



## HIGHLIGHTS

**585**

Persons of concern housed in 8 shelters supported by UNHCR in 2016 (Jan–April)

**46,887**

Persons from the Northern Triangle of Central America detained by the Mexican authorities in 2016 (Jan–April)

**36,000**

Children detained by the Mexican migration authorities in 2015, of whom **18,000** were unaccompanied (Jan–April)

**162%**

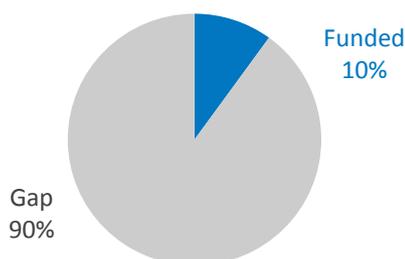
Increase of asylum applications of nationals from the Northern Triangle of Central America from 2013 to 2015. The projected population of concern by end of 2016 is **8,000-10,000** persons.

**Up to 400,000**

Estimated number of people who irregularly cross the Mexican southern border per year.

## Funding requirements

**USD 12.4 million** requested



## Context information

- The vast majority (90%) of asylum seekers reaching Mexico are from the Northern Triangle of Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras). Their protection needs have generally been overlooked, in large part because they have often been considered as migrants in transit.
- Less than 1 per cent of the estimated number of people from the Northern Triangle of Central America who irregularly enter the country apply for asylum, in part due to lack of information.
- Between 2013 and 2015 the number of asylum-seekers in Mexico increased by 162 per cent to 3,423 individuals.
- The number of persons detained by migration authorities in 2015 reached approximately 190,000 (of whom 170,000 are from El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala).

## UNHCR Presence

### Staff:

20 national staff  
8 international staff

### Offices:

3 offices located in:  
Mexico City (BO); Tapachula, State of Chiapas, and Tenosique, State of Tabasco

## UNHCR Mexico: Operational Map

June 2016



## WORKING WITH PARTNERS

- UNHCR works with key actors, both UN and governmental as well as civil society, particularly in the southern part of Mexico and in the capital city.
- The **Mexican Refugee Commission** (COMAR) is a key government partner. It is the Refugee Status Determination body, but also plays an important role by referring asylum seekers and refugees to specific social services. UNHCR also works with the **National Migration Institute** (INM), which is in charge of migration enforcement, screening and referral of those requiring access to the asylum system, determination of statelessness status as well as issuance of documentation to asylum seekers (humanitarian permits) and refugees (permanent residence cards).
- In close cooperation with UNICEF, UNHCR is also supporting the newly established Child Protection Authority (*Procuraduría*) for the implementation of best interest determination procedures for unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children.
- In parallel to the Office's engagement with 32 different shelters along Mexico's migration routes, the office has closely coordinated its efforts with the ICRC and IOM.

## MAIN ACTIVITIES

### Protection

- UNHCR is seeking to increase information on asylum and access to the asylum procedure by:
  - Increasing the capacity of the Mexican Refugee Commission to receive and process claims.
  - Ensuring that the migration authorities provide information on asylum, refer cases and authorize the use of alternatives to detention.
  - Supporting development of best interest determination procedures by the Child Protection Authority to prevent refoulement of unaccompanied children.
  - Providing information, legal aid and representation through network of civil society shelters, NGOs, and University Law clinics.

### Shelter and Cash based Interventions

- Strengthen shelter networks (Church/civil society) to provide safe, dignified conditions for those fleeing the Northern Triangle of Central America countries, including through
  - Short term "referral" shelters which provide information on asylum
  - Shelters for long term stay by asylum seekers with capacity for families and LGBTI persons
  - Shelters specifically for asylum seekers and refugees
  - Governmental (through the National System for the Integral Development of the Family) and civil society shelters for unaccompanied children.

### Durable Solutions

- Local integration remains the most appropriate durable solution for refugees in Mexico. Domestic law contains provisions which facilitate integration. The law also ensures refugees' social and economic rights, including provisions on access to health, work, and to obtain identity, residence and travel documents.
- Despite an advanced legal framework, integration efforts are hindered by gaps in implementation, difficulties in accessing refugees in large urban centers, limited financial and human resources of partners, and the absence of partners in field locations.
- A multi-year Durable Solutions Strategy is being developed.

UNHCR is grateful for the generous support of donors who have given unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions to UNHCR this year as well as to the [United States of America](#) and [Mexico](#), which directly contributed to the operation.

#### Contact:

Mariana Echandi, Communications/PI Associate, [ECHANDI@unhcr.org](mailto:ECHANDI@unhcr.org), Tel: +52 55 5083-1713, Mobile +52 1 55 1916 2805  
 Catia Lopes, UNHCR External Relations Officer, [LOPES@unhcr.org](mailto:LOPES@unhcr.org), Tel.: +41 (0)2 27397204 **Website:** [www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)