



# Summary of Discussions on Results-Based Management Regional Technical Team on Reception, Admission and Case Processing 2024





# Reception, admission and case processing

## Background


The persistence of mixed movements through Central America and Mexico in recent years has increased the risks faced by individuals in need of protection, while also posing significant challenges for host communities. As of mid-2024, 1.24 million people had been forcibly displaced within the region.

Despite these challenges, the countries that are part of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) — Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Panama — have demonstrated exemplary solidarity by promoting solutions and providing protection through the strengthening of asylum systems and the implementation of alternative mechanisms for regular stay.

In this context, MIRPS member States are implementing their National Action Plans, which include efforts to strengthen their asylum or refugee systems and reduce backlogs of pending applications through innovative approaches aimed at expediting case verification and adjudication. They are also promoting the application of simplified procedures for asylum seekers, strengthening verification capacities and the use of country-of-origin information, as well as modernizing and digitalizing national systems, among other initiatives.

From a regional perspective, MIRPS member States established the Regional Technical Team (RTT) on Reception, Admission, and Case Processing, which brings together representatives from the asylum systems of the seven member countries, with the support of the MIRPS Technical Secretariat, composed of UNHCR and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS), through its Department of Social Inclusion.

As part of their 2024 priorities, MIRPS member States held virtual working sessions and the Workshop on Results-Based Management and Communications, in Panama City on September 4 and 5, 2024.



Representatives of MIRPS member States participating in the Regional Technical Team (RTT) on Reception, Admission, and Case Processing carried out an analysis of results-based management through four key stages:

1. Problem Analysis: Identification of the root causes of the main challenges in the regional and national contexts;
2. Theory of Change: Definition of the changes required to address these challenges and achieve impact for displaced persons;
3. Results Framework: Structuring of impacts, outcomes, and outputs to articulate, communicate, and operationalize the proposed changes;
4. Monitoring and Evaluation: Discussion on how to measure progress in the implementation of the results framework.

The analysis of results-based management, and particularly the theory of change, enables the development of a regional vision of the expected changes, ensuring that strategies are built upon strategic thinking and identifying other key partners necessary to achieve those changes. Its objective is to guide the planning and monitoring of MIRPS initiatives aimed at strengthening asylum and refugee systems at both regional and national levels.

This summary, prepared by the MIRPS Technical Secretariat, presents the outcomes of the analysis conducted by the RTT representatives across the four stages of results-based management. This document does not entail additional commitments from MIRPS Member States; rather, it offers strategic support for the work being carried out at the national and regional levels. Annexed to this document are the pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum and the MIRPS commitments on Reception, Admission, and Case Processing contained in the National Action Plans.



# Step 1: Problem Analysis

Problem

**Refugees do not have efficient and equitable access to comprehensive protection in their host countries.**

Manifestations

Situations of vulnerability and irregular status before and during the issuance of documentation.

Asylum procedures are not always fair, efficient, or of high quality.

Immediate causes

There are challenges in identifying individuals with international protection needs.

There is a lack of comprehensive response to those needs.

Processing times are long.

Access to the procedure is limited.

Systemic causes

There are insufficient mechanisms and procedures for receiving protection claims at border crossing points.

Mixed movement flows make it difficult to identify individuals with protection needs.

Identifying specific needs is challenging.

Response protocols by population group are weak.

There is a lack of up-to-date information on countries of origin.

Case management systems do not always automate processes at each stage.

There is a lack of differentiated procedures.

Information about the process is limited.

Structural causes

Lack of knowledge about needs.

Changing population profile.

In some countries there are not enough staff for the country of origin.

Country of origin officers seek information on an individual basis.

Lack of harmonised systems for data collection and storage.

Procedures involve many steps.

Geographic accessibility limitations.

Lack of information on migration and asylum/refuge options and which ones respond to their needs.

Lack of repository of information accessible to all.

Difficulty in finding objective information.

Lack of resources dedicated to digitisation.

High turnover of officials.  
Officials who do not speak the necessary language.

Not all institutions have adequate information to provide to the population.

Need for smooth coordination between countries on changing contexts in countries of origin.

Number of officials not growing at the same rate as displacement situations.

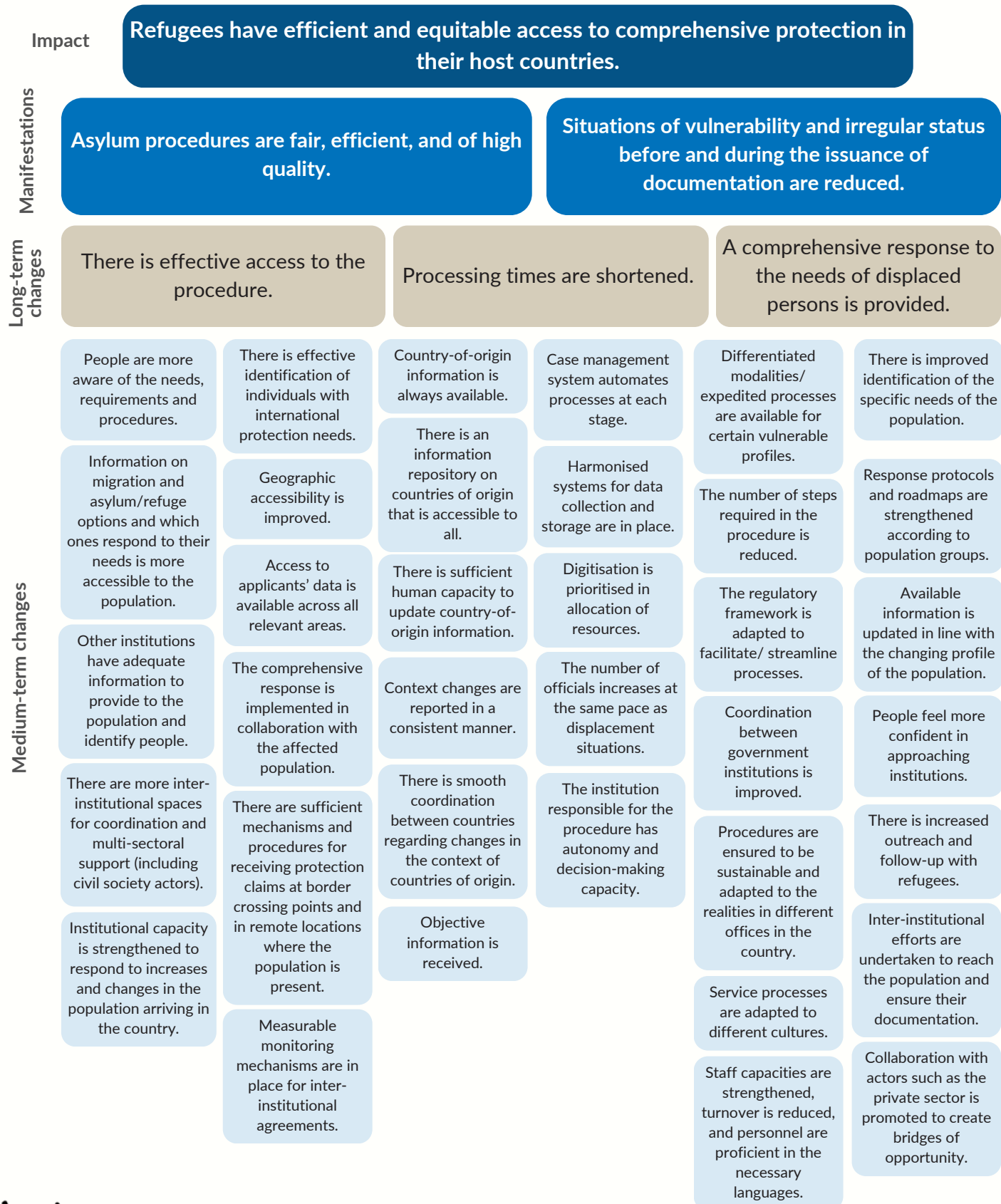
Information/guidelines are needed from various authorities.

Regulatory frameworks include requirements that do not facilitate streamlining processes.

Entry points difficult to access.



## Step 2: Theory of Change







## Step 3: Results Framework



### Impact

Refugees have efficient and equitable access to comprehensive protection in their host countries.

### Outcomes

Asylum procedures are fair, efficient, and of high quality.

There is effective identification, prioritization, and referral for the comprehensive response to the needs of the target population.

### Outputs

There is increased exchange of about countries-of-origin information.

Countries develop or strengthen differentiated analysis strategies.

Countries enhance their case management systems through digitalization.

People on the move receive information about their rights and the requirements to apply for asylum.

Countries establish strategies and strengthen inter-institutional referral and counter-referral mechanisms.

Countries reinforce the mechanisms for issuing the documentation required to access services.





## Step 4: Monitoring and Evaluation

The indicators reported by MIRPS countries in the 2023 MIRPS Annual Report, related to Reception, Admission, and Case Processing at the national level, are:

- **On processing:**
  - Number of refugee status determination interviews- *Belize*
  - % of asylum-seekers and refugees in relation to the national population- *Costa Rica*
  - Number of asylum-seekers- *Guatemala*
  - Number of persons in need of international protection identified, assisted, and referred in border/transit areas- *Honduras*
  - Confirmation of application for refugee status recognition- *Panama*
- **On processing times:**
  - Average processing time (from formalization of the asylum application to first-instance decision)- *Costa Rica*
  - Maximum processing time from registration to the adoption of an asylum decision in first instance- *El Salvador*
  - *Average processing time of refugee status recognition applications from reception to final decision- Panama*
- **On documentation:**
  - Asylum-seekers with legally recognized identity documents or credentials- *Costa Rica*
  - Number of identity documents issued to asylum-seekers- *El Salvador*
  - Asylum-seekers holding a temporary Unique Population Registry Code (CURP)\*- *México*
  - Card for asylum-seekers admitted to the procedure / Renewal of refugee recognition card / Statelessness recognition process documents / Permanent residence card- *Panama*
- **On decisions issued:**
  - Number of decisions granting refugee status- *El Salvador*
  - Number of persons recognized as refugees during the year- *Guatemala*
- **On children and adolescents:**
  - Children and adolescents in need of protection / refugees and asylum-seekers assisted at Casa Nuestras Raíces Guatemala and Quetzaltenango- *Guatemala*
  - Asylum-seeking children and adolescents (CAAs) referred by COMAR to child protection authorities- *Mexico*
- **On training of government teams:**
  - Training processes on Refugee Protection, International Protection, and Case Review Procedures for IGM officials- *Guatemala*
  - Training sessions for members of CONARE on Refugee and International Protection issues- *Guatemala*

# ANNEXES

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# **MIRPS Pledges on Reception, admission and case processing** **Global Refugee Forum**

## Regional pledge

In support of the Multi-stakeholder Pledge on Asylum Capacity and in the framework of the MIRPS Working Group on Strengthening Asylum Systems, MIRPS States commit to continue strengthening national institutions responsible for refugee status determination processes by improving technical capacities and developing national asylum procedures, systems and practices that enhance efficiency, fairness and quality, in accordance with the capacity and needs of each country and with the support and assistance of members of the MIRPS Support Platform, UNHCR, OAS, and other partnerships.

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### Belize

•**GRF 07996** The Government of Belize is committed to strengthening the fairness, efficiency, and integrity of the national asylum system through the review of legislative and regulatory frameworks and the implementation of innovative case management systems.

### Costa Rica

•**GRF 10538** Modernization of the national asylum system to provide a fair, efficient and quality response to refugees.

### El Salvador

•**GRF03540** Expand the capacity of the national asylum system through legal reform, the digitalization of the registration system, and other actions that will translate into a modern, agile and increasingly efficient system.

### Guatemala

•**GRF 08057** Facilitate access to the National Refuge System through the decentralization of the services of the Department of Refugee Status Recognition -DRER of the Guatemalan Migration Institute -IGM-

•**GRF 08058** Strengthen the Department of Refugee Status Recognition -DRER- with technical, technological, and financial resources.

# **MIRPS Pledges on Reception, admission and case processing**

## **Global Refugee Forum**

### **Honduras**

• **GRF 00627** The guarantee that individuals in need of international protection can enter Honduran territory under dignified and safe conditions, as well as access efficient procedures, reflects Honduras' commitment to the fundamental principles of human rights and the protection of those seeking refuge and asylum. This approach is part of a broader context of the country's response to mixed migration flows and its international obligations regarding asylum.

The processes and procedures developed by the National Migration Institute are designed to identify immediate needs and coordinate in a timely manner with the relevant authorities in cases requiring international protection, assistance for voluntary return, or where there are indications of gender-based violence, crimes related to irregular migration, human trafficking, or migrant smuggling.

This comprehensive approach not only focuses on facilitating the entry of individuals in vulnerable situations but also strives to ensure that procedures are efficient, guaranteeing that applicants for international protection can access the necessary resources and services in a timely and effective manner. This initiative aims not only to fulfill Honduras' legal obligations, but also to build a more humane and compassionate environment in the treatment of those seeking protection in the country.

### **Mexico**

• **GRF 08742** Maintain and promote the innovation of strategies and tools that ensure a fair, non-discriminatory, and efficient refugee status determination procedure, reducing the time required to access the process, and strengthening institutional assistance actions in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Refugees, Complementary Protection and Political Asylum, as well as international human rights treaties. This includes improving case analysis and the issuance of substantive decisions through the use of digital technology at the national level.

• **GRF 08745** Strengthening asylum capacity within the framework of the MIRPS Working Group on Strengthening Asylum Systems. MIRPS States commit to continuing to strengthen national institutions responsible for refugee status determination by improving technical capacities, and developing procedures, systems, and national asylum practices that enhance efficiency, fairness, and quality, in line with each country's capacity and needs, and with the support and assistance of members of the MIRPS Support Platform, UNHCR, OAS, and other partners.

### **Panama**

• **GRF 07384** Panama will continue working to identify innovative and digital technology solutions to improve its case management procedures, including the digitization of individual case files and the introduction of interoperable procedures (both for central and border locations). It also commits to improving its registration system, implementing a biometric system, and providing reliable statistical data.

• **GRF 07385** Panama is increasing the capacity of its institutions both at the central level and at strategic border points by hiring and training qualified personnel, as well as improving office infrastructure, including reception areas and interview rooms.

• **GRF 07386** Panama commits to implementing child-sensitive procedures within the refugee status determination system, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and national legislation.

# **MIRPS Commitments in National Action Plans- reception, admission and case processing**

## **Belize**

- Ensure the **implementation of Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs)** to facilitate the comprehensive identification and referral of persons with international protection needs.
- Ensure that persons arriving at official border points, including at the international airport, are provided with **essential information on the right to claim asylum and related procedures**.
- **Promote understanding amongst the general population** of the right to asylum, and foster a climate of tolerance and mutual coexistence.
- Conduct a review of existing data availability, essential information needs, and potential digital tools and systems to integrate a **comprehensive approach to Registration and Identity Management**.
- Strengthen the timeliness, efficiency, and quality investigation and adjudication processes of the national asylum system.
- **Ensure the inclusion of up-to-date refugee and asylum-seeker population data** within national data, national development planning, and implementation processes.

## **Costa Rica**

- **Presence at the border:** Strengthen the existing agreement between DGME and UNHCR that facilitates the presence of liaison personnel at border migration posts in Peñas Blancas, Los Chiles and Tablillas in the north, and Paseo Canoas in the south, as well as extending it to ensure the placement of at least one person in the ports of Golfito, Limón, Caldera and in both international airports.
- **Regionalization of the Refuge Unit:** Advance the regionalization of the Refuge Unit in the offices of Upala, Liberia, Paso Canoas, Limón, los Chiles and San Carlos to decentralize the functions of the Unit.
- **Strengthen the Temporary Care Center for Migrants (CATEM):** Guarantee the allocation of funds for the maintenance of infrastructure, equipment, and administration of the CATEMs as a good regional practice as an alternative to administrative detention.
- **Promote national or international public-public and/or public-private partnerships** to secure funds and respond to the need for assistance and legal sponsorship for asylum-seekers undergoing refugee status determination.
- **Project for the Prevention of Delays:** Increase the number of officials specialized in refugee matters, by at least 6 persons in each instance.
- **Strengthening of the Commission on Restricted Visas and Refuge (CVRR):** Assign a full-time Specialized Legal Advisor to each Commissioner, in charge of the respective Ministries in order to assist in the review of files received by the Refuge Unit, and in the preparation of draft CVRR resolutions.
- **Maintain free documentation for asylum-seekers** and reduce the cost of documentation for refugees.

# **MIRPS Commitments in National Action Plans- reception, admission and case processing**

## Costa Rica

- **Digitization of the Refugee Process:** With the technical and financial support of UNHCR, the DGME will develop a digital system for processing asylum claims that will speed up the process of issuing documents, advancing appointments, and reducing wait times to receive official documentation. This system will allow the Refuge Unit to reduce the number of cases pending the formalization of applications and/or eligibility interviews.
- The General Directorate of Migration and Foreigners **will adapt the procedures for refugee status determination** in line with the assistance, care, and support needs of persons with disabilities claiming asylum to guarantee due process in accordance with their needs and circumstances. This action must be carried out by the DGME with the support of CONAPDIS.

## El Salvador

- **Train personnel in specialized legal assistance** (economic, social, and cultural rights), concerning the protection of property and assets for people in need of protection.
- **Review and update existing protocols and routes in the Center for the Attention of Migrants (GAMI)** to include specialized care according to profile and vulnerability (children and adolescents, women, families, LGBTI population, people with disabilities, and older persons).
- **Establish a training plan for GAMI staff** based on identified needs, where organizations join according to their mandates/expertise.
- Create, print, and disseminate **informative materials on the available services** provided by the institutions present at the GAMI.
- Dissemination at the national level for the population of the new **Immigration and Foreigners Law**.
- **Carry out training, as well as disseminate information and communication** on the right to international protection, the asylum process, and its corresponding identity document for asylum-seekers and refugees, aimed at government institutions and private companies.
- Technically and operationally **strengthen the Commission for the Determination of Refugee Status (CODER)** -the Secretariat and Sub-Commission- to increase the capacity to analyze and resolve requests.
- Design and print **informative materials on the asylum process in El Salvador**.
- **Include refugee, asylum-seeking, and displaced children and adolescents in policies and protocols.**

## Guatemala

- **Strengthen the knowledge of officials from the Guatemalan Migration Institute** on assistance and protection for individuals applying for refugee status, among other topics.
- **Develop a Guide for the Identification and Referral of Individuals with International Protection Needs** at land, air, and sea borders.
- **Strengthen the Migrant Assistance Center (CAMIEX).**
- **Enhance the knowledge of officials from the Secretariat of Social Welfare of the Presidency** to ensure the protection of children and adolescents in the context of human mobility.

# **MIRPS Commitments in National Action Plans- reception, admission and case processing**

## Guatemala

- **Disseminate information about the services and assistance** provided by institutions to protect the Guatemalan host community.
- **Inform and raise awareness** among public servants on key topics, including human mobility, refugee protection, international protection, and MIRPS, to strengthen processes for identification, assistance, care, referral, and protection, with a gender-sensitive approach focused on at-risk women, victims of human trafficking, older adults, and persons with disabilities.
- **Strengthen intersectoral coordination** to expand access to essential protection and basic services for children and adolescents seeking refugee status and those already recognized as refugees.
- **Modernize the Registration and Information System** for Refugee Status Applicants.
- **Decentralize access** to the refugee status application process.

## Honduras

- **Guarantee** that people in need of international protection can enter Honduran territory in **dignified and safe conditions and access efficient procedures**.
- **Consolidate the technical and operational capacities** for the identification, attention, and referral of people with international protection needs.
- **Improve the mechanisms for receiving requests** through a network of remote care units to serve people with protection needs.
- **Implement the System for the Admission and Registration of Requests for Protection (SIARSP)** and improve the processes of digital registration of cases.
- **Ensure legal guidance and humanitarian assistance mechanisms** in the CAMI at the national level.

## Mexico

- **Give continuity to COMAR's visits to the Immigration Stations**, for the follow-up of requests for recognition of refugee status.
- **COMAR will train and sensitize the INM staff at internment points and Migration Stations** in order to improve the identification and care of asylum-seekers.
- **Promote permanent information campaigns** that, in a simple language, inform about rights and the possibility of seeking asylum.
- **Continue providing training aimed at public servants**, as well as contracting companies, financial institutions, and other relevant actors that maintain direct contact with asylum-seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of complementary protection, to ensure a favourable environment for their protection and integration in dignified conditions.
- **COMAR and UNHCR through "El Jaguar," in collaboration with other relevant authorities, continue to implement information and awareness campaigns.** In addition, the creation of spaces for dialogue in which asylum-seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of complementary protection and civil society participate, will serve to monitor areas of opportunity and fill gaps for their adequate integration.



# **MIRPS Commitments in National Action Plans- reception, admission and case processing**

## Mexico

- The DIF National System and the DIF State Systems will **strengthen alternative care spaces for the temporary residential accommodation of unaccompanied children and adolescents**, preventing them from being in Immigration Stations.
- **Improve coordination mechanisms between the authorities that attend to children and adolescents in the context of migration** (COMAR, INM, PPNNA) to facilitate the identification of international protection needs and access to the refugee status determination procedure. SIPINNA will strengthen coordination between said authorities.
- The INM and the Attorney General's Offices for the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents (federal, state, and municipal) will continue to promote the **application of the Initial Evaluation Protocol for the identification of international protection needs in unaccompanied or separated children and adolescents**, developed by COMAR, UNICEF and UNHCR and its interview techniques to identify international protection needs, for subsequent channelling to COMAR or competent authorities.
- **Increase the operational capacity of the federal, state, and municipal Child Protection Prosecutor's Offices**, mainly in the states with the largest population of people in the context of migration, applicants for refugee status, refugees, and beneficiaries of complementary protection (Chiapas, Tabasco, and Veracruz).
- **The PFPNNA will generate coordination mechanisms with state and municipal protection attorneys** to standardize criteria that regulate restitution plans and the determination, coordination, execution, and monitoring of comprehensive protection measures and restitution of the rights of children and adolescents. Likewise, the SIPINNA will promote the creation, installation and operation of Commissions for the Comprehensive Protection of Girls, Boys and Adolescents in the context of mobility in the federal entities so that these collegiate bodies facilitate the link between the PFPNNA with state and municipal protection attorneys.
- CONAVIM and COMAR, within their jurisdiction, continue to carry out actions aimed at **preventing and eradicating gender-based violence against girls and women**.
- **Give continuity to the work of reviewing and approving the missing registration information**, with the aim of ensuring that the information collected is of good quality, using an appropriate language for children and adolescents.
- **COMAR, UNHCR and UNICEF will implement training and support tools for their staff, so that attention to children and adolescents is done while using appropriate language**. These techniques will be used during eligibility interviews and other procedures or questionnaires addressed to this population.
- **Promote institutional linkages and rapprochement with civil society and government shelters**, in order to safeguard the right of the targeted population to have a shelter.
- Work will continue on the implementation of mechanisms that allow COMAR to **provide care for the targeted population**.
- **Guarantee the right to identity targeted documentation** of asylum-seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries for complementary protection, from the issuance of the CURP (temporary and/or permanent) and establish coordination mechanisms between RENAPO, INM, and COMAR to strengthen management, implementation, and training.
- INM, COMAR and UNHCR will promote measures to **speed up the procedure of providing a signature before the COMAR or INM office as proof of presence** in accordance with the obligations of asylum-seekers, in order to facilitate their integration.

# **MIRPS Commitments in National Action Plans- reception, admission and case processing**

## Panama

- **Continuous strengthening of training processes for public officials** at the national and local levels in matters of international protection, to expand their abilities to identify and refer people with protection needs (refugees and stateless persons). In addition to MIRE, the Electoral Tribunal (Civil Registry), SENAFRONT, SNM, SENAN, ONPAR, CONARE, INAMU, SENNIAF, the Ombudsman's Office and local authorities in prioritized areas, officials from other relevant state entities will be included.
- **Develop a care, identification, and referral protocol** between the Ministry of Security (SNM and SENAFRONT) and the Ministry of Government, as established in Executive Decree no. 5 of 2018.
- **Improve the national registration system, incorporate biometrics, and issue a new card with QR codes** to facilitate the verification of asylum-seekers between authorized public institutions, while ensuring data confidentiality.
- **Speed up the processing of asylum claims** by reducing the delay in applications through the restructuring of internal processes, as well as the development of technical tools.
- **Continue facilitating the hiring of human resources** (lawyers, social workers, psychologists, and other related professions) for ONPAR, to have sufficient capacity to respond to the growing number of requests.
- **Continue developing inter-institutional sessions for issuing and renewing documents** (temporary and permanent residence, and defined or indefinite work permits) in areas that are difficult to access.
- **Provide care for female refugees/asylum-seekers and survivors of gender-based violence** through the development and implementation of a care, referral, and counter-referral protocol between the Ministry of Government (ONPAR) and the National Institute for Women (INAMU), and the promotion of the Attention Route.
- Encourage legal clinics of the Faculties of Law of public and private universities to **provide guidance, support, and free legal assistance to asylum-seekers.**