



July-September 2021

IMPLEMENTING THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO

STRATEGIC SECTORS:



Protection



Jobs and
livelihoods



Social protection



Education



Health

MIRPS IN ACTION: UPCOMING EVENTS

Public-private dialogue on the inclusion of displaced persons in the labour market

Business exchange on market access and practical tools for labor inclusion of internally displaced persons, asylum seekers, refugees and returnees in the economies of Central America and Mexico. The event will provide insight into the experience of certain business organizations in developing labor inclusion guides in the region, as well as the private sector's perspective on employability programs that are already being implemented, addressing the challenges and opportunities that still exist to enable a more efficient response.

MIRPS Annual Meeting

**IV MIRPS
ANNUAL MEETING**

November 30th, 2021
9:00 am (GUATEMALA - CST)

High-level meeting

The event will be broadcast online

Supported by
UNHCR ACNUR
OEA

MIRPS IN ACTION:

IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL PLANS

MEXICO

SOCIAL PROTECTION - In various entities of the country, local Bureaus have been installed, derived from the Inter-Agency Bureau on Shelter and Supplementary Protection of MIRPS, in the case of Monterrey, Nuevo Leon; Palenque, Chiapas; Tenosique, Tabasco; Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas and Tijuana, Baja California. The COMAR Representation Offices in these entities have likewise replicated the installation of the thematic tables at the state and municipal level, in Tijuana (Thematic Table on Identity and Documentation), in Palenque (Thematic Bureau of Health) and in Monterrey (Thematic Tables on Identity and Documentation, Health and Labor Inclusion). The local roundtables will promote public integration policies for refugees at the local level.

PROTECTION - In September, the III Regional Congress of Women in Migration Contexts was held, with the participation of the 11 member countries of the Regional Conference on Migration, international agencies and civil society, where the challenges for women's economic autonomy in mobility contexts were addressed. It highlights the participation of refugee women who presented their success stories and the obstacles they faced in their integration in Mexico.

EL SALVADOR

EDUCATION - The Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology has updated the guide to care for children, adolescents, youth, and teachers in condition or risk of forced displacement and has developed an operational manual to facilitate its implementation. Both documents are under review and are expected to be socialized with all stakeholders involved in 2022. These tools will allow practical guidelines to be established to guide the technical staff and faculty of the national education system in identifying, addressing and referral cases, under a rights approach.

JOB AND LIVELIHOODS - The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare is making efforts to reactivate the labor insertion table for the LGTBIQ population, with the aim that this will be a space where different initiatives will be coordinated to strengthen the technical and soft capacities of the population, as well as to serve as liaison with the private sector to facilitate their employment. Therefore, 13 organizations of the Salvadoran LGTBIQ Federation and the Ministry of Culture have been summoned to hold a first meeting this coming September 29.

GUATEMALA

PROTECTION - The Secretariat of Social Welfare of the Presidency of the Republic, with the support of UNHCR, has begun the implementation of the "Casa Joven" program in Amatitlán, department of Guatemala. The model of "Casa Joven" will provide psychological, social, and educational and technical opportunities to girls, boys, adolescents and young people at social risk and in the context of human mobility.

In August and September 2021, inter-agency coordination meetings led by the Guatemalan Migration Institute have been held, with the participation of the Office of the Child and Adolescent Procurator of the Office of the Attorney General and the Judicial Agency, with the purpose of establishing the "Route of Referencing Cases of Children and Adolescents Unaccompanied with Needs of International Protection".

LIVELYHOOD - In July 2021, the Charter of Understanding between the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and UNHCR was revised with the aim of establishing a collaborative framework that would contribute to the search for durable solutions for refugees, applicants for refugee status, returnees with protection needs and other persons in a vulnerable situation requiring international protection.

COSTA RICA

SOCIAL PROTECTION AND HEALTH - Access of persons in need of international protection to state health services: As part of the agreement signed between the Costa Rican Social Security Fund (CCSS, the governing body of the administration of public health services in Costa Rica) and the UNHCR, the insurance has been provided to **8823 persons** (as of September in a situation of economic vulnerability and suffering from health. During the period from July to September (2021), 11 cases have been identified in which barriers to medical care arose, mainly related to lack of information, which have been identified and resolved, thus guaranteeing the right to health of asylum-seekers and refugees.

PROTECTION - Simplification of documentation for work permits: As of July, the Directorate-General for Migration and Foreigners (DGME) initiated the issuance of identity cards for asylum seekers with an indication of the possibility of carrying out work activities with freedom of condition, after three months of its validity. This measure exempts asylum seekers from travel to the DGME for additional management of the application for work permit three months after the formalization of their refugee request; it avoids the risk of contagion by Covid-19 by agglomerations; it provides greater clarity to asylum seekers about the validity of their work permit; facilitates the search for a job opportunity; and contributes to integration and social inclusion processes.

JOB AND LIVELIHOODS - Vocational Training for Applicants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers: The "Emplate" Program is the public-private initiative led by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MTSS) that promotes labor integration through the development of skills and capacities of refugee and asylum seekers in areas of higher labor demand. Under this initiative, 25 people participated in technical training in the period of July and September and 51 more began their training processes that will be extended over the next few months.

MIRPS IN ACTION:

IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL PLANS

BELICE

PROTECTION - From July 1 to September 30, four people were registered as asylum seekers. In addition, eight registered asylum seekers have been granted refugee status, bringing the total number of recognized refugees from 51 to 59.

HEALTH - The Ministry of Health and Welfare reports that the number of Belizans who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 is now more than 81,000 compared to 16,000 three months ago. In addition, as of September 13, 176,242 people had received the first dose. Information campaigns have been alerting refugees and asylum seekers to full access to the vaccine. It is estimated that 35% of this group have received a first dose. Belize's total population is estimated at 420,000.

JOB AND LIVELIHOODS - The number of eligible asylum seekers who have the opportunity to formally enter a specific segment of the labor market has grown from 300 June to 391, while letters of referral for regularization have been issued to 201 heads of asylum.

HONDURAS

PROTECTION - The National Institute of Migration, activated a scheme of identification of persons in need of international protection, with the following results: From July to date, **3,703 outbreaks of vulnerabilities** have been applied in the Irregular Migrant Care Center at Toncontin Airport, Tegucigalpa. The procedures unit continues to work on the development of instructions for border officials and manuals for the determination of refugee status. Spaces equipped for the care of persons seeking refugee status, and migrants in transit with international protection needs, in the delegation of Choluteca, Trojes and CAMI Toncontin. The follow-up of the applicants continues, through 2 registration brigades between the months of July to September addressing the north and south areas; and 4 meetings of the Refuge Commission.

The Secretariat for Human Rights, with the support of UNHCR, is piloting assistance to displaced persons and at risk of displacement through the emergency humanitarian assistance mechanism. As of 27 September, **17 cases** (out of a target of 30), corresponding to **58 displaced persons**, have been addressed. In addition to providing assistance and protection measures, piloting will contribute to the review, adjustment and/or creation of care protocols and tools for interview, characterization and follow-up of cases. In addition, it will strengthen the capacities of the personnel of the Division for Protection of Internally Displaced Persons from Violence (DIPPDIV) to provide comprehensive and differentiated care to displaced and at-risk displaced populations.

LIVELIHOOD - In August, the Secretariat for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, through the project **"Yo Emprendo en mi Tierra"** in partnership with SENPRENDE,

supported 151 Honduran migrants returning with the delivery of seed capital to start their own business. In addition, together with the National Institute of Vocational Training (INFOP) and with the support of the GIZ, the Workshop "Start Your Business" was held with 25 young people, who received tools to identify business opportunities and develop a business plan.

EDUCATION - The INM (for its acronym in Spanish) coordinated the identification of 45 boys, girls and adolescents to be reintegrated into the national education system, and the southern zone liaison began the process with 7 boys, girls and adolescents already enrolled and under follow-up for effective insertion.

PANAMA

PROTECTION - Between July and September, a total of 150 authorities were trained in principles of protection and identification and referral mechanisms, especially addressed to SENAFRONT, SENAN and migration authorities in Darien, as well as at the national level.

Through consulting, commitments previously made as part of the Quality Assurance Initiative (QAI) were reviewed and incorporated into a future action plan with ONPAR to further strengthen the asylum system. A total of 20 recommendations related to improvements in the interview process, analysis of country of origin information, analysis of individual cases, etc. are being prioritized.

During the reporting period, in coordination with the Electoral Tribunal, a total of 7 newborns were monitored in Panama (Darien) as part of the people in transit (mixed movements) entering the Darien gap. All of them were issued relevant birth certificates to avoid future risks of stateless persons.

SOCIAL PROTECTION - A community center in Colon was formally inaugurated with the presence of municipal authorities. The center was improved through the UNHCR - Norwegian Refugee Council (NCR) program and is used to implement different socio-recreational activities with local Panamanian and refugee populations.

MIRPS IN ACTION: MIRPS REGIONAL WORK

MIRPS THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS

The Thematic Working Groups of the MIRPS held sessions for the exchange of knowledge, experiences, lessons learned and good practices among countries, experts and international organizations. The working groups were accompanied by the MIRPS Technical Secretariat, made up of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

Working group on Labour Market Access and Vocational Training:

This Group had Costa Rica as a leading country, through the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, and was composed of Belize (as an observer), Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama. The Working Group held 4 sessions with the support of a Panel of Advisers, composed of UNHCR, ILO, UNDP and UNESCO, with the aim of identifying good practices and making recommendations for priority actions in this area. The sessions addressed various topics such as: (1) legal frameworks for labor inclusion and approaches for understanding national regulatory frameworks (2) recognition of educational studies and paths, (3) recognition of qualifications and competencies, and work terms, (4) linking and supporting refugees and displaced persons to contribute to local development from an integral perspective, as well as entrepreneurship and social enterprise development. The sessions highlighted the good practices of states in employment, training, entrepreneurship and partnerships with the private sector. The Group has finalized a report with recommendations that have been divided into 2 axes, of short-term actions and long-term actions.

Working group on Local Governance:

The Working Group on Local Governance was composed of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama, with participation both from the central level and from its municipalities: Upala, Los Chiles, La Cruz, Escazu and Canton San Carlos of Costa Rica; Esquipulas and Villa Nueva of Guatemala; San Pedro Sula of Honduras, and the municipality of Panama City, Panama. In the development of the Group's work, the MIRPS countries were accompanied by a panel of advisers composed of the Municipality of São Paulo, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The thematic sessions addressed (1) legal frameworks for refugees and internally displaced persons and other specific characteristics of other vulnerable and at-risk populations such as children and adolescents; (2) multisectoral coordination between the various partners and services; (3) local development planning and multisectoral needs; and (4) community consultations, validation of local development plans. These sessions provided an opportunity for representatives of local governments and agencies to share experiences, good practices and ongoing initiatives. Local government representatives were able to present some preliminary results on their partner and service mapping.

Working Group on Internal Displacement:

The Working Group on Internal Displacement has Mexico as its leading country and is also composed of El Salvador and Honduras, Costa Rica and also Guatemala participate as the observer country in this Group in their capacity as Pro- tempore presidency. The Working Group held 4 sessions addressing the following themes: (1) review of the policy framework discussing national contexts and challenges in addressing internal displacement and its causes, (2) information and statistical systems, (3) community-based prevention and approach, (4) differentiated approaches in innovative solutions responses. The Group was accompanied by a panel of international experts who provided inputs and recommendations on the subject based on experiences from other countries in the region and from outside the region. The Group is currently in the process of compiling its report with the main findings and compilation of ongoing country initiatives to address internal displacement.

