the legal registration of civil society organisations, as well as networking spaces and analytical sessions on global frameworks such as the Global Compact on Refugees.

In northern Mexico, an initiative was launched to select five refugee-led organisations in Tijuana, Chihuahua and Monterrey to receive grants in 2026, strengthening their capacities, service delivery, and role within the humanitarian and protection response. In southern Mexico, UNHCR promoted 20 community-based activities that brought together 3,500 people and accompanied support groups benefiting more than 450 women and LGBTIQ+ people. These actions reinforced community integration, access to information and psychosocial support, serving as a critical foundation for violence prevention and the strengthening of local support networks.



Voices of RLOs

“

The Dialogue Mechanism between Refugee-Led Organisations and UNHCR Mexico (MERLOS Mx), is a living space for dialogue, debate and collective learning, where diverse experiences, perspectives and needs converge and require us to engage, negotiate and build agreements from horizontal positions. This dynamic is of great value for the defence of the rights of refugees and forcibly displaced people

”

Loraine Morales, Member of the Steering Committee of MERLOS Mx



© UNHCR/Pierre Marc-Rene

Refugee and Mexican youth participating in activities for the Days for Inclusion and Non-Discrimination in Chiapas.

Chapter 12

Promoting peaceful coexistence **through sport, culture and academia**



Peaceful coexistence is a key pillar for strengthening the integration and protection of displaced populations. In a year marked by budget cuts and increasing assistance needs, cultural, sports and academic initiatives created safe spaces for interaction, helped reduce tensions, and promoted relationships of solidarity between host communities and refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people.

12.1 Strategy to address discrimination, racism and xenophobia in Mexico

Discrimination and xenophobia disproportionately affect people fleeing violence and seeking protection, creating barriers to access to services and to everyday life. In Tapachula, Palenque and Salto de Agua, more than 430 people participated in the Days for Inclusion and Non-Discrimination, where authorities, journalists, teachers, families and refugees reflected on discriminatory practices and the importance of building safer and more respectful

communities for those seeking protection. Since 2021, the National Council to Prevent Discrimination (CONAPRED, for its acronym in Spanish), COMAR and UNHCR have jointly organised these initiatives, which aim to promote prejudice-free coexistence and prevent discrimination against forcibly displaced people through community-based actions.

In Tenosique, the first Peaceful Coexistence Roundtable was established, bringing together 20 institutional and community actors to promote welcoming actions, solidarity and coexistence between refugees and host communities. This initiative is particularly relevant in southern Mexico, where the largest number of asylum-seekers enter and remain while awaiting the resolution of their claims before COMAR.

12.2 Sport as a bridge for protection and integration

For many refugee, asylum-seeking and internally displaced children and youth, sport represents a space for protection, recreation and well-being.



Days for Inclusion and Non-Discrimination

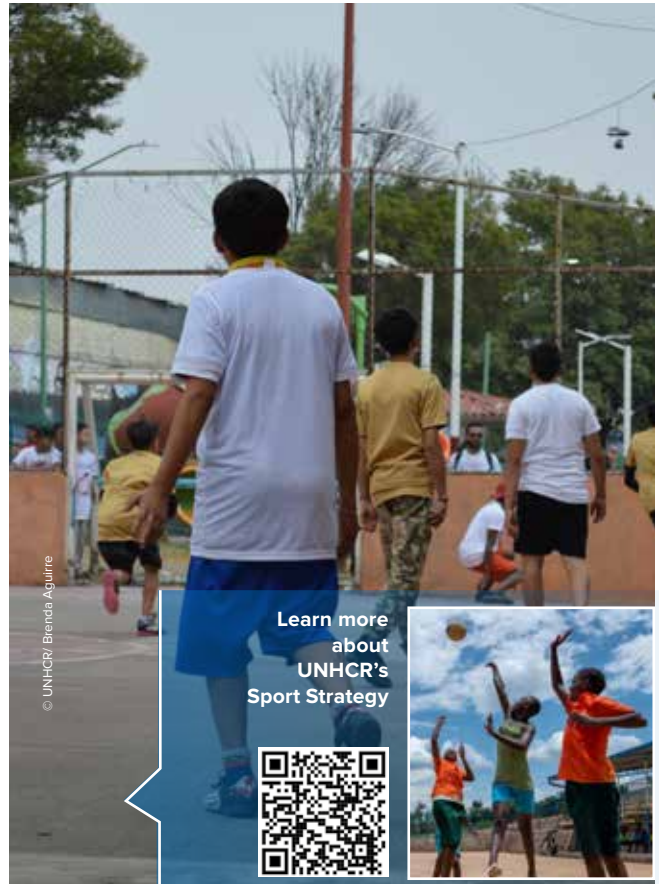


Refugee and asylum-seeking youth playing a football match in Mexico City.

© UNHCR/Brenda Aguirre

UNHCR’s sport-based strategy promotes these efforts, combined with the development of life skills and peaceful coexistence through sport. More than 3,100 individuals participated in regular sport-based protection activities across different regions of the country, including sports clinics, stadium visits, ongoing participation in academies, gyms and community spaces, as well as races and tournaments. These advances were made possible through strengthened partnerships with sports associations, educational institutions, government bodies, and public and private venues, enabling the consolidation of inclusive, long-term programmes with a positive protection impact.

UNHCR organised its first fundraising race, held in Aguascalientes, which brought together more than 300 participants. This initiative mobilised public support for protection and integration activities.



© UNHCR/ Brenda Aguirre



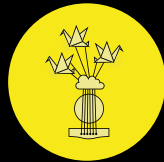
© UNHCR/ Moises Lievano



© UNHCR/ Moises Lievano

Participants of the "Hope of a New Home" race in Aguascalientes cross the finish line.

© UNHCR/CLAN



PALOMAZO
por las personas
Refugiadas

Watch the
Palomazo for
Refugees on
Canal 11



12.3 Cultural activities

Culture plays a key role in making diversity visible and promoting positive narratives, building bridges between refugees and host communities through the exchange of talents, traditions and stories.

At the national level, UNHCR brought together thousands of people through nearly 60 events and activities held to mark World Refugee Day. In northern Mexico alone, more than 13,000

people participated in arts workshops, fairs and intercultural events that strengthened peaceful coexistence. In addition, 1,200 people attended the sixth edition of Palomazo for Refugees in Mexico City¹⁰, a concert aimed at raising awareness of the situation of people forced to flee their countries and mobilising public support through music. The event achieved wide media reach, with nearly 62.3 million views across its posts and approximately 20 interviews featuring the band Gran Sur.

¹⁰ The Palomazo for Refugees 2025 edition featured performances by Gran Sur, Andrea Echeverri, Vivir Quintana and Leonardo de Lozanne, as well as refugee violinists Florángel Cuicas and Sayd Hortúa, and Mayumi Kimura, pianist and UNHCR staff member.

UNHCR's presence in cultural spaces was further strengthened through photographic exhibitions on asylum and integration in Mexico, at the Chapultepec Fence, with the Mexican Foreign Service Association, and with the Chapultepec Forest. For the first time, UNHCR also joined the *Ambulante* documentary tour at the National Cinematheque and participated in UNAM's Day of the Dead Mega Offering, enabling thousands of visitors to engage with narratives on human mobility and displacement. In addition, activities such as the play *Small and Extraordinary Things* at the National Institute of Fine Arts and Literature and a book presentation at the Guadalajara International Book Fair brought the realities of people forced to flee closer to children and academic audiences. Complementing these efforts, 30 storytelling sessions based on the book *Bolay* introduced 1,000 children to stories of displacement and empathy from an early age.

In northern Mexico, cultural activities such as music and photography workshops, exhibitions and intercultural events brought together people from 15 nationalities, strengthening a sense of belonging. Participation alongside the Mexican Japanese Association of the Northeast in a family-oriented event integrated activities combining calligraphy, storytelling and cultural expressions linked to displacement. In the south, film discussions, cultural brigades, reading fairs and visits to archaeological parks brought together more than 1,700 people in Tapachula, Palenque, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Villahermosa and Tenosique. The leadership of refugees stood out in panel discussions, literary presentations and artistic workshops, strengthening their role as cultural actors within their communities. In Mexico City, the Community Bazaar for Women in Displacement and two collaborative murals promoted positive appropriation of public space and supported the entrepreneurship of forcibly displaced women.



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12.4 Academia

Academia expands access to better opportunities for people forced to flee by promoting research, training and spaces for community participation. UNHCR’s Sergio Vieira de Mello Chairs expanded through the signing of four new cooperation agreements with universities¹¹, reaching a total of 12 institutions engaged in specialised research, law clinics, training programmes and advocacy initiatives that generate in-depth knowledge on the rights of refugees. The second National Meeting of the Sergio Vieira de Mello Chairs, held at the Universidad Veracruzana in October 2025, strengthened collaboration between

UNHCR, academics and institutions operating legal and psychosocial clinics in states such as Baja California, Coahuila and San Luis Potosí.

Notable research initiatives with universities this year included studies on the impact of UNHCR’s work in strengthening the asylum system and humanitarian protection in Mexico over the past 15 years (El Colegio de la Frontera Norte), challenges to financial inclusion in north-eastern Mexico (Tecnológico de Monterrey), the design of specialised academic programmes in international law for refugees (Autonomous University of Chiapas), and advocacy activities carried out in internally displaced communities in Sinaloa.

¹¹ The new agreements under the Sergio Vieira de Mello Chair were signed with the Autonomous University of the West (Sinaloa), the Autonomous University of Guerrero, the Iberoamerican University Tijuana, and La Salle University Hidalgo. These institutions join those that are already part of the Chair: ITESM Guadalajara Campus, the Autonomous University of Querétaro, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Instituto Mora, the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí, the Autonomous University of Coahuila, the Autonomous University of Chiapas, and the Autonomous University of Baja California.

The Ambassador of Canada to Mexico, Cameron MacKay, visits the Hospitalidad y Solidaridad shelter in Tapachula, Chiapas. Thanks to Canada's financial support, UNHCR strengthens humanitarian assistance and ensures safe access to the asylum procedure in southern Mexico.

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Este albergue fue construido gracias a la colaboración en
Hospitalidad y Solidaridad y la Agencia de la ONU para
Refugiados, ACNUR, con el objetivo de brindar protección
asistencia a la población refugiada y solicitante de asilo
Tapachula, Chiapas

Este proyecto recibió el apoyo del Gobierno de Estados Unidos



2020

Hospitalidad
& Solidaridad
SITUACIÓN SIN FRONTERAS

Chapter **13**

External relations **and** **funding**

The actions described in this report reflect UNHCR Mexico’s continued commitment to the protection and integration of refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people, stateless people and other populations forced to flee. Throughout 2025, the operation strengthened its public presence, consolidated strategic partnerships and mobilised essential resources in an increasingly complex humanitarian context, marked by the largest budget reduction in its history.

IMPACT AND DIGITAL PRESENCE REPORT

STRENGTHENING PUBLIC POSITIONING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

SOCIAL MEDIA



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY:
Information campaigns, impact stories,
and an active digital presence



MEDIA COVERAGE



Institutional communications were reinforced through the production of 20 public reports, 15 field missions, multiple briefings with the international community, and analytical documents on protection trends. In addition, 20 regular newsletters were shared with government counterparts, diplomatic missions and civil society partners, bringing key stakeholders closer to UNHCR's work in Mexico.

The projects described in this report were made possible thanks to the support of governmental, multilateral and private donors, including the European Union, the governments of Canada, Japan and the United States, as well as private-sector partners such as FEMSA, Islamic Relief USA and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Inter-agency mechanisms and United Nations pooled funds also played a key role in strengthening operational capacity.

In total, UNHCR Mexico mobilised approximately USD \$21 million, which enabled the continuation of life-saving assistance and the expansion of integration opportunities. Private-sector engagement gained particular relevance, with significant contributions from companies such as FEMSA and H.E.B., in addition to thousands of individual donors who contributed a total of MXN \$59 million (approximately USD \$3.4 million), a critical source of support for sustaining the response.



Despite these achievements, 2025 represented one of the most severe financial challenges for the operation, with an overall funding reduction of nearly 65 per cent in a context of growing humanitarian needs and expanding mobility into new regions. Of the total resources mobilised, 85 per cent came from governmental and multilateral sources, and 15 per cent from the private sector.

Thanks to the commitment of partners, UNHCR was able to maintain priority services and advance innovative collaboration mechanisms, including university-based legal clinics, pro-bono legal support, partnerships with local governments and new forms of cooperation with the private sector.

Nevertheless, a significant funding gap remains, limiting the continuity and scale-up of essential programmes in 2026, particularly in legal assistance, protection monitoring, institutional strengthening and support for shelters.

UNHCR expresses its deepest gratitude to individual donors, implementing partners, private-sector allies, diplomatic missions and institutional counterparts whose commitment made it possible to sustain the humanitarian response. Every contribution, large or small, was essential in enabling people forced to flee to access protection, exercise their rights and rebuild their lives with dignity in Mexico.



© UNHCR/Isabel Sorela



The Tovar family (Carlos, Nurei and Camila), refugees from Venezuela, sharing a hug at San Cayetano Park in Aguascalientes.

Chapter **14**

Building **the way forward**

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The joint efforts of people forced to flee, public institutions, civil society, the private sector and local communities made it possible to move towards a more inclusive country in the face of the challenges of forced displacement. 2025 was also a year of difficult decisions: the closure of four field offices and the farewell to colleagues who had accompanied the operation since its inception

marked a moment of transition. Their legacy, however, endures in every achievement made and, in every community, strengthened. Despite these challenges, UNHCR remains present on the ground in a more focused manner and with the same commitment to protect and accompany people forcibly displaced who seek to rebuild their lives in Mexico.

Adonay, a refugee from Venezuela, walks back home alongside his father and a UNHCR staff member after a basketball match.



© UNHCR/Roberto Tellez

Looking ahead to 2026, the global context demands a more agile and targeted operation. Financial constraints require prioritising interventions that generate sustainable impact, strengthen local capacities and protect those facing the greatest risks. UNHCR is adjusting its footprint and making evidence-based decisions, while remaining firmly guided by its role as a catalyst for solutions—bringing actors together and ensuring that every resource translates into real opportunities for refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people and others forced to flee.

The year ahead offers a unique opportunity to advance inclusion and integration efforts through new platforms. As Mexico prepares to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup, UNHCR will leverage existing and emerging sports partnerships to promote messages of solidarity and create spaces where sport serves as a bridge between communities, particularly for refugee children and youth. In doing so, Mexico demonstrates that bringing communities together is part of its identity and a source of its strength.

Despite budgetary and operational challenges, Mexico remains a key country for advancing durable solutions for people forced to flee, supported by committed institutions, welcoming communities and partners who believe in a coordinated and sustainable response. Partnerships with the private sector will continue to be essential in expanding socio-economic opportunities and ensuring that local integration becomes a sustainable reality nationwide. UNHCR will continue to accompany these efforts with people-centred actions, guided by the possibility of restoring dignity and hope.

Charting new horizons means looking ahead with clarity, innovating in the face of adversity, and keeping people at the centre of every decision. With a renewed vision, a reconfigured operational structure and stronger partnerships, 2026 will be a year to consolidate opportunities, protect rights and continue demonstrating that, even in complex times, hope can open pathways.

*UNHCR staff in Mexico City
welcome the Representative,
Chiara Cardoletti.*

**UNHCR remains, evolves and continues to stand
alongside people forced to flee who are searching
for a safe place to begin again.**

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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 2025



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

2025

Highlights

UNHCR Mexico

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*Greissy, a refugee from Venezuela,
teaching dance classes to the local
population at the Centro de Artes Vivas
in Guadalajara.*

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