



Migrant Caravan and increased child migration in the north of Central America and Mexico

Humanitarian Situation Report



SITUATION IN NUMBERS

October - November 2018

8,247

Approx. No. of people part of the Caravans, in Mexico as of 25 November.

(Source: Mexico Ministry of Interior)

6,067

Approx. No. of people that had arrived in Tijuana (United States border), as of 28 November, including:

1,058

Approx. No. of children that had arrived in Tijuana (United States border), as of 28 November.

(Source: Tijuana Migration authorities)

3,178

Approx. No. of children and under-21 youth who have returned to Honduras from Guatemala and Mexico, including

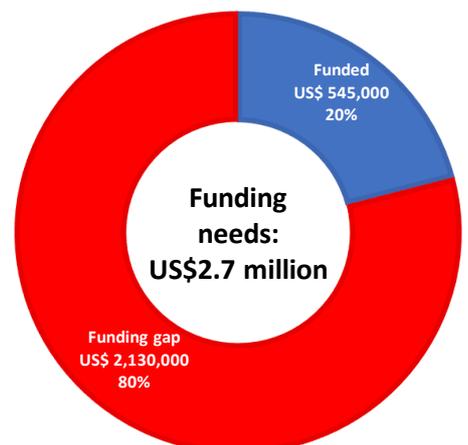
765

Unaccompanied children

(Source: DINAF, as of 28 November)

UNICEF Immediate funding needs

US\$ 2,675,000



Highlights

- Since 13 October 2018, an estimated 16,000 migrants, largely from Honduras and El Salvador, have transited through Guatemala.
- The Government of Mexico has officially reported the presence of some 8,000 migrants in its territory. As of 28 November, at least 6,067 migrants, including 1,058 children, had arrived in Tijuana (Baja California state), on the border with the United States. In Mexicali there are about 1,200 migrants settled, and around 300 are estimated to still be on the move heading north in Mexico.
- Given the challenging conditions at the initial shelter in Tijuana, Deportivo Benito Juárez, a new bigger shelter (El Barretal) was opened on 29 November, 30 minutes away from the first one
- UNICEF Mexico continues with presence at both borders (south and north), and monitoring the situation of the 270 migrants still in Mexico City.
- In Honduras, the national child protection agency reports that 3,178 minors have returned from Guatemala and Mexico between 15 October and 28 November, at least 765 of which were unaccompanied.
- UNICEF continues monitoring the situation in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, and efforts are focused on supporting authorities for proper case management of returnees, ensuring their access to necessary services and identification of protection needs.



An interactive map is being updated by Mexico CO to track the location of the Caravan movement, available in the following link: <http://bit.ly/2RZ4jhV>

*Funded includes Emergency funds received to cover immediate needs.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Since 13 October 2018, an estimated 16,000 migrants have transited through Guatemala. The Government of Mexico has officially reported that some 8,000 migrants are in its territory.¹ The so-called migrant caravans have been largely made up of Honduras and El Salvador nationals,² fleeing from violence, extortion and poverty in their home countries. Thousands of children are part of the caravans, and UNICEF's response is dedicated to their immediate protection and basic needs.

The main needs of children and families on the move range from access to information on their rights and protection services including asylum and other modalities of granting people with protection needs permission to remain in country, medical attention and first aid, food, access to drinking water, sanitation facilities and personal items like clothing and hygiene kits, while supporting the determination of the child's best interest.

At least four large Caravan groups have been identified while small groups were also reported, crossing through Guatemala into Mexico. According to the Mexican Ministry of Interior, as of 25 November, at least 8,247 people were still part of the Caravans in **Mexico**, most of them (7,417) in Baja California state (Tijuana and Mexicali).

Throughout their journey, the Caravan groups have been temporarily sheltered at different locations in Mexico City with peaks of nearly 6,000 people at 'El Palillo' shelter. By the beginning of December, a group of around 270 people - including at least 34 children - were still in Mexico City at 'Faro de Tláhuac' - a cultural centre used as shelter, where basic services have been provided by authorities.³

Tapachula (Mexico, Chiapas state), on the Guatemalan border, has been another transit location for the Caravans. While most of the migrants stayed for a few days in Tapachula before continuing their journey, a large group has decided to seek asylum in Mexico and have been accommodated in shelters and received cash transfer support from UNHCR.

While crossing **Guatemala**, most of the Caravan groups rested at migrant centres (Casa del Migrante) in **Guatemala City and Tecún Umán** - on the Guatemala / Mexico border. With the sudden flows, the situation at the Tecún Umán became further aggravated since 28 October when the border was closed (for few days) and security was reinforced at both sides of the border, a Honduran migrant died during riots that emerged on the Guatemalan side. Since the first week of November, flows stabilized at the Tecún Umán border with an average of 150 to 200 people crossing the border on a daily basis.

As there are no reports of new Caravan groups leaving **Honduras**, the focus by local authorities and partners is now on the reception of returnees and deported. National authorities report that 3,178 minors have returned from Guatemala and Mexico between 15 October and 28 November, at least 765 of which were unaccompanied. These figures bring the total number of children returning to Honduras from Mexico, Guatemala and the United States up to 10,590 since January 2018. Migratory personnel at the western borders (Agua Caliente, Florida) report that more and more Hondurans and international migrants are crossing the border at blind spots, including river crossings some kilometres off the Agua Caliente border, forcing authorities to spread out and install more checkpoints.

In **El Salvador**, from where at least 2,400 people left to join the Caravans, it has been reported that part of the group is returning with support from the Salvadoran consulate in Guatemala, while others are being deported from Mexico.

Humanitarian Leadership and Coordination

Mexico

In Tapachula, under the local government coordination efforts, UNICEF staff have been supporting information sharing and actions (particularly with Child Protection Authorities, international agencies and civil society organisations). In Tijuana, UNICEF has established constant communication flows and technical assistance on child protection in the shelter, with officers from the National Migration Institute (INM), the Mexican Refugees Commission (COMAR), and United States lawyers from NGOs with presence at the border - who will be giving legal advice to families and their children at the Children Services Pavilion established by UNICEF at the shelter.

UNICEF has been advocating with the new authorities⁴ of INM and COMAR for humanitarian visas for all unaccompanied children and those accompanied by their families. Also, as a result of UNICEF's advocacy, COMAR will prioritize asylum requests from unaccompanied children and families with children, and both institutions (INM and COMAR) will work in coordination with the Child Protection Authority of Baja California state. UNICEF will support coordination mechanisms between them and will provide technical assistance to implement an alternative care model for migrant children.

In Mexico City, while 'El Palillo' shelter was in operation, the local government established a Permanent Command Centre to coordinate actions at the shelter. UNICEF took the lead to coordinate and install a Children Services Pavilion at 'El Palillo', following

¹ 'Inter-agency response - Large movements from the North of Central America. 15 - 30 November 2018', UNHCR-UNICEF, 5 December 2018.

² Ibid.

³ 'Traslada a 403 migrantes a nuevo albergue en Tláhuac', *El Universal*, 26 November 2018, <<https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/metropoli/traslada-403-migrantes-nuevo-albergue-en-tlahuac>>

⁴ As of 1 December, the new Government of Mexico took office.

international standards and IASC guidelines, which focused on the provision of basic services, particularly psychosocial support, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). UNICEF played a key role in supporting coordination among the different actors with presence in the shelter. El Palillio shelter is no longer in operation and remaining migrants in Mexico City (270 of which 34 are children) are staying at El Faro de Tlahuac (7 Dec).

Overall, UNICEF and other agencies present in Mexico, including UNHCR, OHCHR and IOM, remain in close coordination including for information sharing and situation monitoring. UNICEF works with local authorities in locations along the route, sharing information and protocols with the state and municipal Child Protection Systems (SIPINNAS).

Honduras

The Honduran Government, under the leadership of the Directorate for Migrant Protection of Foreign Affairs (DMP-FA), has been coordinating the response with participation of the national child protection agency Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Families (DINAF), the National Migration Institute (NMI), the Permanent Contingency Committee (COPECO), the Ministry of Human Rights (MHR), Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (SEDIS), National Police and municipal governments, focused on providing integrated consular assistance and protection measures to families and unaccompanied children. UNICEF is supporting the government efforts through the Protection Group led by UNHCR and through a bilateral cooperation agreement with DINAF.

Guatemala

UNICEF supports migrant centres, focusing on psychosocial care for children and their families, particularly of those in the process of family reunification. Under the leadership of the Office of the Resident Coordinator, the United Nations System agencies, funds and programs (UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, OHCHR), remain in coordination with local partners (including Scalabrinian Missionaries, Human Mobility Pastoral and other NGOs), and have provided assistance to most of the migrants stationed in Guatemala City and Tecún Umán.

El Salvador

The Government working group on migration (CONMIGRANTES) remains active and have started implementing a multi-sectoral plan focusing on ensuring security, protection, and provision of humanitarian assistance for migrants. Support from IOM, UNHCR, UN Women and UNICEF has been requested for the implementation of the plan. Furthermore, Child Protection institutions, including the National Council for Children and Adolescents (CONNA) and the Salvadorian Institute for the Integral Development of Children (ISNA) have activated various security mechanisms to guarantee the protection of migrants, in particular vulnerable groups, children, adolescents and women.

The network of Salvadoran embassies and consulates located in Guatemala, Mexico and the United States has activated mechanisms to assist, guide, and protect Salvadorian migrants, and a plan has been developed to facilitate the safe return, in collaboration with different governmental institutions. The General Directorate of Migration and Foreign Affairs (DGME) has faced significant challenges to ensure adequate reception due to the increased number of returnees. In order to increase DGME capacities, UNICEF has deployed staff to support functions of reception, information, referral to services and humanitarian assistance to returning families with children. UNICEF continues to monitor the situation with the UN and government partners.

Humanitarian Strategy

Mexico

UNICEF's response strategy had initially focused on responding to the needs of the migrants who were in transit by providing support in rest destinations as well as addressing the needs of the migrants temporarily sheltered in Mexico City. With the rapidly evolving situation, UNICEF has adjusted its strategy accordingly and currently has a two-pronged approach: (a). Migrants stationed in Tapachula (mainly asylum seekers willing to stay in Mexico); (b). Migrants who have arrived at the northern border (Tijuana), who are likely to stay in Tijuana for up to three months.

Actions implemented by UNICEF and partners, include: 1) protecting children from violence, exploitation and abuse in shelters and public spaces of temporary refuge, as well as providing child friendly spaces and psychosocial support; 2) ensuring access to adequate safe water, hand-washing and sanitation facilities, as well as hygiene supplies; 3) providing technical assistance on health and nutrition guidelines; 4) coordination and technical assistance to/with government and civil society counterparts to ensure the provision of ECD activities for children under 5 in shelters

UNICEF has closely monitored the Caravans as they transit through towards the north and continues to monitor their situation particularly regarding WASH, health and protection situation. If needed, specific support is ready to be implemented through partners.

Honduras

UNICEF supports the DINAF in the identification of protection needs of children and families at the borders and consular reception and immediate protection interventions at the Belem reception centre, including medical assistance, food, shelter, and psychosocial support. At the time of this report, there are no facilities at the western borders of Agua Caliente and El Florido to provide

differentiated assistance for returned children. UNICEF, DINAF and UNHCR will explore the possibility of opening a temporary child protection centre near the border (Santa Rosa de Copán or Ocotepeque are possible options), to ensure adequate care and protection of children who continue to arrive through these more remote border crossings.

UNICEF's main priority is to help the central and municipal governments provide appropriate case management services to facilitate the reintegration process of returned migrant children and their families, including access to education, counselling, and social protection services such as housing, employment, health and mental health care. This is being carried-out through advocacy with central authorities and by channelling additional resources to DINAF for case management services to help reintegrate unaccompanied children and/or victims of violence with special protection needs, including relocation and assistance for asylum requests.

Guatemala

UNICEF is focusing on monitoring the situation and supporting the provision of basic services at the migrant centres (Casa del Migrante), with special focus on the provision of psychosocial support for children, adolescents and their families.

UNICEF supports the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, specifically the Ombudsman for Children and Adolescents, increasing human resources capacities in Tecún Umán, in order to effectively verify the fulfilment of children's rights. UNICEF has also been leading a forum involving entities who are part of the Special Protection System (Secretariat of Social Welfare, Attorney General of the Nation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Secretariat against Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons and the National Civil Police) to apply lessons learned from the response and to reinforce communication and coordination in view of potential mass movements of migrants.

El Salvador

UNICEF works in coordination with UNHCR, IOM, and UN Women to provide assistance addressing the most pressing needs of migrants and returnees, and is monitoring the situation with UN agencies and partners. UNICEF is supporting the only existing reception centre of returnees directed by the National Direction of Migration (DGME), with additional staff to reinforce capacities for situation monitoring and service provision. UNICEF is also supporting the Child Protection institutions, in particular CONNA and ISNA, in the dissemination of information about the rights and protection of migrant children throughout the migration route, as well as providing information on safe return.

Summary Analysis of Response

Mexico

a) Tapachula, Chiapas state (Southern border)

- Child Protection: UNICEF staff provides technical assistance to the local Child Protection Authorities in the identification of cases that require special protection. Through implementing partner Tech Palewi, UNICEF provides psychosocial support for children and their families in two shelters in Tapachula, reaching approximately 12 children per day. A total of eight kits with materials for these activities have been distributed.
- WASH: Between 14 and 16 November, UNICEF conducted a rapid assessment of WASH needs in temporary and transitory shelters in Tapachula, Arriaga, Mapastepec, Huixtla, Ciudad Hidalgo; all of them in Chiapas state. Activities are currently focused on strengthening capacities of local entities that are providing assistance to the asylum seekers migrants and to other groups potentially arriving. Five water purification systems were installed to provide drinking water in shelters in Tapachula (2), Ciudad Hidalgo (2), Mapastepec (1). As a preparedness intervention, three water purification systems were installed to provide drinking water in Pijijapan, Tonalá and Arriaga (Chiapas), where there are some migrants resting in shelters.
- Since the onset of the situation, two UNICEF staff were deployed to Tapachula, one continues in the field.

b) Tijuana, Baja California state (Northern border)

- Child Protection: At the Benito Juárez shelter, UNICEF had established a Child Services Pavilion on 22 November, which continued in operation till 28 November with the transfer of migrants to the new shelter El Barretal. The Pavilion offers specialized services for children, and facilitates coordination among partners providing child-focused services, including space management, access records, and case referrals. UNICEF partners at the Pavilion include Futbol Mas, La Jugarreta, Enseña por Mexico and World Vision. Between 20-27 November, 549 children have been reached with psychosocial and leisure activities. UNICEF did set up a new Children Services Pavilion at El Barretal, which started providing services on 4 December.
- WASH: Activities are focused on complementing other UNICEF activities that are taking place at the Child Services Pavilion. At least 2,300 hygiene kits are being distributed by UNICEF (including 300 baby kits, 1,000 kits for children, 1,000 kits for women). A safe water point for children was installed at the Pavilion, around 100 litres were consumed during the first two days after its installation. UNICEF is providing technical assistance to the shelter's staff regarding minimum standards for WASH infrastructure (bathrooms and showers), and spaces have been identified for installation of mobile hand washing stations. In addition, UNICEF is preparing the distribution of 1,000 blankets.

- **Early Childhood Development (ECD):** Between 26 and 27 November, an average of 22 children (0 - 6 years old) were reached on a daily basis by UNICEF's implementing partner "Enseña por México," which specializes in early education and stimulation of children under six. As a result of the partnership between UNICEF and health service providers, the Federal Government donated to UNICEF two early stimulation kits and 10 "green boxes" with games for cognitive development. The materials were transported to Tijuana on 29 November to be used for ECD activities at the Benito Juárez shelter.
 - **Nutrition:** Activities to be implemented with partner World Vision are expected to start in the coming days.
 - By mid-November, UNICEF had deployed two staff members to Tijuana with additional numbers deployed since then. By end November, six UNICEF staff members remain deployed working with different partners.
- c) **In transit locations**
- **Child protection:** Through implementing partners La Jugarreta and Fútbol Mas, leisure (reading, singing, drawing) and sports activities were conducted reaching children on the move. Through partners, UNICEF-supported socio-sport activities reached an average of 65 children daily.
 - Three UNICEF staff members were deployed until 14 November.
- d) **In Mexico City ('El Palillo' shelter)** In early November, UNICEF established a Children Services Pavilion offering specialized services for children and adolescents. The Pavilion was dismantled on 17 November and relocated in a better location.
- **WASH:** WASH support (installation of latrines, showers and bathrooms for children) remained functional until 17 November, when the Children Services Pavilion was dismantled.
 - **Child Protection:** Between 5 and 17 November, around 553 children were reached by child protection activities in the shelter, including psychosocial support.
 - **Health and nutrition:** UNICEF carried out a rapid nutrition assessment in collaboration with the National Institute of Public Health (INSP). UNICEF established a breastfeeding and complementary feeding space (in collaboration with World Vision and Milk league) in order to provide advice on infant and young child feeding practices. Mothers of the 120 children part of the rapid nutrition assessment were provided with breastfeeding and complementary feeding support. Additionally, UNICEF delivered about 30 baby wraps (rebozos) to mothers of children under one year of age in order to facilitate breastfeeding and transportation of babies during the long walks. UNICEF staff identified eight children with respiratory and skin illnesses and referred them to mobile health units to be treated.
 - In addition to activities at 'El Palillo' shelter, after this site was vacated, UNICEF delivered 2,000 hygiene kits in 'Casa del Peregrino' shelter, where part of the population was relocated.
 - While the shelter was operating, on average, nine UNICEF staff attended the shelter on a daily basis, including five staff members and four implementing partners.

Honduras

UNICEF has provided funds for hiring and training - by DINAF – eight Child Protection Officers deployed to the western borders. These Child Protection Officers board the buses and/or meet returnees at terminals to provide information and guidance to returned children and their families, carry-out initial screening for protection needs and convey the information to DINAF social workers at the Belen Center and six DINAF Regional Offices. They also provide immediate care such as hygiene kits, diapers, food, baby formula and water. UNICEF also funds the mobilization of surge personnel from DINAF regional offices unaffected by the migrant crisis to the border areas. With UNICEF support, between 15 October and 13 November, DINAF had provided assistance to 3,080 repatriated children, including 1,702 children returned from Guatemala and Mexico by land borders. By 13 November, 604 unaccompanied migrant children had been attended by DINAF and reunited with their families.

Guatemala

UNICEF has prioritized actions to ensure the protection of children, adolescents and their families in the migratory transit through Guatemala, with focus in supporting the Casa del Migrante centres, including installation of toilets, showers and portable sinks in Tecún Umán. Over 4,500 people, including 1,035 boys and girls have been reached by UNICEF-supported actions, also including psychosocial services.

With the aim of strengthening the capacity of local authorities, UNICEF's ongoing support includes contracting five individual experts to provide psychosocial support in Guatemala City (3 staff) and Tecún Umán (2 staff) as well as one UNICEF staff, those individual experts will continue providing support until 15 December. Support for the Ombudsman for Children and Adolescents of the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office, through one additional staff, continues in Tecún Umán until 9 December while support in Guatemala City will continue until 31 December.

El Salvador

UNICEF has distributed more than 54,000 child-friendly leaflets with messaging on protection of children in transit, through migration authorities, ISNA, municipalities and partners. In addition, 223 kits for children, particularly returned children, have been distributed to date. An additional, 1,100 kits have been handed over to DGME, for further distribution to returnees as required. Radio spots on key migration and child protection issues continue being disseminated via community radio network (ARPAS) with national coverage.

Funding

UNICEF urgently requires emergency funding of US\$ 2.7 million to support the needs of children on the move for the coming six months in Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. The funding needs of the migrant response are reflected in the UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional HAC. Only 21 per cent of the funding required has been met to date. Funds received include US\$ 45,000 from Global Humanitarian Thematic funds and a contribution of US\$ 500,000 provided via UNICEF USA.

Additional funds will allow UNICEF Country Offices to expand their Child Protection interventions, including psychosocial support for children and families, strengthening identification processes for special protection needs and access to services, and strengthening asylum procedures and alternative care. In addition, UNICEF will continue supporting WASH and shelter-related actions in critical locations.

Preliminary Funding Requirements																				
Appeal Sector	MEXICO				HONDURAS				GUATEMALA				EL SALVADOR				TOTAL			
	Requirement	Funds Available	Funding gap		Requirement	Funds Available	Funding gap		Requirement	Funds Available	Funding gap		Requirement	Funds Available	Funding gap		Requirement	Funds Available	Funding gap	
			US\$	%			US\$	%			US\$	%			US\$	%				
WASH/ NFIs	200,000	118,092	81,908	41					250,000	20,000	230,000	92	40,000		40,000	100	490,000	138,092	351,908	72
Child Protection	800,000	100,267	699,733	87	500,000	111,408	388,592	78	350,000	93,583	256,417	73	435,000	72,193	362,807	83	2,085,000	377,450	1,707,549	82
C4D		4,456			75,000		75,000	100					25,000	25,000	0		100,000	29,456	70,544	71
Total	1,000,000	222,816	777,184	78%	575,000	111,408	463,592	81%	600,000	113,583	486,417	81%	500,000	97,193	402,807	81%	2,675,000	545,000	2,130,000	80%