



Country: Mexico

Best Practice: Accelerated Procedures

Implementation dates: November 2020-present

General Description:

In 2019, Mexico received 70,431 claims for refugee status. The top three nationalities for applicants were Honduras (30,283), El Salvador (9,079) and Cuba (8,732). In mid-2019, the country began to receive an unusual number of Haitians who formalized their claims for refugee status with the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR). In 2019, 5,581 Haitian people applied for protection in Mexican territory, ranking as the country with the fourth-highest number of claims in Chiapas and the fifth-highest number of claims in the COMAR headquarters in Mexico City. In 2020, 5,938 applications for refugee status were received from Haitian nationals, 90% in the Tapachula office. There were 5772 claims from Cuban nationals in 2020, of which 66% were submitted in the Tapachula Delegation.

COMAR has different representative offices that are responsible for the refugee status determination process. The need to homogenize decision-making, together with the need to make the eligibility process more efficient, led to the development of support packages for eligibility analysis.

The package includes a number of documents:

1. Country of origin information document
2. Model resolutions
3. Interview script

The Country of Origin Information Document takes into account the most updated information sources regarding this country, establishing a series of risk profiles.

COMAR also established the steps to be taken in order to verify the existence of a well-founded fear of persecution of those who fall within these risk profiles.

Activities:

- Research and elaboration of country of origin information document and identification of risk profiles
- Design of model resolutions; preparation of general interview scripts and specific interview scripts for each risk profile.
- Training: the packages were accompanied by a 5-hour training session on: a) objective information for risk profiles; b) the use of correct tools based on each profile; and c) the holding of interviews in accordance with each profile (taking into account, among other things, the need for interviews to be conducted with the help of interpreters).



These training sessions were carried out online for Protection Officers from different offices throughout the country (due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic).

- Monitoring the use of the tools that have been designed with the objectives of: (1) ensuring that the tools are being used homogeneously; (2) ensuring that the tools, are being used in a critical and responsible manner, avoiding that the questions posed are used automatically; (3) ensuring that cases are receiving suitable attention within the proposed model for each profile; (4) verify whether the tools have supported a decrease in the time taken to resolve each case.

Results / Impact:

- Simplification of the process, guaranteeing the quality of the procedure and efficiency with the resolution of cases.

Implementation challenges:

- Initially, the implementation required a change in the mentality of the staff involved in the interviewing and analysis of the cases as it implied a different working method than what they were used to.
- Strengthening triage mechanisms continues to be a challenge, which implies training and the availability of tools to carry them out.
- Infrastructural aspects need to be strengthened in order to better implement this practice (specifically, specific spaces for holding interviews).
- Maintenance of the tools so that they are always up to date.

Partner(s):

COMAR / UNHCR (QAI Program)

Lessons learned:

- This procedure demonstrates the benefits of implementing diversified case processing strategies in the face of significant growth in asylum applications.
- Monitoring the implementation of differentiated procedures is crucial for their effective application and the achievement of the proposed objectives. This monitoring includes the establishment of concrete deadlines for the different stages and the preparation of the necessary documents.

Impact of the COVID pandemic on implementation:

- The need to maintain social distancing measures forces the population to be attended to in accordance with biosecurity protocols, which has meant that the physical space available in COMAR's offices insufficient. This has caused delays to the procedure. As a result, interviews often take place remotely.

Use of the Asylum Capacity Support Group mechanism:



No.

Additional information:

Website of the [Mexican Commission for Aid to Refugees \(COMAR\)](#)

Subject area: Differentiated Refugee Status Determination Procedures (RSD)