

El Salvador

July 2018

UNHCR has significantly scaled up its operational capacity in El Salvador by working closely with the Salvadorian State and its partners to provide assistance and protection. More than **9,400 persons of concern** were assisted in 2017.

59,400 new asylum applications were submitted in 2017 by Salvadorian citizens around the world. It represents an increase of **38.5%** compared to 2016.

26,463 Salvadorians were returned in 2017, **99%** of them were from Mexico and the United States. **14%** of adults and **27%** of children reported leaving the country due to insecurity.

HIGHLIGHTS

A nationally-representative profiling exercise led by the Government (Ministry of Justice and Public Security) was published in March 2018. The study found that in **1.1%** of all households residing in the country were forced to change their residence due to or in order to avoid the effects of violence between 2006 - 2016. Equates to approximately **71,500 IDPs**.

POPULATION OF CONCERN IN EL SALVADOR (UP TO JUNE 2018)

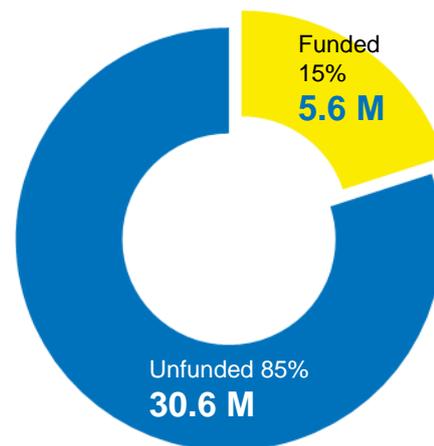
Refugees	48
Asylum Seekers (pending decisions)	2
IDPs	71,500
Others of concern to UNHCR	1,900

Source: Information Provided by Government and partners to UNHCR.

FUNDING (AS OF MAY 2018)

USD 36.2M

Requested for North of Central America Situation



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

10 National Staff

8 International Staff

Offices:

1 National office located in San Salvador

UNHCR El Salvador



Working with Partners

- UNHCR works in close coordination with the Salvadorian State, civil society organizations, UN Agencies, regional bodies, and persons of concern. The agency also works closely with the United Nations Development Group in Latin America and the Caribbean, alongside UN Resident Coordinators, to ensure UN coordination on protection issues in the region.
- UNHCR leads the Protection Working Group at national level in San Salvador with the participation of UN Agencies Funds, Programs and civil society organizations, in order to strengthen technical capacity in protection, joint risk analysis and exchange of information, as well as regional and global visibility to El Salvador's protection needs. UNHCR works closely with the Salvadorian State in the implementation of the National Plan for Citizen's Safety (*Plan El Salvador Seguro*) on the protection of internal displaced persons and victims of violence with special protection needs.
- UNCHR has an active participation in the interagency coordination scenarios (UNCT, Country Humanitarian Team) through which efforts are made to make visible the situation of people with protection needs due to violence. Complementarity actions on the promotion of the 2023 Agenda on the SDG where UNCHR is working for our persons of concern to be appropriately included.
- UNHCR in El Salvador works along with civil society and institutional partners to expand the protection networks that are currently available to people who are at risk or have been victimized. Our partners include: the Human Rights Institute of the Central American University (IDHUCA), CARITAS El Salvador, CRISTOSAL, World Vision, Save the Children, COMCAVIS TRANS, Plan International, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINREX), the Ombudsman's Office (PDDH), the General Attorney's Office (PGR), the National Council for Children and Adolescents (CONNA), the National Institute for Children and Adolescents (ISNA), the Salvadorian Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU), Scalabrinians, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other UN agencies.

Main Activities

Protection,

Internally displaced persons

- UNHCR has provided technical support to the Victim's Assistance Directorate in the establishment of the Local Assistance Offices for Victim's, support the creation and socialization of the Inter-institutional Coordination Roadmap for comprehensive care and protection of victims of internal mobility due to violence and the publishing of a profiling study on internal displacement in El Salvador. The main objective of the profiling study is to provide a reliable source of the internal mobility in the country, offering information about the estimated magnitude, characteristics and impacts of internal displacement in the country. UNHCR is also facilitating trainings on the protection of internal displacement guiding principles, protection needs and responses.
- UNHCR supports the implementation of the *Plan El Salvador Seguro*, specifically related to the Axis 4 regarding prioritized actions for the protection of victims of violence.
- Through sub-agreements with civil society organizations, UNHCR is working in the identification and strengthening of existing protection mechanisms for victims of violence. In addition the Ombudsman's Office & other partners are providing legal assistance, orientation and psycho-social support to cases at heightened and imminent risk. UNHCR and Partners also provide humanitarian assistance (food kits) to families and individuals who have been victims or are at risk.
- Strengthening communities to identify protection risks and prevent forced displacement is a key part of UNHCR strategy in El Salvador. In 2018, community interventions have benefited communities nationwide through an integral assessment ensuring an age, gender and diversity approach, and the establishment of a Community Protection Model. The Community Based Protection and Resilience Strategy has the following objectives:
 - Promote community participation and engagement for enhanced protection and solutions for communities at risk.
 - Strengthen community structures and promote dialogue with State entities.
 - Mitigate risks through community based interventions, targeting PoC with specific protection concerns including children, youth, SGBV survivors and LGBTI, among others)
 - Broaden local protection networks with the participation of community and civil society organizations.
- Since 2016, UNHCR promote the Protection Transfer Arrangement, a regional cooperation mechanism that aims to provide a safe and legal alternative through which a limited number of people with specific profiles can access an international protection system. The PTA is part of the Regional Strategy for Protection and Solutions for the Northern Triangle of Central America, which

includes a work axis for the strengthening of identification and reference mechanisms for people at high risk.

Deportees with protection needs

- UNHCR works on promoting the establishment of an identification mechanism, documentation and reference pathway for deportees with protection needs at the Reception Center for Deportees of the Direction for Migrants Attention (DAMI). During 2017 UNHCR supported the establishment of a Local Victim Assistance Office at DAMI to strengthen the identification of deportees with protection needs.
- Strengthening of the capacity of the Ombudsperson's Office (PDDH) for the identification and attention of deported persons with protection needs by supporting its presence with one person financially and technically at the Reception Center (DAMI).
- Coordination with UNHCR IP Caritas EI Salvador to provide temporary shelter, humanitarian, psychological and legal assistance to identified cases of deportees with protection needs, and search for protection solutions to respond comprehensively to their specific needs.
- UNHCR / IOM have a close coordination and work on a joint initiative in 2018, which includes strengthening the identification of deportees with protection needs at reception centre DAMI and at a local level, through technical trainings and assistance to develop a Road Map for providing attention to cases.
- UNHCR is providing technical assistance to State authorities in the development of protocols for the identification, documentation and referral of deported Salvadorian children and women with protection needs, which include guidelines for BIDs and BIAs.
- Improvement of reception conditions and establishment of identification, referral and protection guidelines in coordination with relevant entities, with particular focus on child protection and women victims of SGBV.
- Strengthening of national protection mechanisms for the assistance of identified cases of children, women victims of SGBV and families returned with protection needs. UNCHR with key partners, World Vision and Save the Children, are strengthening community-based protection mechanisms for returned children with protection needs in the departments of Usulután, San Miguel and Santa Ana.

Asylum seekers, refugees and statelessness

- Strengthen the technical capacity of the National Commission for Refugees (CODER) in the enhancement of the national legal framework through the revision of the Refugee Law reform, the Migration Law and the Ratification of the Convention to reduce cases of statelessness.
- UNCHR is supporting the CODER and the Migration Directorate in the development of standard operating procedures on asylum seeker and refugee children, which include the development of BIDs and BIAs for unaccompanied and separated children.

External / Donors Relations

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2018

United States of America | European Union | United Nations Peacebuilding Fund |

CONTACTS

Elisa Carlaccini, Head of Office in El Salvador,
carlacci@unhcr.org, Tel: +503 2209 3590

Oscar Ramírez, Public Information Assistant in El Salvador,
ramirezo@unhcr.org, Tel: +503 2209 3585

LINKS

[Regional portal](#) – [Help El Salvador](#) - [Twitter](#) - [Facebook](#)