



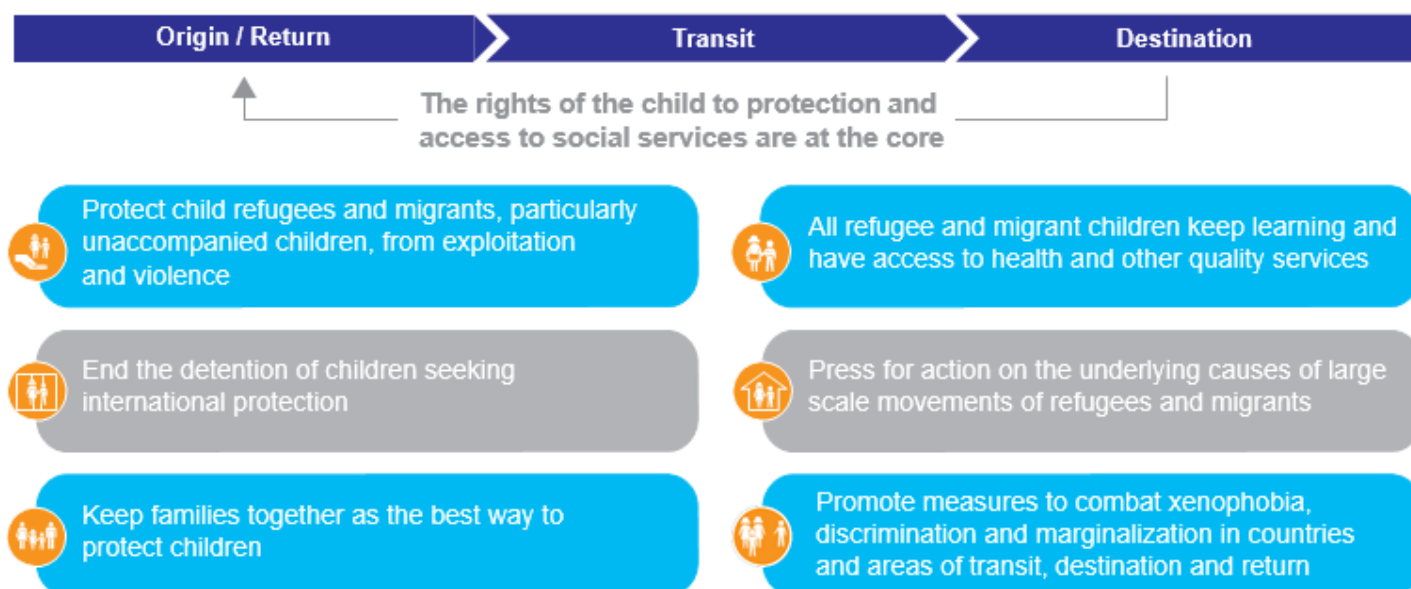
Child Migration – from Central America and in the U.S.

OVERVIEW

Globally, more than 65 million people have been forced to leave their homes. One person is displaced every two seconds. Many are children. While these children may be refugees, internally displaced or migrants, they are, **first and foremost, children.**

Some 6.3 million migrant children from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), mainly from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico, face life-threatening situations and multiple forms of violence. They seek to get away from violent gangs that target them or poverty and exclusion that deprive them of opportunities and hope. Many travel to the U.S. to reunite with their families. Hundreds of thousands of children move on their own or with their families, often using dangerous routes and engaging smugglers to help them cross borders. Deprived, unprotected and often alone, children on the move can become easy prey to traffickers and others who abuse and exploit them. Regardless of their immigration status, all children have the right to be protected from harm, to get essential health care and education, to be with their families and to have their best interests guide decisions affecting them.

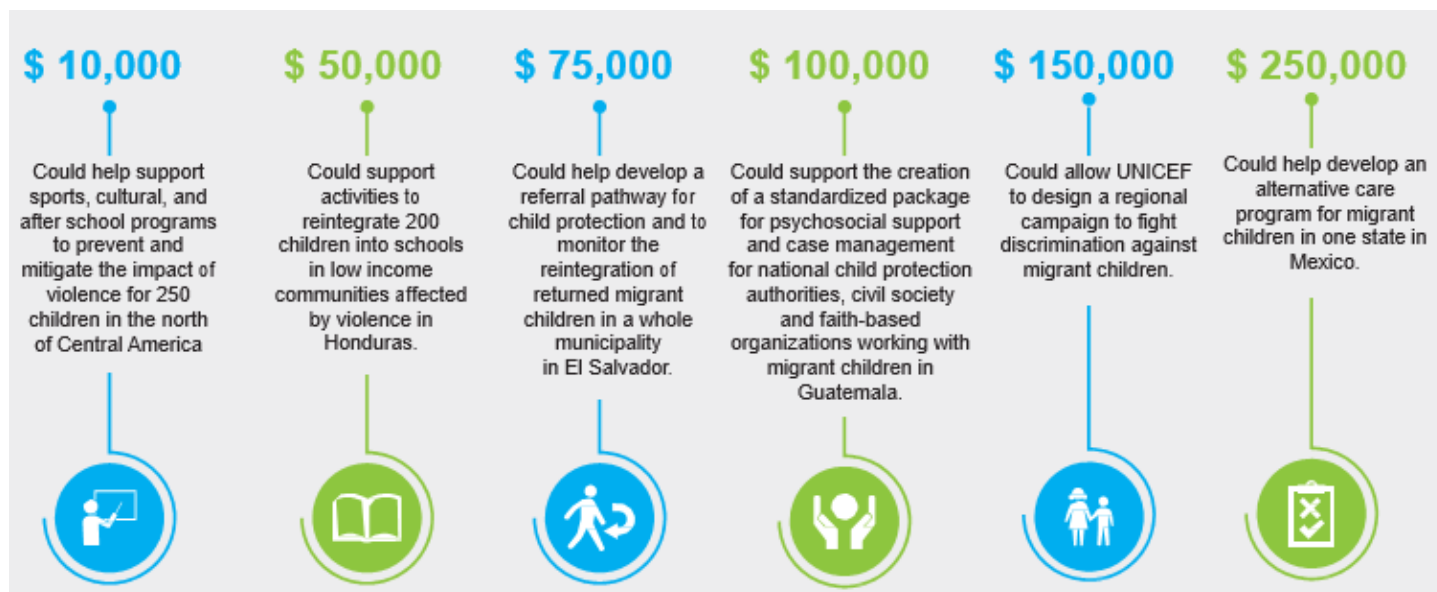
UNICEF focuses on **six strategies** (see below) to keep migrant children safe and provide them with a better future. UNICEF's comprehensive approach addresses the rights of children in countries of **origin** (preventing and responding to violence and improving opportunities), during **transit** (ensuring access to services, case management and appropriate care), during **reintegration** (if they are returned to their home communities) or at their **destination** (in this case, social integration and non-discrimination in the U.S.).



UNICEF IN ACTION – CENTRAL AMERICA

For many years, UNICEF offices in Central America have been working to strengthen national protection systems and address the root causes of migration, such as violence. UNICEF has worked with consular authorities to ensure the protection of children abroad and with migration and child protection bodies to establish and implement standards on treatment of migrant children.

UNICEF is well-positioned and well equipped to design, develop and implement programs in the LAC region. In order to implement the proposed activities, UNICEF requires approximately \$4 million per year. Examples of support:



UNICEF IN ACTION – UNITED STATES

Supporting displaced and migrant children at home and globally is a shared responsibility. Children's voices, their plight and the issues they face concern all of us.

In the U.S., UNICEF, in consultation with partners, has identified support measures to address the needs of migrant and refugee children arriving into the U.S. from Central America. Following a mapping of key actors' programs and their expressed gaps, UNICEF USA will work to support the strengthening and expansion of partners' good work and existing protection measures for migrant children. These activities include:

- **Alternatives to Detention:** pilot alternative care model and train U.S. officials and entities on child-friendly and child rights procedures
- **Strengthening Sponsor System:** develop and pilot a system to screen, assess and support placement of children without sponsors; roll out standardized case management mechanisms on supervision of unaccompanied migrant children; develop a system of screen volunteers to support the reintegration of children with their sponsors
- **Legal Assistance:** support the expansion of legal aid for children in immigration proceedings by growing networks of pro bono lawyers to provide legal support to unaccompanied and separated children and train judges and government authorities in specific courts to consider the best interest of the child
- **Advocacy:** develop advocacy and communication campaign promoting the message that migrant children are children first; advocate for equal treatment of children; brief congressional members on the situation in region

This is the first comprehensive program developed by UNICEF and UNICEF USA to address the needs of migrant children in the U.S., requiring approximately \$2 million a year.