

## CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO

### UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

May – July 2015

#### KEY FIGURES

**26,374**

Asylum applications submitted in Canada and the United States originating from citizens of Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador during 2014.

**65% increase**

In asylum applications submitted in Mexico from citizens of Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador since 2011.

**48.6%**

Estimated percentage of unaccompanied or separated children from Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador with potential international protection needs in Mexico.

**21,547**

Children, mostly from Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador, detected and detained by Mexican migration authorities in 2014.

#### FUNDING

**USD 3.810 Million**

Requested for the operation for 2015



#### PRIORITIES

- Strengthen the asylum and international protection systems in countries of asylum and transit.
- Reinforce the protection of internally displaced persons.
- Strengthen the protection of unaccompanied children, in line with best interest practices and principles.

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- The **Rapid Assessment Missions** conducted in the Northern Triangle countries (Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador) and Mexico allowed UNHCR to better define the region's priorities and to outline specific objectives for the long term.
- In June 2015, the SICA Council of Vice-ministers authorized Democratic Security Directorate to work with UNHCR towards the creation of a **Human Rights Observatory on Displacement**, one of the 11 programmes included in the Brazil Plan of Action.
- For **World Refugee Day**, High Profile UNHCR Supporter Kat Graham visited the border between Guatemala and Mexico to raise awareness of the plight of Central Americans fleeing the growing violence in the Northern Triangle countries.
- In order to expand UNHCR's field presence and better address the international protection needs of Central American asylum seekers, a new **UNHCR Field Office was established in Tenosique**, Tabasco State, Mexico. Tenosique is a key and strategic entry point used mostly by Hondurans fleeing violence and persecution. With an enhanced field presence of UNHCR, the Office expects to better respond to emerging protection needs and more efficiently contribute to capacity building activities aimed at Mexican border and other officials.
- A **High Level Mission from Colombia** visited Honduras to exchange good practices and relevant experience from the response to forced displacement in Colombia.
- The first private shelter exclusively dedicated to asylum seekers was inaugurated in June in Tapachula, Chiapas, Mexico. With an initial capacity to host five families, the **Trés Ángeles shelter** was partially built with UNHCR funding. An expansion plan aimed at increasing the shelter capacity has already been shared with UNHCR.



## UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

### Operational Context

In the **Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA) – Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador** – transnational organized crime (TOC) and rampant violence pose a major challenge to national institutions and regional security. Criminal threats inflamed by drug trafficking, polarized political systems, weak law enforcement and social hardships - such as poverty and unemployment - contribute to the current insecurity crisis in the region.

According to Official Government statistics for each country, the following homicide rates were reported for 2014: for Honduras, 68 homicides per 100,000 people; for El Salvador, 68.6 homicides per 100,000 people; and for Guatemala, 31 homicides per 100,000 people.

In 2014, a total of 226,244 Central Americans from the NTCA were deported from United States and Mexico (Guatemala: 94,967; Honduras: 80,021; and El Salvador: 51,256). Out of the total, 19,898 were children and adolescents (Guatemala: 6,171; Honduras: 8,779; and El Salvador: 4,948.)

Between January and May 2015, a total of 65,903 Central Americans from the NTCA were deported from Mexico (El Salvador: 12,076; Guatemala: 31,136; and Honduras: 22,691) according to official statistics published by the Government of Mexico.

According to information obtained during border monitoring missions and from the dialogue with civil society-run shelters, women, unaccompanied and separated children, and other groups from the NTCA are facing increased risks and vulnerabilities. UNHCR registered situations of community and domestic violence, which most severely affect women and other individuals whose gender identity and sexual orientation make them more vulnerable to aggression and to becoming subjects of persecution. This poses challenges to both authorities and civil society organizations as they lack specific reception, care and protection mechanisms, while the number of specialized official government staff and civil society agencies is minimal and insufficient to effectively deliver protection interventions.

In June 2015 Mexican authorities released Mexico's refugee statistics for 2014, revealing a 65% increase in the number of new asylum claims (2,137), when compared to 2013 (1,296). This is the highest number of asylum claims registered by COMAR since the adoption of Mexico's Law on Refugees and Complementary Protection in January 2011. UNHCR estimates that as many as 900 new asylum claims could have been registered by COMAR during the first semester of 2015.

### Achievements

#### Protection

##### Migration and Children Task Force in Guatemala

- The Task Force, co-led by UNHCR and UNICEF, developed a Report on the situation of deported population to Guatemala. The report consists of an evaluation of the gaps and challenges that remain after one year of work, in order to provide adequate attention to adults, family units and unaccompanied children and adolescents. The report observed unequal treatment depending on the departing country and manner of deportation. Guatemalans are deported from the USA by air, from Mexico by land or by air, and from other countries by air. For Guatemalans deported from the USA, there are minimum reception services available at the Guatemalan Air Force base where the reception process occurs. For Guatemalans deported from Mexico or other countries, there are neither reception centres nor services available. Lack of resources translates to a serious lack of attention to deportees that jeopardizes the proper identification of protection needs, legal orientation, issuance of identity documents, contact with relatives, and access to food, health and psychosocial services. These basic necessities are required to ensure secure and dignified reception of all people deported to their country of origin. Therefore,

existing practices for attending to deportees focus on managing their reception, rather than on providing much needed comprehensive protection. It is fundamental that protection needs be identified on a case-by-case basis in order to refer deportees to adequate institutions, or other entities, that can provide appropriate responses and follow up on specific cases. The report focused on analysing the response to each group and formulating specific recommendations.

## Achievements and Impact

### REGIONAL LEVEL

#### ■ Rapid Assessment Mission

A Rapid Assessment Mission was conducted by UNHCR to the Northern Triangle of Central America and Mexico to better understand the current displacement situation in the region, as well as the gaps and needs of Central Americans fleeing violence and persecution. The Mission was divided into teams, the first visited Honduras and El Salvador and the second Mexico and Guatemala.

Some of the main findings are highlighted as follows.

#### ***Honduras and El Salvador***

Both countries are affected by the actions of *maras* or gangs and transnational organized crime. In El Salvador, extortion, violence and intimidation by the *maras* gravely affect small family businesses, public transportation services, and particularly vulnerable groups such as women, children and the LGBTI population. In this context and based on the existence of diasporas and family ties abroad, many people decide to leave the country. Honduras is the first and only country in the region to recognize forced internal displacement by violence. However, due to lack of national protection mechanisms and territorial control by the gangs, displacement remains invisible. There are no official numbers regarding forced displacement in Honduras.

#### ***Guatemala and Mexico***

The constant flow and the plight of thousands of Central Americans, many of them fleeing gang violence and persecution was confirmed in both, the route through Petén in Guatemala leading to Tabasco State (Tenosique) and through the Guatemalan Department of San Marcos leading to the Chiapas State (Tapachula). There is a strong need to continue supporting shelters in both countries to ensure protection and assistance to migrants and refugees. The need to strengthen border monitoring capacity was also underlined.

The Rapid Assessment Mission allowed UNHCR to better define the region's priorities and to outline specific objectives for the long term. Accordingly, the Mission generated a vision for the regional protection and solutions strategy for Mexico and the Northern Triangle of Central America.

The vision has defined 6 strategic objectives:

- Regional and national legal framework/policy meets international standards.
- Protection network established and capable to identify, refer, document and respond to specific needs of Persons of Concern.
- Persons of Concern have access to minimum reception standards and fair and efficient asylum systems
- Basic protection needs of children and other persons with specific needs are properly identified and addressed.
- Increase awareness among stakeholders to ensure visibility of the protection risks of Persons of Concern in the region and contribute to the mobilization of resources.
- Different solutions scenarios for persons of concern to UNHCR promoted and strengthened.

## MEXICO

### ■ Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC)

UNHCR has played a key role in capacity building on the protection of refugee and migrant children under the new General Law on Children and Adolescents. A training program addressed to the National and local Family Welfare System (DIF) is intended to strengthen their capacities and promote mutual collaboration. UNHCR also promoted the adoption of child BIA/BID procedures and has positively influenced the establishment of a training program to strengthen DIF capacities – the program will be implemented from August to December 2015.

UNHCR continued strengthening its internal capacities towards the establishment and operation of a BID process, and undertook formal risk assessments to facilitate selected adolescents in need of international protection to eventually have access to a comprehensive protection program managed by IP Casa Alianza.

UNHCR has provided training and technical assistance to Child Protection Officers (OPIs) and COMAR to improve their assistance and protection of children. In Mexico City, in Ixtepec (Oaxaca State) Tapachula (Chiapas State) and Tenosique (Tabasco State), UNHCR contributed to develop the capacities of the government and the migrants' shelters on child protection issues, particularly with the implementation of the "Children of Peace" program, funded by ECHO. Through its interventions, UNHCR has expanded and strengthened its child protection network throughout the Mexican-Guatemalan border areas and along the traditional routes.

### ■ Access to Territory and to the Asylum System

The IFDP (Federal Institute of Public Defenders) shared its interest in having an agreement with COMAR, reiterating its interest in assuming further responsibilities on the provision of legal assistance to asylum seekers. UNHCR and IFDP agreed on training activities with public legal counselors on the subject of international refugee law for developing capacities of representation of asylum-seekers.

Aiming at expanding access to Mexico's asylum system and RSD procedures, and in accordance with UNHCR's Global Detention Strategy (2014-2019), UNHCR has intensified its monitoring visits to the migration detention facilities in Mexico. UNHCR staff are conducting weekly visits to the migration detention facilities located in Mexico City, Palenque and Tapachula, (Chiapas State), Tenosique and Villahermosa, (Tabasco State).

In fulfilment of their commitment to improve quality within the national asylum system in Mexico, through implementation of the Quality Assurance Initiative (QAI), UNHCR and COMAR continued working on putting into place key components through a 2015 Working Plan. This working plan is focused on: continuous technical support to the government for strengthening capacities to improve interview and decision making processes; providing different tools to facilitate drafting legal analyses based on law and facts and; technical assistance on drafting Directives related to the refugee status determination procedure. Since early 2015 a Joint and Permanent QAI Supervisory Group was established to monitor the implementation of QAI recommendations. The Supervisory Group is scheduled to meet three times during the 2015.

## HONDURAS

### ■ The Inter-Institutional Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence in Honduras (ICFD)

UNHCR supports, in a technical capacity, the Inter-Institutional Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence in Honduras. At the end of 2013, the Honduran Government created the Inter-Institutional Commission with the objective of driving the formulation of policies and the adoption of measures to prevent forced displacement due to violence and to assist, protect and respond to internally displaced persons and their families.

#### *High Level Mission from Colombia*

A High level mission from Colombia comprising the Colombian Constitutional Court, The Commission to Monitor Public Policy on Forced Displacement (CODHES) and UNHCR was took place with the aim of providing technical assistance to the ICFD and other government institutions involved in the response to internal displacement in

Honduras. The mission hosted two workshops, one with the Protection Group and the second with the ICFD, and one working session with the National Juridical Commission.

In the workshop with the Protection Group the framework for protection of IDPs was revised, including the Guiding principles of Internal Displacement, protection mechanisms established by the Constitutional Court in Colombia and the monitoring and follow up work that CODHES carries out in the framework for protection of IDPs in Colombia.

With the ICFD, UNHCR Colombia presented the Colombian legal framework for protection of IDPs, as well as the main elements that a Public Policy should contain regarding legal measures, planning, institutions' responsibilities and budgetary considerations with an emphasis on the necessary coherence that the institutional response should entail. The Constitutional Court presented the concept of "enjoyment of rights" and its measurement through indicators established by the Court in the Colombian context.

The working session with the National Commission on Legislation aimed to provide technical assistance on how to elaborate an assessment of the protection legal and institutional framework applicable to IDPs.

### ***Progress with CENISS***

The ICFD and UNHCR coordinated with the National information Center of the Social Sector (CENISS) the inclusion of questions to assess forced displacement trends in the country. The questions were included in the questionnaires currently applied by the CENISS on a national basis to monitor the access of the Honduran population to the Government's poverty reduction programs. The inclusion of the questions on forced displacement aim at obtaining periodic and reliable official information on internal displacement magnitude and trends.

### ■ **El Edén Reception Center.**

#### ***Tripartite agreement between UNHCR, DINAF and Casa Alianza***

During the official inauguration of the renovation works to El Edén, funded by UNHCR and World Vision in 2014, a tripartite agreement was formalized between UNHCR, the Directorate of Childhood and Family (DINAF) and Casa Alianza. The agreement states the commitment of the three parties to share relevant information of deported children with protection needs identified upon their arrival to the reception center.

#### ***Guidelines for the identification and referral of deported children with protection needs.***

As part of the tripartite agreement between UNHCR, DINAF and Casa Alianza, UNHCR supported the Government in developing guidelines for the identification and referral to protection mechanisms of children deported to El Edén who have protection needs resulting from violence in Honduras. The reception center's staff present at El Edén during child deportation processes from Mexico began the implementation of the guidelines in May. During the follow up process of the implementation of the guidelines, UNHCR has conducted several missions to San Pedro Sula where El Edén reception center is located. UNHCR trained the reception center's staff on forced displacement and the implementation of the guidelines to ensure the proper identification of deported children with protection needs

### ■ **Cooperation agreement with UNICEF.**

UNHCR and UNICEF signed a bilateral agreement to carry out joint advocacy and protection interventions for children of concern. Within this framework, UNHCR supports UNICEF in the establishment of an Early Warning System to monitor child migration and forced displacement. UNICEF has included forced displacement as a working priority and has become one of the most relevant partners for UNHCR in the country. The bilateral agreement was signed on the basis of the existing Global Agreement between both agencies.

### ■ **Partnership with Casa Alianza**

On April 2015, UNHCR and NGO Casa Alianza signed a sub agreement on alternative mechanisms for deported children who cannot return to their communities of origin.

**Workshop on Forced Displacement**

UNHCR conducted a workshop for Casa Alianza on forced displacement trends and patterns in Honduras and the IDP protection framework. The results of UNHCR studies “Children on the Run and “Uprooted (Arrancados de Raíz)” were analysed in detail with the members to ensure a child-based analysis of forced displacement trends in the country. The workshop aimed at enhancing the ability of Casa Alianza’s staff members in the identification of internally displaced children and the systematization of the information.

**Workshop on SGBV.**

Casa Alianza’s staff was trained on SGBV against internally displaced and deported children. The aim of the trainings was to strengthen the NGO’s capacity in the identification process, prevention and response to SGBV. Sixty officials of Casa Alianza’s staff were trained including educators, psychologists, among others. The workshop is a first step in the strengthening of the NGO’s capacities towards SGBV response. Follow up actions are planned, such as the creation of SGBV Standard Operation Procedures for Casa Alianza.

**GUATEMALA**

- **Monitoring and Protection Network**

UNHCR is developing a protection and monitoring network in Guatemala to register and refer cases of people in need of international protection. The Network is active in some key points in the northern Guatemalan border with Mexico, in Guatemala City and in Izabal (border with Honduras) as well. The Monitoring and Protection Network (MPN) conducted a National Meeting facilitated by the Pastoral of Human Mobility (PMH) UNHCR’s partner in the country. The purpose of the meeting was to share the work developed by the MPN’s focal points, as well as to discuss the challenges and opportunities to improve the attention of people under UNHCR’s mandate. The new strategy was shared with all the focal points and will be implemented in the remaining months of 2015.

- **Social Welfare Secretariat’s Protocol for Psychosocial Attention of Children**

UNHCR, in the framework of the UN Task Force on Migration, supported the Social Welfare Secretariat (SBS) through technical comments for the Protocol for Psychosocial Attention of Children. During the Progress Report presentation of the SBS, the Protocol was highlighted among various activities conducted by the SBS during 2014 and 2015. Other highlighted efforts were the inauguration of new shelters, including those for the attention of unaccompanied children in transit, and the Institutional Strategic Plan. UNHCR has continued to work alongside the SBS on the protection of children of concern.

- **Fact finding mission to the Tacaná unauthorized border point.**

UNHCR conducted a fact finding mission to the Tacaná Border Point at the Guatemalan border with Mexico. The mission aimed to understand the dynamics of the unauthorized border point of Tacaná, San Marcos. At the time of the mission, the Catholic Church’s shelter in Tacaná had not undertaken an exercise for the identification of protection needs, hence the number of people with protection needs is unknown. However, when UNHCR visited the border point, people from the community expressed having heard rather often of Honduran nationals fleeing due to violence. The local authorities estimate that approximately 1500 people per month are crossing through Tacaná border point. UNHCR will continue to explore the possibility of working closely with the shelter.

**EL SALVADOR**

- **Trainings to Salvadoran Consul Network in Mexico and the US**

UNHCR has conducted different workshops with Salvadoran Consuls in Mexico and the US in coordination with relevant UNHCR offices in the region as well as relevant civil society actors. The workshops focus on training consuls on international protection and international refugee law, as well as providing information to Salvadorans fleeing violence and persecution that may seek assistance in their consulates.

- **Technical support on the development of public policy for Salvadoran migrants**

UNHCR has provided technical advice to the Committee for the Protection and Development of the Individual Migrants and Their Families (CONMIGRANTES) and supported the development of a national migration policy for Salvadorians. Additionally, UNHCR advocated that the migration policy should include El Salvador as a country of

destination, transit, origin and return in order for the policy to be comprehensive. Moreover, UNHCR also advocated for the policy to include the reasons behind migration and displacement.

- **Technical support on the development of a strategy for the protection of returned people with protection needs**

CONMIGRANTES President established a Commission to "search for solutions for returnees who cannot return to their place of origin" in order to have a proper and adequate response to returnees with protection needs.

The Commission is composed of 20 institutions, including 14 social and protection agencies (National Institute for Women, National Council for Children and Adolescents, the Salvadoran Institute for Children and Adolescents, Attorney for Human Rights, Attorney General of the Republic, the Institute for Youth, Directorate General of Immigration, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, among others), 3 international organizations as technical support (UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF) and three entities from Academia (Central University, Technological University and Pan-American University). The new commission is led by the General Directorate of Migration.

- **CONNA's Protocol for the protection and attention of Salvadorian migrant children and adolescents**

UNHCR has supported in a technical capacity the development of the "Protocol for the protection and attention of Salvadorian migrant children and adolescents" in El Salvador. The Protocol developed by the National Council for Children and Adolescents (CONNA) includes a section to address the protection and attention needs of deported children and adolescents.

- **ISNA's Strategy for Deported Children**

The National Institute for Children and Adolescents (ISNA) is developing a strategy for the Assistance of Salvadorian deported children and adolescents in coordination with IOM. UNHCR has provided technical advice on the inclusion of specific programs for deported children at risk and the need to articulate the interventions with the relevant government institutions present at deportation centers.

## Education

### Achievements and Impact

#### GUATEMALA

- **Children of Peace**

Access to education in countries of asylum can be limited to refugee children and adolescents as well as children seeking asylum due to the country's requirements to access formal education. EU's Children of Peace Project in Guatemala aims to strengthen formal education of children and adolescents that have been recognized as refugees in the country. UNHCR and the Pastoral of Human Mobility (PMH), UNHCR's partner in the country, supported 7 cases of refugee children that were unable to formally register in the education system in Guatemala due to the lack of documentation from their country of origin. Moreover, 20 children and adolescents were supported by UNHCR through the EU's Children of Peace Project with school scholarships that covered fees, materials and uniforms.

## Health

### Achievements and Impact

#### MEXICO

- Within the framework of the project funded by UNHCR, in coordination with the organization "*Una mano amiga en la lucha contra el Sida*" and the Chiapas State Commission of Human Rights, several workshops on the Fourth forum on Sexual diversity and human rights were carried out, with the participation of municipal and state police officers. The main objective is to raise awareness on the inclusion of diversity by promoting a culture of public safety and respect for the rights of the LGBTI community.



## Food Security and Nutrition

### Achievements and Impact

#### GUATEMALA

- **WFP donation to Izabal's Migrant shelter**

As part of the UN System's strategy in Guatemala within the *Migration Task Force with special attention to unaccompanied children*, World Food Programme (WFP) supported the shelter "Casa del Migrante" in Izabal (border with Honduras) with a donation consisting on 2,700 rations of food. The donation, made in mid-June, is expected to last three months.




## Shelter and NFIs

### Achievements and Impact

#### MEXICO

- **"3 Angeles" Shelter**

The first shelter in Mexico and in Latin America to provide lodging exclusively for asylum seeking families was inaugurated in late June in Tapachula. The shelter, called "3 Ángeles" (Three angels) was partially built with UNHCR funding. It is run by Ms. Olga Sánchez, who also runs a shelter for injured and sick migrants. "3 Ángeles" has the capacity to host five families, but there are plans for extending the construction to accommodate more families.



## Durable Solutions

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

#### MEXICO

- UNHCR identified the need to develop local integration programs in the field for refugees and asylum seekers related to livelihood and employment. More and more families have shared their interest in staying in Mexico, which creates the need to ensure a favorable environment regarding local integration.

## Working in partnership

#### REGIONAL LEVEL

- **SICA**

SICA, the regional organization based in El Salvador funded by Central American States plays an important role through the Security Strategy for Central America (ESCA). UNHCR entered into a cooperation agreement with them in 2014 that has served to enhance Central American governments support. In June 2015, the SICA Council of Vice-ministers authorized Democratic Security Directorate to work with UNHCR towards the creation of a Human Rights Observatory on Displacement, one of the 11 programmes included in the Brazil Plan of Action. The Human Rights Observatory provides forced displacement information, technical support to the member states in the implementation of the Brazil Plan of Action and promotion and dissemination of the Plan.

- **Tour around the world in a backpack**

The Regional campaign "Tour around the world in a backpack" provided UNHCR an opportunity to liaison with new partners, as well as to promote awareness raising activities with the focus on the plight of refugee children. In Mexico, partners that joined the campaign included the Museum of Popular Art, Papalote Children's Museum, Memory and Tolerance Museum, among others.

#### MEXICO

- **National Commission for Victims**

Collaboration was strengthened with the National Commission for Victims (CEAV, Comisión Ejecutiva de Atención Víctimas), aiming at facilitating the provision of CEAV services to asylum seekers and refugees. CEAV continued leading Mexico's government efforts on the provision of specialized services to victims of violence and crime.



UNHCR actively participated in government coordination mechanisms along with other relevant actors. UNHCR also provided technical inputs to incorporate international protection aspects with Regulatory Law for the General Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents.

## HONDURAS

### ■ Interagency Protection Group

The Interagency Protection Group has been tasked to follow up on the work started by the protection cluster which was activated in that country between September 2014 and February 2015 as a response to the humanitarian emergency resulting from the migration of thousands of Honduran children to the United States most of whom were expected to be deported at the inception of the emergency. .

The Group's objective is to strengthen the preparation and coordination among the relevant actors to provide a predictable, responsible, effective and transparent protection response and to continue advocacy efforts on specific cases and topics before local and national institutions. The main role is to ensure a human rights approach, a communitarian approach and attention to intersecting issues such as age, gender and diversity in the humanitarian response. The Protection Group focuses their work on two areas: 1. Migration and Forced Displacement; and 2. Humanitarian and emergency response. Unlike the deactivated Cluster which focused only on unaccompanied minors, the Protection Group has included both adults and children displaced by violence in its target population. The Protection Group is currently defining a work plan.

## GUATEMALA

### ■ Migration and Children Task Force

UNHCR co-leads the task force in coordination with UNICEF since August 2014 and includes the participation of several UN agencies as well as IOM under the purview of the Resident Coordinator. As concrete results of the Task Force, 4 shelters were supported through infrastructure works and/or donation of assets as well as the adjustment of a space in the Guatemalan Air Force facilities for the attention of family units deported from the USA; workshops with members of the consular network in the USA, Canada, Mexico and Central America were conducted; the capacities of the consulates to provide specific assistance to unaccompanied children and adolescents were strengthened; a public information campaign targeting children and their families on their rights during the migration process was created and launched.

### ■ Kat Graham visit to Guatemalan border

UNHCR High Profile Supporter Kat Graham conducted a mission to Mexico's southern border with Guatemala to raise awareness on the situation of the Northern Triangle countries (Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala). The mission was conducted in coordination between UNHCR offices in the USA, Mexico and the Regional Office in Panamá as well as UNHCR staff in Guatemala. During Kat Graham's visit to the Guatemalan side, a home visit to a Honduran family of asylum-seekers was conducted. The family shared the reasons why they fled Puerto Cortez, Honduras: the 14 year old daughter was threatened by gang members and harassed in order to become the girlfriend of the gang's chief. Moreover, the mission also witnessed a deportation process of families and separated children to El Carmen border from Mexico. Visits were also conducted to the "*Casa del Migrante*" shelter in Tecún Umán and to the Red Cross Kiosk in El Carmen border point. For more information on this mission: [Refugee Diaries](#).

## EL SALVADOR

### ■ Returned Children Task Force

The UNCT decided to transition the Task Force into an interagency group and extend the term until December. The interagency group will have a broader mandate that it is still under definition. The group currently is composed of UNHCR, UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, IOM and PAHO. A proposal to change the name to "*Protection Group for Returned Salvadorans*" is yet to be validated by the UNCT.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions in 2015 for the operation amount to some

**USD 1,358,762**

UNHCR is grateful for the support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

### Funding received in 2015 (in thousand USD)



#### Contacts:

Angela Flórez, Public Information/External Relations Associate for Central America, [florez@unhcr.org](mailto:florez@unhcr.org), Tel: +507 317 1713, Cell +507 6930 0655  
 Mariana Echandi, Communications/ Public Information Associate for Mexico, [echandi@unhcr.org](mailto:echandi@unhcr.org), Tel. +52 55 5083 1713, Cell +52 1 55 1916 2805

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