



UNHCR / PHOTO CRED

**MID-YEAR RESULTS 2019**

**UNHCR MEXICO'S ACHIEVEMENTS**

During the first half of 2019, asylum claims in Mexico increased by 204 per-cent over the same period of 2018. As of June 2019, 31,355 persons had sought asylum. Of these, 30 per-cent were girls, boys and adolescents and 30 per-cent were women. UNHCR now projects over 80,000 claimants for 2019. The increase of asylum claims confirms the trends from previous years. An increasing number of persons in need of international protection see Mexico as a country of asylum rather than merely of transit.

Efforts to strengthen the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) have started to show results. COMAR has been able to register 204 per-cent more asylum claims than during the first half of 2018 and is simplifying procedures, including through the application of the Cartagena Declaration. However, obstacles persist as its budget has been further reduced, obliging COMAR to further rely on UNHCR support and creating a serious concern of long-term sustainability.

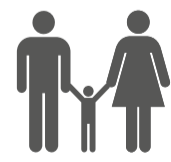
**Legal Assistance and Representation**

During the first half of 2019, UNHCR continued to expand its legal network to provide information and assistance to asylum-seekers. 26 paralegals (people who, without necessarily having studied law, have the capacity to provide legal advice, in this case, about the asylum procedure in Mexico) were hired and allocated in shelters and organizations in cities throughout Mexico. This contributed to enhanced UNHCR outreach, especially in places such as San Luis Potosí, Querétaro, Chihuahua and Tlaxcala.

16,328 received legal information and 7,733 legal aid (including 1,195 who received legal representation) through a network of 26 paralegals and 44 lawyers.



**44 lawyers**  
were hired by UNHCR



**7,733 people**  
were channelled to legal representation services



**26 paralegals**  
were hired by UNHCR



**16,328 people**  
received legal counselling

## Capacity Building

As of June 2019, UNHCR supported COMAR among others with 108 secondees in Tapachula, Mexico City, Acayucan and Tenosique to increase its capacity. Contractors were also being seconded to new COMAR offices in Palenque and Monterrey. Additional contractors are being identified.

UNHCR also helped to renovate COMAR offices' provided necessary equipment and strengthened its presence in the south through a more robust team in Tapachula and the opening of a permanent office in Palenque.

Within the Quality Assurance Initiative (QAI), UNHCR and COMAR have started a joint review of the data flows within COMAR, with the aim of creating a joint data analysis capacity.



**108** secondees

supported COMAR to increase its registration capacity in Tapachula, Mexico City, Acayucan and Tenosique



**272** officers

of COMAR, INM and DIF were trained by UNHCR

## Alternatives to Detention

Until end June 2019, UNHCR supported the release of 4,767 people from detention so that they could continue the asylum process in freedom:

30 per-cent (1,470) were children and adolescents most of which were under 10 years old (1,095).



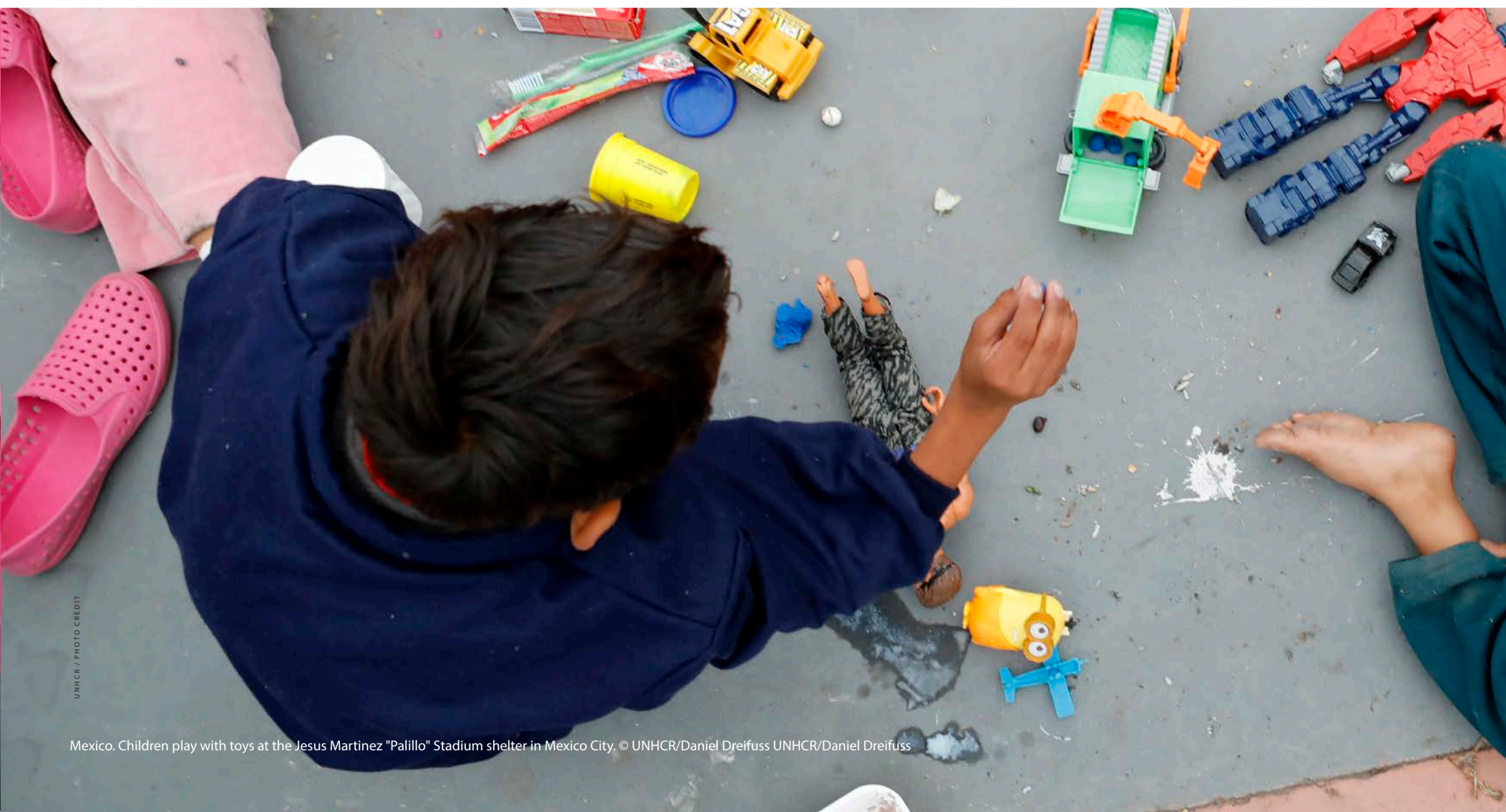
**4,767** asylum-seekers

were released from migration detention centers and continued their process in liberty



**1,470**

were children



# MEXICO MID-2019 ACHIEVEMENTS

## Expansion of Shelters

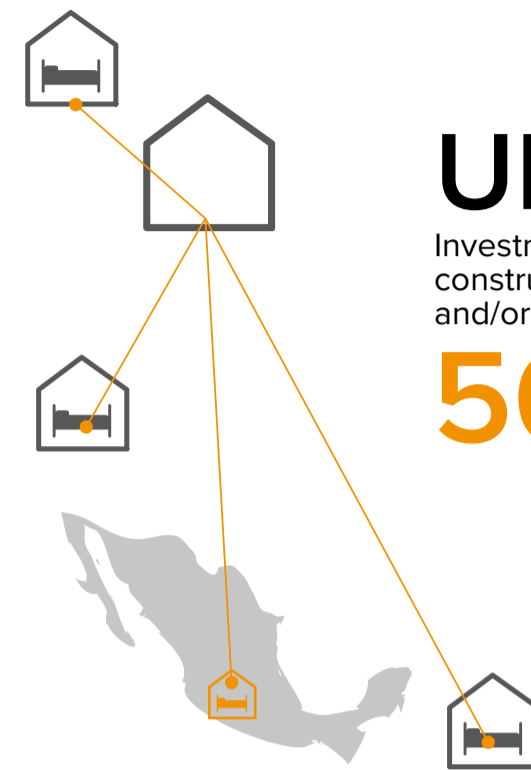
During the first half of 2019, UNHCR continued to invest in infrastructure to expand the network of shelters that provide accommodation for newly arrived asylum-seekers.

During this period, 56 shelters received equipment or benefitted from infrastructure improvements (construction).

UNHCR is also carrying out a comprehensive assessment of shelters, seeking to identify priority interventions to ensure their sustainability and basic protection delivery.

UNHCR's multifunctional team is in the process of evaluating the findings to prioritize interventions in 41 shelters. The implementation will be carried out in the second half of 2019.

The thorough and broad assessment will ensure that UNHCR interventions are strategic and cost-effective.



## UNHCR

Investment allowed the construction, enlargement and/or improvement of

# 56 shelters

Since 2015, UNHCR has supported the creation of 1,130 new safe spaces for asylum-seekers in shelters in Chiapas, Tabasco, Veracruz, Mexico City, Oaxaca, and Coahuila.

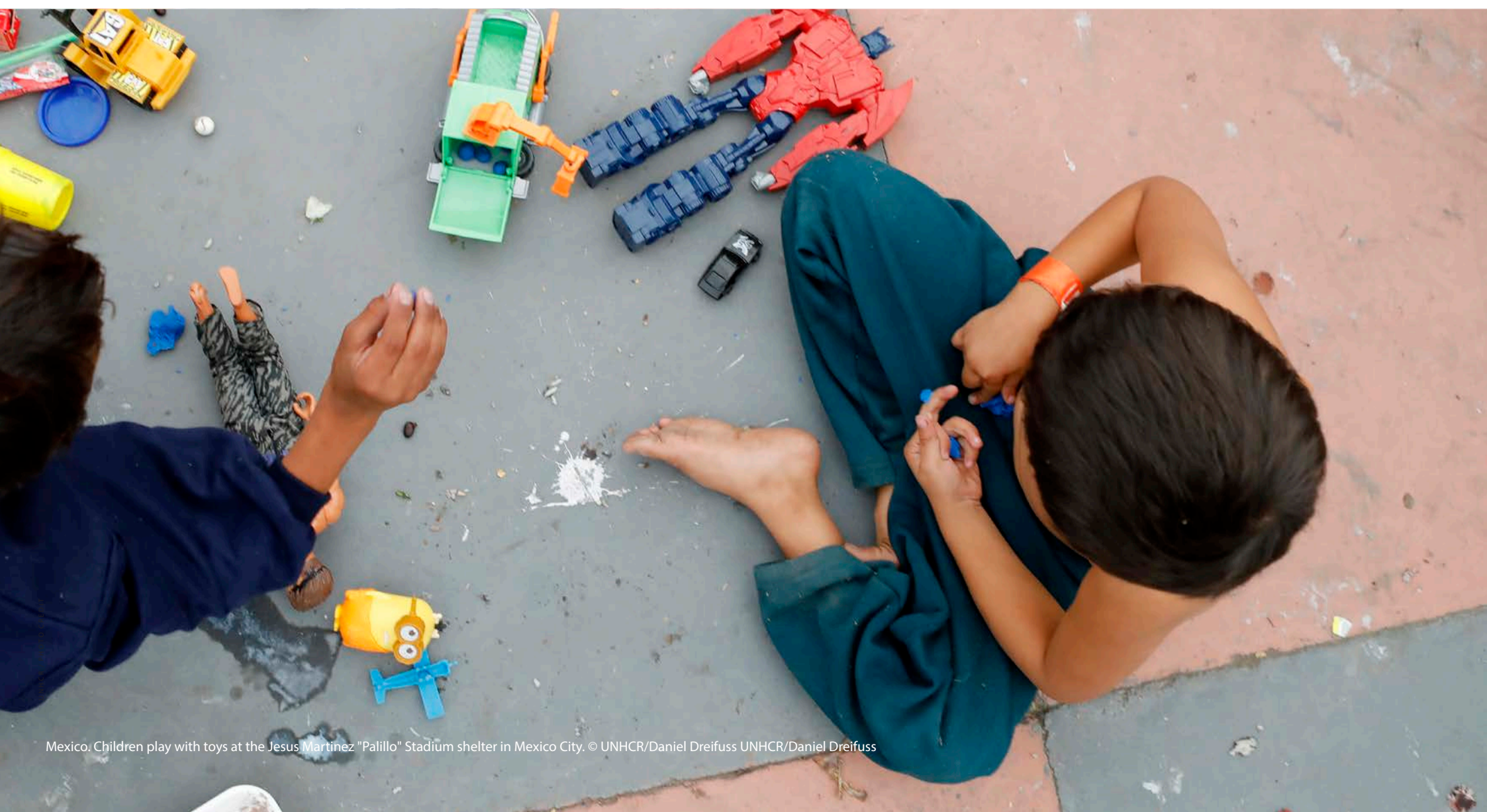
 **54** new spaces were created for asylum seekers

 **3,519** people can be accommodated nationwide in shelters

## Peaceful Coexistence

Consultations with local communities and authorities were held in Tapachula, Saltillo, Tenosique and Acayucan and led to the identification of 30 peaceful coexistence projects to be implemented in the second half of 2019. These will serve both the local community, asylum-seekers and refugees, thus strengthening protection space.

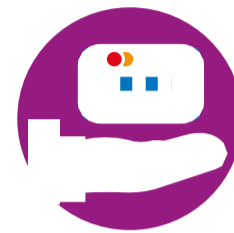
These projects include an innovative WiFi service for rural community connectivity, the rehabilitation of parks, municipal cultural centers, libraries and sport facilities, the organizing of communal sensitization and integration fairs and several mural projects, the donation of musical instruments, water filters and drinking fountains. They also comprise a project funded by the International Olympic Committee in the south of Mexico including sports equipment for renovated sport facilities, football tournaments, and workshops.



## Humanitarian Assistance

Until the end of June, a total of 18,574 new asylum-seekers who arrived in 2019 received cash-based humanitarian assistance from UNHCR.

This assistance is provided to meet basic needs while they are in the process of obtaining refugee status, usually in the south of Mexico. Due to the increase in asylum claims, between January and June, the Operation has more than doubled the number of beneficiaries per month.



UNHCR provided

**18,574**

**new asylum-seekers with cash based assistance to satisfy basic needs**

## Local Integration and Relocation

During the first half of 2019, UNHCR carried out 12,871 interventions for local integration in different areas (one person could have benefited from more than one intervention): individual counseling, job placement, revalidation of studies, certification of skills, vocational guidance, access to documentation, education, language training, family reunification, humanitarian assistance through cash-based interventions and access to naturalization.

Mexico offers a favorable framework for the inclusion and integration of refugees, both in socioeconomic and legal terms. The dynamic economy in Northern states complements this favorable legal framework.

UNHCR's local integration project was expanded in Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Jalisco. There are plans to further expand in the second half of 2019.

1,701 persons were relocated from the southern border to Saltillo, Coahuila, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Monterrey and Nuevo León.

50 private sector employers participate in the local integration program, including large, medium- and small-size companies.

UNHCR continued to carry out advocacy programmes and activities with the private sector and government institutions, including the inclusion of additional employers in the local integration programme, as well as access to education, financial services, housing, health and employment support programs at all three levels of government.

**12,871**

**people**

received support for their integration, in areas like education, documentation, and employment



**1,701**

**people**

were relocated to Saltillo, Coahuila, Monterrey, Nuevo León and Guadalajara, Jalisco



**50**

**private sector employers**

participate in the integration programme

**UNHCR Mexico's Budget requirements in 2019: USD 59.8 million**

**Contributions received in 2019 (until 3 July) : USD 32 million, 54 per-cent funded**

### With a special thanks to our donors:

United States of America, USA for UNHCR, European Union, International Olympic Committee, Nacional Monte de Piedad I.A.P, Fibra UNO, International Chamber of Commerce Mexico, Fundación ADO, ACCOR Hotels Mexico, as well as donors of other softly earmarked and un-earmarked contributions.

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