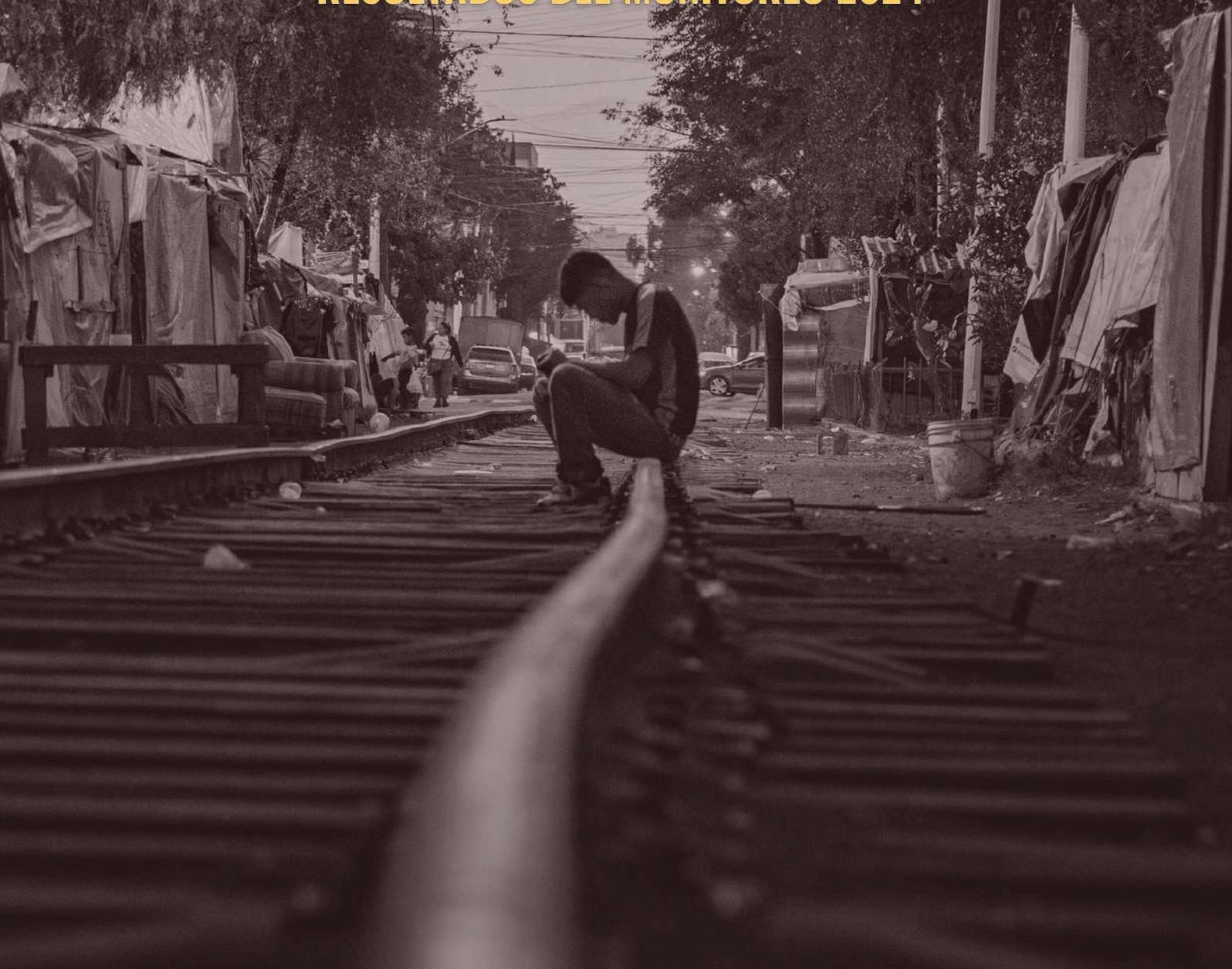

**ENTRE LA ESPERA FORZADA
Y LA ESPERANZA:**

**LOS CAMPAMENTOS DE
PERSONAS MIGRANTES Y
SOLICITANTES DE ASILO
EN CIUDAD DE MEXICO**

GRUPO DE MONITOREO FRONTERA CENTRO

RESULTADOS DEL MONITOREO 2024



BETWEEN FORCED
WAITING AND HOPE:
**THE CAMPS OF
MIGRANTS AND
ASYLUM SEEKERS IN
MEXICO CITY**

CENTRAL BORDER MONITORING GROUP

2024 MONITORING RESULTS



Central Border Monitoring Group

- Shelter, Training and Empowerment Center for Migrant and Refugee Women and Families (Cafemin)
- Alaíde Foppa Legal Clinic for Refugees (CJR) of the Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad de México
- CHIRLA Mexico - Coalition for Immigrant Rights A.C.
- Collective We Are Us
- Human and Free Foundation A.C.
- Migratory Affairs Program of the Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad de México, (Prami)
- Jesuit Refugee Service Mexico (JRS Mexico)
- Independent human rights defenders

The 2024 monitoring report “Between forced waiting and hope: the camps of migrants and asylum seekers in Mexico City” presents the results of the work carried out by the Frontera Centro Monitoring Group during 2023 and 2024.

This collaborative effort of research and systematization has been made possible thanks to the commitment of organized human rights organizations and defenders, volunteers, and non-profit partners. Those participating in this report wish to give back to the communities, individuals, and groups that made this work possible, making visible the conditions in which the camps operated and reaffirming their commitment to the dignity and rights of people forced to migrate and with international protection needs.

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INDEX

Abbreviations and acronyms	2
Introduction	4
Background of the migratory context in Mexico City	7
Migrant camps in Mexico City	22
■ Giordano Bruno Plaza Camp	23
■ North Bus Terminal Camp	30
■ TAPO Bus Terminal Camp	37
■ Plaza de la Soledad Camp	44
■ Tláhuac Camp	53
■ Vallejo Camp	62
Main identified human rights violations	70
Final comments	79
References	84
Appendix	91

ACRONYMS AND

BID: Inter-American Development Bank Cafemin: Shelter, Training and Empowerment Center for Women and Migrant and Refugee Families CAITF: Center for Comprehensive Border Transit Assistance CAIS: Center for Social Assistance and Integration CAN: North Bus Terminal Central CAN: Central de Autobuses del Norte CDH-CDMX: Human Rights Commission of Mexico City CDMX: Mexico City CHIRLA Mexico: CHIRLA Mexico-Women for Immigrant Rights Coalition A.C. CJR: Legal Clinic for Refugees Alaíde Foppa Comar: Mexican Commission for Refugee Aid Cgamhu: General Coordination of Attention to Human Mobility of Mexico City Copred: Council to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination in Mexico City CNDH: National Commission on Human Rights CURP: Unique Population Registry Code DEPMH: Episcopal Dimension of the Pastoral Care of Human Mobility DIF: National System for Integral Family Development FMM: Multiple Immigration Form GMFC: Frontier Monitoring Group Center GN: National Guard IFDP: Federal Public Defender Institute

Imumi: Institute for Women in Migration INBA: National Institute of Fine Arts INM: National Institute of Migration ISSSTE: Institute for Social Security and Services for State Workers JRS: Jesuit Refugee Service Mexico (by its initials in English) MSF: Doctors Without Borders IOM: International Organization for Migration Prami: Migration Affairs Program PCR: Casa Refugiados Program Secgob: Mexico City Government Secretariat Seduvi: Secretariat of Urban Development and Housing SSC: Citizen Security Secretariat Sebien: Secretariat of Welfare and Social Equality of Mexico City STyFE: Secretariat of Labor and Employment Promotion Sibiso: Secretariat of Inclusion and Social Welfare of Mexico City Sobse: Secretariat of Works and Services of Mexico City TAPO: Eastern Passenger Bus Terminal TVRH: Visitor Card for Humanitarian Reasons UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

INTRODUCTION

On Monday, January 20, 2025, with Donald Trump assuming the presidency in the United States, it was decreed the cancellation of existing appointments to present themselves at the northern country's entry ports via the CBP One app, which allowed migrants to request their legal entry. No more appointments can be made, and it is unclear how one can legally enter the United States to seek asylum or any other form of protection. As of March 2025, when this report was completed, details about the implications of the app's closure for users who had used it before such a measure was issued are not yet known. However, it is estimated that more than two hundred seventy thousand people were stranded in Mexico with a cancelled appointment or waiting to obtain one (López Méndez, 2025). At least about two thousand of these were living in camps on the streets of Mexico City.

The present report has been prepared within the framework of the actions of the Center Border Monitoring (GMFC) —a coalition of civil society organizations, academic institutions, collectives, and human rights defenders— has been conducting from August 2023 around the camps of migrants in Mexico City. GMFC has been visiting the camps to provide humanitarian assistance, offer guidance and advice on migratory regularization options and protection of human rights, refer to services, and also collect information about camp conditions, the main risks and needs of migrants.

The GMFC is composed of the following organizations and institutions: Casa de Reception, Training and Empowerment for Women and Migrant and Refugee Families (Cafemin), Legal Clinic for Refugees Alaíde Foppa (CJR) of Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad de México, CHIRLA México-Coalición Pro Derechos del Inmigrante A.C. (CHIRLA México), Colectivo Ustedes Somos Nosotros, Humano y Libre Foundation AC, Migratory Affairs Program of Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad de México (Prami), Jesuit Refugee Service Mexico (JRS México), as well as independent human rights defenders.

This report was prepared from information gathered by the GMFC during the visits to the camps, press notes, as well as some reports, communications and documents from civil society organizations, the Church, organizations international organizations, and information gathered by GMFC itself, together with the Federal Institute of Public Defense (IFDP), for various litigation strategies that have been implemented to defend the rights of people in the camps. The objective is to account for the circumstances that led to the formation of these camps, the conditions faced by people in them, as well as the responses of authorities for the migrant population living on the street in the Mexican capital.

In recent years, Mexico City has been transforming from being a transit space for migrants heading to the United States into a place where hundreds of them wait for a chance to obtain a regular status, sometimes in Mexico, but mostly to continue their migratory project in the United States. Although there are no definitive and entirely accurate calculations about the volume of these population movements in Mexico City, some figures can help measure this phenomenon. For example, in the report of the Episcopal Dimension of the Pastoral Mobility (DEPMH), which analyzed the period from October 2023 to March 2024, about ten thousand migrating people were distributed, at that time, in eight spaces where camps were formed (DEPMH, 2024). Moreover, GMFC has identified that the migratory plan of more than 90% of the people in these camps was to continue their journey north to reach the United States. Therefore, the city transformed into a space where they waited to have their appointment through the only mechanism that existed until early 2025 to access asylum in the United States: the digitized CBP One system.

In this report the main characteristics of the camps are noted of migrants in Mexico City, their life there and the risks and challenges they must face. We agree with activists and defenders, who, by observing and closely accompanying these places, define them as spaces of care, since it was the same migrants who organized themselves creatively and solidarily to protect themselves and pursue a livelihood while waiting for an opportunity to reach the United States.

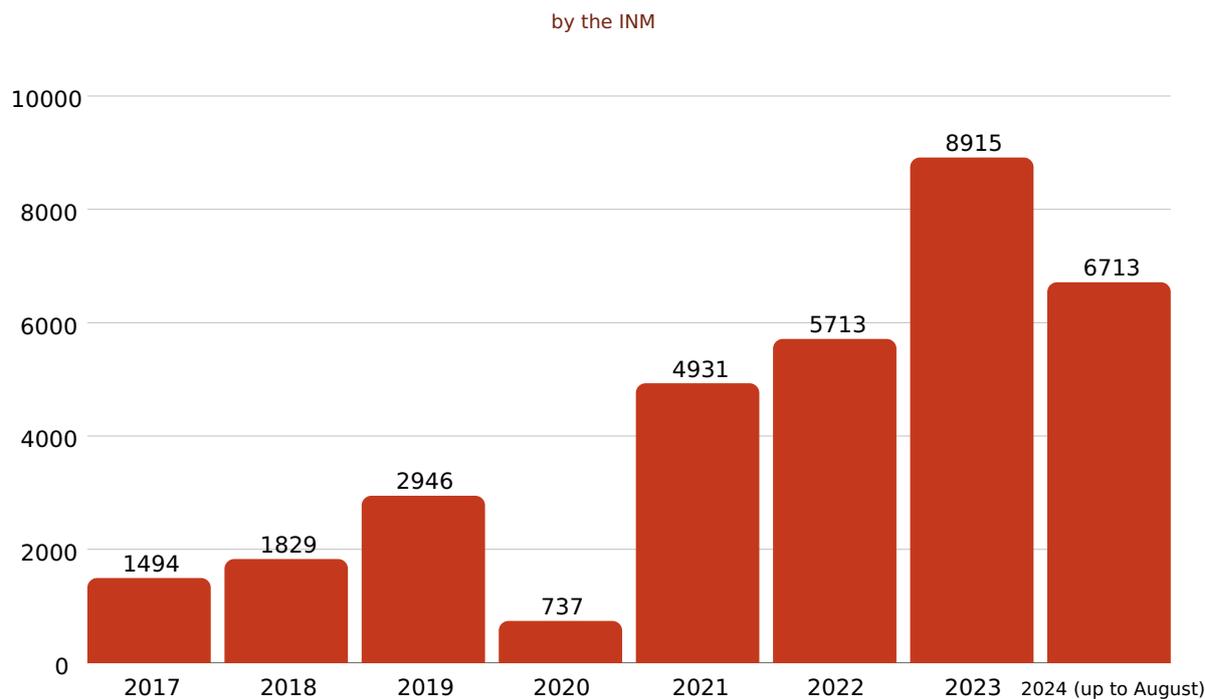


BACKGROUND OF THE MIGRATORY CONTEXT IN MEXICO CITY

Throughout its history, Mexico City has been characterized by an intense migratory dynamic of Mexican people arriving from other states of the republic, or of capital residents who move to other states. According to the most recent census data, between 2015 and 2020 just over half a million people left this metropolis to settle in another entity (557,181), while 308,686 people from various states of the country came to live in the capital. However, international migration, until at least five years ago, had a much less significant dynamic in quantitative terms: according to the 2020 census, between 2015 and 2020, 43,329 people left the capital to live in another country, and a little more than a third of them went to the United States (INEGI, 2020). On the other hand, international migration that arrives in Mexico City in conditions of vulnerability, with international protection needs and irregular status, whether to stay or to go to the United States, had not been significant either, especially in relation to other states of the republic such as Chiapas or Baja California, because its geographic location did not make it a key point within the country's migratory routes.

The above was modified in recent years, derived from various national and regional migratory policies national and regional migratory policies, actions by authorities to control migrations in other parts of the country, as well as the insecurity conditions faced by migrant people in Mexico. In Figure 1, this modification in the increase of detentions of international migrant persons in irregular situations in Mexico City can be observed.

Figure 1. Detentions of irregularly staying migrant people in Mexico City by authorities



Source: own preparation with data from the Unit of Migratory Policy and Registry and Identity of People (UPMRIP).

Between 2018 and 2019, the migrant caravans organized from Central America began to make Mexico City a key point because they shifted their route, which generally followed rail routes, to the main highways of the country, resulting in hundreds or thousands of people arriving in the capital for very short stays, whether a few days or weeks (Prami, 2020).

These caravans arose as a way of organizing the people migrants in the face of the risks and insecurity they face in Mexico, to make the journey safer by traveling together along the country's main roads, making themselves visible, reaching municipal capitals as well as the main cities. In this context, there were people who decided not to continue along the caravan path to the United States border and stayed in Mexico City, considering it a more accessible space to seek work, housing and regularization in the country or apply for asylum. To a large extent, these people stayed for several weeks or months in shelters of civil society in the capital, while regularizing their stay and finding the means of livelihoods suitable to live in the city.

It is important to note that, in light of these caravan migrations, the government in Mexico City, as well as the Human Rights Commission of Mexico City (CDH-CDMX), in coordination and collaboration with civil society organizations, academic institutions, volunteer collectives, and church and civil society shelters, organized the reception of people at the Deportivo Magdalena Mixhuca facilities in the Iztacalco borough. However, especially in 2019 under Claudia Sheinbaum's administration as head of government, there were several limitations, such as the lack of adequate facilities and supplies and the progressive cessation of collaboration with civil society, even recording aggressions against migrants and human rights defenders by authorities in charge of coordinating care for people and the agents of the Secretariat of Citizen Security (SSC) (Animal

Political, 2019).

The migratory dynamics of the caravans, and in general of migration International migration dynamics, including that of the caravans, experienced a significant downturn with the covid-19 pandemic and mobility-restricting measures that were imposed, such as border closures [1]. Later, in the last months of 2021, after various migratory processes of Haitian people from Southern Cone countries, some caravans were organized, particularly of Haitians, with the aim of advancing through the southern part of the national territory, leaving border towns like Tapachula, and reaching Mexico City to initiate asylum or regularization procedures and to have better living conditions (COMDHSM, 2021).

The above led to the arrival of hundreds of migrants of Haitian origin Haitian-origin migrants to civil society shelters, which during the last quarter of the year overwhelmed their capacity for care, shelter, and services. This was reflected in the numbers of applications for refugee status by Haitian people, who in 2021 became the leading nationality applying, with 51,827, with Mexico City being the second place to receive the highest number of such applications after Tapachula (Comar, 2021). Likewise, the increase in Humanitarian Reasons Visitor Cards (TVRH) issued to Haitian people rose from 6,271 in 2020 to 41,479 in 2021, i.e., an increase

of 238% (Madrigal, 2023).

[1] For more information regarding migrations during the covid-19 pandemic, see <https://www.inmovilidadamericas.org/>

In December 2021, a caravan of about 500 migrant people with international protection needs, mainly Central Americans, after walking for a month and a half from Tapachula, Chiapas. Once again, their mobilization stemmed from the institutional violence exerted by the migratory authorities in the south of the country, as well as the lack of decent living conditions. Their goal was to reach the capital to engage in dialogue with the authorities responsible for resolving their migratory situation, as well as to denounce the acts of violence experienced during their stay in the national territory (Ibero and Migration Culture, 2022).

This caravan faced a violent institutional response, with an operation at their arrival which, at least since the 2011 enactment of the City of Mexico Law on Interculturality, Attention to Migrants and Human Mobility, had not been seen. When they reached Chalco, at the border between the capital and the State of Mexico, the caravan was awaited by agents from the National Institute of Migration (INM) and the National Guard (GN), in order to prevent people from hitchhiking and force them to walk to the capital. The GN set up a blockade on the central lanes of the Mexico-Puebla highway, a few meters ahead of Eje 10 Sur, which forced all vehicles to slow down and travel in the side lanes, so that the migrant people could not board vehicles and, if they did, were detected by the GN and forced to get off.

When people were advancing on foot with the intention of heading to the Basilica of the Guadalupe Basilica, since it was December 12, they encountered a blockade by more than 300 agents from the Mexico City Secretariat of Public Security (SSC), just before reaching the highway's interchange near Santa Martha Acatitla, right at the city limits. SSC officers encapsulated the people in the highway's side lanes, with no authority explaining the reason for the blockade or approaching to dialogue. Thus, they tried to prevent the passage of people who, after expressing their interest in heading to the Basilica of Guadalupe, were assaulted by police with insults, tear gas, and blows. The excessive use of force by the authorities resulted in 46 people injured, including girls, boys, and adolescents, of whom at least 13 required medical intervention (Ibero and Migration Culture, 2022).

This caravan held various dialogues with the federal government, and finally continued on its way to the northern border after a little more than a week of stay in the capital. However, the violent operation with which she was received in Mexico City, considered hospitable in its legislation, marked a turning point in the treatment of the capital authorities toward migrants.

At the beginning of 2022, following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, thousands of Ukrainian people began arriving in the country to head to the United States. In January and February alone, ten thousand people arrived by air, mainly to Cancún, Los Cabos and Mexico City (El Universal, 2022). The government of Mexico City installed a temporary shelter at Deportivo Francisco I. Madero, in Iztapalapa, to receive Ukrainian people while they awaited entry into the United States through arrangements with international organizations and the corresponding collaboration of the INM. However, after just over a month of the shelter's opening, it closed in late May 2022. The people who by then had not obtained admission to the United States, or were seeking alternatives to stay in the country, were displaced and most were moved to a civil society shelter; furthermore, 15 families were moved to solidarity spaces by organized collectives of Ukrainian people in Mexico.

In January 2022, the Mexican federal government also implemented visas for of Venezuelan nationality, which led to the intensification of the use of the migratory route that passes through the Darién jungle, at the Colombia-Panama border, and traverses Central America to reach the southern border of Mexico. This meant that the arrival of Venezuelan people became visible, given the lack of migratory regularization and the humanitarian needs arising from the inability to access services and rights due to irregular migratory status. During the first half of the year, this migration became notable at the southern border, while in the second half of the year it began to become increasingly present in Mexico City.

The above, was not only a result of visa implementation, but of various actions by Mexican and United States immigration authorities. On the one hand, at the southern border the INM began to issue Migratory Forms (FMM) in a massive way so that people could move toward the center of the country and thus reduce concentration in the southern cities.

The FMM is a provisional document in which the days are indicated on which people are authorized to permanecer in the country, with a maximum of 180 days. It is not a migratory regularization document, therefore it does not guarantee the right to legal security and due process, nor to fundamental rights such as health and work (COMDHSM, 2022, p. 8).

The INM set up provisional points for the processing and delivery of the FMMs, first at the facilities of the Mesoamerican Fair in Tapachula, then at the Integrated Border Transit Attention Center (CAITF) in Huixtla, and finally in an improvised camp in San Pedro Tapanatepec, Oaxaca. The procedures and requirements for the delivery of FMMs by the INM to migrant persons and those in need of international protection were arbitrary. People waited between 8 and 21 days to obtain one. The validity of the FMM was defined discretionally, between seven and thirty days. Additionally, INM agents in other states of the republic, particularly in the center and north of the country, did not recognize documents issued by their own institution, and detained people with FMMs to return them to cities in the south of the country (COMDHSM, 2022, p. 8).

In the months when the FMMs were delivered in San Pedro Tapanatepec, the authorities also moved by bus the people who already had the document to Mexico City. They paid for their transfers with private transport companies that set up departure points at the INM camp facilities, and the authorities 'gave permission' to those who already had the document to buy tickets and board the buses.

At the same time, from the northern border, the United States government a parole protection program was implemented (Parole) that involved the issuance of 24,000 entry and temporary regularization permits to Venezuelan people who met the process requirements, though for the vast majority they were inaccessible. This program was implemented together with some more restrictive measures on Venezuelan migration and through agreements with the Mexican government, for example, accepting significant numbers of Venezuelan people expelled to Mexico under Title 42, a measure implemented in the context of the covid-19 pandemic, which involved suspending the United States government's obligations to process asylum-seeking individuals.

The Parole was expanded to about 30,000 beneficiaries across four eligible countries including Cuba, Haiti and Nicaragua, in addition to Venezuela. This implied an agreement with the Mexican government for it to accept people of such nationalities expelled under Title 42.

Since October 12, 2022, Mexican authorities began to receive people of Venezuelan origin expelled from the United States through the border points of Ciudad Juárez, Tijuana, Matamoros and Piedras Negras, which led the Mexican government to begin collaborating with the expulsions of non-Mexican nationals from the United States to Mexico, moving them from various points on the northern border toward the center and south of the country. The above was also to reduce the concentration of people in the cities of the northern border (COMDHSM, 2022).

Thus, the United States announced a protection program and further measures restrictive policies on Venezuelan migration, and Mexico imposed visas and began collaborating with United States expulsions, which generated a concentration of people in need of protection and humanitarian assistance in cities on the southern and northern borders. In response, in the south INM began moving groups of people to Mexico City on buses hired by the people themselves, and in the north, buses that began a kind of deportations from the border toward the interior and south of the country.

Since October 2022, an increase in Venezuelan-origin arrivals in the capital was identified, especially women and families with girls, boys, and adolescents. Additionally, in the transfers carried out by INM from the northern border, people were left in the proximity of the offices of the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (Comar) in the Juárez neighborhood, or near the North Bus Terminal (CAN) and the Oriente Passenger Bus Terminal (TAPO), where buses with transfers from the south also arrived (Redodem et al., 2023). Thus, people began congregating in these places, which led to the emergence of camps at Giordano Bruno Square in the Juárez neighborhood, at TAPO and at CAN.

All of this implied an over saturation of civil society shelters in the city, which once again overwhelmed their capacity to provide care.

In light of the growing arrival of people to whom authorities denied a process of migratory regularization or, at best, issued an FMM that did not allow them to access rights or services; humanitarian care needs were urgent, so shelters began receiving people despite being already saturated: they had to adapt their spaces and, for

example, place sleeping mats in courtyards and hallways, the same as doing restructurings to expand their capacity to provide food, bathrooms and medical care. This was possible thanks to the articulation of support networks among the shelters themselves, which shared supplies, resources and strategies, as well as other organizations, supportive people, collectives, academic and educational institutions. The response to the policies and measures taken by Mexican authorities, in collaboration with the American authorities, led to an increase in irregular migration and greater needs for care, funded by civil society organization.

With these migrations, which were arriving to the city progressively and for stays that are no longer short-term but increasingly longer in transit and even indefinite or permanent, a change in people profiles was also identified. Haitian, Venezuelan, Central American, Peruvian and Ecuadorian populations began arriving in increasingly larger families and diverse compositions, such as those traveling up to three generations, with women as heads of household. More single women and with children began arriving, some with disabilities, as well as elderly people, and people from nationalities previously uncommon, such as Afghan, Iraqi and Moroccan, among others.



As well as the conditions of migratory processes from the Darién jungle, as well as institutional and criminal violence faced by people through these increasingly difficult migratory transitions, which resulted in an increase in psychoemotional and mental health problems for people, so civil society shelters not only had to expand their care capacities but also found themselves needing to specialize and professionalize, for example in areas such as psychiatry and its care models. This was possible thanks to support from solidarity networks, and even private institutions, without any response from the authorities in Mexico City, despite local law establishing this response as an obligation for the authorities.

Although civil society shelters in Mexico City that were in constant dialogue with the local government since the first humanitarian emergencies after the COVID-19 pandemic, to demand the opening of shelter spaces for migrants, it was not until after the fire at the INM Provisional Stay in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, which caused the death of 40 migrant people (FJEDD et al., 2024), that the capital government announced the opening of a lodging space with a capacity for about 200 people in the Tláhuac borough.

This measure was announced amid a context of complaints from neighbors of the Juárez neighborhood, due to the camp set up in Plaza Giordano Bruno, and a political dispute between the then Cuauhtémoc mayor, Sandra Cuevas, and the then city head of government, Claudia Sheinbaum (Redodem et al., 2023).

Thus, on March 29, 2023, the opening of a shelter at the entrance was announced of the Tláhuac forest. From that moment, civil society shelters pointed out to the authorities the insufficiency of that space which, a few days after being opened, counted more than five hundred people, who began to sleep nearby the shelter, which are now part of the forest, in what later became another informal camp.

T an only one and a half months after its opening, following the entry into force of new agreements between the governments of Mexico and the United States for migratory containment due to the end of Title 42, the authorities decided to close this shelter. On Saturday, May 11, the space was emptied, and migrant people and those in need of international protection were loaded onto buses provided by the INM to be relocated to the various offices and representations of Comar located in the states of Zacatecas, Michoacán, Aguascalientes, Jalisco, Guanajuato, Guerrero, San Luis Potosí and Morelos.

On the same Saturday, May 11, in the civil society reception spaces in the Mexico City, a growing number of migrant people began to be received, so the only effort to open a shelter space by the capital authorities during this period ended in the creation of another camp and, again, in the overcrowding of the capacity of civil society shelters.

In summary, between 2018 and 2023, Mexico City went through various situations that, progressively, generated an increase in the number of people arriving to the capital. However, from 2018 to mid-2022, this rise was temporary, with months when the number fell again. It was not until mid-2022 that what was previously considered a transitional issue became a more permanent migratory dynamic.

This migratory dynamic since 2022 involved not only an increase in the migrations that arrive to Mexico City in conditions of vulnerability, with protection needs and irregularized status, but also a diversification of profiles with people from countries not previously identified, extended and diverse families, people with needs for specialized attention, such as pregnant women, older adults, people with chronic-degenerative diseases, as well as important psychosocial impacts due to conditions of travel and violence.

Mexico City became a point of arrival and of prolonged and forced waiting for people due to increasingly restrictive regional migration policies, such as the imposition of visas on certain nationalities and the immediate expulsions of non-Mexican people from the United States to Mexico; at the same time, due to the arbitrary and discretionary actions of migration authorities in Mexico, with the issuance of documents in the south, the disregard of those same documents in the north, transfers to move people away from the borders, and the implementation of an internal deportation system, all with the intention of making it more difficult for people to reach the United States.

This led to an increase in the need for humanitarian assistance for people in Mexico City who, despite having legislation that guarantees the rights of migrants regardless of their migration status, were not attended to by the authorities, and only the response of civil society mitigated the conditions of vulnerability and risk, although insufficiently. As a result of this context, camps were created in various parts of the city, where the migrants themselves collectively began to devise strategies to cope with life and survive.

Table 1. Timeline of the migration context in Mexico City 2018-2024

2018

MONTH	EVENT
November	→ Arrival in Mexico City of the first groups of Central American migrant caravans and organization of their reception at Deportivo Magdalena Mixhuca

2019

EVENT/ACCIDENT

February

- Arrest of Honduran human rights defender traveling in a caravan, by unidentified plainclothes agents (allegedly INM) on the streets around the shelter installed at Deportivo Magdalena Mixhuca
- Violent eviction of migrants who spent the night on the sidewalks around Deportivo Magdalena Mixhuca, by agents of the Secretariat of Citizen Security (SSC), and arrests and physical assaults on human rights defenders of various nationalities and organizations.

2021

September

- The arrival of Haitian people to CDMX begins and the saturation of civil society shelter spaces. Haitian people begin to overnight outside Comar offices in the Juárez neighborhood, to secure an appointment to begin their refugee application process.
- The Government of CDMX states it will not open lodging spaces, as they are not considered necessary to address the growing arrival of migrants to the capital, and despite the saturation of civil society shelters, the Secretariat of Inclusion and Social Welfare of Mexico City (Sibiso) begins directing migrants to these.

December Arrival of a caravan of Central American people to CDMX and repression operation by the SSC.

2022

MONTH OF EVENT

January begins the use of the CBP One app to access certain protection programs in the United States, and the governments of that country and Mexico agree and coordinate restrictive measures on migration to Venezuelans. migrant Venezuelan migration.

April The Government of CDMX enables a temporary shelter in Iztapalapa for Ukrainian people.

May Closure of the shelter for people from Ukraine in Iztapalapa and overcrowding of civil society shelters

September

→ The INM begins to leave migrants outside the offices of the offices of the Comar, in Juárez neighborhood, and in CAN and TAPO, after moving them from the cities on the northern border, after being expelled by U.S. authorities under the Title 42, and the southern border, after granting them FMM.



A camp starts to form at Giordano Bruno Plaza in the Juárez neighborhood

October

→ In light of the saturation of civil society shelters, the people migrants begin to spend the night inside CAN.

→ Implementation of the Parole protection program by the United States government for Venezuelan people



A camp starts to form at the Plaza de la Soledad by the transfer of people to this space by Sibiso

November The CAN administration evicts and prevents people from sleeping inside the facilities, so they relocate and begin to spend the night in the parking lot.

December

→ The GN and CAN private security evict and prevent people from sleeping in the parking lot.



A camp starts to form on the sidewalks around the terminal

2023

DATE	EVENT
March	→ Implementation of the Comar appointment system
	→ Opening of the shelter and the Comar service module in Tláhuac
April	Eviction of the Giordano Bruno Plaza camp
May	→ End of Title 42 and effective date of the appointment system for presenting at the United States border. Closure and eviction of the Tláhuac shelter
	 Formation of the Vallejo camp
	→ Eviction of the Giordano Bruno Plaza camp
June	Eviction of the Giordano Bruno Plaza camp
July	Eviction of the Tláhuac camp
August	→ The Comar announces that it will only receive applications at the module of care at Tláhuac, and the camp is reformed
	→ Closure of the Comar atención module in Tláhuac
November	→ Eviction of the camp on the streets around CAN
	→ Eviction of the camp on the streets around TAPO
	→ Attempted eviction of the Vallejo camp by the INM and the Office of Citizen Participation of the GAM mayoralty
	→ The INM stops delivering documents (TVRH or FMM) to people
	→

2024

DATE	EVENT
January	Eviction of the camp in the streets around TAPO
March	Eviction and relocation of the camp from La Soledad Square
A bril	→ Attempt to relocate the Vallejo camp
May	→ Closure of the Comar offices in the Juárez neighborhood and attempt failed relocation in the Anzures neighborhood
	→ Opening of the Comar office in Naucalpan
	→ Attempt to relocate the Vallejo camp
June	→ Eviction of the Giordano Bruno Square camp
August	Opening of the Comar office in Iztapalapa
September	→ Attempt to evict the Vallejo camp
	→ Police raid and illegal detention of migrant people at residences private individuals in Iztapalapa

2025

January	→ End of the appointment system to present at the border with the CBP One app
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CAMPS OF MIGRANT PEOPLE IN THE CITY OF MEXICO

According to the DEPMH report, 2023 was a year in which an increase of migrant people or asylum seekers in Mexico City was observed, which generated new needs to be addressed, but the response, both from the federal and local governments, was punitive, from a national security policy applied to irregular entry in Mexico.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) reported that this situation occurred since August 2021: “it is no longer possible to talk about Mexico City as a sanctuary for the migrant population,” mentioned Israel Reséndiz. In previous years, migrants found in the Mexican capital a rest in their arduous journey, full of dangers and hostilities; however, as already mentioned, this changed and many began to sleep on the street, since civil society shelter offerings were overwhelmed (MSF, 2024).

For this reason, many of these people had to seek spaces to the open air to settle, while awaiting regularization of their situation or to continue their journey. They are provisional camps that do not meet habitable conditions and, therefore, their inhabitants are exposed to unsanitary conditions, limited access to food, situations of violence and extortion, among many others. Below, the characteristics of the main camps that have been configured in the last three years will be developed.

CAMPAMENTO OF THE GIORDANO BRUNO SQUARE

As mentioned, after the most intense months of the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2021 dozens of people began arriving in Mexico City from Tapachula, where they had stayed for months waiting for a response to their asylum requests. However, the conditions they faced in that city (no access to work, decent housing, food, exposed to aggressions, among others) pushed them to seek an answer at the Comar headquarters located in the Juárez neighborhood of Cuauhtémoc borough, in the Mexican capital.

The majority of these people were from Haiti and gathered outside the Comar offices, with their few belongings and no place to sleep, nor money to eat or meet other basic needs, so some began sleeping on the nearby sidewalks, at best with a blanket to cover themselves from the elements.

Some found space in civil society shelters in the city — such as Casa Tochan or Cafemin. However, capacities were limited in light of growing needs, so some people organized to offer temporary spaces to families, to the extent of their possibilities. For example, Ana Enamorado, mother of Óscar Antonio López, a Honduran migrant disappeared in Mexico, called on her colleagues from the Colectivo Huellas en la Memoria to enable Café La Resistencia as a provisional shelter. There, 14 Haitian families took shelter (Rea and Ruiz, 2021)

During 2022, the arrival of migrant people to Mexico City did not stop growing, and with it, the increase of people in the Juárez neighborhood approaching the Comar offices. Furthermore, as mentioned, the expulsions of people by the United States under Title 42, carried out by INM from northern border cities to the center of the country, began leaving people in the vicinity of the Comar offices during the early hours, with the indication that 'there they would be attended.' In particular, between September and October 2022 there was an increase in the arrival of people with these mechanisms, which led to a growing number of them sleeping on the streets around the Comar, so they began to settle three blocks away, at Giordano Bruno Square, site where the first camp of migrant people experiencing homelessness formed.

Conditions of the camp

According to own estimates, based on the accompaniment of people in the camp, humanitarian assistance activities and monitoring, at the Giordano Bruno Plaza camp there were about 350 to 500 people living there. This camp had been formed, from its beginnings and up to the several evictions carried out by the authorities, especially by Haitian population. During 2022 and 2023, more people from Venezuela, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador were added. However, in general Haitian people organized among themselves, mainly because they spoke the same language, and the rest of other Spanish-speaking nationalities did so in parallel. Thus, there were mainly two organized groups in the camp. People formed committees to carry out tasks of collective care and of the space, such as security rounds, picking up trash and cooking. They also elected representatives to dialogue with external people, coordinate the receipt of donations and media attention, among other things.

On the course of time, they acquired tents that they bought in a market nearby, whose prices gradually rose until tripling. In addition, supportive people began to bring donations, including tents, clothing, food, hygiene supplies, toys, etc. In this way, spaces were set up to protect themselves from the elements and safeguard their belongings, as much as their possibilities allowed. On the other hand, they bought their food in the market, supermarkets and nearby grocery stores, and cooked on improvised fires, taking turns for family group committees.

In this space, they never had access to drinking water or toilets. On occasions, they had electricity available, however, it was usually disconnected for them. Thus, the people in the Giordano Bruno Plaza camp tended to resort to the camp of Otomí people, also located in the Juárez neighborhood, where they could have drinking water, bathrooms and electricity to charge their mobile phones (all of this through charges imposed by the Otomí people).

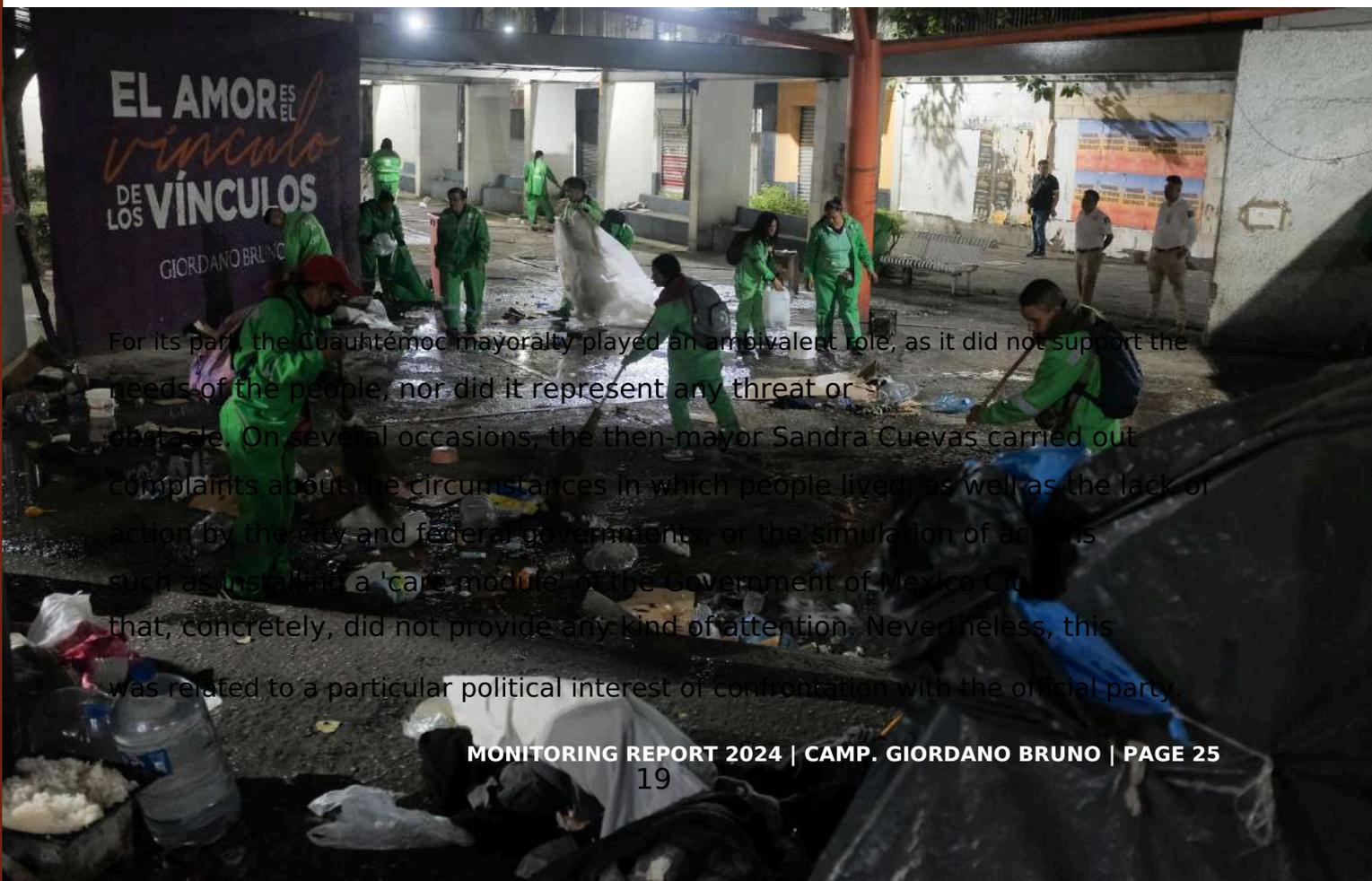


Relation with authorities

The sector police had a positive role in the Giordano Bruno Plaza camp, as it was common for them to have a presence to safeguard people's safety: assisted in emergencies, provided a friendly approach, and built a relationship of trust with the camp residents.

For its part, the Cuauhtémoc mayoralty played an ambivalent role, as it did not support the needs of the people, although it did not represent any threat or obstacle either. On several occasions, the then-mayor Sandra Cuevas filed reports about the circumstances in which people lived, as well as the lack of action by the city and federal government, or the simulation of actions such as installing a “care module” of the Government of Mexico City, which, in concrete terms, did not provide any kind of attention. Nevertheless, this was related to a particular political interest of confrontation with the ruling party.

The Government of Mexico City, despite having made frequent statements publicly about having been 'working on the situation' and carrying out actions such as installing a care module, never carried them out according to people's needs, and all of this was, rather, a strategy of simulation. It also organized actions that infringed the rights of migrants, such as evictions in collaboration with INM authorities, in various forms of violence, or the installation of barriers to prevent people from settling in the square.



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Since 2021, the then head of government Claudia Sheinbaum stated that no lodging space would be enabled for people, as she believed it was not a necessity, since most of them did not seek to stay in Mexico, but to go to the United States. This, despite recognizing that people were in the Juárez neighborhood to request recognition of refugee status before the COMAR (La Silla Rota, 2021).

The then Subdirector of Care for Migrants of Sibiso was a problematic actor, as they approached the camp and provided incorrect or contradictory information to people about the possibility of channeling them to civil-society shelters, staying in Mexico, or accessing asylum in the United States. Likewise, it was a key actor in the tension between migrants and the neighbors of the Juárez neighborhood, as it generally spread a false message that “they offered shelter to people and the people were the ones who preferred to stay on the street”; it was even common that the “shelter” they offered were civil-society spaces that were already saturated. All of this generated a lot of confusion among the camp residents and the surrounding community.

After two years, in March 2023, the Government of CDMX decided to enable a shelter in the Tláhuac municipality, and, ten days after that, carried out a first eviction of Plaza Giordano Bruno, intending to relocate people from the camp to the Tláhuac facilities. However, a little over a month after its opening, the Tláhuac shelter closed and the people arriving to Mexico City began to once again congregate in Plaza Giordano Bruno, where, in the words of the then head of government of the capital, an information desk would be installed to assess the needs of arriving migrants. Claudia Sheinbaum argued, again, that the long waits for refugee petitions concentrated large groups of migrants in this area of the city, but that they did not actually intend to stay here. Therefore, she expected to evaluate the situation to decide whether there was a need to open another shelter (Sarabia, 2023b).



Relation with the neighbors

Relation with the neighbors

The conditions in which this camp was located also added to the frustration of residents. No access to water, bathrooms and basic living conditions, this space constituted a focus of infections and unsanitary conditions. Some people installed showers and temporary bathrooms, taking advantage of storm drains, however the precarious installation did not allow keeping the hygiene, food, and overnight spaces separated. According to MSF, most people who settled in this type of space suffered respiratory diseases, gastrointestinal infections, in addition to exacerbating the chronic conditions with which they began their displacement, and affected their mental health (MSF, 2024).

Even though the organization and mobilization of residents against the camp, with the slogan #LaCalleNoEsAlbergue, was very visible on social media and in the press, and had important impacts on people, such as promoting evictions, this group did not represent the majority of residents of the Juárez neighborhood, who mostly showed ambivalence to the circumstances. Moreover, there were other groups that organized to support the people, providing humanitarian aid regularly, carrying out play-educational activities with children and, in turn, calling on other civil, religious and volunteer organizations to support the people of the camp.

Evictions from Giordano Bruno Square

The first eviction from Giordano Bruno Square took place on April 10, 2023, with the aim of moving people from the camp to the facilities of the newly opened shelter in the Tláhuac borough. According to official information, authorities moved 450 people, with support from units of the Passenger Transport Network (RTP), offering expedited processing of their migratory regularization procedures and asylum application (Sarabia, 2023a).

The second eviction occurred on Friday night, May 19, 2023, at 20:00 hours. Eleven INM buses arrived to transport the people living in the square to Morelos, Puebla, Tlaxcala, and the State of Mexico. However, GMFC could confirm that some people were transported to Tapachula. The operation was led by INM agents, accompanied by the GN with heavy weapons. INM agents walked among the tents to dismantle them, while the migrants collected their belongings. The operation was carried out without the presence of the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) or the CDH-CDMX, much less translators, knowing that most people were of Haitian origin. The migrants boarded the buses, not knowing where they would be taken or what would happen with their cases. Authorities told them they would expedite migratory regularization procedures, a situation that could never be confirmed. According to an INM agent, the first five buses were heading to Chiapas (Díaz, 2023a).

Some individuals and civil society organizations, such as the Casa Refugiados Program (PCR), the Ustedes Somos Nosotros Collective and Cafemin. These organizations helped regroup the people who remained scattered around the square and had nowhere to sleep. The Casa Tochan shelter secured an auditorium for the families and a truck to move them. Cafemin, for its part, reorganized its spaces to receive some. After this eviction, some migrants remained at the site, and the capital's government stated that three shelters would be established to respond to the housing emergency: Xochimilco, Tláhuac, and another to be defined (El Financiero, 2023). The next day, public officials from Sibiso arrived to intimidate the people still at the camp, telling them they needed to leave because the riot police would evict them.

This second eviction occurred after a controversy between the then head of the Government of Mexico City, Claudia Sheinbaum, and the Cuauhtémoc mayor, Sandra Cuevas, over the remodeling of the square, which was not authorized by the capital's government nor by the National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA), or the Secretariat of Urban Development and Housing (Seduvi), as it concerns a space with patrimonial value. The former stated that installing barriers to prevent entry of migrants constituted acts of discrimination, not a solution; arguing that her government offered a shelter in Tláhuac and agreed with the Comar and INM to expedite regularization procedures (Pantoja, 2023b).

The most recent eviction occurred on June 5, 2024, when INM agents, accompanied by GN, began dismantling the camp and forced people to board buses, not knowing their destination. However, INM authorities stated that they agreed to take them to their facilities to regularize their migratory status, although it could not be confirmed, again, that said promise of regularization would be carried out (Pantoja, 2024).

GMFC denounced the arbitrary and violent eviction of the migrant people who inhabited this square, as well as their transfer to other states of the republic, under the pretext of resolving their migratory situation, and documented the separation of families, as well as the destruction of people's belongings.

For its part, the Federal Public Defender's Institute (IFDP) stated that this eviction was illegal and coercive, putting at risk the physical and emotional integrity of the affected people. For this reason, it promoted an injunction to curb this type of action, so that the city government could not expel, deport, or return any migrant person until the injunction case was resolved. It also requested that INM stop carrying out further migratory control actions in the vicinity of Giordano Bruno Plaza, as they considered them arbitrary and rights-violating. This because it documented that, in the last eviction, migratory agents provided ambiguous and erroneous information to persuade migrants to board several unidentified buses (Arellano, 2024). These actions were carried out after the permanent dismantling of the Tláhuac shelter was announced for being overwhelmed, precisely due to the previous eviction of this plaza (Díaz, 2023a).

At the end of this last eviction, the head of INM arrived at Giordano Bruno Plaza, Francisco Garduño Yáñez—who was under process for the death of 40 migrants in the fire at the Provisional Shelter in Ciudad Juárez—, arrived to commend the institute's agents for their work of “humanitarian rescue” and “defense of national sovereignty,” noting that they carried out the eviction with a “white balance” and agents should feel proud and at ease with the “fulfillment of the mission” (Laureles and Xantomila, 2024a).

These actions show us, once again, that the federal and local governments, for a side, obstruct the passage and advance of this population, not providing clear answers to their migratory situation, pushing people to reside on the street in precarious conditions; on the other hand, they do not provide safe waiting places or installation strategies for a population that remains in the country for long periods. In this way, we cannot continue talking about transit in current migrations arriving to the country, but about increasingly prolonged and forced waits.

CAMP OF THE NORTH BUS TERMINAL CAMP NORTH

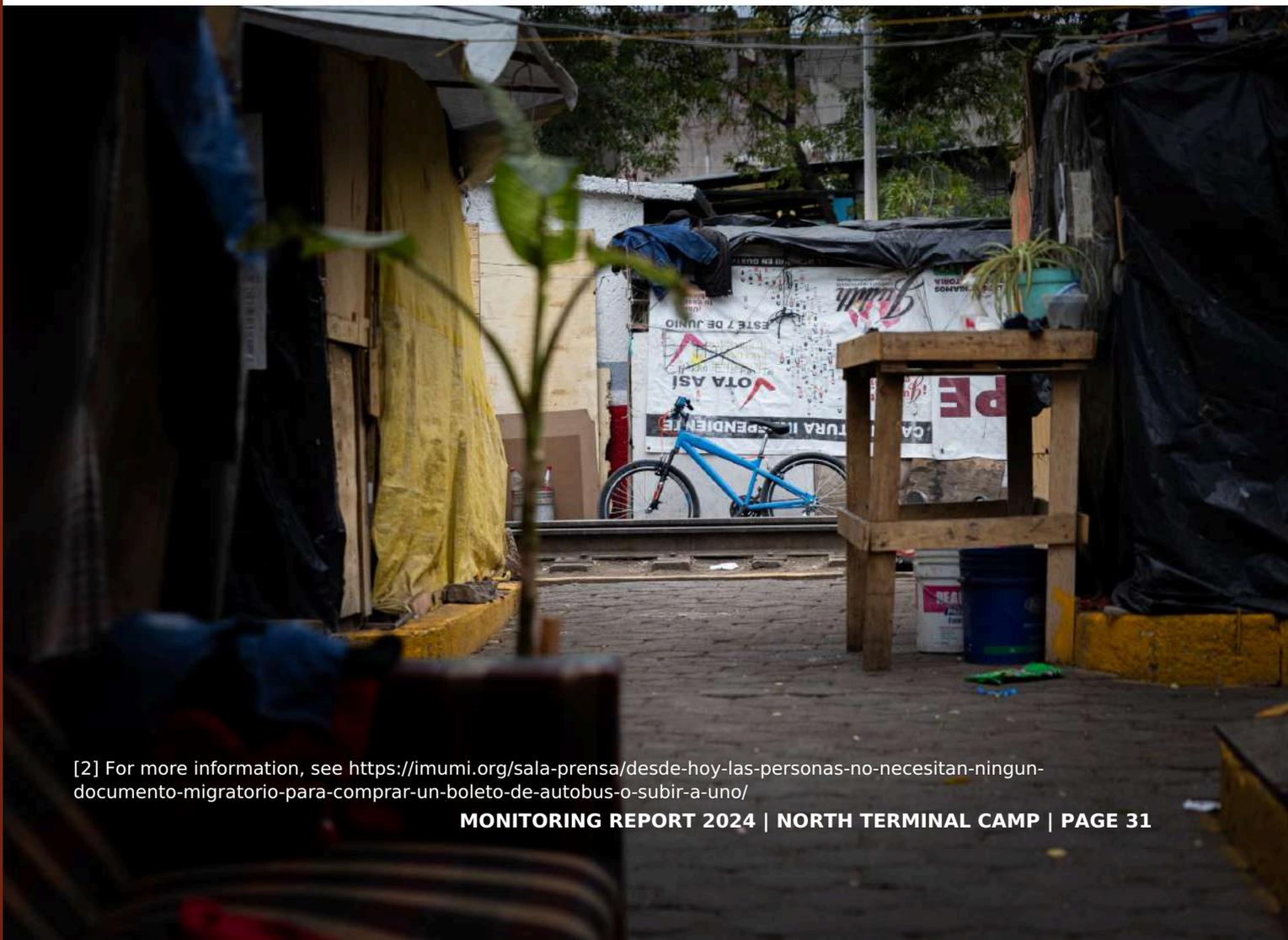
The North Bus Terminal (CAN) is located in the Magdalena de las Salinas neighborhood, Gustavo A. Madero borough. It is the terminal that connects with important cities in the Bajío and the north of the country, such as Guadalajara, Querétaro, Monterrey, Aguascalientes, Zacatecas, San Miguel de Allende, Durango, Puerto Vallarta and many others, in addition to having destinations to all the states of the republic.

Since October 2022, the media circulated information about the presence of people of Venezuelan origin who remained days and weeks at the CAN. As mentioned, the increase in migration of people of Venezuelan origin in Mexico occurred as a result of the announcement by the Joseph Biden administration about the new United States humanitarian parole program, Parole for people Venezuelans, which established that they had to reach U.S. territory by air, and if they attempted to enter through entry ports, even to seek asylum, they would be sent back to Mexico.

This strategy was carried out through coordinated actions with the Mexican government, which imposed visa applications for Venezuelan nationals and reported coordination with the United States through institutional channels: “The two governments will implement as of today a new system for access to the U.S. that prioritizes entry by air...” (SRE, 2022). It was the Mexican government, through INM, that transported Venezuelan people to different points across Mexican territory, while in Mexico City people were moved to CAN. At this point, people returning from the US border converged with those who came from the camp installed by INM in San Pedro Tapanatepec, Oaxaca. They were mainly of Venezuelan origin, however, people from other countries were also arriving.

In a monitoring conducted by the CDH-CDMX on October 14, 2022, the presence of 150 people was documented in the terminal. It consisted mainly of men, but there were also families made up of women, girls and boys (CDH-CDMX, 2022, p. 24). During November and October of 2022, there were people who stayed for several weeks. Unofficial sources informed a media outlet that the private authorities of the terminal allowed them to stay overnight in hall six, but they had to vacate it during the day. In some cases, people planned to move to the northern border states of the country; however, they did not have enough resources, so they stayed there for several weeks while they saved the money needed to carry out their transfers."

Another factor that prevented migrants from traveling to other states of the republic and kept them in the terminal longer was the official disposition, declared illegal by the amparo en revisión 400/2022 [2], which required bus companies to sell travel tickets only to people who had documentation that allowed regular stay in the country. Even if they possessed the FMM issued by the INM, the bus companies did not sell them a ticket. All of this occurred despite it being a measure that transgressed the right to free movement and went against the Migration Law, which establishes that only the INM has the authority to request migratory documents from foreign people. The above caused clandestine sale of bus tickets to Monterrey, but at an excessive cost (DEPMH, 2024, p. 29).



[2] For more information, see <https://imumi.org/sala-prensa/desde-hoy-las-personas-no-necesitan-ningun-documento-migratorio-para-comprar-un-boleto-de-autobus-o-subir-a-uno/>

Camp conditions

By October 20, 2022, inside the terminal there were 400 adults and 100 girls and boys of Venezuelan origin, though there were also people from Colombia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Nigeria and Cameroon (CDH-CDMX, 2022, p. 24). From October 2023 to March 2024, DEPMH documented the presence of 850 people settled in informal camps along Hospital Benito Juárez Avenue and Cien Metros Avenue, in the Magdalena de las Salinas neighborhood.

The authorities of the terminal's concessionaire company, as well as the private security hired private security, progressively forcing people to move away from the facilities. After allowing them to sleep inside for a few months, they expelled them from the covered facilities and forced them to stay in the parking lot, after which they ran them out, so people settled on the surrounding sidewalks. Nevertheless, despite being in the public space, private authorities continued harassing people until they were forced to move to sidewalks and nearby streets.

In these spaces outside the terminal, people began to acquire makeshift houses of campaign and to set up covered spaces with blankets, plastics, cardboard and wood. The conditions of these settlements were precarious and there were a number of needs for attention:

- Lack of basic resources, such as food and drinking water.
- Presence of respiratory illnesses due to adverse climatic conditions.
- Extortion by criminal agents.
- Problems with a portion of the neighboring community, which generated expressions of discrimination and xenophobia (DEPMH, 2024, p. 29).

Regarding the characteristics of the population in the camp, between September 2023 and April 2024, GMFC documented the presence of people from the following nationalities: Venezuela, Colombia, Cuba, Honduras, Haiti, Ecuador, Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Peru, Guyana, and Argentina.

In the various visits to the camp, the presence of families was observed composed of women, men, girls, boys and adolescents, as well as pregnant women and babies: in January 2024, there was information about a newborn baby hospitalized, and in October, a woman living in the camp gave birth. It is important to note that on few occasions people from the LGBTIQ+ community were observed. In relation to the presence of people with disabilities, in November and December 2023 two girls in wheelchairs were seen, one of them a result of a neurological disease (hydrocephalus).

Thus, various sources have pointed to the worrying situation of insecurity around the terminal camp. Evidence of this is the record of a shootout that left one person dead outside the central station in April 2024, and the discovery of a charred man in the vicinity of the camp, of which it is unknown whether he was a migrant person, occurred in December 2024. As of today, there is no more information about what happened.

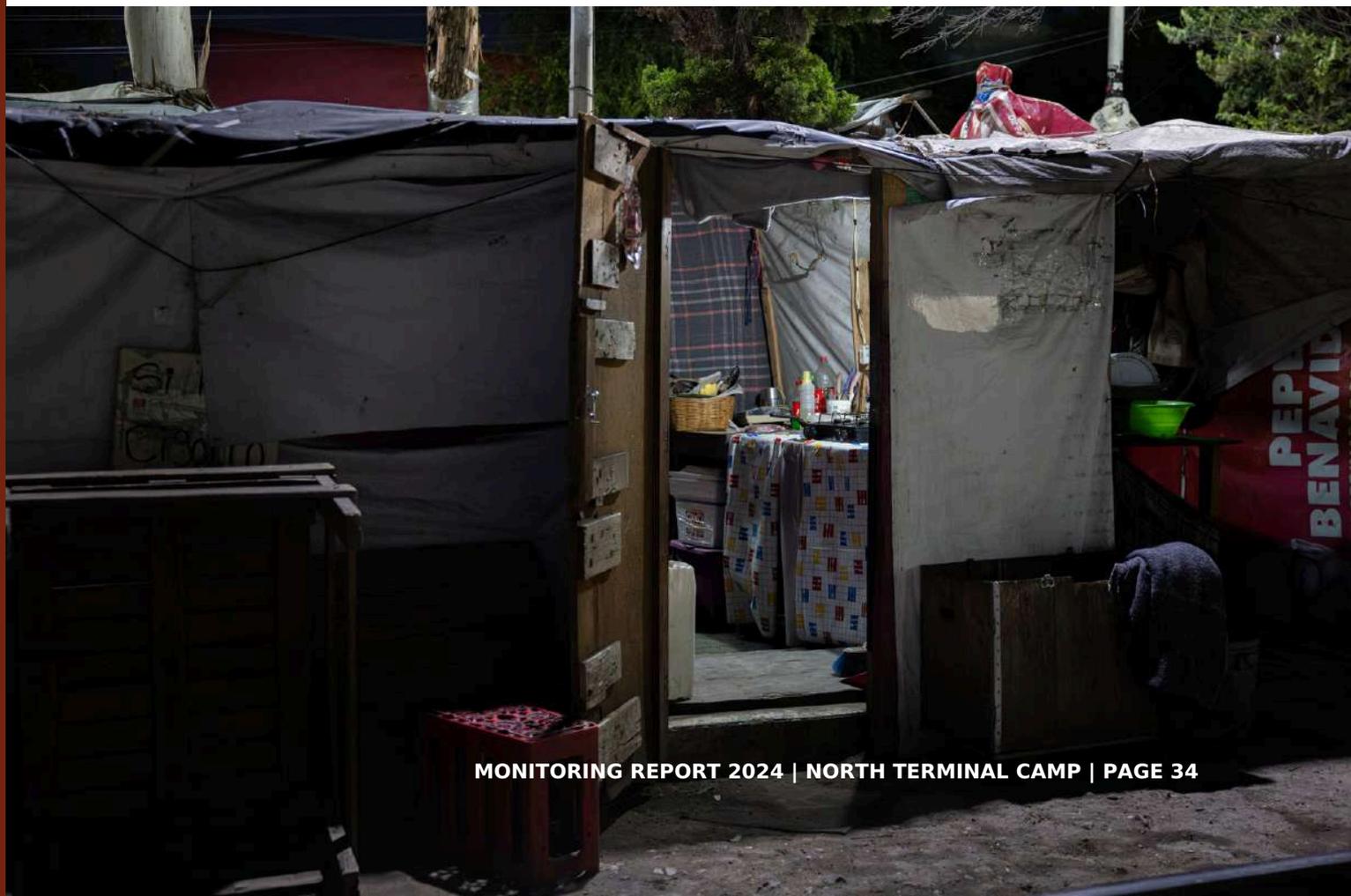


Relation with the authorities

The authorities of the federal government and Mexico City were present at the terminal in mid-October 2022. The CDH-CDMX documented the transfer, on October 15 by the INM, of migrant people by bus to the Comar offices in the Juárez neighborhood, which occurred forcibly, as there was no prior notice and happened despite the fact that the people initially stated they would not seek asylum in Mexico (CDH-CDMX 2022, p. 24).

In this same context Sibiso attended, which conducted channels from the terminal toward the civil society shelters of Mexico City, which were already overwhelmed. Hence, an emergency meeting was requested with the local and federal government authorities, in which the shelters explicitly requested Sibiso to open a space of special attention for migrants to address the increasing migrations that could not be attended by the civil society shelters; a request that was not granted (CDH-CDMX, 2022, p. 24).

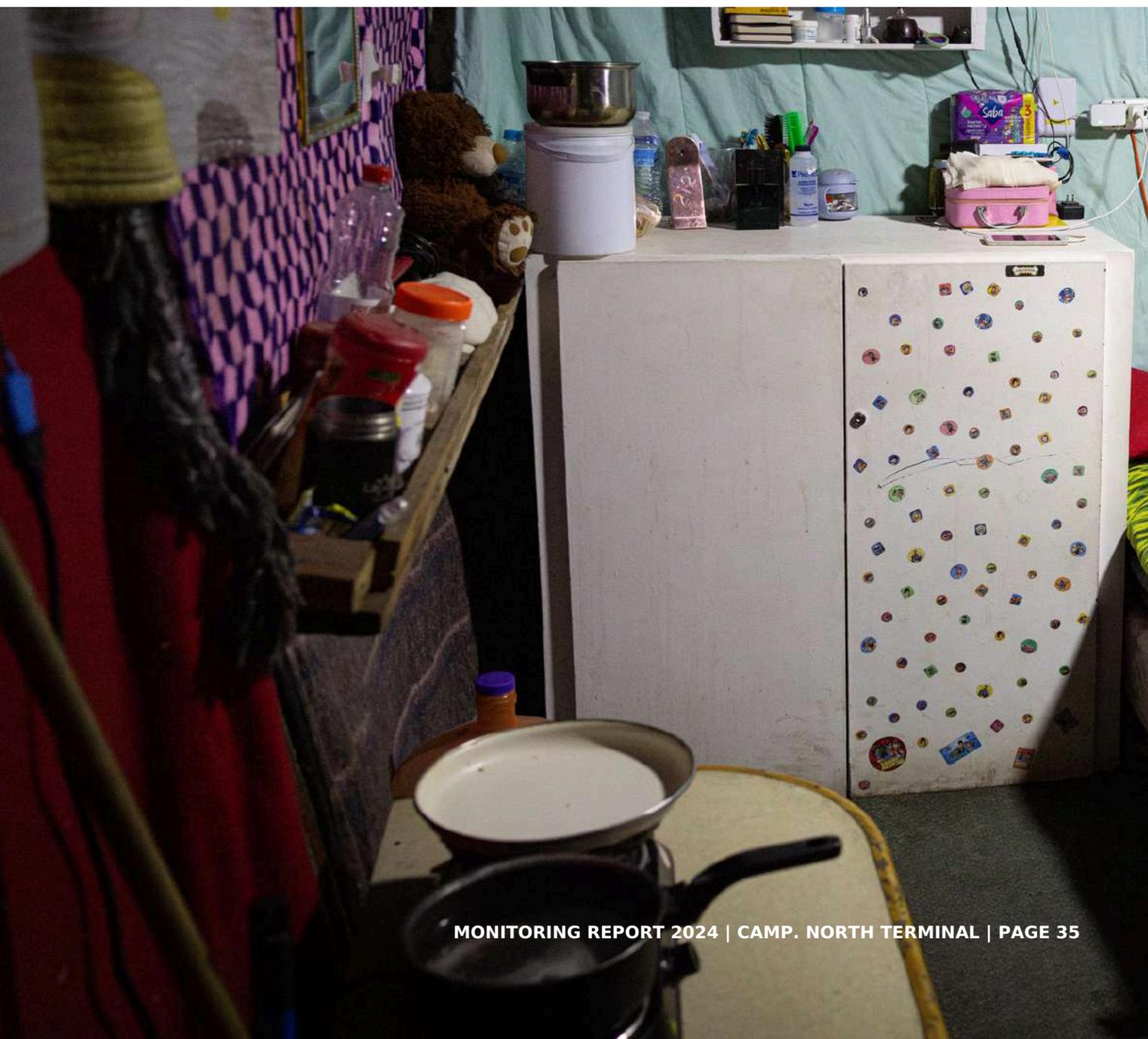
The Sibiso staff continued to be present at the camp, once outside from the terminal facilities, however, it generally generated chaos and confusion among people, telling them that they would be provided shelter, but never carrying through on such promise, or providing incorrect information about the asylum application and migratory regularization processes.



Relation with neighbors

The neighbors of the neighborhoods around the terminal have played a positive role with the people in the camp, as acts of solidarity have been carried out, such as opening their homes to shelter during the eviction, allowing access to drinking water and electricity, among others. Likewise, many people living in the camp area have benefited from the increased consumption driven by migrants in grocery stores, internet cafés and other local businesses.

On the other hand, when the camp was inside the terminal, various civil society and international organizations began to come to provide humanitarian aid, medical care, as well as free legal advice. However, once they moved to the streets, the support from these organizations diminished. Some religious and volunteer groups continued to assist by bringing humanitarian aid and carrying out some recreational and playful activities.



Eviction of the terminal

The private authorities of the terminal and contracted security, as noted, were forcing people to vacate the terminal facilities, the parking lot, and even the sidewalks and surrounding streets. All of this occurred between October and December 2022. Moreover, when the parking lot was evacuated, the GN assisted the private security personnel in forcing people to withdraw; and when the adjacent median next to the terminal was evacuated on November 11, 2023, agents from the INM, the GN, the SSC, and the Gustavo A. Madero borough participated.

In the eviction on November 11, GMFC was able to document the threatening treatment and violent conduct by the authorities, especially the INM and the SSC, insulting, threatening, destroying people's belongings, including documents, and separating families, with the detention of girls and boys to force their parents to surrender to the authorities and board the buses arranged to transport them. Based on testimonies from people with whom contact was maintained, it was confirmed that they were taken to Villahermosa, Tabasco, and they were not given any migratory regularization document, as had been promised to them at the time of this action.

Despite the serious insecurity situation in the camps, the presence of the SSC has been hostile and has contributed to creating an atmosphere of intimidation in the face of a potential eviction. Thanks to the documentation work conducted by GMFC at the camp, during October 2023 there was intermittent presence of SSC police on Cien Metros Avenue, that is, a few weeks before the eviction carried out in November of that year.



CAMP OF THE EASTERN BUS TERMINAL FOR PASSENGERS

The City of Mexico has been transforming in recent years, from being a transit place for migrant people to a waiting space without the capacities or conditions adequate for people to stay for several months; therefore, migrant people have no option but to live day by day and set up improvised rooms on the street. This is the case of the camp raised a few meters from the Eastern Passenger Bus Terminal (TAPO), a place where during 2021, particularly at the end of 2022, migrant people mainly from the southern border of Mexico began arriving, in buses that left the INM camp in San Pedro Tapanatepec, Oaxaca, where the authorities granted them an FMM.

Just like at the Northern Bus Terminal (CAN), many people who arrived at TAPO sought to continue their journey toward the northern border of Mexico. Nevertheless, they did not have resources to pay for their tickets, and they faced high prices due to the illicit restriction by private bus companies not to sell tickets without proving their regular stay in the country. Therefore, people began to congregate on the outskirts of TAPO and inhabit the adjacent streets for several months, while they worked and obtained sufficient resources to continue their journey.



Conditions of the camp

The TAPO camp had various locations along the streets around the bus terminal, but it was eventually located in a park in the Colonia 10 de Mayo, in the Venustiano Carranza borough, beneath the Heberto Castillo road interchange. It was an improvised space raised by the migrants themselves, with the support of some neighbors in the area. There, a helping community was formed where migrants organized for several months, with the support of some locals, while awaiting their CBP One appointments.

As reported in the press of November 21, 2021, initially some women, after spending a couple of nights at the same terminal, decided to go out to look for a space to sleep nearby. Noticing there were two tents under the road interchange, they asked the migrants occupying them—who had already left the place and moved north to surrender to the United States Border Patrol—if they could stay. They were told yes. Then they obtained a tent and settled in (Vega, 2023).

Soon after, more migrants arrived, initially settled with a lot of disorder and improvisation until, helped by neighbors, they established some rules and norms of coexistence in this small site, which before had a small playground and a street gym enclosed by a metal fence.

Until their eviction, they expanded to about 200 tents where they spent their days and nights, about 400 people, mostly Venezuelans, followed by Haitians and Central American populations.

Unlike other camps in Mexico City where this was more relative, the TAPO camp demonstrated the enormous capacity for organization and self-help among migrants and the community of neighbors, who, despite a few rejections, managed to build a safe space for them and their families.

As reported by the press at the time, warned and advised by some neighbors and some empathetic locals with their situation, the camp migrants decided to take advantage of the place's metal fence, and established rounds of six people for surveillance. They also created a set of norms for good coexistence, such as cleaning and order methods, schedules to avoid disturbing neighbors, and ways of cooperation.

In a news article from November 21, 2023, a Venezuelan migrant named Víctor tells the reporter: “All of us here wear a bracelet (a plastic band), that's how we identify ourselves and only those who have it can enter” (Vega, 2023). In the same article, as an example of how well organized this community is, it is mentioned that “every day one of their fellow migrants goes around to collect contributions to buy bleach, Fabuloso, soap, garbage bags, and they take turns in groups to keep the place clean.”

At the entrance, there could be a sign explaining the shelter's rules. Alejandro, a 31-year-old Venezuelan man living in the camp, stated in an interview:

Among the first rules are not to smoke or drink, not to use drugs inside the “facilities,” and not to bring in any kind of weapon. Everyone must sweep the “plot” where their tent is, take out their own trash, and contribute 5 pesos to buy brooms and jugs of bleach and disinfectant, which are used daily to clean the place. Minors cannot leave the shelter alone, and after midnight everyone must be in their tents (Vega, 2023).



Relationship with authorities

Just as this camp presents with uniqueness the self-managed and organizational strength of migrant people and the supportive community, it also exemplifies the repressive role of the State and its lack of cooperation and humanitarian treatment toward these populations. On January 16, 2024 a massive eviction of these families occurred, generating a climate of terror and turmoil, but we cannot place it only on this day, as it had been brewing for months prior.

As neighbors and migrants noted, during 2023 it was common for INM agents to arrive at the site to request documents and that, in some cases, workers from the Venustiano Carranza municipality presented themselves to warn them that they had to vacate the place as soon as possible (Ureste, 2023).

In a news article it is mentioned that in November 2023 several vans of the so-called INM “perreras” arrived to detain “foreigners who slept on Ignacio Zaragoza Avenue, behind the TAPO bus terminal, in the eastern part of the capital, without informing where they were taken” (Ureste, 2023). Many people from the camp dispersed then because, as a migrant person stated, “Migration does not come asking questions, it does it at night and in a bad manner.”

Miriam González, a member of the Institute for Women in Migration (Imumi), noted that, although different organizations, including the INM Citizen Council, had demanded suspending those containment actions, this type of nighttime operations continued to be seen (La Jornada, 2023).

Thus, in no case can we affirm that these were isolated or spontaneous actions, as on the contrary, it was a coordinated act by federal and local authorities, since on November 10 they had also come to evict them, on the same day they did with migrants from the vicinity of the CAN. However, thanks to the intervention of neighbors of the place who warned the authorities that it was wrong to expel them, because there were children and pregnant women there, they managed to halt these actions until early 2024 (Vega, 2023).

Relation with neighbors

The TAPO camp site case very well represents the paradoxes and contradictions that emerge from the presence of migrant populations in specific localities, because in this fenced space located under a vehicular bridge there were both forms of rejection of people and manifestations of acceptance and solidarity. For example, during the eviction carried out by the police, a neighbor appeared who said he was a representative of the community and listed the complaints they had about the presence of migrant people.

As happened in the other migrant camps in the city, in the face of the scenes where people of diverse nationalities appeared sleeping in public roads, preparing food and using spaces to relieve themselves, there were manifestations of rejection, xenophobia, and racism that were documented by the GMFC team.

A migrant person located at the TAPO camp notes: “At first not there were so many tents and there was no organization of anything. People were urinating everywhere and that caused annoyance. Until a neighbor arrived and told us she wanted to help, but before we helped her with the issue of not urinating here and of taking out the trash they generated every day.” (Ureste, 2023).

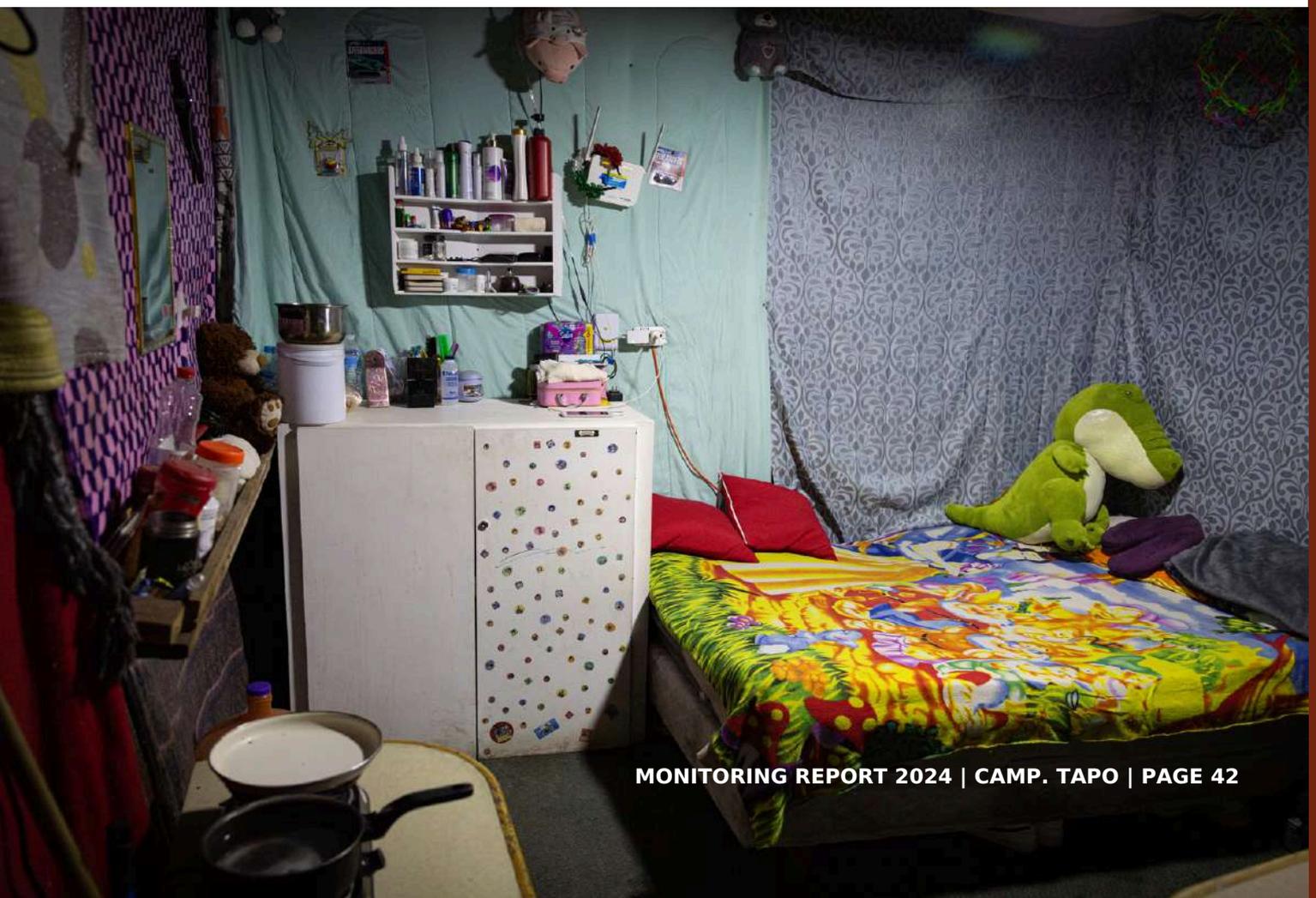
This story is reinforced when it is explained that several neighbors expressed concern about then, in the face of the arrival of migrants, they felt “invaded,” but after starting to listen to their stories, they became solidary, because “we are all human beings” and, moreover, “we all have a relative in the United States who went through the same needs” (Martínez, 2023). This shows that dialogue and listening between the local community and the migrant people was an important factor in changing mutual perception and solving the initial conflicts. The demonstrations of empathy and collaboration that occurred at that time were many. A neighbor from the 7 de Julio neighborhood urged:

Neighbors, people, we must have empathy with migrants, because we do not have the deficiencies they have right now. We at least have a roof, they are under a bridge, and many do not have food, water, or health either. There are 6-year-old children with cancer and girls with heart problems here. There are people with crutches, amputees... Let’s have empathy! (Ureste, 2023).

Since then, very clear norms were established jointly between people migrants and neighbors, such as maintaining access control to the site, preventing overcrowding, establishing teams for garbage collection, surveillance, order, and hygiene. “With a sign that reads ‘overcrowded’, a group of Venezuelans, Colombians, Peruvians, Hondurans, and Haitians, among others, keep order at the entrance and exit at the gate of the fence that is now their shelter while they are passing through our country” (Martínez, 2023).

A neighbor mentioned: “We as settlers stand there at the door and no one passes. And they don’t pass because they abuse. These migrants already carry fear in their bodies for everything they have lived through, and even more so that they arrive here and abuse them is not okay, and we will not allow it” (Ureste, 2023).

Before the eviction, the camp projected an image of order and care, where the constant support of two neighbors who helped improvise a bathroom over a manhole and with black plastic bags as walls stood out. Jenny, a Venezuelan migrant, told it like this: “Two neighbors give us water to bathe and cook. We all did that little bath together and there are cleaning and security groups, besides that we try not to make too much noise, especially at night, because the neighbors have to rest” (Vega, 2023). However, despite these manifestations of empathy and solidarity, shortly after the eviction was carried out, bringing the aforementioned consequences.”



Eviction of the TAPO camp

As happened in other evictions, on the night of January 16, 2024, authorities arrived with threats and aggression, causing panic and terror among families, women, girls and boys.

At 11:00 p.m., SSC officers with riot gear arrived at the site to carry out the eviction of the camp. CHIRLA Mexico interviewed affected people and witnesses, and documented that there were about 180 tents with around 400 people.

During the operation, police carried out arbitrary detentions, intimidation and threats, harassment, arbitrary eviction, loss of identity documents and other belongings. The public force arrived with a person who identified himself as a 'local representative' and 'human rights worker.' They came in a large bus and a garbage truck, while the man identified as 'local representative' stated, paper in hand, that he had a complaint from neighbors about noise, as well as drinking and using the street as a bathroom. The police informed the migrants that they had called the INM to take them away, and that they were already on their way to the site.

At that tense moment, the police began to grab some tents and detained about twelve people, which caused terror among the 400 people in the camp, who began to escape from the fenced area, jumping over it and fleeing in panic. Meanwhile, the police blocked the entrance to prevent

them from escaping.

Some women managed to escape when someone lifted the gate so they could get out underneath. Once the eviction was completed, a van appeared to offer to take people to some shelters. Some women and men got into the vehicle, but others got out when they noticed these men were armed, so they assumed they were part of a criminal group.

Some migrants informed CHIRLA Mexico that a pregnant woman with four children and some migrant men got into the van, but no one heard from them afterwards.

CAMPAMENTO DE LA PLAZA DE LA SOLEDAD

Campamento de la Plaza de la Soledad

In the surroundings and the atrium of the Parish of the Holy Cross and Our Lady of Solitude, one of the oldest in the capital (dating from 1787), in the Venustiano Carranza borough, central area of La Merced in Mexico City, lies the La Soledad camp, one of those that has hosted the most migrant people in recent years.

In the “tent city”, as some migrant people call it, it is estimated that around four thousand migrants have arrived and passed in the last eight months, 2,500 of Venezuelan origin (Guerrero, 2024).

According to interviews with different people who know this space, such as the parish employee Claudia Torres, for many years the area was a place with a strong presence of people experiencing homelessness or without a home, to which a large number of sex workers were added.

Likewise, since the start of his tenure at the parish in 2014, Father Benito Torres Cervantes attended this population in various ways, until 2019, with the arrival of migrant caravans to the capital, migrant people began to settle, causing the social landscape of the place to progressively transform. The parish priest Benito has a clear motto, which he often repeats to volunteers and brigadistas who provide their services to the church: “Until the last migrant” (Díaz, 2023b).

The collaborator Claudia Torres also mentions that her objective is to “give them dignity to the migrants” and “that the time they spend there, they live with a dignified quality. Not to demean them or close one's eyes as if nothing is happening” (García, 2023).

From 2021, with the growing arrival of Haitian people, Sibiso began to channeling to La Soledad those people who had nowhere to stay.

As Father Benito notes, “to the Secretariat of Welfare and Social Equality of the Mexico City came up with the idea that sending them to the surroundings of the parish was a quick and effective way to resolve the tricky matter of what to do with them” (Alemán, 2024). The above reached the point that, on several occasions, Sibiso sent buses of people and left them outside the parish.

Since then, Haitian people, from the north of Central America, Venezuelans, and populations of West Africa began arriving in successive migrations to this central place in Mexico City. They are joined by families of Mexican people displaced from states such as Chiapas and Guerrero, a population that the government of Mexico insists on not recognizing.

Although at first many of these people began their process to obtain the refuge in Mexico, the vast majority had as a migratory plan to reach the United States. Many people who started the refugee process did not show up for their appointments later, and it was heard that they had resumed their journey north. Today, according to GMFC visits, the migrant people there were waiting for their appointment through the CBP One mechanism.



Camp conditions

In the last year, the number of people has decreased compared to the two thousand that existed at some point. Since the end of 2024, the church counted about a thousand people (Alemán, 2024). However, this does not imply that the camp is emptying, because every day as some leave, immediately other migrant people arrive to wait at La Soledad, in a constant dynamic.

Despite these numerical changes, a countless number of people continue to come to the area civil society organizations and international institutions (IOM, MSF, UNICEF and Caritas, among others), which provide legal guidance, medical attention and help with belongings and food. Some migrant people interviewed and activists note that the Government of Mexico City only reaches through Sibiso to conduct surveys, with the message that it will “identify needs” to then address and channel them, which is not carried out.

The perimeter of the entire church is inhabited by small rooms built with makeshift materials, or tents made of plastic, and although in the early years many migrant people stayed inside the parish and the atrium, by order of the Civil Protection Secretariat, this is no longer possible, because the parish suffered damage from the September 2017 earthquake, and there are serious risks that pieces of its structure could come loose. Since this area of the city is near TAPO and CAN, a short distance from Tepito and the Zócalo, there is a constant presence of all kinds of businesses, with many people passing through the area.

The area is categorized as one of the city’s “hot spots,” that is, where all kinds of criminal situations occur, which leads the people who sleep there to seek different strategies to look after themselves and protect themselves, an issue stronger among members of specific national groups. It can be said that it is an area controlled and monitored by criminal groups, in complicity with some authorities that allow their actions, which is why most volunteers wear badges, colored vests and hats to be identified as part of the humanitarian aid deployed there.

Haitian and Angolan women revealed that upon arriving, they were given a tent of campaign, but they later had to pay for it. “There are people who charge us here, they are the bosses,” said one of them (Rocha and Pérez, 2024). Another migrant Colombian woman said: “If we want to build a hut [a little house] we have to pay for the right to use the space to people who are migrants entangled with organized crime here in Mexico”

(Barnuevo, 2024).

This image contrasts with what La Merced was like in the last century, when the arrival of Jewish and Lebanese immigrants gave the area a thriving commercial activity for much of the 20th century, which gradually changed until it became one of the most dangerous parts of the city (Alemán, 2024).

At the same time, the historical presence of people experiencing homelessness and sex workers is a factor that 'normalizes' the presence of migrants in the area, such that residents of the place have not shown explicit forms of rejection toward migrants as clearly as has occurred in other camps in the city, such as Giordano Bruno or Vallejo.

The above, among other things, has allowed many people in the camp to set up small businesses built in improvised structures, with hair salons, kitchens, and sale of products from each of the countries they come from, which has enabled them to generate some income for daily sustenance.

In the La Soledad camp, the layout of the spaces is as follows: in the center is the parish, and on one side is the first and largest of the two divisions of this migrant community. The second, formed mostly by Haitians and people from sub-Saharan Africa, rises on the other side of the esplanade paved, facing the front of the church (Alemán, 2024).

In the La Soledad camp, you can find simple tents, made with rods and synthetic fabric, as well as basic structures of wooden boards lined with old waterproof tarpaulins. One of the most prized items in the camp is wood, which almost everyone obtains by dismantling the boards from the pallets of the neighborhood warehouses.

The migrants position themselves and organize according to their national communities, and there are even spaces where people group by racial criteria, such as Haitians, who share spaces with people from Africa. Venezuelans, for example, express doubts and fears among themselves when accused of belonging to the criminal organization known as the Aragua Train.

The church courtyard is occupied every day by different activities and by various actors. The church opens its doors in the morning and provides a meal and some supplies. Some organizations, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), bring various games and educational materials for the children who stay there, where it is not uncommon for children from diverse backgrounds to quarrel over materials or games, evidencing enormous stress resulting from the situation they are going through. At times, the church courtyard is transformed into a soccer field, and at other times into a playground.

Claudia, a migrant woman from Honduras, expresses her relationship with the space: “We try to keep everything around clean because the Church is giving us permission, the priest is taking us all in. So we cooperate with bleach and water and clean the areas around the church, in order to stay here” (García, 2023).

During the day, many men and some women go out to earn money by doing small jobs in the city center area, employed as assistants, porters, many in the La Merced market. According to journalistic reports, they arrive “boys to look for workers to help them with the sale of clothing and shoes in the center” (Xantomila and Gómez, 2024).

However, the migrants state that in those jobs they do not get paid what corresponds. For example, a Venezuelan woman gets small jobs in the Sonora market, but she says that “they abuse the payment, there are some who don’t even want to pay us, but who are we going to complain to” (Rocha, 2024). Likewise, a Venezuelan man says he works in construction and that “after I do the constructions, it costs to get paid what must be paid” (Rocha, 2024).

The majority of women, however, stay to take care of their children, and cook in very precarious facilities, sometimes preparing food with firewood, in few other cases using small kitchens. To wash clothes and utensils, such as spoons and cups, there are those who collect rainwater.

Thus, despite the hostile context in which the camp is located, its population numerous and changing, and the precarious conditions, people, with the solidarity of support networks, have built strategies to survive and achieve autonomy that allows them to continue with their lives during the wait for the resolution of their migratory plans.



Relationship with the authorities

Despite the laws and regulations that mandate various government institutions to assist migrants and guarantee their rights, they only have themselves and the few organizations that occasionally visit the place. In the La Soledad camp, the presence of the capital authorities has only been to drop people off and collect information, but without taking responsibility for meeting needs, much less providing care or any kind of follow-up. An example of this was the visit of the GMFC to La Soledad on July 2, 2024, at the same time as Sibiso staff. It was observed that they were conducting surveys and claimed they could provide information. Members of CHIRLA MÉXICO asked the officials which shelters they could refer migrants to, to which

they replied that they could not say anything before referring them to their hierarchical superior.

Relations with the authorities have also been characterized by an abuse of power towards migrants. The media has reported that people in the camp have had problems with the authorities themselves. A Venezuelan woman, for example, stated: "Here the police come and rob us, beat us, it is the authorities themselves who do this. They take our cell phones, the few pesos we earn, but I tell them: 'have a heart, we are not going to stay here, we are going to reach our

destination, which is the USA'" (Rocha, 2024).

A worrying aspect is that the INM and the GN have carried out at least four operations in downtown Mexico City to evict migrants, displaced persons, and those in need of international protection. In this context, the militarization of migration control and the lack of clear information and concrete support for this population end up generating a sense of state abandonment, if not outright aggression. Humanitarian aid ultimately falls to civil society organizations, private individuals, and a few

international institutions that provide support in these spaces.

Due to all these situations, thanks to the support of several organizations and the IFDP, in the La Soledad camp, an injunction was obtained to prevent migrants from being evicted, in the Second District Court (Sánchez, 2024).

Relationship with neighbors

The relationships of migrants with neighbors have been ambivalent, sometimes good, but in many other cases quite bad. The newspaper *La Jornada* reported that, in March 2024, due to pressures from neighbors, as well as conflicts between foreign and Mexican individuals, migrants were relocated by the authorities of the city hall to the El Caballito square. The parish priest of the church explained that, during Holy Week celebrations, people were sent to El Caballito to avoid conflicts between shop owners in the area and the migrants, because it is a period of good economic income for them.

The migrant people have experienced all kinds of displays of rejection, xenophobia and racism. For example, a Colombian migrant woman noted that “They look at you as if you had a contagious disease. You don’t answer them out of respect, but you know why they look at you that way. Still, nothing happens to me, because I am proud of my race. I am Black, and I know well where I come from and the person I am” (Medellín, 2024).

Furthermore, the opinion of a migrant woman who recounts the problems she has had with the neighbors:

The lady next to the hardware store the other day threw hot water at me and my daughter and other people who were near her shop, but on other days they have told us “fucking migrant, go back to your country,” or then they call us assholes or lazy just for how we look or how we are dressed or the tone in which we speak (Medellín, 2024).

Temporary eviction of La Soledad, situations of alarm and risk

In the atrium of the Church of La Soledad, every year a palm merchant fair takes place, prior to the Catholic celebration of Palm Sunday. Thus, in February 2024, local merchants and the Government of Mexico City began to pressure migrants, indicating that they must vacate the camp for palm sales, or otherwise they would be evicted by authorities. The rumors and misinformation about the actions authorities planned continued until March of the same year, when in a coordinated operation between the capital government, through Sibiso, and the Gustavo A. Madero municipality, they evicted the square and moved people to the nearby park known as El Caballito, located right in front — separated by a busy avenue — of the rear of the Congreso de la Unión and next to Metro Candelaria (Xantomila and Gómez, 2024).

Although, unlike what happened in other evictions, there was no explicit use of physical or verbal violence, nor an operation with armed security forces, GN or INM, the authorities carried out this eviction at the La Soledad camp without offering the people even minimal alternatives for care or transfer to a shelter. As stated in a GMFC communiqué: “authorities of CDMX and the Gustavo A. Madero borough evicted more than 1,500 people between March 8 and 9, 2024 without offering adequate alternatives.” After a few weeks in El Caballito park, and after the palm sale fair had passed, people gradually returned to the surroundings of the parish.

As documented by the GMFC in its various visits to the camp since November 2023, many alarming situations have been recorded, one of which has to do with the large number of boys and girls who cannot go to school and spend much of the day exposed to risky situations. In addition to fights between people of different nationalities, there are several health problems among the population. “The main problem is sanitation,” a young Venezuelan migrant told us during one of our visits, to which we can add the presence of pregnant women and newborn babies. “At night, rats come to try to eat our things; it's hard to sleep like this,” another young migrant told us.

In a statement issued by the GMFC in March 2024, it is mentioned that due to omission and negligence by the authorities, migrants find themselves in conditions of risk and vulnerability in improvised camps. Since these are family groups and some people traveling without family, there are many problems arising from people who need specific care, have chronic illnesses, or are pregnant women or women with very young children. Added to this is that many people present symptoms of post-traumatic stress, the result of countless acts of violence that affected them in their places of origin and along the route.

In the camp there are also not even the minimum hygiene conditions, since water is difficult to obtain, the bathroom service operates three days a week at the parish, and many people do not have enough food. In addition to the above, threats of eviction and other forms of intimidation against the people and families settled in the camp persist.



CAMP TLÁHUAC

Shelter of the Plaza de la Solitude

The shelter located in the Tláhuac borough, created by the Government of Mexico City in 2023, is a sample of the inadequate, insufficient, and thus counterproductive response by the federal and local governments to the increase of migrants and people in need of international protection. It opened on March 29, 2023, with a capacity to serve 200 people. During the first three days, they had attended to 60 people from countries such as Haiti, Brazil, Angola, Chile, Venezuela, El Salvador, Cuba, and Ecuador, according to Sibiso (Sebien, 2023).

This was not the first time that migrants were assisted in this borough, since in November 2018 the Faro Tláhuac, within the Tláhuac forest, received a little over 400 migrants of various nationalities who were awaiting recognition of refugee status in Mexico, or some other form of migratory regularization, in the context of the arrival in Mexico City of a caravan of more than five thousand migrants that arrived that year.

The Tláhuac forest is part of the 58-hectare community park, consisting of a running track, multiple sports fields, an Olympic pool, an ice rink, play areas for children, a farm and a venadary, an artificial lake, the Centenary of the Revolution arts room, the sustainable agroecological unit Tlalteca Yoliztli, the cultural center, the Faro Tláhuac art school, and Mini-Marquesita: a wide park where you can ride a horse and rent ATVs, in which residents of the area often take their livestock to graze. The shelter installed by the

city government was located inside the forest at Mini-Marquesita.

The creation of this shelter, as already stated, was related to three events: the first was the sustained demand expressed by civil society, particularly shelters, to have attention spaces enabled by the Government of Mexico City to respond to the increase of migrants and the humanitarian emergency this entailed (López Dóriga, 2022).

The eight city shelters that assist migrant people had a joint service capacity of approximately 440 people; however, from 2021 onward, and later in October 2022, the increase in migration caused them to exceed their capacity by as much as 625% (CDH-CDMX, 2022). In monthly meetings between the shelters of Mexico City and public agencies, concern was expressed about this humanitarian crisis caused by the saturation of service spaces and the high vulnerability conditions in which the migrant people were located (CDH-CDMX, 2022).

The second fact related to the opening of the shelter was the dispute between the Cuauhtémoc mayor and the city's head of government clashed over the situation at Plaza Giordano Bruno. In response, the former opened a shelter in the borough—where people were only allowed to sleep and where abuses and mistreatment by those responsible were identified—and denounced the lack of actions by the capital government in the face of the increase of migrant people living on the street. Thus, the opening of the shelter in Tláhuac allowed capital and federal authorities to carry out the first eviction of Plaza Giordano Bruno. From the early days after the shelter opened, the Government of Mexico City moved migrant people from Plaza Giordano Bruno to the Tláhuac forest, on the one hand, to have them sleep there, and on the other, for them to begin their refugee status recognition processes at the extra office of the Comar, installed there a few days after the shelter became operational, so that the concentration of people in the Juárez neighborhood offices would decrease.

Finally, it is important to mention that two days before the shelter opened Two days before the opening in Tláhuac, a series of events occurred that constitute serious human rights violations through the treatment, life, and personal safety (to name a few) by the actions and omissions of INM staff, during the fire that led to the death of 40 people and 27 more with injuries at the Provisional Stay in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, on March 27, 2023 (FJEDD, DHIA, Imumi and Asylum Access Mexico, 2024). The migration issue had a strong presence in federal and local government discourses due to the clear responsibility of the Mexican State in this event, and in the failure to fulfill its obligation to guarantee access to justice and full reparation for the victims and their families. In this context, Claudia Sheinbaum, head of government of Mexico City, announced the construction of three shelters in the boroughs of Tláhuac, Iztapalapa and Xochimilco, as a response to address the conditions of migrants in this city. But it was not until March 29 that the opening of the shelter in Tláhuac was announced, the only one that was realized (Pantoja, 2023a).

A few days after the shelter was made operational, the installed capacity for attention was exceeded, and, to expand, Sibiso set up three tents for dormitories and distributed more than one hundred tents, forming the camp in the Tláhuac forest. In the following weeks, the camp continued growing and reached more than three thousand people (Head of Government, 2023).

Camp conditions

A month after the shelter opened, the context of that space and the camp was saturated. Tents were observed inside the Tláhuac forest throughout the Mini-Marquesita area, and outside, along Heberto Castillo Street and on the outskirts of the General Hospital of the Institute of Security and Social Services for State Workers (ISSSTE) in Tláhuac.

Various civil society organizations, human rights defenders, as well as researchers began to conduct visits to monitor the situation and provide humanitarian support, legal advice, and medical care. Since the space opened, it was reported that capacities were insufficient, minimum standards of care and safety were not met, and the protocol developed by the CDH-CDMX for the operation of these spaces had not been implemented, as authorities noted. The vast majority of those left outside the shelter and camp did not have access to toilets, drinking water, suitable sleeping spaces, or food; therefore people began cooking with stoves in the surroundings and lined up for long times at the forest's public restrooms to bathe (Vargas León, 2023).

Likewise, illegal charging for entry into the forest by police was documented by the municipality, an action that added to the generalized mistreatment by public officials assisting the population, overwhelmed by the number of people, the limited capacity of Comar and INM to attend, and the multiple language barriers, as most people were of Haitian origin and there were no interpreters:

Above all, the shelter workers —employees of Sibiso— are the ones who attend to migrants with impatience, as they shout, grab, make violent bodily gestures, and push papers at them, saying: “Step back! You cannot pass, move aside! There is no space, understand!”, those were the words of a Mexico City worker at the entrance of the shelter (Aguilar and Naranjo, 2023).



Relation with the authorities

Since the first days of operation of the shelter, an extraordinary Comar counter was created, with the aim of transferring the attention provided in the Juárez neighborhood, and thereby lowering political tensions with Cuauhtémoc City Hall, while also addressing the neighbors of Juárez.

In this Comar service window, slips were handed out so that people would pass to start a pre-registration with which they could later submit their application for recognition of refugee status. It should be noted that this pre-registration is a procedure not regulated by Mexican law governing Comar's actions, and it indicates the procedure for people to be recognized as refugees.

Comar had the capacity to receive up to seventy applications per day, with a demand of about two hundred people daily. The above led to the continuous growth of the camp in light of the arrival and waiting of people to begin their procedure:

They only give around 50 slips; I lined up from the previous day, starting at seven at night, and even then the slips run out because those with young children are given higher priority. It was very hard to get here to Tláhuac and it is very unpleasant to be lined up all night, especially because it is dangerous since there is no lighting in the forest, and at five in the morning the line starts moving (55-year-old Honduran woman) (Aguirre and Vera, 2023).

In addition, when starting the process, they had to wait between one week and 15 days to be able to effectively submit the application and thereby obtain the certificate that accredits them as asylum seekers in the country. Afterwards, they had to wait between 15 days and a month to obtain a temporary CURP (Clave Única de Registro de Población), a document that would be issued to them at the Comar offices in the Juárez neighborhood.

All of the above occurred in a context where, as early as January 2023, there were 12,863 applications for recognition of refugee status, of which 3,692 were from Mexico City (Comar, 2023). Some people arriving, whether at the Comar offices in the Juárez neighborhood or in the Tláhuac forest, had refugee status recognition procedures initiated in other southern cities of the country, particularly Tapachula, which implies an additional procedure that in some cases Comar did not accept, requiring them to start a new pre-registration, increasing the wait.

In the shelter, a INM assistance module was also installed, where supposedly people could access an FMM or a TVRH, which is issued to asylum seekers with the Constancia de la Comar. However, as already mentioned, the FMM does not consist of a migratory regularization procedure and, therefore, does not grant any legal security, nor does it enable access to rights or services, and even bus companies and the authorities themselves are unaware of its validity.

For its part, Sibiso, faced with space saturation, began sending people to civil society shelters, which were already saturated themselves. Although there was a strong presence of authorities at the shelter facilities and around the camp, mistreatment was constant. The CDH-CDMX attended on several occasions to provide information about the rights of migrants in the country, as well as to receive complaints about alleged human rights violations; however, this information remained on paper and in the authorities' speeches, and it is unknown whether complaints were filed or proceeded; but if any were, none reached the issuance of recommendations.



Relationship with neighbors

A sector of the female and male neighbors in the area had a significant impact on the eviction of the people and the closure of the shelter, as they issued constant complaints to the media and the authorities of the mayor's office and the city

Following the eviction of the shelter and camp, there have been serious cases of discrimination and xenophobia that prevent the people who stayed in the area from integrating into the local life dynamic. For example, several of them joined the local informal commerce by selling various products at a market. People from Tláhuac arrived at this place to ask them to leave, explaining that they cannot sell there because it is “a space only for Mexicans.” This occurred after some Haitian people had filed formal requests to obtain the permit required to sell at the market, which was denied.



Closure and reopening of the shelter, and evictions from the camp

At the beginning of May 2023, unofficial information began to be received about the possibility of closing the shelter due to the lack of resources of the Government of Mexico City. Then, on May 12, 2023, just over a month after the shelter opened, the forced eviction of the shelter and the camp extended through the forest and the adjacent streets was carried out. The above coincided with the political context in which the public health order Title 42 from the Trump and Biden administrations ended, which had kept the Mexico-United States border closed to the admission of asylum seekers since March 2020; which led to new agreements between the Mexican federal government and the United States government.

On May 12, 2023, authorities of the Government of the City of Mexico guiding, coercively, intimidatory, with deceit and promises of providing them access to regular stay documents, to migrants to board buses provided by the INM. At first, only those with the FM3 (FMM) or who had started a process with Comar were allowed to board, telling them they could not continue the process in Mexico City. However, later it was found that there were people who were moved without any documents.

The eviction occurred in a context of misinformation and lack of clarity about their migration procedures, in addition to inadequate communication, because again, although most of the people were Haitian, interpreters were not available to convey information in their language. People were confused and had no information about the reasons for closing the shelter, what would happen with their immigration procedures, or where they would be taken on the buses. Authorities did not provide information at any time that could resolve these questions, without offering any alternative to people in mobility (Redodem et al., 2023).

Thanks to documentation from civil organizations and human rights defenders human rights in those days, it was possible to identify that the people were moved to the different offices and representations of the Comar in the states of Zacatecas, Michoacán, Aguascalientes, Jalisco, Guanajuato, Guerrero, San Luis Potosí and Morelos (Redodem, 2023). Moreover, the treatment that people received in those states was random: some were granted FMM, others TVRH, and others no document.

From the Colectivo de Monitoreo de la Frontera Sur (COMDHSM) the actions similar to those that occurred in Tláhuac were observed. For example, in the afternoon of May 11 the delivery of FMM was suspended and the camp tents in the Tapachula Ecological Park were dismantled without prior notice, where INM carried out this procedure. The people who were there were transported in INM trucks to Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, under mistreatment conditions, endangering their physical, emotional and mental well-being, as they were left for a long time on parked buses under the sun, with high temperatures and without access to hydration and food, despite the fact that it was a...

of families with children and adolescents (Colectivo de Monitoreo Frontera Sur, 2023).

The above shows that the actions of local and federal authorities were coordinated at various points in the country. It also reinforces the relationship between the changes in US policy and these events.

For their part, for several days, the capital authorities denied the closure and eviction of the shelter, until after being exposed and pressured by various media outlets and civil society organizations, which made public videos and photographs of the events, officially announced the closure of the shelter due to the “overcrowding of space.”

The closure of the shelter and the eviction of the camp caused migrants to return to occupying Giordano Bruno Plaza, from which they had previously been evicted, and to seek attention in civil society shelters in Mexico City, thereby increasing the saturation conditions of those spaces, which began to experience cramped conditions, with an over-saturation of up to 800%, as well as complications in addressing basic needs of

food, hygiene, information and accompaniment (Silva, 2023).

In Giordano Bruno Plaza, in the Juárez neighborhood, tensions resurfaced with the local community and the arrival and establishment of more people in the camp, factors that led to a new eviction on May 19, 2023, accompanied by the reopening of the shelter in Tláhuac, which allowed the authorities to transfer people from there to Tláhuac again (Rodríguez, 2023).

On August 28, 2023, COMAR announced that only refugee recognition applications would be accepted for recognition of refugee status at the Tláhuac shelter, which forced people to move to that borough to begin a process. This again led to shelter saturation and the creation of the camp. By November of that year, there were about 1,500 people in the shelter and 500 more living in tents on the sidewalks on both sides of Herberto Castillo Avenue and surrounding areas.

On November 10, 2023, the Comar permanently closed the temporary module of outside the shelter, right next to the tents where people of Haitian origin slept, more than three blankets with institutional colors (red and gold) were placed, informing of the closure of the Comar offices in the Tláhuac forest as “definitive.” This occurred days after neighborhood groups prevented Comar officials from carrying out their activities. Andrés Ramírez, then general coordinator of Comar, denied that the institution under his charge had posted those notices, however, he confirmed the closure of the office in Tláhuac due to neighborhood demands and to “avoid confrontations” (Hernández, 2023). By that time, a larger number of people living on the sidewalks of Herberto Castillo Avenue could already be perceived, and although there was no official statement, the shelter appeared closed.

The Tláhuac camp was the result of infrastructure and capacity insufficient, in addition to the fact that the care did not respond to the growing arrival of migrants or to the specific needs of the population, and that it was created and operated without adopting the Protocol for humanitarian emergency attention to migrants and/or persons under international protection in Mexico City (which provides guidelines for migrant care). The above reveals that the operation of the shelter and the implementation of migratory policies in Mexico City do not respond to the interest or obligation of the authorities to attend to migrants and those with international protection needs; on the one hand, it has a political use aligned with local and federal government interests; on the other, it depends on the outsourcing strategies of the US government's borders.

In a site visit conducted by the GMFC on December 9, 2023, it was documented the presence of around 325 migrant people in tents around the Tláhuac forest. Their stay, mainly of Haitian origin, has been constant in the Tláhuac borough, even months after the closure of the Comar offices and the shelter.



VALLEJO CAMP

The Vallejo camp is located along the railroad tracks of the Vallejo neighborhood, in the Gustavo A. Madero borough, a couple of blocks from the Cafemin shelter, and it was formed due to the shelter's inability to receive all migrant people who needed a place while awaiting the resolution of their immigration procedures or the appointment in the United States, during periods of city saturation, particularly following the closure of the shelter and the eviction of the Tláhuac camp (Contreras and Pastrana, 2023).

As mentioned, in various saturation circumstances, the Subdirectorate of Care for Migrants of Sibiso directed migrant people to civil society shelters, being fully aware —because periodic meetings were held— that these shelters were oversaturated and did not have capacity to receive them. The above generated a tense situation, as people had expectations that they would be accommodated and, at the same time, civil society shelters made every effort not to leave people on the street, although this was impossible (Cafemin, 2023). This was the case of some referrals that reached Cafemin since the Tláhuac shelter reached its maximum capacity, so on the day of eviction several groups went to the shelter to seek accommodation, creating oversaturation, as it had around 800 guests in its facilities, eight times its capacity. This situation forced the shelter to reconfigure its care model, which was oriented toward medium and long-stay arrangements.

Given the inability to admit all the people who arrived that day, all available spaces were maximized to accommodate those with profiles of special vulnerability, such as pregnant women, mothers with babies, girls, boys and adolescents, as well as older adults. Thus, many families opted for these profiles of their household to be admitted to the shelter, and the men decided to sleep on the streets outside the shelter. Even with this situation, the shelter's management secured a "loan" of a space in the Doctores neighborhood, to which some of the men who ran out of space at Cafemin were directed, which was not enough. Thus, the people sleeping around the shelter's facilities, whether because their family members were inside or because they were waiting to be housed, began moving toward the train tracks, two blocks away, and they set up tents, cardboard, plastic and wood to shelter from the elements.

Camp conditions

During their first months, the camp was mainly composed of tents and flimsy structures, mostly cardboard covered with plastic. However, these structures later became more complex, with materials such as MDF, furniture, kitchen utensils, and even partitions that created organized spaces in the form of “little ranches” (as people call them), installed along the train tracks (Osorno, 2024). In this context, migrant people tried to reclaim some everyday life amid the fragility of being a street resident: “Perhaps many of them think we are used to living like this, when it is simply a struggle [...] Neighbors have to understand that they cannot stop living: celebrate a birthday, have a beer, play music” (Osorno, 2024).

The population in the camp has fluctuated over the last two years, between 400 and up to 1,200 people, according to GMFC calculations. The main nationalities have been people from Venezuela, Haiti, El Salvador, Honduras, Ecuador, Colombia and Peru, but also from Morocco, Nigeria and Afghanistan. The population, generally, are family nuclei, with a significant presence of people with particular vulnerability situations, such as pregnant women, newborn babies, girls and boys with multiple disabilities and people with chronic-degenerative diseases.

Until the time of writing this report, the people who inhabit the camp do not have access to running or potable water, electricity, nor do they have adequate spaces for their hygiene or to perform their physiological needs. Nevertheless, they have carried out various organizational efforts to maintain certain minimums to enable subsistence in dignified spaces, such as keeping the street clean, even though garbage trucks initially refused to collect the waste, either due to prejudice against the population, or due to the cost they require for waste removal, which can reach up to ten pesos per bag.

Similarly, some neighbor supporters have organized themselves with the people of the camp, to support filling containers with water for everyday use, request sewer unclogging, and, in extreme cases, arranging the transfer of people to hospitals.

Even with these obstacles, migrants acknowledge receiving more or less constant support from local churches, civil society organizations, and international organizations, to obtain humanitarian aid supplies such as non-perishable food, hygiene and cleaning items, medical referrals and medicines, school supplies for children, and clothing, among others. However, most of the resources are generated by the camp residents themselves. Most have informal jobs due to their irregular status. Those who do not leave the camp because they are responsible for caring for others, or are afraid due to circumstances they have experienced in Mexico, earn resources by selling food—arepas, empanadas—or by offering beauty services such as haircuts and straightening. Some of those who leave the camp to continue their migration and life project 'sell' their space to newcomers as a way to finance their journey.



Relation with the authorities

This camp is composed mostly of Venezuelan migrant people, who arrived in the Mexican capital to carry out migratory procedures, either to stay in Mexico or to request an appointment through the CBP One app to seek asylum in the United States. The waits to receive a response were variable, since some had the appointment shortly after arriving in the Mexican capital, while others were more than a year waiting. The little information about wait times constituted an obstacle for these people to plan a life in Mexico. This permanent transit kept them suspended in a geographic area they did not choose to settle in, where they also faced discrimination, stigmatization and rejection.

To this uncertainty about their migratory processes and their access to rights is added the action of the authorities in Mexico, in particular the Subdirectorato de Atención to Migrants of Sibiso, which played a harmful role by spreading misleading information about the actions it seemingly would undertake to guarantee minimum conditions. Among them, channeling to housing spaces directed by the Government of Mexico City, the presence of the National System for Integral Development of the Family (DIF) to issue protection measures for girls and boys, police presence, among others. To “carry out these actions,” Sibiso conducted censuses on several occasions, without it being known what the information was used for up to now, and without it leading to concrete actions. Likewise, the presence of authorities from INM, the GN, the Gustavo A. Madero borough, as well as the city government, has been with an attitude of intimidation and threat, carrying long weapons and spreading rumors about possible evictions from the camp.

During the first months of the camp, faced with the growing discontent of the neighboring community—which led to the blockade of Circuito Interior on September 23, 2024—the shelter management and the opposing neighbors held at least two meetings called by the Secretariat of Government of Mexico City, with the participation of INM and Sibiso (Proceso, 2023). These meetings aimed to relieve emerging tensions among the camp inhabitants, reduce those tending to criminalize Cafemin staff for their defense work, and analyze the situation to build joint responses (Trejo, 2023). However, the agreements reached were not complied with by the authorities, which led to an increase in harassment and intimidation toward civil society organizations, the Church, and the migrants who inhabited the camp.

In February 2024, this camp, together with two others—La Soledad and Estación Norte—, secured an injunction in the courts of Mexico City to stop eviction operations. These injunctions were promoted by the Strategic Litigation Unit for Human Rights of the IFDP, due to the need for this population to have an accommodation space and the authorities, such as INM, refraining from carrying out forcible evictions (Vivas and Gallegos, 2024).



Relationship with neighbors

The lack of access to hygiene and sanitation spaces, the crowding of people seeking to shield themselves from the weather with tarps, and the installation of improvised cardboard and mattresses on Constantino street, in front of Cafemin, were some of the main triggers of tensions with the neighbors, who expressed their annoyance at the odors and unsanitary conditions of the area. They also warned of the risk for girls and boys playing in an area with constant vehicle entry and exit.

This situation, as already mentioned, began to generate uncertainty and rejection from a group of neighbors, who at first sought an approach with Cafemin's management to jointly request a dignified shelter space for these people from the Government of Mexico City. However, the lack of agreements and results from the meetings held led to an escalation in tensions between neighbors and migrant persons, resulting not only in situations of xenophobia, racism, and discrimination, and risk situations for Cafemin's volunteer staff and collaborating people, but also in the blocking of some main roads in the area (Circuito Interior Bicentenario) to request authorities the

relocation of these people (Luna, 2023).

Once the blockades and other actions undertaken by the neighbors did not yield results, other forms of xenophobia, discrimination, and racism toward migrant people began to appear. Among them, the spread of biased and false notes in the media, linking them to alleged crimes (El Gráfico, 2023); the constant rumor mill within the neighborhood community—including alerts about supposed INM raids in any conflict situation—and even the installation of signs in the Soriana bathrooms near the area to deny them access.

In May 2024, some neighborhood organizations from the Cuauhtémoc, Iztapalapa and Gustavo A. Madero boroughs held demonstrations and road blocks to demand the authorities relocate this population. The result was the violent eviction of the Giordano Bruno Plaza camp and, in the Vallejo case, an increase in hostility. However, the tension generated in the camp reached its limit when in September 2024 a pyrotechnics incident set a part of the camp on fire. Before that, on some unhappy neighbors' social networks, comments circulated inciting to “burn down the camp.” But this did not end there, as in the early hours of December 12, 2024 the camp suffered a new fire, where fortunately no injuries were reported. Although some people who inhabit the camp and neighbors claim it was a deliberate attack, authorities have not yet confirmed it (González Huerta, 2024). According to testimonies of migrant people, they had been living with threats of burning the camp for a week, so they asked the INM for permission to circulate through the country and leave the camp toward the northern zone of Mexico, but they did not receive a response.

In this last fire, at least seven or eight tents burned down, from which only adults and children were barely able to escape. However, the families lost personal documents and essential items—blankets, mattresses, clothes—and food supplies, making their situation even more precarious. The fire spread quickly due to the type of material used in the shelters, and it was the residents themselves who tried to put it out, while firefighters took more than 20 minutes to arrive. What remained was fear and anxiety among the people living in this camp, in addition to irrecoverable material losses. One of the interviewees mentioned that the only C5 camera

was removed weeks ago (Laureles and Xantomila, 2024).

What happened in this camp is not surprising, as it is nothing more than a chain of negligent decisions. The presence of a population in a precarious situation, without attention to their basic needs, nor information about the waiting time to resolve their legal status, without papers to obtain decent work, in the midst of the daily life of a population that is also tense, is nothing more than a pressure cooker that finally exploded. The government's inaction affects not only migrants, but also the Mexican population, whose habitability and mobility are impacted, and in some cases, even their ability to generate income.



Eviction attempts, alarm situations and risks

In a scenario of increasing hostility from authorities and harassment by neighborhood groups, some civil society and church members who have approached the camp have at times worked to strengthen capacities to document human rights violations and incidents that have occurred in the space. This work has been crucial to make visible certain actions on social networks and to create networks of support and care among the camp inhabitants.

Two relocation attempts of the camp have been recorded by Sibiso, the CNDH and the SSC, in April and May 2024, and a forcible eviction attempt, in September 2024, by INM and GAM city hall staff, always with the same pattern: they occur between 10 and 12 at night, in vehicles without identification logos and with misleading information about the places of transfer and destination of the people. Thanks to documentation and visibility strategies, these attempts have not succeeded. However, this has not been the case in the small gatherings near the camp, such as Vallejo and the Norte Bus Terminal (CAN), which were reported by La Jornada in November 2023 (Xantomila, 2023)

Another alarming situation has been the constant presence of GN and INM personnel, who periodically attend the camp without clear objectives. They have been observed only taking photographs of people, in an intimidating attitude, especially because they carry long weapons. A related incident was also reported involving security personnel from Petróleos Mexicanos (Pemex), as the camp is located in a conflict space near two gas stations.

Some of the alarm situations are related to the precarious health conditions of people in the camp due to infectious or chronic diseases, which led to the death of a person of Haitian origin due to a cardiac arrest. In addition, outbreaks of chickenpox, pneumonia, malaria and bedbugs have been reported. Regarding sexual and reproductive health, at least two births among adolescent women in the camp were documented, and at least one case of sexual violence.

Tensions with the neighborhood community have continued, and rumors and threats about evictions and fires do not cease. At the same time, verbal and physical aggressions have been constant. Moreover, incidents such as shootouts, extortion and other assaults related to criminal groups that keep the camp population in a state of insecurity, uncertainty, fear and distress.

MAIN VIOLATIONS OF IDENTIFIED HUMAN RIGHTS

In April 2017, the Mexican capital proclaimed itself a “sanctuary city” for migrants, initiated by then-head of government Miguel Ángel Mancera. The above stems from the recognition that:

- Mexico City is an intercultural entity, with a multilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural composition grounded in its inhabitants and founded on the diversity of its traditions and social and cultural expressions, as established by the Constitution of Mexico City.
- Mexico City is enriched by the transit, destination, and return of national and international migration, and is recognized as an open space for displaced people, foreign nationals, refugees, and asylees.

All of this, in line with the Constitution of Mexico City, which establishes in Article 11, Section I, the rights of migrants and persons under international protection:

Migrants and persons under international protection and in other contexts of human mobility, as well as their families, regardless of their legal status, shall have the protection of the law and shall not be criminalized for their migrant status. Authorities shall take the necessary measures for the effective protection of their rights, under criteria of hospitality, solidarity, interculturalism, and inclusion.

Likewise, the Law of Interculturality, Attention to Migrants and Human Mobility, promulgated in 2011, it mandates the capital authorities to promote public policies that allow the effective enjoyment of the rights of people in a state of human mobility and contemplates various specific mechanisms for it. These norms mention as rights of migrants at least the following:

• Right to free movement. • To legal security. • To consular protection. • To asylum. • Not to be discriminated. • To the protection of family unity. • To human dignity. • Not to be criminalized. • To education. • To health. • To work. • To access civil registry acts.

Among the main agencies the Government of Mexico City has to safeguard these rights are the former Sibiso, now the Secretariat of Welfare (Sebien), the Council to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination in Mexico City (Copred), the Secretariat of Labor and Employment Promotion (STyFE), and the Comar, an agency that is federal, but has implemented various/actions -insufficient- to address this emergency.

Although Mexico City has a wide range of laws that recognize and protect the migrant population, and despite discourse on respecting human rights and dignified treatment by authorities, in practice, as the present report has shown, the opposite has happened. In August 2024, the international organization MSF declared that Mexico City stopped being a “sanctuary for migrants” due to the scarcity of safe shelters, the complex access to

migration procedures and the increased vulnerability for this population (MSF, 2024).

Since 2021 there has been an increase in migrations in Mexico City, especially people of Haitian and Venezuelan nationality, although traditional Central American migration continues, and populations from Ecuador, Colombia, Cuba and some African countries have joined. Although migrations continue to aim for the United States, the current transit times have lengthened, so people’s stay in the capital has become mid-term—one or two years—sometimes even becoming permanent.

According to the DEPMH Report, in 2023 there was an exponential increase in the arrival of migrants and applicants for refugee status in Mexico City and the metropolitan area, which reached its peak in November 2023, with 1,458 applications. Particularly in the second half of 2023, this same report speaks of a time of migration and refugee emergency. Added to this is the increase in foreigners in irregular migratory situations detained by the INM, as shown in the figures at the beginning of this report. For these reasons, Mexico City became the second federal entity with the most refugee applications in the country, only after Chiapas, the gateway in the south.

for foreign nationals.

Due to this, the few civil society shelters in Mexico City—few compared to those on the southern and northern borders of the country—have been overwhelmed in their capacity to receive migrants. With the maximum expansion of their capacities and the redesign of their care models, these shelters have been demanding greater support and conditions from the government for at least three years so that they can

provide dignified treatment to those who come seeking new horizons in life.

In this context, despite having legal instruments to respond to these circumstances, it seems that the situation has caught the capital authorities by surprise, who have responded with policies and actions of control, surveillance, harassment, repression, and violence, even going so far as to expel migrants from the city; which ultimately worsens the vulnerability of these people, increases tensions with the communities where they have settled and

creates situations of greater insecurity for all people living in the city.

From the federal and local governments, there is no recognition that Mexico is no longer just a country of migratory transit, but has become a destination for these international migrations, which should imply the development and implementation of migration policies that respond to this change in migration patterns, in accordance with the legislation

in force.

Federal authorities have hindered and used as a tool of control migration, the right to legal security through discretionary and random regularization processes that are not even recognized by the authorities themselves. If we look at the figures, while in 2023 almost one hundred thirty thousand TVRH were issued, in 2024 just over three thousand were issued, which means that people do not have legal security in the country, and are also denied effective access to a series of rights such as health, work, and housing. Many people cannot practice their professions, so this population is pushed into precarious jobs, with low pay, and also susceptible to abuse.

According to data from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), in Mexico 50% of the local population works informally, while for migrant people the percentage rises to 60%. Migrant people of Latin American origin have work weeks of up to 50 hours, so it is concluded that this population is more prone to having lower quality jobs (Vivas and Gallegos, 2024).

During the last three years, the offices and procedures for people to exercise their right to apply for asylum in Mexico have been in constant change. First, due to pressure from neighbors in the Juárez neighborhood, as well as political dispute between Cuauhtémoc municipality and the capital government; then due to the opening and closing of the Tláhuac shelter; and finally, due to the relocation of Comar offices, as well as the distribution across different physical office spaces of the different procedures. During 2024, Comar offices in Mexico City were closed for several months, from which people learned via a notice posted on the office doors, and there was never certainty about dates or places where they would resume attention and follow-up to the open procedures.

As of the publication date of this report, Comar has two offices in the Mexico City metropolitan area: one for receiving asylum recognition requests, in the municipality of Naucalpan, State of Mexico; and another in Iztapalapa borough, where open procedures are followed. Additionally, there has been a significant increase in asylum requests to Comar during the first two months of 2025, making headlines for acts of corruption and crimes, such as selling spaces in the queue outside Comar offices in Naucalpan. Meanwhile, INM continues to deny the issuance of TVRH, which generates enormous pressure and distress for migrant people.

The City of Mexico has become a zone of installation or forced waiting of migrant people. If five or so years ago the Mexican capital constituted a migratory sanctuary —tolerant, inclusive, and respectful—, today this has changed. The arrival of a larger number of migrant people to the capital has strained the existing service spaces, forcing the population to settle in informal camps that do not guarantee access to the minimum rights of habitable conditions.

The image left by the lack of attention to these people is six camps set up precariously and irregularly in various areas of the city. These self-managed spaces have been subject to stigmatization, rejection and, in many cases, have been violated by city, security, and migration authorities, as well as by neighbors. The population is largely made up of family units with children and people who require special care: pregnant women, babies and young children, adolescents and youth, people with disabilities (motor and psychosocial), elderly people, and people with congenital or

chronic-degenerative diseases.

One of the most concerning situations identified is a series of health issues related to migratory transit and the stay of people living on the street:

- Post-traumatic stress in people who were victims of various human rights violations or crimes, mainly extortion and kidnapping. Nevertheless, reports of kidnapping have been recurrent in various parts of the country.
- Untreated physical injuries or harm resulting from migratory transit and living on the street. For example, a child fell in the jungle and weeks later still had headaches and bleeding; another person, while escaping migration agents, suffered deep wounds on their legs; another person had immobility in an arm after being hit while escaping an assault; a woman had a miscarriage at five months pregnant after falling from the train tracks.
- Outbreaks of chickenpox, malaria, gastrointestinal and respiratory diseases, conjunctivitis, especially in young children, due to the conditions

of living on the street.

In terms of security, risk situations have been identified, for example, people outside the migrant family groups took children out of the area, and a two-year-old child was run over near one of the camps. In addition, we have recorded the occurrence of various crimes, such as physical assaults by people living around the camps, while migrants have been victims of theft and extortion. In the camps, there is a presence of criminal groups that control the territorial areas where they are located and have

exercised various types of violence against migrants.

In a broader sense, the conditions of hygiene and health in which people find themselves are worrying, since there is no access to potable water for food, personal hygiene, or even for cleaning spaces; there is also no access to toilets, and the garbage collection service is insufficient.

At the same time, because people do not have a document that allows them to work during their stay in the country, many lack sufficient resources for basic sustenance and, therefore, there are people identified, including girls and boys, without enough food, clothing, shoes or belongings such as blankets that allow them to shield themselves from the elements and the changing climate, which affects people's health conditions.

The migrant population does not have adequate spaces to organize their lives, so they are forced to rely on makeshift facilities in public spaces in the capital. Without basic services for dignified living, they are compelled to use whatever materials they have on hand to improvise bathrooms, showers, drainage and cooking areas, washing clothes, as well as places for living together and recreation. All on the street, all under plastic tents, with discarded materials, using drains as a drainage method. In this context, it is almost impossible not to invade public spaces, transform them and sometimes even degrade them, which has generated tension in several of these camps with neighbors. In extreme cases, such as Giordano Bruno Square or Vallejo, neighbors have blocked streets in protest and to demand their clearance, but concrete attacks also occurred in some camps.

Thus, the authorities' action has been completely negligent of their responsibilities to protect and guarantee the rights of the migrant population, not only due to the lack of access to migratory regularization procedures and recognition of refugee status, but also due to the lack of policies that allow for proper temporary or permanent integration of people. Moreover, the capital authorities have been remiss and negligent in guaranteeing fundamental rights, regardless of people's legal situation, as established in local legislation.

The authorities have also carried out violent actions and rights violations, as those that occurred in the camps' evictions. In the best cases, when evictions have occurred, such as at La Soledad in March 2024, no dignified spaces have been offered for people, and they have been left to fend for themselves, which fosters the formation of other camps. But on other occasions, such as Giordano Bruno Square, the shelter and camp in Tláhuac and evictions at Northern and TAPO bus terminals, there have been verbal and physical assaults, destruction of people's belongings, and even separation of families, all with the aim of expelling people from Mexico City.

In the case of the La Soledad camp, parish priest Benito Torres Cervantes stated that the actions of the authorities have been deficient in addressing a crisis that worsens day by day:

When you do a beautiful job, everyone applauds you, but when problems start to arise, you are the guilty one. The Government lets institutions like the Church attend to crises that they can no longer control. For the Government, the easiest thing is to wash their hands and let others do what they cannot. We can see this with the fire that occurred in March at the migrant detention center in Ciudad Juárez. Dozens of people died due to the authorities' inaction (Díaz, 2023b).

Beyond the situation in the camps, since GMFC also monitored the conditions of migrants living in Mexico City, actions of deception, misinformation, and violence were documented. This occurred at the Centro de Asistencia e Integración Social (CAIS) Vasco de Quiroga of the Government of Mexico City, for the homeless population, located in Tepito. During the accompaniment and monitoring conducted by GMFC, more than once Sibiso carried out flooding processes to enable families to enter the shelter; however, when they reached CAIS Vasco de Quiroga, they were told at the entrance that the place was full and they could not be admitted. This happened despite migrants inside the shelter reporting that the space was almost empty. The above caused weariness among families and distrust in the false promises of relocation to safe spaces by the authorities.

Similarly, arbitrary detentions were recorded in the Estrella Sur neighborhood of the Iztapalapa borough, by INM and SSC agents, who violently raided private homes and carried out illegal detentions of migrants. This occurred on the morning of September 24, 2024: doors and windows were broken, and extreme distress was caused among those affected, including several minors. These people were waiting to obtain their appointments through the CBP One asylum application system. In the video shared with GMFC, the voice of an INM agent can be heard explaining that they must wait for the appointment outside the country, which is completely false: the Mexican government allowed wide use of the CBP One app on its territory through an agreement with the U.S. government, and the app even operated only within Mexican territory (GMFC, 2024a).

As already described, transfers carried out under false pretenses or coercively are recurrent. On October 12 and 13, 2024, the forced transfer of migrants from CAIS Vasco de Quiroga to the states of San Luis Potosí and Zacatecas was recorded. Migrants and those in need of international protection who stayed in various civil society shelters and camps became aware of these transfers and boarded the buses, as they were led to believe they would be transferred to Monterrey.

Without embargo, they were abandoned in San Luis Potosí and Zacatecas, without support networks in those places, exposed to being detained or deported, and in cities with high insecurity levels. These actions were carried out by the Government of Mexico City, in collaboration with INM, without providing any official information and under deception (GMFC, 2024b).

On the other hand, we know the strong impact that certain migratory experiences have on individuals when they must face contexts of fear, uncertainty, and violence. We also know the added vulnerability to which women and feminized bodies are exposed in these journeys. Their status as migrants increases the level of exposure, risking kidnapping, sexual violence, or abuse.

Reports and figures about what happens in the camp are incomplete, but the existing ones can indicate a few things. For example, MSF (2024) reported that, between January and March 2024, 83 cases of sexual violence were recorded in the Mexico City camps, a figure much lower than what actually exists because, as the specialized literature has shown (Walsh and Menjívar, 2016), women do not report for multiple reasons. Among others, because justice systems are especially violent with them, and with indigenous people and those with limited resources. Furthermore, they are constantly revictimized in a judicial model that questions the complaints, in which there is a will not to investigate, and where the same people bear the burden of proof (Redodem, 2019).

Due to the multiplicity of violences faced by migrants in Mexico, added to the context of impunity that reigns here, our country is not an option for the majority of them. An example is María's opinion, a 14-year-old adolescent girl at the La Soledad camp: "I don't feel safe here, I just want to reach the United States, that is my goal. I just want to study, feel safe somewhere. Be in a house, bathe well, eat well" (Sánchez, 2024).

Against these extreme circumstances of neglect of the migrant situation in the capital, of violence and human rights violations committed against them, and the prevalence of impunity in these circumstances, we reach 2025, when the presidency of the United States, with Donald Trump, once again transformed the life possibilities of migrants and those in need of international protection. The cancellation of the appointment system through the CBP One app meant that most people in the camps saw their migration and life plans frustrated. Since late January 2025, people face great uncertainty: many would not want to stay in Mexico, but they also cannot return to their countries nor continue toward the United States. Thus, the need for adequate humanitarian response policies, access to rights, and integration of migrants, respectful of their human rights, that allow them to redo their life plans and find the possibility of a dignified life that has been repeatedly denied to them, becomes even more urgent.



FINAL COMMENTS

The monitoring and documentation exercise carried out by the Border Center Monitoring Group (GMFC) in the six migrant camp camps in Mexico City allowed identifying systematic and structural elements that generated the various human rights violations noted, and configured the conditions that pushed people to live on the streets under irregular, unsafe conditions and without access to protection of their basic needs. All of this with serious implications for health protection and life, since, moreover, the majority are people in extreme vulnerability with specific needs.

Through this analytical exercise, we observed in the documented time period a continuum in the actions of the federal government, the Government of Mexico City and, in some cases, of the municipalities, which through coordinated actions established a migratory policy based on the physical and mental wear of migrants through containment, forced transfers, evictions, misinformation, and the omission of implementing a hospitality policy, as indicated by the local legal framework.

Below are the elements that characterize this conduct, and the components of particular concern in protecting the rights of migrants:

the components of special concern regarding the protection of the rights of migrants:

- This documentation exercise showed more clearly that the actions of the Mexican government during the current humanitarian crisis that migrants are experiencing in our country does not respond to the international mandate to offer protection and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, or to the obligation of the Government of Mexico City to protect the human rights of migrants. On the contrary, it is the result of a strategy of coordination, negotiation and generation of agreements with the United States government. This is seen in the relationship between the following facts:

- 1) The creation of the protection program (Parole) for Venezuelan people by the U.S. government in October 2022, and the transfers that INM carried out in those same dates, from the northern border of the country to Mexico City.

- 2) The end of Title 42 policy by the United States government and the abrupt closure of the shelter in Tláhuac, the eviction of people from this municipality, as well as the closure of the camp installed by INM in San Pedro Tapanatepec, Oaxaca. The relationship between these events constitutes evidence of the Mexican government's participation in the outsourcing of the United States borders, with the aim of preventing and hindering people from reaching that country.

- As part of the border outsourcing and containment policy, there is a persistent
- lack of options for migratory regularity in the country by the INM, and a deliberate saturation of the Comar offices, which authorities even contributed to by transfers to the vicinity of the offices of this institution; this results in people staying in the camps, with no access to basic rights such as employment and housing. Thus, although most of the migrant people living in the camps in Mexico City still had the primary interest of continuing their transit to the United States, their prolonged and indefinite stay warrants attention actions and facilitation of migratory regularization processes.

- The actions of the federal government and Mexico City, related to evictions and
- Forced relocations to different cities and states of the republic were coordinated among the various agencies and coincided with the same forced relocation strategies in other states. The above evidence shows that the actions of the Government of Mexico City were not conditioned by compliance with the legal protection framework for migrants, but, on the contrary, were part of a federal containment and wear-down strategy. This is also seen locally, as eviction and forced relocation actions in a camp in a certain borough affected or repeated in another and in other boroughs.

- A political use of actions to assist migrants is observed, based on the interests of the then Government of Mexico City and the federal government. For example, the sudden opening of the shelter in the Tláhuac borough, two days after the fire at the INM Provisional Shelter in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, within the political dispute between the Mexico City Government and Cuauhtémoc municipality in March 2023.

- In light of the current humanitarian crisis context faced by migrants in Mexico City, federal and state authorities undertook a systematic conduct that generated chaos, confusion, disorientation, tension, and weariness among migrants. This is even more serious because one of the main institutions that carried out these actions was responsible for safeguarding the rights of migrants in Mexico City, the Subdirectorato de Atención to Migrants of Sibiso:

1. The execution of eviction operations in camps during the night or early morning, which impacted greater psychological harm to families, especially to girls and boys;
2. The Sibiso conducting random or haphazard registrations or censuses, without explaining to people in the camps what they would do with that information, nor translating said diagnostic information gathering into concrete actions;
3. The false referrals to CAIS Vasco de Quiroga shelter and referrals to saturated civil society shelters;
4. The multiple forced transfers to different states, without providing any official information and under deceit;
5. The transfers by INM of people to the outskirts of the COMAR offices, indicating that their migratory situation would be resolved there;
6. The illegal detentions of migrants in Iztapalapa, the morning of September 24, 2024, for which there has been no official statement about what happened.

Despite these events, and the multiple impacts, humanitarian aid actions persisted in the camps through organization, collaboration, and solidarity among migrants. The very formation of the camps and the way they addressed the various needs and limitations of living on the street demonstrate the broad capacities for organization and agency that migrants have shown in facing adversity, as well as doing so through a sense of mutual support and collective care. This has been accompanied by the presence of neighborhood groups, religious organizations, and other civil society actors who have shown support and empathy. In all camps, humanitarian aid actions were present by these civil society actors, which shows that Mexico City is not an absolutely xenophobic city, and that, on the contrary, a culture of hospitality, welcome, and solidarity underlies it.

However, the description of the multiple forms of violence points out the role that has been played by the federal government and that of Mexico City in generating rejection and discrimination. The continued presence of the head of the INM in the new federal administration, Francisco Garduño, who was identified as responsible for the fire that occurred in a migrant facility under his supervision, demonstrates the continuity of this repressive approach in Mexico's current migration policy.

For its part, the current Government of Mexico City also faces a great challenge to rebuild trust among migrants in institutions and in actions to protect their rights, based on the obligations set out in the local legal framework. On December 18, 2024, International Migrants Day, the current administration announced ten actions in favor of migrants' rights to be undertaken in the capital, one of which referred to ensuring that there would be no more people living on the streets.

The above presents various challenges, due to the persistent pressures from the government of President Donald Trump for Mexico to continue being the wall country that prevents people from reaching that neighboring country, and the policy maintained by the federal government. In addition, more and more people see Mexico as a destination that, although forced, represents a life option that their countries of origin do not offer, and which, given the current situation, they can no longer seek in the United States.

Transforming the conditions of crisis and hardship experienced by migrants in Mexico City requires collaboration from different sectors of the population. It is essential that host communities create conditions of safety and protection for all of us who live in this city, bearing in mind that the presence of migrants will continue.

Hospitality and welcoming are lessons learned from migrants themselves as well as from shelters and civil society migrant houses, groups, and supportive communities. Rejection, xenophobia, and discrimination are expressions that undermine dignity and whose effects reach all of us who live in this city. It is necessary for the local population (neighborhoods, neighbors) to assume shared responsibility as a host community for migrants and refugees, without forgetting that migration in Mexico City has historically been a key part of its identity, greatness, and strength.



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APPENDIX

At the close of this report, in March 2025, actions in the camps have occurred that are important to note and visualize. Amid the demands of the new US government on Mexico to curb migrations, coupled with the closure of the CBP One app, the situation of people in the camps has become even more precarious and highly vulnerable. These people are without legal security, as most do not have a document allowing them to regularize their stay in the country, and this results in them being easy targets of the restrictive policies of local authorities -which, as seen in the report, in previous years have already taken violating rights actions-. On March 11, 2025, GMFC documented the eviction and transfer operation of the CAN camp. There, a series of acts were observed that occurred in an intimidating, coercive and even violent manner. Around 8:00 p.m., the General Coordination for Attention to Human Mobility (Cgamhu) arrived with at least 20 people in burgundy vests, accompanied by plainclothes police. At first, Cgamhu staff explained to the people that they could be transferred to two shelters: one for individuals (CAIS Tepito) and the other for families (CAIS Marina). There were various acts showing violent conduct during the eviction:

- Authorities entered the interiors of the houses without the authorization of the people, pressuring and threatening them using unclear information.
- They were insistent in saying that INM agents would come to conduct migratory verification, and even the Army, so they had to accept the transfer.
- By around 10:30 p.m., authorities from the Secretaría de Gobierno de la Ciudad de México (Secgob) and CDH-CDMX withdrew, indicating that they had completed the day's tasks and would continue the next day. At that moment, staff from the Secretaría de Obras y Servicios de la Ciudad de México (Sobse) entered, starting to dismantle and destroy the camp houses. This led to many tensions, as Sobse personnel dismantled and destroyed whatever they could, even when the houses were occupied or the people present warned that they had inhabitants.
- By midnight, only about 20 houses remained in the camp and it was guarded by SSC personnel with long weapons.

Two days after the eviction (March 13, 2025), a group of people still staying in the camp were forced, by dozens of armored SSC officers and INM agents, to board buses heading to the Estación Migratoria de las Agujas. According to testimonies collected by GMFC, during the operation there were maltreatment, physical assaults and excessive use of force, one case of family separation and some people were stripped of their cell phones.

El IFDP obtained an injunction for illegal deprivation of liberty, risk of expulsion and deportation, and possible forced disappearance, designating as responsible authorities the INM, through the Mexico City Representation Office, the SSC, the Sobse, the Cgamhu, the Mexico City Migratory Station, and the Subdirectorato de Control and Migratory Verification.

Es importante mencionar que, como se desarrolló a lo largo del informe, aunque es cierto que estos campamentos no tienen condiciones dignas de vida, son el resultado de la inacción y negligencia del gobierno local al atender a esta población que espera la resolución de sus procedimientos migratorios, ya que los albergues administrados por el gobierno de la CDMX han sido insuficientes y han tenido graves deficiencias, como el albergue en Tláhuac que se saturó y cerró sus puertas tres semanas después de abrirse.

En este sentido, a pesar de que esta operación se realizó con autoridades diferentes debido al cambio de administración en la Ciudad de México y el nombramiento de nuevas autoridades responsables de cuidar a los migrantes, las acciones de las autoridades locales continúan con una inercia de reactividad y violencia, y no ofrecen alternativas sostenibles a largo plazo que respondan a las necesidades de una población que ya no podemos considerar en tránsito. Estas acciones son violativas e incluso contrarias a la ley - de acuerdo con la injunción contra desahucios -, además de permitir al personal de Sobse confiscar los bienes de una población que tiene acceso a recursos limitados para mantener condiciones mínimas de vida en esta ciudad.

Por lo anterior, la queja expresada en el informe emitido por el GMFC (2025):

1. Falta de preparación y coordinación adecuada para llevar a cabo la operación de manera que respete los derechos humanos de los migrantes, lo que implicó la presencia de autoridades sin la conciencia o herramientas adecuadas para atender a la población. En concreto, la presencia de policías y personal de seguridad, en lugar de organismos de protección como el Secretariado de Mujeres, Salud, Bienestar, entre otros.
2. El relato y la estrategia de comunicación que muestra una versión de los hechos que difiere de lo que realmente ocurrió y lo que vivieron los residentes del campamento.
3. El desalojo de la población mediante prácticas coercitivas y violentas que violan la dignidad y los derechos.
4. El incumplimiento de las obligaciones de las autoridades federales y locales en materia de protección de los derechos de los migrantes y, en particular, la falta de acceso a los procesos de regularización migratoria y a la protección internacional, así como a los derechos fundamentales y servicios como salud, trabajo y vivienda.
5. La falta de atención y de medidas adecuadas ante las situaciones de inseguridad y violencia que enfrentan los migrantes, especialmente aquellos que son sin hogar, a través de acciones dirigidas a investigar y perseguir a los víctimas.



