



Operational Context

Honduras is characterized by a situation of protracted internal displacement caused mainly by organized crime. Despite the Government's official recognition of forced displacement in 2013, the persisting protection needs within high-risk communities and the weak governance capacity constitute continuing challenges for an adequate response to human rights violations and widespread violence, mainly in urban settings. Armed structures such as maras (gangs), criminal organized groups and drug trafficking structures operate under the basis of institutional weakness to consolidate their economic interests and exercise social and territorial control over the population.

Wide gaps of inequality and poverty accompanied by institutional fragility have not allowed to address expulsion factors. More than 149,000 Hondurans have been forced to flee and since late 2018 it is estimated that ten caravans have been organized allowing for 17,000 to 25,000 Hondurans to leave.

Honduras has also seen a recent increase in refugees. Since 2018 to 30 June 2021, 299 asylum claims were filed, mainly from Nicaraguan nationals. The legal framework and reception capacities severely limit an adequate response. Since 2014, at least 10 persons of concern to UNHCR have been murdered in south border towns, possibly related to ongoing persecution from their country of origin. Honduras was the fourth source country in the world of new asylum applications from January to June 2021 with 33,900 applications (30,100 in the same period in 2020), according to UNHCR's Mid-Year Trends 2021.

The impact of COVID-19 and hurricanes Eta and Iota further aggravated an already precarious protection environment. Changes in the violence dynamics due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions have shown a reconfiguration of organized criminal groups. The Observatory of Violence of the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) informed that the country reached a homicide rate of 45 per 100,000 inhabitants by the end of 2021, with an average of 10 homicides committed daily (with peaks of over 40 murders in a single day).

As of 16 December, 3,472 homicides were reported (3,496 in 2020). Violence against women and girls has increased in Honduras due to the pandemic, a situation that worsened with the impact of hurricanes Eta and Iota, warned the UN Resident Coordinator. The Human Rights Secretariat (SEDH) informed that 314 women were murdered in Honduras in 2021. In 2022, 34 femicides have been registered as of 21 February.

In 2022, 34 femicides were registered and 17 persons from the transport industry were killed as of 21 February.

10 per cent of funding needs received by 1 March 2022. UNHCR is appealing for **USD 28.6 million** to support vulnerable people in need of protection in Honduras.



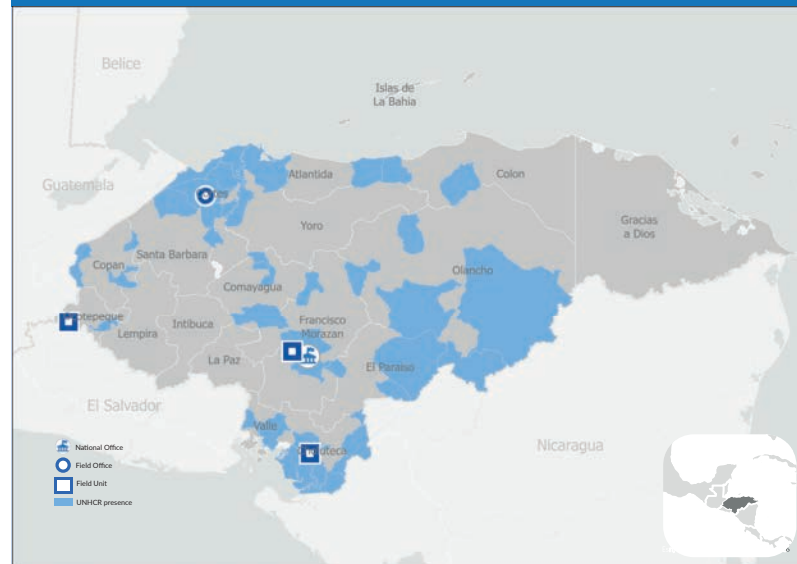
247,090

internally displaced people between 2004 and 2018 according to a profiling exercise led by the Government in 2018, leaving an estimated of **2.7 per cent of the Honduran population displaced**.



An estimated of **5,800 persons** individually assisted and **11,000** benefitted through community-based interventions as of June 2021.

Operational Presence



Staff and affiliate workforce

56 Nationals
33 Internationals



49 Women
40 Men

In line with the country's national policy commitments under the MIRPS, UNHCR Honduras adopted a comprehensive approach to the protection of IDPs, refugees, asylum-seekers, persons at risk of displacement, returnees with protection needs, and other persons of concern with specific needs. Strengthening legal frameworks, State presence and response are all essential prerequisites of an enabling protection environment to ensure access of affected populations to rights, protection mechanisms, livelihoods opportunities, shelter solutions and essential services. From October to December 2021, UNHCR jointly with partner World Vision delivered core relief items (CRIs) and non-food items (NFIs) to 17,000 vulnerable families from San Pedro Sula, Tela, Lima, and Choloma affected by COVID-19 and hurricanes Eta and Iota. In 2020 and 2021, UNHCR also engaged in the improvement of infrastructures such as one temporary isolation centre, five individual shelters, and a refugee housing unit collective shelter for Eta and Iota affected population.



Protection

- UNHCR supports local governments to strengthen institutional capacities in responding to internal displacement. With the municipality of San Pedro Sula, technical assistance for the implementation of the Municipal Mechanism of Humanitarian Assistance (MMAHE) aims to provide emergency humanitarian assistance and protection to internally displaced people and persons at risk of being displaced. At the national level, UNHCR provides support to the design of institutional protection measures and advocacy for the adoption of the IDP draft bill.
- With the support of UNHCR, the National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH) created the Internal Forced Displacement Unit (UDFI) in 2016. The UDFI seeks to guarantee the protection and promotion of the human rights of displaced persons and persons at risk of displacement providing psychosocial care services, legal advice, and protect IDPs through the reference to other UNHCR partners. By 2021 UDFI had nationwide coverage among the 18 departments in the country, installing a national capacity to promote the respect of rights of IDPs through access to individual counselling and continuous analysis on displacement triggers and profiles.
- UNHCR provided technical and financial support to the Human Rights Secretariat (SEDH) for the implementation of the first pilot project on humanitarian assistance and seed-capital for self-reliance and livelihoods development. The project was implemented through the Directorate for the protection of IDPs (DIPPDIV) and targeted IDPs. It was the first to be implemented directly by a public institution at the national level. Some 124 persons (31 families) were assisted by DIPPDIV under the pilot project by implementing a comprehensive strategy that begins with the case identification, interview and analysis, all the way to humanitarian assistance, psychological support, referrals to the other national protection systems, start-up capital and continuous follow-up.
- UNHCR directly supports the Inter Institutional Commission for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons by Violence (CIPPDV), through the SEDH, on its roll of Executive Secretary of the CIPPDV. The Commission has the mandate to promote the design of a national prevention and protection framework and the SEDH oversees providing protections measures to IDPs in coordination with the CIPPDV. UNHCR works with both mechanisms to ensure capacity building in response to the needs of displaced populations.
- In 2021 UNHCR documented 860 cases of people seeking protection due to internal displacement (3,253 persons; 52.8 per cent men and boys, and 47.2 per cent women and girls). Of those, 1,175 persons (307 cases) benefitted from internal relocation protection alternative implemented by partner NRC as of November.
- The Office assists the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs to establish identification, referral, and protection guidelines for returnees with protection needs within protection and assistance protocols implemented in the Centres for Returned Migrants (CAMRs). Since 2018 through the presence in three CAMRs, 9,400 returnees and family members with protection needs have received counselling and access to referral services.
- UNHCR technical and financial support to the National Migration Institute (INM) promotes the decentralization of the asylum system through the development of field registration and interview brigades to reach asylum-seekers in border areas. It also supports the implementation of government identification screening tools, such as vulnerability interviews, to screen people with international protection and specific protection needs within mixed movements. In 2021, 213 people received training on principles on refugee protection and international refugee law. This includes training to implementing partners NRC, PMH, Caritas, World Vision and CDH with actions in border zones; 60 local authorities of border zones; 70 community leaders of border zones, and 20 government authorities of municipal units for returnees.



Promoting friendly spaces in Chamelecón, San Pedro Sula, Cortés Department.

Photo: UNHCR/Juan Camilo Jiménez

Funding UNHCR's Response

UNHCR is appealing for **USD 28.6 million** to provide comprehensive solutions to forcibly displaced persons in Honduras in 2022.

The best way to support UNHCR's appeal is through unearmarked contributions. Such flexible funding at global level will be key in allowing a timely response to the evolving needs wherever required.

Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence

- In 2021, UNHCR contributed to strengthen the Child Protection National System by supporting the establishment of an Internal Displacement Unit within the National Directorate of Children, Adolescent and Family Affairs (DINAF). Additionally, UNHCR fully funded and trained eight Protection Officers to strengthen the DINAF's response to mixed movements and child protection needs and risks for children on the move. The Officers are in border crossing points and operate from prefabricated office units built with UNHCR funds.
- In 2021, 8,324 children received psychosocial support and 29,223 children and youth were provided with individual education learning materials through nationally supported systems in pre-primary, primary and secondary levels through the Blueprint initiative with UNICEF. UNHCR partner Youth Against Violence and Nansen award-winner and Director Santiago Ávila continued to work in 36 communities at risk alongside 400 volunteers promoting protection spaces and community-based strategies to prevent child recruitment and use.
- UNHCR supports specialized programmes to address the needs of children and youth at risk (displaced, returnees, and forcibly recruited). Through partner Casa Alianza, 596 children and adolescents have accessed services since 2017 such as family reintegration (for deportation cases), shelter, psychological care, and GBV assistance. Some 659 children and young people - including family members - received psychosocial assistance in high-risk communities.
- UNHCR supported the development of a case management protocol to document risks, needs, and gaps in State's response to GBV, piloted amongst 150 women in communities of San Pedro Sula, Choloma, Bajo Aguán and Santa Bárbara. The Office also signed a MoU with the National Institution for Women (INAM) and implemented and shared the research on GBV and its relations with forced displacement.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- Since January 2020, UNHCR has conducted 108 community consultations, including 70 virtual and presential focus groups discussions in participatory assessments with children; youth; women; men; elderly and persons with disabilities; LGBTIQ+; and African descent groups at national level (five under the scope of consultations for the High-Level Panel on Internal displacement), and 38 individual key informant interviews with internally displaced persons, asylum-seekers and refugees.
- UNHCR has engaged directly or in joint community-based interventions with partners and grassroots organizations in 24 high-risk urban and rural communities to preserve and increase humanitarian space, monitor, and address protection needs, as well as foster social cohesion. It has also engaged with 41 leadership structures from 45 communities nationwide remote community-based protection monitoring during COVID-19 and Eta hurricane.
- Despite limited access in some communities due to increased violence and COVID-19, 1,399 adolescents participated in risk prevention programmes focused on community-based mechanisms to promote protective environments and safe spaces, which helped in the strengthening and self-empowering of communities.
- UNHCR has updated and/or carried out 11 community-based risks assessments conducted to strengthen the communities' capacity to identify risks and formulate solutions. The Office has also supported local engagement with the implementation of a Community Art Programme, reaching 400 children and youth.

Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion- Durable Solutions

- The pilot project with the SEDH on self-reliance grants for self-employment in 2021 covered 12 cases (53 persons), who received cash assistance to start a productive initiative. Sixty-two per cent (55% women, 45% men) of the beneficiaries achieved an increase in income generation by 35% on average three months after the mentioned interventions.
- UNHCR equipped three training labs in community centres in high-risk areas of La Central and Rivera Hernández (San Pedro Sula), for electricians, refrigerators maintenance and computer skills trainings and secured National Institute for Professional Training (INFOP) certification for these courses.
- UNHCR cooperates with the Honduran Private Enterprise Council (COHEP) and the Honduran Corporate Social Responsibility Foundation (FUNDHARSE) on vocational training and internship for individuals and social enterprise support for communities.
- UNHCR and the Property Institute are jointly advancing in the design of a strategy to identify, register and protect dispossessed and abandoned land, house, and property. To identify affected properties, UNHCR, the civil society and the SEDH have developed mechanisms to identify abandoned property. So far, data collecting tools are being piloted and a virtual module will be installed within the property registry information systems. The Institute and SEDH are also advancing the design of a protection route of abandoned land and property of IDPs connected to SEDH's protection mechanism.
- UNHCR works with partners to identify cases at high risk in Honduras. Within an individual case management strategy, the Office provides humanitarian assistance where needed. The assistance includes transitional shelter at the initial stage and cashed assistance for shelter and basic needs, the internal relocation process and the resettlement of certain profiles at high-risk through the PTA Programme. In 2021, 415 Honduran Nationals were referred to resettlement countries for resettlement consideration.

Working with partners and other institutions



- UNHCR directly supports seven government institutions, including the Human Rights Secretariat, CONADEH (Ombudsperson), DINAf, Property Institute and the INM to ensure capacity building in response to the needs of people of concern to UNHCR.
- UNHCR works with the Inter Institutional Commission for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons by Violence (CIPPDV), the government inter institutional commission in charge of promoting the design of a national prevention and protection framework, to promote advocacy actions for the adoption of the IDP bill and support the design of national response mechanisms in accordance with protection principles.
- UNHCR supports the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, with direct and partner presence in Centres for Returned Migrants, to ensure identification mechanism for returnees with protection needs. UNHCR works with 11 international NGOs and nine civil society organizations to consolidate a protection network and promote a complementary response to assistance and protection needs of people of concern to UNHCR. The Office has also established direct community engagement in 45 communities.

Protection Cluster

UNHCR exercises its leadership and coordination responsibility as co-lead of the Protection Cluster with NRC, which was activated in the framework of the emergency of hurricanes Eta and Iota that hit Honduras in November 2020, and was extended until December 2022.

Comprised of 38 member organizations (24 NGOs, 10 UN Agencies and three Red Cross Organizations), the Cluster includes two UNHCR-led Subclusters in Cortés/ Atlántida and in Choluteca/ Valle/ El Paraiso and the two international areas of responsibility of Child Protection, and Prevention of GBV. The Protection Cluster is key to implementing protection streaming in the humanitarian architecture as well as human and social rights and welfare, while ensuring protection alerts and contingency responses to mixed movements and natural disasters.

MIRPS

Honduras adhered to the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) in 2017. In the IV Annual Meeting of the MIRPS held on 30 November 2021, Honduras assumed the Pro Tempore Presidency for 2022. This state-led regional application of the Global Compact on Refugees has brought bigger visibility to the needs of refugee population. The long-term development of enabling protection systems is a priority to address the needs of displaced people, refugees, and host communities, providing a means to contribute to the SDGs, and notably to the commitment to leave no one behind.

UNHCR is thankful to the donors who provide funds to Honduras.

Belgium | Canada | Denmark | European Union | Germany | Ireland | Netherlands | Norway | Private donors | Republic of Korea | Sweden | Switzerland | United States of America | UN Peacebuilding Fund

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