

# PROTECTION MONITORING: MEXICO

## SNAPSHOT MAY & JUNE 2023

This SNAPSHOT summarizes the findings of Protection Monitoring conducted during bimester. Protection Monitoring is part of the humanitarian response of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) to two crisis situations in Mexico. On the one hand, DRC directly addresses mixed migration flows in Tapachula and jointly with the Jesuit Refugee Service Mexico (JRS) in Ciudad Juarez, within a consortium with Save the Children Spain and Mexico, Plan International Spain and Mexico, HIAS Mexico and Medicos del Mundo France, with the financial support of the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO). On the other hand, DRC addresses internally displaced persons in multiple locations in the states of Sinaloa and Chihuahua with the financial support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). To view the interactive Dashboard of the results of this period and since the start of the Protection Monitoring program, click [here](#).

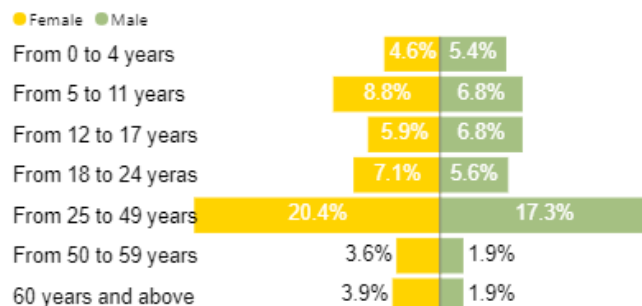
For the **mixed migration movements**, the months of May and June 2023 were marked by the suspension of the application of Title 42 on May 12<sup>th</sup> and by the imposition as of this same date of new restrictions to access U.S. territory through a change in relevant regulations. Nonetheless, statistics from CBP evidence approximately the same number of irregular crossings and expulsions – approximately 350,000 – as in the previous bimester. There was an increase in the arrivals of persons of concern to Mexico without a corresponding increase in the number of applications filed with the COMAR which reported approximately 25,000 applicants received during May and June at the national level, compared with approximately 24,700 during the previous bimester. In Tapachula, the *ad hoc* practices of INM with the issuance of *oficios de salida* contributed to northward transit of a significant part of the population of concern, while in Ciudad Juarez, numerous informal settlements were established, including in the El Chamizal park near the international bridge.

Monitoring of the situation of **internal displacement** enabled the expansion of the mapping of displaced persons in different parts of the state of Sinaloa and confirmation of the dynamics of continued displacement in the state of Chihuahua. The need to strengthen efforts to achieve durable solutions in Sinaloa is evident in the average duration of displacements, which is more than ten years, and the fact that 97.4% of respondents affirm an intention to remain in their current locations. Nonetheless, a deterioration in security in different parts of the state and in adjacent municipalities in neighboring states suggests the possibility of new displacements that could require immediate response. In Chihuahua, events of violence in the mountain region continue to provoke new displacements, with armed groups exercising increasing control.

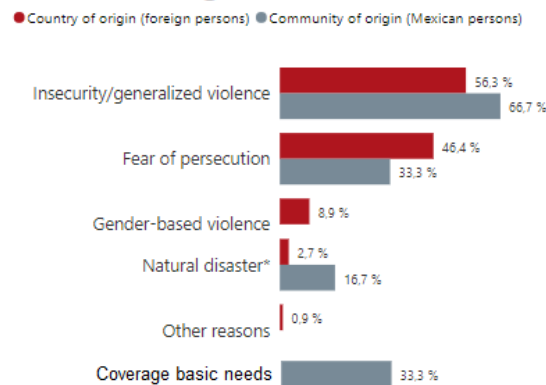
## KEY FIGURES

Between May and June 2023, 197 interviews were conducted, covering a total of 589 people.

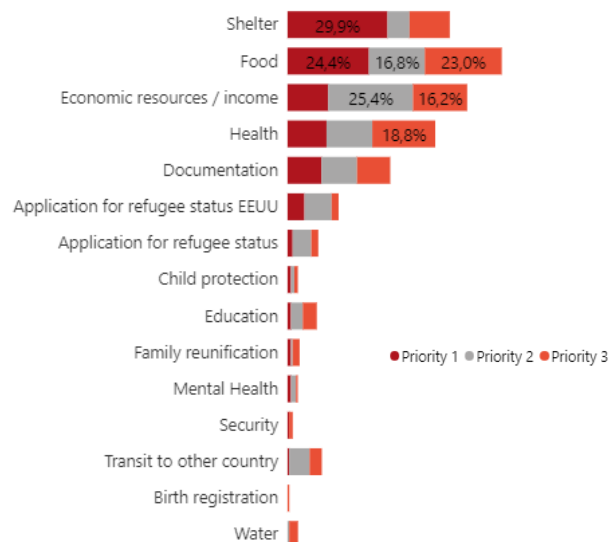
### Sex and Age



### Flight Motives



### Main Priorities



## PRIORITY ISSUE: AGE, GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Not all people experience humanitarian crises in the same way. Age, gender and other sociodemographic diversity factors can marginalize and create barriers to the enjoyment of rights and access to humanitarian protection and assistance. The concept of age refers to where people are in their life cycles, the extent to which their capacities and needs change throughout time. Age can increase or decrease the capacity of people to exercise their rights and influence risks. Children and adolescents can face specific risks associated with coercion, such as **child labor** which interferes with the health and proper development of this population group or **child exploitation** which is a particular form of violence. Additionally, elderly adults can experience greater vulnerability to multiple risks, including, for example, barriers to **access to information**. With respect to the concept of gender, this is understood as the social, cultural and psychological qualities associated with being a man or woman. Gender directly influences vulnerabilities, needs and capacities, and determine power dynamics. Gender is directly related to **sexual and gender-based violence**, where it is a factor that motivates or is taken advantage of in the act of violence. Similarly, considering the dominant gender roles in the region, gender can be related to different vulnerabilities and capacities, such as **sources of income**. Lastly, diversity includes a wide range of identities and characteristics present in the population, which often intersect and impact the exposure and capacities of people. Other diversity factors such as language can create greater exposure to risks such as **denial of services** due to a lack of adaptation or even **community tensions** as a result of xenophobia.

In the context of **mixed migratory movements** in Mexico, there is a great diversity among persons of concern. 40.2% of those covered during the bimester between Tapachula and Ciudad Juarez are children and adolescents younger than 18. Among the school-age population – between 5 and 17 years old –, 93.9% is not enrolled in the school system, without **access to education**. The main reasons cited were being in transit, referenced by 51.4% of households in this category that had still not arrived at their final destinations, followed by a lack of information – 7.9% - and a lack of documentation – 12.6% -. Multiple sources demonstrate that discrimination and inflexible requirements imposed by educational personnel contribute to this dynamic. On this issue, in June 2023, UNICEF published a [participatory assessment](#) on the barriers to educational inclusion for children and adolescents on the move in Mexico.

With regards to gender, there is a significantly equal presence of women and men among the population of concern, with a slight majority – 50.8% - of women, many of whom are also heads of household. Multiple key informants described trends of higher rates of violence against women, with some signaling how the influence of different patriarchal cultures creates difficulties for raising awareness around and addressing these issues. 99.0% of those monitored affirmed that their gender identity corresponds to the sex that was assigned at birth, although monitoring activities also reveal that people with diverse gender identities can face greater risks of **trafficking** and certain forms of **gender-based violence**. Cases of **physical aggression** against transgender people have been documented. Some of those monitored in Ciudad Juarez have decided to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity to be able to maintain their access to religious-leaning shelters. During the bimester, one shelter in this location temporarily closed its door to the LGBTIQ+ population and some lesbian women monitored reported facing discrimination in these spaces.





Diversity at the level of nationality of the population on the move in Mexico is evident on both borders of the country, where Honduras, Venezuela, Haiti, El Salvador and Guatemala lead a list of more than ten countries of origin of the population of concern. Other diversity factors among mixed migration flows are related to language, where 18.9% of respondents between Ciudad Juarez and Tapachula confirm facing barriers to communicate in Spanish. 5.6% of people indicated having significant or total difficulty. There is an insufficient offer of interpretation services in official processes and in assistance projects in both locations, which prejudices these individuals with respect to **access to information** and can greater a **denial of rights and services**. Similarly, 6.3% of people reported having some disability, with the majority of these relating to difficulties when walking or with sight. These conditions reduce the self-protection capacity of these individuals in the face of diverse threats. However, there are no specialized assistance initiatives for disabled persons in Tapachula or in Ciudad Juarez.

In the context of **internal displacement**, the ways in which age, gender and diversity impact protection risks are different. 36.3% of those covered in Sinaloa are children and adolescents, but the vast majority of these – 96.5% - are studying. Nonetheless, among this population group, the practice of **child labor** is evident, above all in urban areas, as a phenomenon that is exacerbated by insufficient means of subsistence in the household. Additionally, there is a greater presence of women among the adult population – 39.8% of those monitored – compared to men – 23.8% -. This also contributes to a diminished coping capacity with respect to **sources of income**, given the domestic and familial responsibilities that women assume.

Monitoring activities in Chihuahua confirm greater exposure of the indigenous population to displacement, but also specific effects due to the special relation with the land from which they were **evicted** which serves not only as a source of **means of subsistence** but also as part of their cosmivision. Given the uncertainty around **tenancy** of the lands of indigenous communities, displacement often represents a permanent loss of this property.



## MIXED MIGRATION MOVEMENTS

The bimester saw a decrease in the population housed in shelters in Ciudad Juarez, apparently due to the interest of the population in being closer to the border in case of a change in processes to access the United States, leading to redirect monitoring activities to public spaces, like parks and streets, where the population is concentrated in informal settlements awaiting the possibility of crossing the border. With the suspension of Title 42, barriers to **access to territory** of the United States arise from the application of a [new rule](#) which modifies the pre-existing form of processing at the border known as Title 8. Despite having received hundreds of thousands of comments with observations on the proposed change in regulations – including from [DRC](#) – U.S. authorities adopted a rule that considers generally ineligible for asylum in that country any person who arrives at the border without a visa to enter or who is detected following an irregular crossing, unless (1) that person has authorization to enter under a parole process; (2) that person had previously programmed an appointment through the CBP One application; or (3) that person requested and was denied asylum in a third country through which they had transited. With few exceptions, persons who do not fall into one of these categories can be returned to their countries of origin and, in the case of nationals of Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti and Venezuela, can be directly returned to Mexico. Although these regulatory changes have been the subject of a number of lawsuits, these have not prevented its implementation.

In different parts of the northern border of Mexico, this policy change caused the crossing of asylum-seekers into the United States to slow in comparison to the high volume of entries under the prior usage of lists of exceptions to Title 42. In this context, the use of CBP One is understood to be the main form to regularly access U.S. territory. Nonetheless, in practice, in Ciudad Juarez as in other places along the northern border, the persistent use of lists by community leaders or even by the population of concern to facilitate entry beyond the appointments obtained through CBP One has been documented. This dynamic lends itself to abuses of power that were previously documented while the list practice was in effect.

56.3% of respondents in Ciudad Juarez manifest having suffered a crime during their stay in their country, and 57.6% report abuses during their transit within Mexican territory. In this context, in this location monitoring activities documented a higher exposure of persons of concern to the risk of **kidnapping**, with those who arrive in order to attend the appointments programmed through CBP One being particularly vulnerable. Multiple people monitored described experiences of kidnapping before

arriving in Ciudad Juarez by bus from other points within the country and described having had to pay up to \$2,000 USD per person in order to be freed. On this same issue, 28.1% of respondents in this location reported facing checkpoints operated by different authorities where 83.3% suffered or observed distinct types of abuses. Psychosocial support activities registered dynamics of psychological mistreatment during the kidnapping incidents, among other forms of abuse, which leads to heightened symptoms among the population of concern. Similarly, nearly all of those who revealed experiences of kidnapping manifested being afraid to leave the shelter or location where they were housed in order to avoid being again exposed to kidnapping or **extortion** by some authorities that apparently colluded in these acts. 40.6% of respondents in this location reported that they do not feel safe in their current shelter arrangement.

On the southern border, 24.4% of respondents in Tapachula had not approached the COMAR, mostly due to the alternatives for the obtention of **documentation** through the *ad hoc* practices of INM. On May 12<sup>th</sup>, migration authorities abruptly [took down](#) the Provisional Attention Center in a public park from which, during previous months, they had implemented a process for issuing the *Forma Migratoria Múltiple* (FMM) that facilitated the internal circulation of [thousands of persons](#). Following the demands for transit documentation by part of the population and the establishment of an informal camp near an INM checkpoint in the community of [Viva Mexico](#), a mechanism was initiated to transport hundreds of persons of concern by bus to the city of Tuxtla Gutierrez where eventually they could be issued *oficios de salida* that contemplated departure from Mexico through the closest border within a period of five days. Those who remained in Tapachula, however, have not been able to access the transfers to Tuxtla Gutierrez or documentation – the FMM or an *oficio de salida* -. In this regard, 66.0% of respondents in this location confirmed not having any document that would protect them against *refoulement* or facilitate their access to services in Mexico.

## INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Through key informant interviews in Sinaloa, the mapping of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the state was expanded to include approximately 130 families in the municipal capital of Salvador Alvarado and 145 families in the locality of Guamuchil, as well as 96 families in the municipal capital of Guasave, 70 families in different locations of the municipality of Sinaloa de Leyva and approximately 700 families in the municipality of Culiacan. The vast majority of household interviews were conducted in the municipality of Salvador Alvarado (mainly coming from the municipality of Badiraguato), with a smaller proportion of in the municipalities of Culiacan and Angostura (coming from the municipality of Sinaloa de Leyva and the Chihuahuan municipality of Guadalupe y Calvo).

Monitoring activities in Sinaloa evidence diverse protection risks, including **child labor** in the landfill around Ampliación Bicentenario, where at least 60 families of IDPs have been identified. Of the 3.5% of households monitored in Sinaloa between May and June that indicate that children and adolescents are not studying, the main reason cited was because they are working. Monitoring allowed for documentation of how many families resort to this **negative coping mechanism** due to the lack of means of subsistence, which prejudices **access to education** among children and adolescents in this location.

Although there have been no registered events of massive displacement in Sinaloa during the bimester, the security situation in the territory remains volatile, which can provoke **forced displacements** on a smaller scale. Media outlets confirm more than ninety **illicit killings** in the state between [May](#) and [June](#), along with **deliberate attacks** and other **activities of armed groups** in the municipalities of the states of [Chihuahua](#) and [Durango](#) which border with Sinaloa territory. Similarly, there have been documented [clashes](#) between the army and armed groups in Culiacan, together with reports of **torture** by [armed forces](#) in the north of Sinaloa. Violence is expected to worsen following [threats](#) from organized criminal actors towards others involved in the production of illicit substances in the state, which has already led to at least [three homicides](#).

The returns of dozens of families of IDPs in Sinaloa reported in the previous Snapshot were addressed by the [State System](#) for Comprehensive Family Development (DIF, by its Spanish acronym) to promote initiatives to increase the **means of subsistence**. Notwithstanding, local organizations confirmed the presence of armed groups in the area and signal the lack of a report confirming that [safety conditions](#) are suitable for return. In this regard, 11.8% of households monitored during the bimester reported having experienced violence in their current location.

Having **safe housing** continues to be the [main demand](#) of IDPs in Sinaloa, with 76.4% of those monitored in this state confirming that housing is their first priority. 26.0% of respondents confirm that the loss of property was among the effects that they suffered in their place of origin as a result of violence. The Secretary for Wellbeing and Sustainable Development (SEBIDES, by its Spanish acronym) confirmed that it has nearly 54 hectares of land a budget of 15 million Mexican pesos for resettling IDPs in the municipalities of Concordia, Mazatlan, Culiacan, Guasave and Guamuchil. However, 30.3% of respondents confirmed that they are not benefiting from the housing program, of which 34.8% did not even have information about the program. Among those monitored who have benefited from the housing program, monitoring activities documented concerns around the legal uncertainty of the plots assigned by the Housing Commission, the impossibility of settling on the assigned lots due to the lack of public services and the inability to access credits or other programs to facilitate the construction of houses on the assigned plots. During the month of May, twelve families that lived in self-build houses in the settlement established by the Housing Commission in the municipality of Mazatlan received support from a [civil society organization](#) for the construction of houses.



In Chihuahua, key informant interviews confirm a continuous dynamic of **forced displacement** in the mountain region, with the locality of Baborigame being the main reception point for people from other localities within the municipality of [Guadalupe y Calvo](#). Similarly, successive displacements were detected from the municipalities of Guachochi and Coronado. News outlets reported displacements of multiple families from the locality of Santa Anita in Guachochi following a series of [violent events](#) in this location. Civil society organizations condemned that **armed groups** have consolidated effective control of at least [ten localities](#) in the state, provoking eviction and occupation of property and causing an increase in displacement.

Following this bimester, DRC will suspend its Protection Monitoring activities with IDPs in Sinaloa and Chihuahua due to budget cuts.



*This document is part of the humanitarian response activities of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) in Mexico, with the financial support of the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It is not a publication of ECHO or UNHCR. The financing agencies are not responsible for the use that may be made of the information contained in the document and do not necessarily support its contents. All of the opinions expressed herein belong exclusively to DRC and should not be interpreted in any way as the official opinion of the European Union, the United Nations or their Member States.*

## CONTACT INFORMATION



[www.drc.ngo](http://www.drc.ngo)



[lac.info@drc.ngo](mailto:lac.info@drc.ngo)



[@DRC\\_LAC](https://twitter.com/DRC_LAC)



[@ConsejoDanesDRC](https://facebook.com/ConsejoDanesDRC)

## TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION FROM DRC



Scan this QR Code or [Click Here](#)

For DRC and our partners, your opinion and suggestions about the content of the Protection Monitoring Snapshots is very important to ensuring a product that increasingly responds to your needs. To provide feedback, [click here](#).