

Communication with Communities in Mexico

Among forcibly displaced people with whom UNHCR works, there are differences in age, gender, diversity, and other characteristics such as social or legal status, ethnicity, and different specific needs, as disabilities. These identities can exacerbate inequality, discrimination, and limit opportunities. Therefore, UNHCR considers each person's unique needs, priorities, and strengths. UNHCR's **Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) Policy** ensures that people forced to flee can enjoy their rights on equal footing and participate meaningfully in the decisions that affect their lives, families, and communities. **Effective, inclusive, and consistent communication with communities is vital to the work of UNHCR and its partners, and an essential element of UNHCR's Accountability to Affected People (AAP)**, a commitment to the systematic inclusion of the needs, concerns, abilities, and perspectives of the people with and for whom UNHCR works.

One of the regional challenges in the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers is their lack of access to information about how to access protection, refugee status recognition procedures, and local integration resources and services. **The Communication with Communities (CwC) unit ensures that forcibly displaced persons have access to timely, accurate, and relevant information on their rights and entitlements and the programs of UNHCR and its partners, through various channels and formats and can give feedback.** The unit maintains a constant two-way dialogue with refugees and asylum-seekers to build trust and to receive feedback. We believe that listening and talking to communities is a fundamental part of humanitarian response to understand the different groups within the population we serve, their protection and information needs, their preferred information channels and trusted sources. Communities' voices need to be heard to inform UNHCR's decisions and assure accountability.

Our Objectives

1. Guarantee **access to relevant and updated information on how to apply for refugee status** in Mexico and increase community outreach efforts to facilitate a **more inclusive feedback process**. This includes the use of language and formats adapted to different audiences and taking into consideration any barriers to access:
 - Use **participatory methodologies**, such as questionnaires and focus group discussions, to identify information needs.
 - **Produce and disseminate materials** validated by the communities themselves.
 - Maintain and **diversify channels of communication** to reach a broader audience.
 - Monitor and respond to queries from the people we serve via telephone, WhatsApp, email, live chat, Facebook message, and in-person consultations.
2. **Promote two-way communication with communities** to ensure greater transparency and meaningful participation in decision-making that affects forcibly displaced people, with an emphasis on feedback and learning.
3. Strengthen implementation of **Accountability to Affected People** principles within the UNHCR operation and with partners, including participation and meaningful inclusion of the people we serve, feedback and response, communication and transparency as well as learning and adaptation.

Key Achievements



23,612 queries were answered through the Helpdesk team, from **January through September 2023**, on topics like COMAR asylum procedure, appointment scheduling, regularization, and more.



In 2022, **491 reports** were received through the **Community Feedback and Complaint Mechanism**, of which 86% were resolved. 40% of the comments received were made by women.



To enhance communication with refugee communities in Mexico, UNHCR is working with **Outreach Volunteers**. By partnering with qualified and trained refugee volunteers, UNHCR achieves to improve two-way communication and information-sharing to better understand the needs and capacities of the population but also to draw from their multiple qualities. The volunteers bring the ability to speak several languages, such as Spanish, Creole, French and English and the diversity of profiles allows to lower the barrier to ask questions and to generate trust. So far, the Outreach Volunteers reached **12,247** people in Mexico. The program was implemented in 2022 and will be resumed in October 2023.



189,739 visits to the **UNHCR Mexico help.site** that provides information and guidance to asylum-seekers and refugees in Mexico, from **January through September 2023**, representing a **13% increase** compared to the same period in 2022.



768 people, including women, men, children, elderly, refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, and host community members joined UNHCR **participatory assessments** last year.

Spotlight: *Meet El Jaguar*



The Facebook page "Confía en El Jaguar" (Trust in El Jaguar) has the mission of providing people fleeing violence or persecution, asylum seekers, refugees or in situations of human mobility with reliable and timely information. El Jaguar seeks valuable content and shares it with his followers with dynamic materials,

language that is easy to understand and a rights-based approach. Through the page, people can ask questions directly through Messenger and WhatsApp, which are answered in real time by the UNHCR Helpdesk team. As per September 2023, the Confía en El Jaguar fan page has more than 170,000 followers and on yearly basis, approximately 400 posts are disseminated with critical information.

Within the last twelve months, these were the achievements of UNHCR Mexico's El Jaguar webpage:

- ✓ Reached **4.6 million** Facebook users (a monthly average of 400,000 users).
- ✓ Registered **7 million** page views (a monthly average of 584,000 page views).
- ✓ Generated **321,000** interactions with posts (a monthly average of 26,700 interactions).

The Jaguar is a friend of refugees and asylum-seekers.

See more at: <https://www.facebook.com/ConfiaEnElJaguar>