

Annual Results Report

2022

Mexico

Acknowledgements

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Table of Contents

Section 1: Context and Overview

- 1.1 - Changes to the Operational Context
- 1.2 - Progress Against the Desired Impact
- 1.3 - Challenges to Achieving Impacts
- 1.4 - Collaboration and Partnerships

Section 2: Results

- 2.1 - Outcomes and Achievements
- 2.2 - Age, Gender and Diversity

Section 3: Resources

- 3.1 - Financial Data
- 3.2 - Resources Overview

Section 1: Context and Overview

1.1 Changes to the Operational Context

Forced displacement across the hemisphere and the consequent increase in the number of new arrivals at Mexico's southern border continued in 2022. In 2021, the number of asylum applications reached a new record of 130,000 asylum claims, while 2022 represented the second year with the highest number of asylum claims filed, with over 118,000 individual applications.

Just as 2021 was marked by the sudden arrival of tens of thousands of Haitian nationals, mostly from Brazil and Chile, in 2022 Mexico witnessed a notable increase in the number of requests for asylum from Cuban, Nicaraguan and Venezuelan nationals.

The re-instated Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP 2.0) applied across four different ports of entry, allowed for over 7,000 asylum-seekers to be returned by U.S. authorities to Mexico's northern border to await their asylum hearing dates, before its termination in August 2022.

Border restrictions and expulsions from the United States of America of asylum-seekers and migrants under Title 42 related to the COVID-19 public health emergency persisted, with notable changes: On 12 October 2022, it was announced that Mexico would readmit Venezuelan nationals who entered irregularly to be summarily expelled under Title 42 by U.S. authorities. Previously Mexico accepted the readmission of nationals from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. This change in policy resulted in a peak in asylum applications in Mexico from Venezuelan nationals in the last quarter of 2022.

The complexity of mixed movements of refugees and migrants, together with the absence of alternative legal pathways posed a threat to the processing capacity of the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) in the face of the fast-increasing asylum demands. Though COMAR made remarkable progress in increasing its processing capacity over the years with support from UNHCR, its resources remained limited and further efforts are required to increase its budget, operational capacity and infrastructure nationwide.

1.2. Progress Against the Desired Impact

1. Impact Area: Attaining Favorable Protection Environments

People UNHCR serves access comprehensive protection in policy, law and/or practice, with adequate consideration of their specific needs and their age, gender, and diversity.

People UNHCR serves access the territory without being detained and can satisfy their basic needs and access their rights upon arrival and during the asylum process in Mexico with an age, gender and diversity perspective.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Actual (2022)
1.1 Proportion of individuals seeking international protection who are able to access asylum procedures.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	75.63%
1.2 Proportion of PoC who are able to move freely within the country of habitual residence. [GCR 2.1.2]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	31.85%	31.22%

The increase in the number of arrivals, and the lack of legal stay arrangements overwhelmed the capacity of the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR), resulting in delays in accessing the asylum procedure and increasing processing times. Despite the adversities, COMAR registered over 118,000 claims and resolved nearly 65,000 individual cases, which represents a fourfold increase from 2018, with an overall recognition rate of 63%.

UNHCR supported COMAR with the implementation of streamlined registration procedures and a solid strategy of differentiated case processing modalities, which explains the results in terms of admissions and adjudications. A new version of COMAR's Case Management and Database System "SIRE" was implemented in Mexico City and partially across an additional four cities nationwide: Tapachula, Monterrey, Tenosique, and Palenque. The system included new functions that ensured coherence throughout the process, from registration to final decision. In Mexico City, waiting times for accessing the procedure were reduced, increasing COMAR's capacity to register claims into SIRE. COMAR's Physical File Verification, Digitization and Reorganization project was completed in seven offices.

Through a robust network of 106 lawyers, 58 paralegals and 43 public defenders strategically placed in over 31 cities across the country, UNHCR provided protection counselling and orientation, and guaranteed legal assistance for persons in need of international protection. Pro-bono allies contributed with legal representation of complex cases and provided legal opinions on intricate matters. At the same time, UNHCR worked with eight human rights university clinics in Guadalajara, Monterrey, Aguascalientes, San Luis Potosí, Mexico City, Puebla, Tabasco, and Querétaro. In 2022, paralegals and lawyers reached over 200,000 people and provided information and legal advice that guarantees efficient access to asylum or immigration procedures in Mexico.

3. Impact Area: Empowering Communities and Achieving Gender Equality

People UNHCR serves are empowered, informed and participate in key decisions that affect them, and are organized into self-identified community initiatives.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Actual (2022)
3.1 Proportion of PoC who have the right to decent work [GCR, 2.1.1]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%

UNHCR prioritized the participation and involvement of refugees and host communities in its programming by strengthening 41 of its staff's capacity and drafting new operational guidelines on community mobilization to provide technical orientation to thematic focal points. Furthermore, yearly participatory assessments and feedback sessions took place with people under UNHCR's mandate to integrate their opinions into UNHCR's planning exercises. For instance, in León and Saltillo, UNHCR supported a network of refugees to provide orientation and help to new arrivals, while in Mexico City, UNHCR worked closely with four groups of refugees seeking their feedback on the Office's strategy and communication materials. Of these, 60% were women.

Regarding Accountability to Affected Population, a complaint and feedback mechanism was put in place so that the affected population may report issues, including allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse. Over 800 reports were filed, primarily to request information or assistance, but also to provide feedback, to request a review of decisions on denied cash grants, and to flag situations of protection risks and potential cases of misconduct. UNHCR was able to follow up on and resolve, 66% of the reports received in 2022.

Lastly, UNHCR expanded its outreach and access to information through the production and distribution of protection materials through different channels. The national HelpDesk received and answered more than 34,000 queries (a 211% increase in the average attending rate since the establishment of the service in 2020). The Confía en El Jaguar (Trust the Jaguar) Facebook page boosted its outreach to users by 86%, compared to 2021, bringing the total of users to over 87,000, nearly 50% being women) through varied content such as videoblogs, Facebook Lives (6 in 2022, reaching more than 290,000 users), and information cards shared with the digital community. The national Help webpage also received more than 211,000 visits in 2022.

4. Impact Area: Securing Solutions

People UNHCR serves in Mexico achieve effective local integration, self-reliance, and peaceful coexistence with host communities, including through complementary pathways to Mexico.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Actual (2022)
4.2a Number of PoC who departed on resettlement. [GCR 3.1.1]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	35	47
4.2b Number of PoC who departed through complementary pathways	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	0	0
4.3b Number of refugees for whom residency status is granted or confirmed.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	20,266

With the Relocation, Job placement and Local Integration Program (PIL) and the in-situ component, UNHCR was able to provide the tools required for thousands of refugees to integrate within their host communities. Over 12,800 recognized refugees and people with complementary protection took part in the PIL, reaching a total of 28,700 participants since the beginning of the programme in 2016. They accessed formal employment, social security coverage, and support to access education and health services.

55,600 refugees and asylum-seekers who decided to remain where they initiated asylum procedures were also supported in their local integration, directly through UNHCR interventions. The National Employment Service and over 500 private companies were key allies for its success.

Opportunities for inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers were institutionalized through the Inter-institutional Roundtables on Refugees and Complementary Protection led by COMAR. With the establishment of local roundtables in ten different municipalities, refugees were being included in public programmes related to access to employment, school enrolment, challenges accessing health services, and obtaining official documentation.

UNHCR continued to advocate bilaterally with several bank institutions to tackle the barriers to financial inclusion which impacted the sustainability of the integration process in Mexico. The World Bank office in Mexico engaged with the International Finance Corporation to articulate the business case, which would demonstrate the economic benefits of financial inclusion, while two pro-bono legal partners engaged private sector banks to explain the legal framework. To some extent, refugees managed to open bank accounts following these interventions.

The naturalization process was reopened and UNHCR liaised with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ensure refugees who met the criteria submit their request. Over 180 refugees were accompanied by UNHCR to submit their naturalization process in 2022.

1.3 Challenges to Achieving Impacts

The increase in mixed movements, together with the absence of alternative legal pathways, resulted in an overwhelming pressure on the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR). Its resources remained limited and further efforts were required to increase its budget, operational capacity and infrastructure nationwide. Likewise, measures to preserve the integrity of the asylum system remained a top priority for UNHCR and, moving forward, concerted efforts involving COMAR, the National Migration Institute (INM), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Interior (Mol) and other relevant stakeholders were essential.

The absence of a law on internal displacement or other instruments that allowed federal authorities to identify and plan for the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs), was a barrier to their protection and assistance. In some states, political changes and staff rotation in public institutions hindered efforts on matters related to IDPs that were ongoing.

IDPs faced challenges in finding effective protection responses. In states where there was no legal framework for internal displacement, authorities stated their lack of capacity to cover IDPs' needs, as resources were not allocated.

On statelessness, Mexico maintains reservations to the 1954 Convention, specifically regarding access to naturalization. Mexico has not ratified the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. In December 2020, the Mexican Congress adopted a reform to the Mexican Political Constitution (art. 30), regarding the acquisition of the Mexican nationality, which would prevent cases of statelessness. However, further constitutional review would be required to accede the 1961 Convention, which was not foreseen in the current legislative agenda. In 2022, UNHCR provided technical support to the MFA, Mol, COMAR and immigration authorities.

1.4 Collaboration and Partnerships

UNHCR expanded its network of partners in 2022, signing agreements with 40 organizations across the country (36 local actors) to enhance coordination in protection and durable solutions. 22 Memorandum of Understanding were signed with federal and local governments, academic institutions, and private sector organizations. UNHCR cooperated closely with 19 government authorities and public institutions across different levels and branches of government. In the field,

UNHCR improved dialogue and collaboration mechanisms with state and municipal government authorities, namely through new agreements with the local governments of Chihuahua, Michoacán, Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, Saltillo, and Tlaxcala.

Within the framework of the Global Compact on Refugees, and the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS in Spanish), Mexico implemented a range of commitments to provide protection and solutions for those forcibly displaced and included strategies to support host communities. In 2022, the inter-ministerial roundtable on inclusion and integration of refugees set up with Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) to implement MIRPS was consolidated, becoming an important platform of coordination between government entities, UN agencies and development actors.

In Mexico's context of complex mixed movements, UNHCR sought to strengthen coordinated protection responses, maximising efforts, and avoiding duplication. Under the overall guidance of the UN Resident Coordinator, UNHCR and IOM co-lead the UN Interagency Group on Human Mobility (GIMH) covering topics related to refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs, and migrants.

With an area-based approach, 9 UN agencies under the overall lead of the UN Resident Coordinator's Office and technical coordination from UNHCR, worked together on a comprehensive plan to support humanitarian and development-oriented initiatives for Tapachula, one of the hot spots for human mobility in the region.

Section 2: Results

2.1. Outcomes and Achievements

2. Outcome Area: Status Determination

Institutional and operational capacity strengthened to have adequate preparedness plans, identify people in need of international protection and refer to appropriate referral pathways.

Technical and financial capacity of the Government is increased, and the asylum procedure is further simplified and efficient.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
2.3 Proportion of individuals undergoing asylum procedures who have access to an effective appeal mechanism after first instance rejection of their claim.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Mexico had seen continuous growth in mixed movements composed of refugees and migrants across both its southern and northern borders over previous years. In the south, the unprecedented increase of arrivals coupled with the absence of legal stay arrangements and alternative pathways resulted in an overwhelming pressure on Mexican authorities, and most particularly on the already overstretched capacity of the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR). While recent experience had shown that the profiles of those transiting through the region and into Mexico could quickly change, highlighting the need for an evolving response, one concerning trait of 2022 was the heightened vulnerability of individuals and family groups and the growing risks to which they were exposed along their route.

With Mexico having become one of the countries with the highest number of asylum applications in the world, the need for UNHCR to continue supporting COMAR to ensure effective access to international protection for those forced to flee and their access to comprehensive responses was more important than ever.

As most asylum-seekers entered Mexico through its southern border, the Mexican state of Chiapas found itself with a sizeable group of mobile population with very acute humanitarian and protection needs; 75% of all asylum claims were lodged in Chiapas in 2022, primarily in the city of Tapachula, but also in Palenque.

In terms of adjudications, COMAR had almost quadrupled its processing capacity since 2018, proving that the strategic use of differentiated case processing modalities worked. Notwithstanding efforts to strengthen COMAR's processing capacity, it merely covered 58% of the total number of claims registered in the same year (in 2021, this percentage stood at 44%). By the end of 2022, COMAR had issued just over 64,000 individual decisions throughout the year, with an overall recognition rate of 63%. The application of the Cartagena Declaration through simplified procedures, explains both reduced waiting times and the higher recognition rates for some nationalities.

The complexity of mixed movements of refugees and migrants and consequent response policies which entailed border restrictions and summary expulsions (like the Migrant Protection Protocols and Title 42), increased not only the risk of refoulement (and chain refoulement) but also posed additional pressure on COMAR's already limited processing capacity in the face of the fast-increasing asylum demands triggered as well by the absence of alternative legal pathways.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

It was essential to increase the federal budget of the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) to adequately support its infrastructure, personnel, and processing capacity in coherence with the number of asylum claims registered annually. Moreover, preserving the integrity of the asylum system required both implementing fair and efficient asylum procedures, as well as offering legal stay arrangements and alternative pathways for those who were not in need of international protection. The consequences of channeling all cases towards COMAR, without proper identification of the individuals' specific needs in a context of mixed movements, would entail the collapse of the asylum system in Mexico.

3. Outcome Area: Protection Policy and Law

There is a legal framework and public policy, and international conventions are fully applied to ensure protection and solutions for internally displaced people and stateless individuals in Mexico.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Mexico had seen a continuous increase of mixed movements at its southern and northern borders, which has resulted in an overwhelming pressure on the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR).

Despite these different challenges, COMAR's processing capacity almost quadrupled since 2018. This progress was directly related to UNHCR's technical and financial support which entailed support with staff, material resources, technical assistance from the Quality Asylum Initiative (QAI) programme, and the implementation of simplification and efficiency processing measures. UNHCR advocated for the optimization of these processing modalities and for the correct interpretation of refugee status determination standards to guarantee quality of interviews, legal assessments and the integrity of the asylum system.

Violence within Mexico, perpetrated by criminal and drug-trafficking groups, contributed to an increase in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs). According to the monitoring carried out by a Mexican NGO, almost 380,000 people were displaced due to incidents of mass violence from 2006 to 2021. Some of UNHCR's achievements in assisting in IDP-related matters were the drafting of the Manual on Internal Displacement of the Supreme Court of Justice –the first of its kind at the regional level– as a tool to help justice operators find the most relevant standards to guarantee the rights of IDPs, which was coordinated by UNHCR and ICRC. Furthermore, the working group on IDPs, which was co-chaired by UNHCR, met regularly, and its members agreed on the Terms of Reference as well as a Work Plan. UNHCR scaled-up its response to have a presence in Chihuahua, Michoacán, and Sinaloa on internal displacement matters. As such, UNHCR collaborated with the Government of Michoacán to carry out seven dialogue tables with 17 institutions and civil society members of the Inter-Institutional Committee for Attention of Internal Displacement, to consolidate the legislative initiative. UNHCR provided technical assistance to the Government of Sinaloa with the IDP registration tool and held a workshop as a preamble to the working groups for the regulation of the Law on Internal Displacement, and the creation of a protocol which began in 2022.

UNHCR continued to facilitate the coordination of the working group on the profiling of IDPs in Chihuahua. The group successfully collected quantitative and qualitative data, analysed it, and jointly revised the findings. Preliminary results were already considered for the 2023 State Budget, and IDPs were included in the State Development Plan.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

There were several challenges in relation to migration policies implemented in Mexico, and the applicable legislation. Access to the asylum procedure at airports and cities where there is no presence from the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR), was challenging. During the appeal process, COMAR did not issue asylum seeker certificates, which could expose people to deportation. The detention of asylum-seekers and refugees posed a serious risk of refoulement. Immigration detention was established in the national legal framework without a time limit and with no consideration of alternatives. In 2022, UNHCR identified a total of 53 individuals who were refouled, 22 of whom were recognized refugees in Mexico.

Following the announcement of a humanitarian parole program in the U.S. for Venezuelans in October 2022, thousands of people remained in limbo in Mexico while awaiting a response to their requests. The need for shelter and other protection services increased and the response came from civil society organizations and the United Nations.

4. Outcome Area: Gender-based Violence

Risk of gender-based violence is reduced for all people UNHCR serves and all survivors have adequate and timely access to services.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
4.3 Proportion of survivors who are satisfied with SGBV case management services.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	85.00%	86.73%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR strengthened its gender-based violence prevention and response interventions through capacity-building, increasing the community awareness and reducing the risk of gender-based violence, particularly in shelters. UNHCR undertook training sessions and participated in sensitization activities on gender-based violence prevention, including talks on human rights, conflict resolution, positive child-rearing, and gender-based violence specifically.

In terms of risk mitigation, UNHCR increased awareness of gender-based violence, and sexual and reproductive rights, and distributed menstrual hygiene dignity kits. In regard to the response, of the 1,200 survivors helped and supported by UNHCR's specialized partners (Médicos del Mundo, ALPAZ, DHIA, and HIAS), 86% expressed satisfaction with the services they accessed. Overall, UNHCR increased access to services by 44.5% in 2022. In terms of protection against sexual exploitation and abuse, UNHCR were evaluated according to IASC standards in 2022. Jointly with UNFPA, UNHCR co-led the interagency sub-Group on gender-based violence.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

In 2022, there were difficulties in fully achieving the objectives of gender-based violence prevention regarding community-based groups working on this issue because organizing community-based groups in Mexico is incipient. UNHCR also continued to have an extremely mobile population, which presented challenges for long-term initiatives. Furthermore, UNHCR field presence needed to be reinforced to respond to the different priorities. An additional challenge was related to lack of sufficient budget for risk mitigation measures and campaigns on sexual and reproductive rights.

5. Outcome Area: Child Protection

Child protection system strengthened, and children's well-being ensured

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
5.1 Proportion of children at heightened risk who are supported by a Best Interests Procedure.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	69.84%	80.00%	86.36%
5.3 Proportion of unaccompanied and separated children who are in an appropriate alternative care arrangement	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	60.00%	63.64%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2022, UNHCR, in coordination with UNICEF, focused its efforts on the inclusion of refugee children in the national child protection system and ensured timely and comprehensive protection responses, improved reception conditions and access to asylum, and advocated for the implementation of the legal reforms aiming at eradicating child detention in a migratory context. The European Union project “EU Global promotion of best practices for children in migration” played a key role in supporting these efforts. To strengthen best interest procedures, UNHCR provided temporary staffing support, technical assistance and on-the-job training to child protection authorities responsible for best interest procedures. The UNHCR also trained 909 people (staff, partners and key counterparts) on refugee child protection, and partnered with Save the Children to provide specialized case management services for 1,150 asylum-seeking and refugee unaccompanied and separated children and others at heightened risk (89% of those identified).

To strengthen the capacities of local child protection authorities, UNHCR offices in the field had a child protection focal point who received technical assistance and guidance from the national focal point. The staff provided to child protection authorities assistance to over 5,000 children on the move in 2022, referring 19% of them to asylum procedures and/or temporary immigration status to prevent refoulement. Also, UNHCR supported with technical assistance child protection authorities for the implementation of the mechanism in Tijuana for the transfer of unaccompanied children for whom accessing the US protection system is determined to be in their best interest. Moreover, it led the interagency advocacy efforts with UNICEF and IOM for its expansion to Ciudad Juárez that resulted in a series of binational meetings to put in place the coordination required in El Paso: 23 children were processed and accessed the U.S. child protection system and family reunification process in 2022. Almost 60 children have benefitted since 2019.

To improve reception conditions for children and ensured access to asylum and the end of immigration detention, UNHCR provided appropriate alternative care for 70 asylum-seeking and refugee children for whom family reunification was not possible. It also implemented psychosocial, recreational and educational activities for over 6,000 children in 20 child-friendly safe spaces across the country. In addition, UNHCR supported the school enrolment of over 600 refugee and asylum-seeking children and provided over 2,000 parents and caregivers with positive parenting techniques to prevent violence in the family. Finally, sport activities were implemented with over 5,000 people to promote peaceful coexistence and provided child-friendly information on the right to seek asylum for nearly 1,000 children. In terms of inter-agency collaboration, UNHCR developed a work plan with UNICEF and was the co-lead with UNICEF of the Child Protection Sub-Group.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Insufficient funding available posed a challenge to supporting child protection authorities to ensure a timely and comprehensive response. Although the Family Welfare Agency (DIF) financed the construction of over 60 new shelters across the country to increase reception conditions for families, alternative care

arrangements for unaccompanied children in need of international protection were still insufficient. Despite DIF and child protection authorities making significant efforts to ensure that shelters apply international standards, there was a need to expand community-based and family-based alternatives that guaranteed the well-being and development of children, while at the same time continued to explore legal avenues for families.

6. Outcome Area: Safety and Access to Justice

Refoulement is effectively prevented, legal reform ensures immigration detention is used as last resource, children are no longer detained and adult asylum-seekers benefit from alternatives to detention.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR maintained a robust network of 106 lawyers and 58 paralegals distributed across 16 cities throughout the country in 2022, strategically provided protection counselling and orientation to guarantee legal assistance for persons in need of international protection. UNHCR's objective was to provide individuals with reliable information and tools to make well-informed decisions and to mitigate risks associated with perilous journeys, smuggling or human trafficking. UNHCR collaborated with 43 public defenders in 31 different cities, adding to the network of legal service providers. In addition, two new law firms joined UNHCR network of pro-bono allies in 2022, providing legal representation of complex cases and contributing to assessing legal matters. At the same time, UNHCR established agreements with eight human rights clinics that were part of universities in Guadalajara, Monterrey, Aguascalientes, San Luis Potosí, Mexico City, Puebla, Tabasco, and Querétaro. These actors worked tirelessly to guarantee access to justice and provide legal advice and representation to asylum-seekers and recognized refugees in Mexico. In 2022, paralegals and lawyers reached 201,000 people and provided information and legal advice that guarantees efficient access to either the asylum or immigration procedures in Mexico.

Legal partners assisted refugees on cases related to access to refugee status. They also provided support regarding violations of due process and other rights within the framework of the refugee status recognition procedure, detention of asylum-seekers and refugees with documentation, and people in need of international protection at risk of refoulement.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Legal challenges regarding the detention of asylum-seekers remained, including cases of refoulement – 31 cases were registered, corresponding to 53 refugees and asylum-seekers deported to their country of origin. Through visits to migrant detention centres, UNHCR monitored the needs of those detained and provided information on the right to seek asylum to over 35,000 people. Over 5,000 people received legal orientation and more than 500 individuals were released from detention, including six children.

Possible violations of due process occurred, such as the lack of access to immediate documentation, the lack of valid documents for applicants who were in review appeals, annulment of amparo proceedings, the lack of clear criteria that allowed a person to adequately justify why they did not approach COMAR within the 30-day period stipulated in the legislation, and significant delays in the procedures for recognition of refugee status, among others.

7. Outcome Area: Community Engagement and Women's Empowerment

There is an effective two-way communication between people UNHCR serves and UNHCR; the community is fully engaged into programme design, monitoring and evaluation; and people UNHCR serves are able to make informed decisions.

Refugees and host community networks are consolidated and strengthened for people UNHCR serves to identify risks and organize through community initiatives and leaderships.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
7.1 Proportion of PoC who participate meaningfully across all phases of the OMC.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	98.17%	99.00%	98.05%
7.2 Proportion of PoC who have access to effective feedback and response mechanisms.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	98.17%	99.00%	98.05%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

One of UNHCR's core activities was promoting the participation of the people whom UNHCR serves so that their perspectives was regularly reflected in its programming. To achieve this, UNHCR trained 41 staff members on community-based protection and drafted operational guidelines on community mobilization to provide technical orientation to thematic focal points.

Participatory assessments were implemented throughout the country involving a total of 800 refugees, asylum-seekers and host communities, ensuring persons with specific needs such as persons with disabilities and serious medical conditions, LBGTIQ+, gender-based violence survivors, among others, were able to express their views on needs, gaps, solutions and actions to be prioritized for UNHCR's 2023 strategy.

UNHCR refurbished nine community centres throughout the country, provided training on leadership to 54 refugees and asylum-seekers, identified and supported 17 community initiatives and promoted 62 activities centred around strengthening peaceful coexistence, especially through raising awareness and sport.

To better reach the population, UNHCR collaborated side-by-side with 30 outreach volunteers who provided information to more than 12,000 people in the communities of eight cities. UNHCR maintained strong access to information on the rights and integration of people who were forced to flee thanks to the consolidation of a centralized, national HelpDesk, its Help webpage (receiving more than 211,000 visits in 2022) and the Facebook platform El Jaguar, where videoblogs, Facebook Lives (6 in 2022, reaching more than 290,000 users) and cards were uploaded and shared with the digital community so they could take more informed decisions. Furthermore, 10 short documentaries titled "From refugees to refugees" were produced and shared across UNHCR platforms, where refugees told of their life experiences in Mexico on naturalization, health services, family reunification.

In terms of the Community Based Complaints Mechanisms, over 800 reports were filed by the affected population, mainly to request assistance, to provide feedbacks, to review decisions on denied cash grants, to ask for information, to flag situations of protection risks and potential cases of misconduct. UNHCR was able to follow up on and resolve 66% of the reports received in 2022.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Some of the main challenges in ensuring significant engagement of refugees and asylum-seekers were related to the high mobility of the population throughout the country, which limits their regular participation

as they frequently move from one location to another.

This implies that it was difficult to promote a sustained and long-term engagement with the affected communities so they could identify leaders who could represent them and join initiatives to implement. Therefore, the number of community leaders and refugee-led organizations was limited.

One of the biggest challenges was to systematically ensure the participation of women and girls, whose participation remained low or their contribution to activities were not regularly documented.

8. Outcome Area: Well-Being and Basic Needs

People with specific needs are supported, through adequate and timely identification as well as effective and specialized response.

People UNHCR serves have access to information, comprehensive assistance (including through more sustainable shelter options) and case management.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Shelters played a fundamental role to deliver protection and a wide range of other services. In partnership with 20 shelters and 3 network of shelters, UNHCR ensured that more than 15,000 refugees accessed comprehensive assistance including adequate housing, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, and legal aid. More than 14,000 people received psychosocial support provided by 24 shelters and specialized partners. UNHCR provided direct and indirect support to 82 shelters through infrastructure improvement, staffing, core relief items distribution and capacity building.

To further strengthen protection capacity in the shelters, UNHCR designed a tool to evaluate the level of implementation of the minimum standards, which also included Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), gender-based violence and child protection, among others. This tool helped shelters to focus on gradually improving its performance against identified gaps and considerably support its work in favour of abiding by the highest level of protection accordingly.

Considering all cash assistance (Humanitarian Assistance, Protection and Durable Solutions Sectorial grants), 60,300 beneficiaries received assistance. In terms of humanitarian assistance, 17,000 people/6,799 households benefitted. The operation also adjusted the targeting process for humanitarian assistance. This allowed for an overall 40% eligibility rate over the year considering cases registered.

A detailed targeting review took place resulting in a more logically structured scorecard, also allowing better analysis and identification of different profiles according to the vulnerabilities registered. Another value added of the exercise was the granular scoring which allowed the ranking of cases in order of the level of vulnerabilities.

The Post Distribution Monitoring confirmed that 65% of the beneficiaries were able to cover all or most of their basic needs, 86% had access to the required goods and services, 74% found themselves very satisfied with the attention received, and 73% confirmed they would opt for the same assistance modality (prepaid cards).

UNHCR resumed leadership of the Cash Working Group in the last quarter of 2021 and established a strong link with Government counterparts to ensure strong collaboration between UNHCR and all other actors. Among the various objectives agreed upon by the group, a key objective was to reduce the risk of duplication and to ensure the best use of the scarce resources.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Shelters played a fundamental role in the protection of the people under UNHCR's mandate. The changes in US immigration policies affected thousands of people, facing strong needs in terms of basic services and accommodation.

Although UNHCR prioritized the limited resources through the necessary adjustments in the targeting or eligibility process under the Humanitarian Assistance Programme, the overall 40% eligibility rate over the year left many vulnerable people out of the assistance scheme. Assistance was crucial for the population as only 15% of the people were able to cover most of their basic needs without the humanitarian assistance.

13. Outcome Area: Self Reliance, Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods

People UNHCR serves in Mexico access the formal labour market, including through the adoption of related public policy.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2022, UNHCR liaised with 294 new private sector companies to facilitate recruiting refugees as part of their labour workforce, reaching a total of 518 enterprises. Among the companies are Mexican companies AB Manufacturing and PPM Industries; German company Continental Automotive; American company Daymond Worldwide; Hungarian company KIPP Automotive; and Japanese companies Daikin Global and Nax MFG. More than half of these are large-sized companies.

UNHCR continued its strategy on sensitization and training sessions with several partners including Tent Partnership for Refugees for the Human Resources and Corporate Social Responsibility teams of private sector companies in Mexico. Most common queries from the private sector include understanding the hiring regulations and requirements to contract refugees; types of migratory identity cards issued by the National Migration Institute (INM); processes to notify an employer or workplace change; types of legal figures for refugees and migrants; and other companies' experiences from working with refugee populations.

Since the cooperation program with SAT (tax authority) started in February 2022, more than 9,200 people with TVRH have been supported to access an "express appointment" at SAT offices, thus allowing them to access a formal job in Mexico in time. UNHCR has successfully opened a direct line of communication with the SAT authorities to book appointments for refugees and asylum-seekers to register and obtain their Federal Tax Registry (RFC) number.

In March 2022, a reform in the legislation on the credit institutions was issued acknowledging the cards issued by the INM as valid identity cards to open bank accounts. UNHCR and its partners have approached bank institutions to ensure the implementation of this reform.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Asylum-seekers and refugees faced challenges in having their cards issued by immigration authorities, which allowed them to obtain a Federal Tax Registry (RFC) and to access formal employment. Having an RFC became mandatory in Mexico for all adults.

Opening bank accounts by refugees continued to be a major challenge despite the law recognizing that the cards issued by immigration authorities was a valid document. Most financial institutions continued to require a passport as identification for all foreigners who wished to open bank accounts.

15. Outcome Area: Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

Asylum-seekers and refugees with serious protection risks have access to internal relocation for local integration in Mexico or are resettled to third countries where they can benefit from protection and a durable solution.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
15.1 Number of refugees submitted by UNHCR for resettlement.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	220	330	332
15.2 Average processing time from resettlement submission to departure under normal priority.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	Unknown	256.00

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

As the Global Compact for Refugees highlights, resettlement is one of the durable solutions that allow the most vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers to benefit from integration perspective, especially when they may face protection challenges in the first country of asylum. Thanks to the solidarity of countries such as Australia, Canada and the U.S., throughout 2022 UNHCR Mexico was able to identify, interview, and submit for consideration 332 persons to be resettled to a third country of asylum, exceeding the expected quota of 330.

Those identified and referred were women and girls at risk (58%), survivors of violence and/or torture (30%), or individuals who had legal and/or physical protection needs (12%). Most of the refugees and asylum-seekers considered for resettlement were from Guatemala and Honduras; 64% were women.

Within the pledge under the Global Refugee Forum, UNHCR implemented complementary pathways through education. Three students from Latin America (Colombia, Honduras, and Nicaragua) arrived in Mexico as part of the complementary pathways program for tertiary education. They were the first students from the region to participate in the programme, which previously focused on the MENA region, and obtained a full scholarship. Two students began their undergraduate studies, and one student started a Master's degree. 19 nationals travelled to Mexico from India, Kirgizstan, Kazajstan, Pakistan, and even from Afghanistan to join the programme.

A delegation from Mexico participated in the Signature Event on Complementary Pathways and Local Integration within the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) Platform. The event was organized by the Government of Canada as Chair of the MIRPS Support Platform. Canada confirmed the financial support to the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) on technical assistance for the implementation of the complementary pathway program.

UNHCR continued to provide information on family reunification and supported legal partners and the Federal Institute of Public Defence (IFDP), playing a key role in the accompaniment of refugees in their family reunification processes.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Because of the long procedures with the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR), many people abandoned their process or left Mexico to reach the U.S. irregularly. Among the 266 cases considered for interview with U.S. for resettlement, 50% abandoned the process, the rest of the cases were still waiting. Australia announced that the cases submitted in 2022 would be processed in 2024 due to the lack of visa issuance -no cases travelled to Australia in 2022. Additional budget and staff were needed in line with the changing quota and the priority resettlement gained in the region.

On labour mobility, although cases were identified (refugee nurses, technology developers and general services to work in Canada) none had been selected yet, mainly due to the complex eligibility process of the Economic Mobility Pathways Project. On family reunification, there are obstacles to obtain appointments at the Mexican consulates to obtain visas or additional requirements.

16. Outcome Area: Integration and other Local Solutions

People UNHCR serves in Mexico have access to public and private services including health, education, social security, housing, and financial services.

Refugees and asylum-seekers have access to relevant documentation recognized by public and private actors.

Naturalization and family reunification are accessible for people UNHCR serves based on their interest and eligibility.

Opportunities for people in need of international protection UNHCR serves are expanded through complementary pathways.

People UNHCR serves manage to integrate socially and culturally into the host community, and host community is receptive of the people UNHCR serves.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2022, 12,800 refugees participated in the relocation, job placement and local integration program. Over 1,000 people were part of the Relocation Pilot in coordination with IOM for Haitians, and 37 were internally displaced persons (IDPs), who accessed the programme within the framework of the pilot projects agreed on with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Ministry of Interior.

In 2022, UNHCR provided local integration and protection support through home visits and counselling sessions for population in situ reaching the areas of Mexico City, Tapachula, Tuxtla, Tenosique, Villahermosa, Acayucan, Palenque, Tijuana and Mexicali. In 2022, UNHCR conducted over 8,400 interviews comprising 13,200 asylum-seekers and refugees in order to identify protection needs and monitor local integration processes, referring people to relevant services and programmes where necessary.

In line with its 2030 Education Strategy, UNHCR promoted the school enrolment of asylum-seekers, refugee children and adolescents. Over 3,000 children were supported by UNHCR to cover education-related costs throughout the year. 2022 also marked the third year of implementation of the Educate A Child project to promote the school enrolment of out-of-school children in primary education and their retention in schools. Project interventions included the provision of financial assistance to refugee students, including over-aged learners, the renovation and refurbishment of educational infrastructure, and training and sensitization sessions for teachers. An innovative awareness-raising and sensitization campaign was developed under the Educate A Child project, in coordination with the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) and the Ministry of Public Education with the Mexican Radio Institute (IMER). Jointly, radio spots nationwide were developed, sharing messages on the right to education of refugee children.

In 2022, Mexico granted 15 new scholarships under the Global DAFI Programme, reaching a total of 52 DAFI students, and 14 DAFI students graduated over the year. Additionally, UNHCR supported another 160 students within its tertiary education programmes, including 39 students who were connected to university programs.

With the reinstatement of the naturalization procedure by the Mexican Government following its suspension since the onset of the pandemic, nearly 200 refugees submitted their request for naturalization to the MFA with the support of UNHCR. UNHCR also assisted refugees in their naturalization processes during 2022 through cash grants to cover the naturalization fees, as well as the travel costs to Mexico City for refugees

living in other parts of the country. In the last quarter of the year, the MFA opened four remote offices in the cities of Monterrey, Mérida, Puebla and Pachuca, and set up online processes aimed at removing some of the practical challenges to submit the process. UNHCR signed a collaboration agreement with the MFA to address the requests of hundreds of refugees who met the criteria and were interested in submitting their naturalization process.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Continuous changes in the practice by the National Immigration Institute (INM) to issue visitor's cards on a humanitarian basis for asylum-seekers and/or permanent residencies for refugees posed challenges in the implementation of the relocation, job placement and local integration of refugees' programme. Data gathered shows that delays in obtaining documentation and tax-payer numbers impact significantly on participants' ability to access formal employment within the first week.

UNHCR advocated with tax authorities to streamline the issuance of the Federal Tax Registry (RFC) in communities of first asylum in the southern part of Mexico. The offices in Tapachula and Tenosique reported limited processing capacity, and SAT had no branch in Palenque nor in Tenosique. This situation required UNHCR to organize transportation for participants to obtain the RFC in other municipalities and sometimes in a different state. In such cases, an authorization by the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) is needed to travel.

2.2. Age, Gender and Diversity

UNHCR strengthened the implementation of the Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) Policy. Data was collected, disaggregated, analysed and used for programming. UNHCR established a Dashboard where ProGres data is disaggregated based on the AGD approach. The operation used Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) for ensuring appropriate identification, case management and local integration of persons with specific protection needs, with a particular accent on persons with disabilities, gender-based violence survivors, single caregivers and LGBTIQ+, who benefitted from sectoral cash grant when appropriate as part of the comprehensive care. Specific SOPs have also been rolled out for LGBTIQ+. Shelters received capacity- building on the AGD approach and Persons with Specific Needs.

UNHCR carried out participatory assessments and started to engage them into the monitoring phase of programming. Two sessions were organized for UNHCR staff on how to involve the people we serve into monitoring and evaluation. In addition, a specific All Staff session was carried out on the AGD Policy, where 211 colleagues participated, to further strengthen the staff's knowledge on what obligations and priorities derive from the Policy. Although still limited in scope, women and girls participation was promoted in ad hoc discussion groups, as outreach volunteers and closely monitored in accessing information and decision-making structures.

AAP became one of UNHCR's top priorities. The operation counted on the community-based complaint mechanism whose functioning was underpinned in dedicated SOPs displaying a wide variety of channels from digital to in person, although for 2023 UNHCR was planning to increase its access for children, persons with disabilities and the elderly. Furthermore, effective two-way communication was ensured through a broad range of means such as the Help Desk, the Jaguar and getting feedback from the communities on UNHCR's strategy.

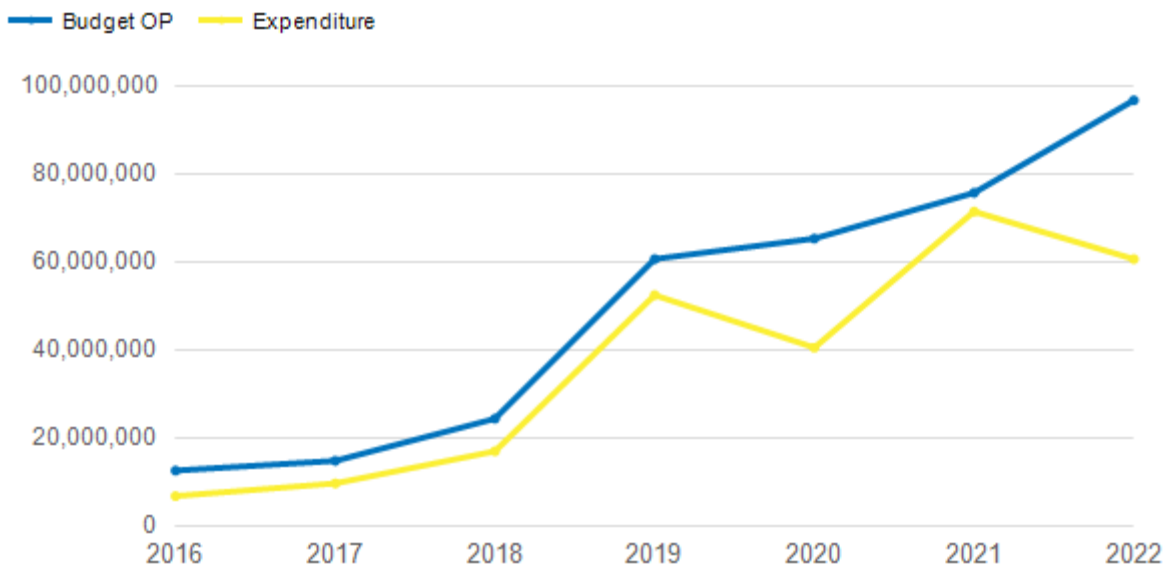
Section 3: Resources

3.1 Financial Data

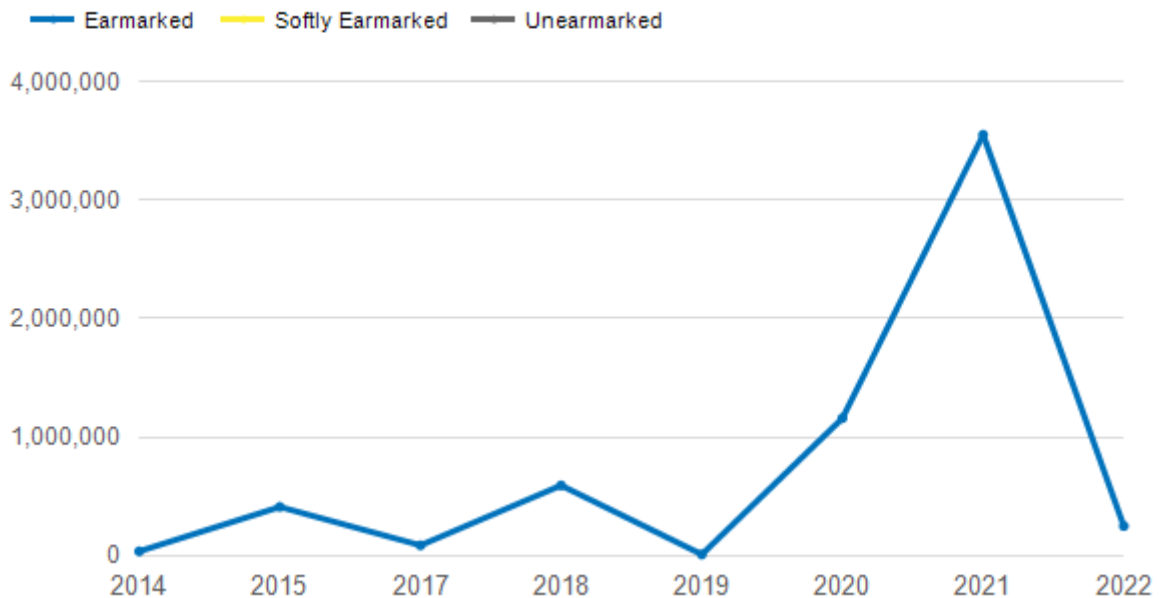
Impact Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
IA1: Protect	50,568,568	39,418,426	77.95%	39,443,957	100.06%
IA3: Empower	724,623	472,768	65.24%	473,010	100.05%
IA4: Solve	45,310,222	20,621,464	45.51%	20,631,788	100.05%
All Impact Areas		36,225	0.00%		0.00%
Total	96,603,413	60,548,883	62.68%	60,548,756	100.00%

Outcome Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
OA2: Status	15,577,857	12,749,501	81.84%	12,754,312	100.04%
OA3: Policy/Law	3,427,857	2,854,388	83.27%	2,859,200	100.17%
OA4: GBV	2,727,857	2,810,899	103.04%	2,815,710	100.17%
OA5: Children	3,992,857	3,954,436	99.04%	3,959,247	100.12%
OA6: Justice	215,000	241,856	112.49%	241,856	100.00%
OA7: Community	724,623	443,816	61.25%	444,058	100.05%
OA8: Well-being	22,393,571	14,755,917	65.89%	14,759,124	100.02%
OA11: Education		292	0.00%	292	100.00%
OA13 Livelihood	30,656,644	12,772,974	41.66%	12,774,911	100.02%
OA15: Resettle	1,528,571	1,574,462	103.00%	1,577,669	100.20%
OA16: Integrate	12,431,933	6,697,902	53.88%	6,704,096	100.09%
EA17: Systems	705,000	495,768	70.32%	495,768	100.00%
EA20: External	2,221,644	1,160,448	52.23%	1,162,513	100.18%
All Outcome Areas		36,225	0.00%		0.00%
Total	96,603,413	60,548,883	62.68%	60,548,756	100.00%

Budget and Expenditure Trend



Contributions Trend by Type



3.2. Resources Overview

The resources allocated to the Operation were prioritized taking into account the most pressing needs of the people UNHCR serve identified during the planning phase, and the different pillars of the multi-year strategy (Protection, Reception and Admission for Protection, Local Integration, and Empowerment). Operational budget was prioritized based on ensuring 12 months of Partnership Agreements with UNHCR partners and also covering the main programmes implemented directly by the Operation, such as the Cash-based Interventions (CBI), COMAR operational support, the Local Integration and Job Placement Programme, operational support to shelters, IDPs activities, and other protection and solutions interventions.

The operation closed four Field Units: Acayucan, Cancun, Mexicali, and Puebla; and opened one Field Unit in Villahermosa. At the end of 2022, the office structure was composed of 1 Country Office,

2 Sub-Offices, 3 Field Offices and 12 Field Units.

The number and scope of field activities increased, and the demand for security advice also grew proportionally. The operation implemented adequate security measures in its office premises as well as provided support on staff safety.

Delegation process admin/programme activities for Sub-Office Monterrey and Sub-Office Tuxtla continued during 2022. At the year end, both Sub-Offices were fully delegated during the period and responsible staff were guided, trained, and accompanied.



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