

El Salvador

July 2018

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

59,400 new asylum applications were submitted worldwide by Salvadoran citizens in 2017. This represents a **38.5%** increase in comparison with 2016.

26,170 Salvadorans were returned from the United States and Mexico during 2017. **14%** of adults and **27%** of children reported leaving the country due to **insecurity**.

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2018, a nationally representative profiling exercise led by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security revealed that in **1.1%** of the families residing in the country by the end of 2016, at least one of its members was forced to change its place of residence within El Salvador between 2006 and 2016, as a result or to avoid the effects of violence. This finding represents the existence of approximately **71,500** internally displaced persons (IDPs).

POPULATION OF CONCERN IN EL SALVADOR

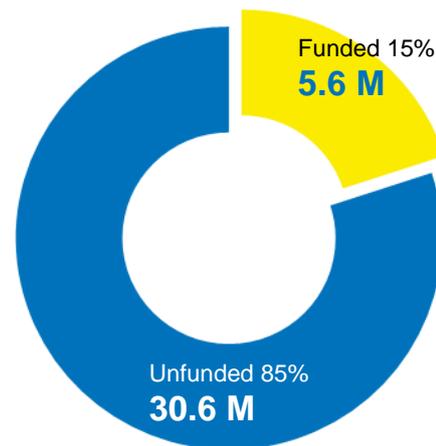
Refugees	48
Asylum Seekers (pending decisions)	2
IDPs	71,500
Others of concern to UNHCR	1,900

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 Salvadoran State, civil society organizations, UN Agencies, Funds and Programs, 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 the 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 Salvadoran State in the implementation of the National Plan for Citizen's Safety (*Plan El Salvador Seguro*) in relation to the protection of internally displaced persons and victims of violence with special protection needs.
- UNHCR has an active participation in interagency coordination scenarios such as the UN Country Team (UNCT) and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) where efforts are made to make visible the situation of victims of violence with protection needs. UNHCR is carrying out complementary actions to promote the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to ensure the protection of its persons of concern is appropriately included.
- UNHCR in El Salvador works along with civil society and institutional partners to expand the protection networks that are currently available to persons who are at risk or have been victims of violence. 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 Salvadoran 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 Victims, at the same time, it has supported 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 information on the estimated magnitude, characteristics and impacts of internal displacement in the country. UNHCR is also facilitating trainings on the protection in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, protection needs and responses.
- UNHCR supports the implementation of the *Plan El Salvador Seguro*, specifically relating to Axis 4 on 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, UNHCR alongside the Ombudsman's Office & other partners are providing legal assistance, orientation and psycho-social support to cases at heightened risk. UNHCR and its partners are also providing humanitarian assistance (food kits) to families and individuals at risk and victims of violence.
- Strengthening communities to identify protection risks and prevent forced displacement is a key part of UNHCR's 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 persons of concern with specific protection needs including children, youth, SGBV survivors and LGBTI persons, among others.
 - Broaden local protection networks with the participation of community and civil society organizations.

- Since 2016, UNHCR has worked in the implementation of the Protection Transfer Arrangement (PTA), a regional cooperation mechanism that aims to provide a safe and legal alternative for a limited number of persons with specific profiles to access the international protection system. The PTA is part of a regional protection strategy for the North of Central America, which includes a work axis for the strengthening of identification and reference mechanisms for people at heightened risk.

Deported persons with protection needs

- UNHCR works on promoting the establishment of an identification mechanism, documentation and reference pathway for deported persons with protection needs at the Reception Center for Deportees of the Directorate for Migrant's Attention (DAMI). During 2017, UNHCR supported the establishment of a Local Assistance Office for Victims at the DAMI to strengthen the identification of deported persons with protection needs.
- UNHCR supports financially and technically the presence of one person representing the Ombudsman's Office (PDDH) at the DAMI to identify and assist deported persons with protection needs.
- CARITAS El Salvador and UNHCR provide temporary shelter, humanitarian, psychological and legal assistance to identified cases of deported persons with protection needs and work to respond comprehensively to their specific protection needs.
- UNHCR and IOM closely collaborate on a joint initiative in 2018 which includes strengthening the identification of deported persons with protection needs at Reception Center for Deportees of the Directorate for Migrant's Attention (DAMI) and at the local level, through technical trainings and assistance to develop a road map to provide attention to cases.
- UNHCR provides technical assistance to State authorities in the development of protocols for the identification, documentation and referral of deported Salvadoran children and women with protection needs, which include guidelines for BIDs and BIAs.
- UNHCR works in the improvement of reception conditions and the establishment of identification, referral and protection guidelines in coordination with relevant entities, with particular focus on child protection and women victims of SGBV.
- The strengthening of national protection mechanisms for the assistance of identified cases of children, women victims of SGBV and families deported with protection needs is important to UNHCR. UNHCR, World Vision and Save the Children, are strengthening community-based protection mechanisms for deported children with protection needs in the departments of Usulután, San Miguel and Santa Ana.

Asylum seekers, refugees and statelessness

- UNHCR works to 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.
- UNHCR supports the CODER and the Migration Directorate in the development of standard operating procedures on asylum seekers and refugee children, which include the development of BIDs and BIAs for unaccompanied and separated children.

External / Donor Relations

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

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

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