



# Mexico – Migration Tapachula

## Humanitarian Situation Report No. 1



for every child

2022

Reporting Period: 1- 18<sup>st</sup> March 2022

Picture: UNICEF health and nutrition actions in communities receiving migrant population in Chiapas.

### Highlights

- During January and March 2022, there has been an increase in people arriving in Mexico, mainly from Central America, Haiti, Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Cuba, Congo, Nigeria, and Ukraine. Returns under the Migrant Protection Protocol (Stay in Mexico Program) continue, as well as Title 42 expulsions.
- On March 15, 4,000 people arrived in Tapachula with the intention of seeking asylum in Mexico. An estimated 30,000 people are waiting for their refugee status in the city. By the end of February 16,309 people had formally requested asylum in Mexico (26% from Haiti and 22.5% from Honduras).
- Protests (hunger strikes and marches) have been held these months at the INM office in Tapachula, requesting the speed up of immigration legal status documentation.
- INM maintains a policy of immigration control, containment, and dissolution of caravans with the assistance of the National Guard and the Mexican Army (SEDENA).

### Situation in Numbers

 **5,000**

children in need of humanitarian assistance  
(Preliminary data from INM on children of the move in Tapachula)

 **30,000**

people in need  
(Preliminary data on people in Tapachula requesting refugee status in Mexico)

### Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

- 63% of the applications for refugee status in Mexico have been filed in the city of Tapachula. During February, INM operations and those of the National Guard intensified the search for migrants. Likewise, protests have continued demanding INM deliver documents to facilitate the transit of migrants to the country's northern border. These demonstrations have manifested themselves as hunger strikes and "self-chaining". Ten Latin American migrants sewed their mouths to give continuity to the hunger strikes and thus pressure the INM to deliver immigration legal status documentation. At least eight malaria cases were detected among migrants in various shelters around Tapachula. A medical team from the "Sanitary Jurisdiction VII" announced blood samples were taken,

Map 1. Location of UNICEF Tapachula Field Office



and the contagions of the disease, which had previously been eliminated from Mexico, were determined.<sup>1</sup>

- Shelters are overcapacity with some forced to close their doors due to staffing shortages caused by an increase in COVID infections. This situation has put pressure on the system (of protection of children and adolescents) due to the lack of space for adequate care, especially for unaccompanied children. This has led to almost immediate assisted returns without appropriate assessment of the best interests of the child.
- It is estimated that between 5,000 – 10,000 additional children and families on the move will arrive at the southern border of Mexico in 2-3 weeks' time.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

To respond to the immediate needs of the newly arrived children and adolescents on the move in Tapachula, UNICEF will install child friendly spaces with WASH and health interventions. Moreover, UNICEF, through its field office in Tapachula and implementing partners, has an ongoing humanitarian and programmatic response to the situation of migrant population in the city with the following actions:

### Health

- UNICEF will provide medical assistance and medicine in communities and shelters through partner CADENA with a mobile health unit, serving approximately 150 children, adolescents, and pregnant women per week in Chiapas.
- UNICEF hired a gynaecologist to work with the Ministry of Health for the care of pregnant women.
- At the beginning of 2022, a donation of paediatric medicines and hygiene kits was made to the Ministry of Health for the migrant community.

### Child Protection

- Care is provided to children and adolescents in migration situations through a multidisciplinary team hired by UNICEF to work within the DIF system in Chiapas, Baja California and Chihuahua. UNICEF has continued to provide psychosocial support in shelters as well as referring cases in need of assistance to the child protection authorities. Advocacy is carried out to prevent the automatic assisted return of children and adolescents to their countries of origin.
- Implementing partners impact with psychosocial support activities, educational, child protection and sport activities, including psychosocial activities in a DIF municipal shelter in Tapachula, where 172 children and 155 adolescents received psychosocial and sports activities on a weekly basis, through the partners Futbol Más and Jugarreta in Tapachula. Training is provided in nine shelters by UNICEF on PSEA and GBV topics.
- 134 cases have been managed by the multidisciplinary teams financed by UNICEF at the local Child Protection Authorities in Tuxtla and Tapachula, (112 unaccompanied and 22 accompanied).
- Child friendly spaces will be set-up in the migration processing centers of the National Institute of Migration (INM), in partnership with Futbol Más.

### Education

- RADIX (UNICEF implementing partner) provides emergency educational activities in Tapachula, where 93 children and adolescents are benefited on a weekly basis.

### WASH

- Infrastructure improvements are being made to six shelters in Tapachula, with cleaning products provided by UNICEF.
- UNICEF has an agreement with INM to install drinking fountains and hand washing stations in Tapachula.
- A donation of two mobile WASH stations (handwashing stations, showers and toilets in mobile containers) was made to the Municipal Civil Protection Office. These stations have the capacity to provide services to 120 people per day. So far, 3000 people have benefitted from them, of which 900 are children.
- 2, 796 hygiene kits reached children, adolescents, and their families in various shelters in Tapachula.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.inm.gob.mx/gobmx/word/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Tarjeta-Migratoria-110222.pdf>

## Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP)

A skills development program began operating in Chiapas at the end of 2022, however, due to COVID related closures training in life and technical skills began in February 2022. So far 65 participants have started the program in the cities of Tapachula and Comitán.

## Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

UNICEF participates in several humanitarian coordination mechanisms focusing on the migration situation, such as the Protection Working Group, the Health and Migration Working Group, the GBV and Migration Sub-Working Group, the PSEA Sub-Working Group. Moreover, UNICEF leads the WASH Working Group and the Child Protection in Migration Discussion Group, the later in which key NGO and UN agencies participate and have prepared key advocacy documents to advance the protection of accompanied and unaccompanied children on the move to be presented to the Government.

## Human Interest Stories and External Media

UNICEF Mexico has produced photographs and a video on the implementation of the health intervention in Tapachula, Chiapas, particularly the deployment of the mobile health unit that is providing health support for migrant children, adolescents and pregnant women. [Photos and video are available on WeShare.](#)

**Next SitRep:** 31 March 2022.

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