

PILOT PROJECT FOR THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC INSERTION OF VULNERABLE POPULATION IN A SITUATION OF MOBILITY IMPLEMENTED UNDER THE INTERMINISTERIAL COMMISSION FOR COMPREHENSIVE MIGRATION MANAGEMENT (CIAIMM IN SPANISH)

The movement of Haitian nationals across the American continent marked a new trend in human mobility in the Americas in the second half of 2021.



According to official figures from the Government of Panama, between January and December 2021, more than 133,000 people would have crossed irregularly the border between Colombia and Panama, a geographical area better known as the Darien Gap. Nearly 90,000 of these people were Haitian nationals, albeit mostly originating from

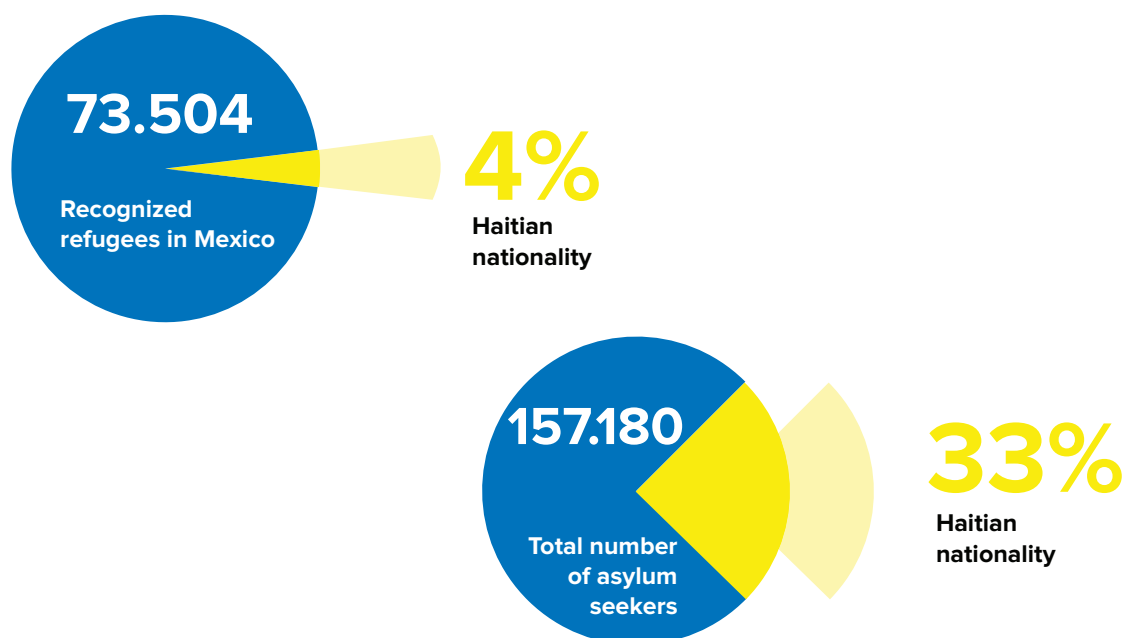
Brazil and Chile where the majority have lived following the devastating 2010 earthquake that shook that small island nation causing around 250,000 deaths and displacing more than 1.5 million people. A considerable number of children part of these mixed movements were born in Brazil or Chile and have therefore Brazilian or Chilean nationality.

Increased insecurity as well as the gradual deterioration in the socioeconomic conditions in their country of origin and the absence of work or legal alternatives to stay in the countries of previous residence -particularly exacerbated by the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic- triggered a journey northward of tens of thousands of people of Haitian origin in the Americas. These movements -mixed in nature- began arriving at Mexico's southern border as of March 2021, giving rise to a situation without precedents for both host communities and Mexican authorities. Their need of protection, coupled with the impossibility of returning to their country of origin and the absence of legal alternatives to remain in -or transit through- Mexico, prompted a sharp increase in the number of people claiming asylum before the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR). In a year in which the number of people claiming asylum in Mexico surpassed all historical figures with more than 131,000 claims, COMAR - with the support of the

UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) - registered more than 62,804 asylum seekers of Haitian nationality, including their dependents, mostly of Brazilian and Chilean nationality.

According to UNHCR's Annual Statistical Report, as of 31 December 2021, 4% of the 73,504 recognized refugees in Mexico were of Haitian nationality. Likewise, 33% of the total 157,180 asylum seekers as of 31 December 2021 were Haitian.

According to the latest Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) presented by IOM in 2022 entitled *Profiling of the population of Haitian origin in Mexico*, 74% of the people consulted stated to have an intend to remain in the country. This data, together with the percentage of negative cases of refugee status recognition, puts on the table the need for legal alternatives for these people to remain, taking into account that this is a population group that requires special consideration in view of their protection needs.



United Nations and the Government of Mexico - Working together to find protection solutions and legal stay alternatives

In addition to the support provided to refugees, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Government of Mexico have been working together to support legal alternatives for vulnerable mobile people, among whom are those who have not applied for asylum before COMAR or who have different needs. Approved on 16 December 2021 by the Interministerial Commission for Comprehensive Migration Management (CIAIMM in Spanish), UNHCR and IOM began the comprehensive relocation, labour insertion and integration project in January 2022 through the implementation of various mechanisms:

The first mechanism consists of the identification by IOM of Haitian families in

Tapachula (Chiapas) that have at least one Spanish-speaking member of productive age (25 to 49 years old), with the willingness and profile to join the formal labour market. The identification mechanism of potential candidates and the preparation for local integration of those selected is carried out in cooperation with the National Institute of Migration (INM) for the issuance of a Humanitarian Visa (*Tarjeta de Visitante por Razones Humanitarias* or *TVRH*, in Spanish) and the Haitian consulate for the issuance or renewal of passports. IOM will also accompany the effective integration of the Haitian population through attention to the specific protection needs of vulnerable people part of the joint project, language learning, cultural orientation, and training and sensitization on migration issues for companies.



62
PEOPLE



They are being assisted in their integration as of April 5, 2022 within the framework of the comprehensive project of relocation, labor insertion and accompaniment to integration implemented under the CIAIMM.

For its part, UNHCR has contributed to this joint project both the experience and know-how acquired through the integration of more than 18,000 people in need of international protection and the support network it has built through its flagship local integration program (or PIL, in Spanish), which has been implemented in Mexico since 2016. This includes being able to offer to this population formal employment opportunities through the 260 companies part of its network, and accompaniment for their integration. In this sense, this project seeks not only to provide stability through decent livelihoods, but also to complement the route to lasting integration through UNHCR's personalised accompaniment in academic integration of children and adolescents, access to basic public services such as health, access to housing, vocational

training, revalidation of studies, access to university scholarships, certification of primary and secondary education as well as skills certification and, lastly, through family reunification and naturalization.

In addition to the labour integration strategy for the Haitian population already in Mexico, there is a medium-term component implemented by IOM whose objective is to establish mechanisms that allow people to access jobs and regular migratory status in Mexico from their countries of origin. In relation to this component, the IOM has established contacts with various governmental and private sector actors to announce the initiative and work on the bases for establishing mechanisms that will allow for regular, safe and orderly migration from the countries of origin.





PROGRESS TO DATE

Between January and the first week of April 2022, a total of 62 people of Haitian origin have been supported in their integration after being relocated from Tapachula to San Luis Potosi, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the INM. The collaborative relationship between United Nations agencies and Mexican Government authorities has helped shape and establish the pillars required for the effective integration of this population group through the issuance of stay and work permits needed in the framework of the labour inclusion project for Haitian nationals.

In January 2021, the first family of three members was identified under the joint UNHCR-IOM local integration project. One week after their relocation to San Luis Potosi, one of the adults was formally employed, the family had access to health services, had received accompaniment on their migration procedures and had moved into rented housing. The child is currently attending school and an educational grant is being processed through UNHCR to continue supporting the family temporarily in their integration.

Similarly, **of the seven cases (13 people) who were relocated to San Luis Potosi in March, all of them already have a formal job offer and started working the first week of April.** UNHCR and IOM will continue to assist them in view of their specific migratory requirements and in accordance with their specific protection needs, as well as in the search for housing which is facilitated through a one-time economic integration support, they already received on March 31. UNHCR will continue to provide assistance to help them access to health services and in school insertion of the children and adolescents who are part of this group.

Furthermore, **46 people of Haitian origin channelled under this same initiative arrived in San Luis Potosí at the beginning of April** and are currently in the induction week that allows them to acquire the tools to successfully begin their integration process. UNHCR will continue to provide them with the necessary assistance to link them to the job offers available in San Luis Potosí and to accompany them in the other needs they require for their effective integration. IOM will continue to accompany the migration and protection processes of this group in response to their specific vulnerabilities.

Thanks to the close relationship and communication channels established between the private sector in San Luis Potosí and UNHCR, the business community has shown a remarkable openness to the incorporation of Haitian nationals into their workforces. L'Oreal, MABE, Bimbo, Oxxo and the Japanese automotive companies Nissin and Midori Nanjo are just some of the companies that have vacancies available for the population relocated under this project. These relationships will also be strengthened with the coordination of IOM and the private sector on migration issues.

The initiative to integrate vulnerable, mobile people into Mexico's labour force has proven to be not only a positive strategy for stabilizing mobile population, but also a successful economic development strategy for the region and the private sector. This initial phase of the project plans to assist 200 Haitian families in 2022 through their socioeconomic integration into Mexico's host communities and be potentially implemented for a larger number of beneficiaries nationwide starting in 2023.

