

Strategy and response to displacement in and from

El Salvador, Guatemala & Honduras

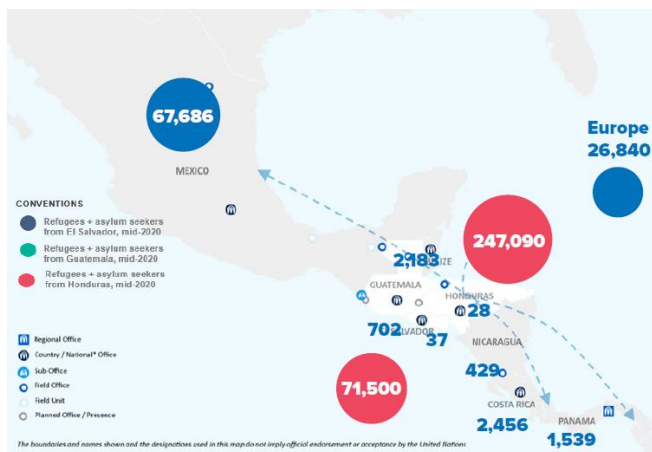
June 2021

Around **515,000** refugees and asylum-seekers from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras and **318,600** internally displaced people in Honduras and El Salvador are considered people of concern to UNHCR.

Violence and crime together with food insecurity and a lack of opportunities are the main drivers of forced displacement in and from these countries. UNHCR works to boost the capacity of **national asylum systems** and to promote **integration of refugees** in host communities, while addressing the **needs of internally displaced persons**.

Climate change is increasing the intensity of rain and droughts, particularly in the “dry corridor”, exacerbating the violence and economic hardship that are spurring **increased displacement**, both in large mixed movements and as a steady flow of individuals, families and unaccompanied children.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF POPULATION OF CONCERN FROM NCA COUNTRIES



Source: Data provided by governments to UNHCR, Data for mid-2020 is preliminary and can be subject to changes.

CONTEXT

A complex inter-relation between gang violence and domestic abuse, food insecurity, increasing poverty, and the effects of climate change, drive forced displacement from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras already visible in the uptick of asylum claims in countries like Mexico, which saw a historically high number of asylum seekers in the first quarter of 2021, a trend that is expected to continue.

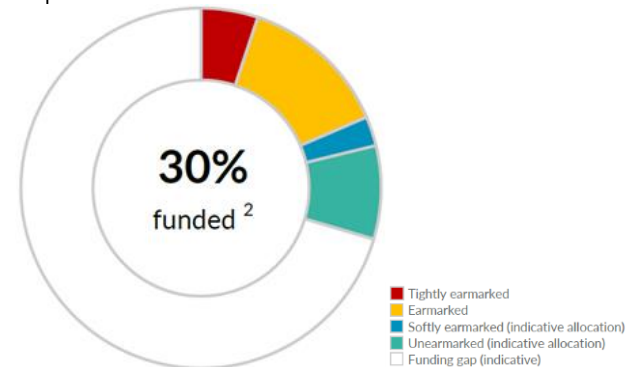
Around 40% of the people who arrived in Mexico from El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala left their homes after suffering violence and persecution, according to research by UNHCR. The report « **Forced displacement to Mexico from Central America, 2014-2019** » (ES), analyzes the multiple causes behind displacement from and within Central America. Also, a joint UNHCR and UNICEF *Families on the Run* documents the interrelated and compelling reasons behind the shift in forced displacement trends in northern Central America, from individuals— notably children—to entire family units fleeing.

The socioeconomic impact of the pandemic led more refugees and asylum seekers to request assistance, mainly to cover basic needs such as rent, food and medicine. In El Salvador, poverty levels rose from 31 to 41% and in Guatemala, labour informality is rising from 70 to 75%.

FUNDING (AS OF 1 JUNE)

USD 173.5 M

requested for North of Central America situation in 2021



1. The financial requirements of the North of Central America Situation include Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico.



Asylum claims in Mexico reached unprecedented numbers in 2021.

Priorities in 2021

UNHCR works with **over 70 partners** in countries responding to displacement in and from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. The Office supports States to implement their national plans under the **Regional Comprehensive Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS)**, the regional framework implementing the Global Compact on Refugees in Central America and Mexico. Guatemala holds the Pro-tempore presidency for 2021 after the third annual MIRPS meeting in December, during which the countries adopted the San Salvador Declaration.

Alongside governments, **partner organizations, civil society, faith-based organizations, development actors and UN Agencies**, UNHCR undertakes protection and solutions activities, including:

Investment in **Governance, Displacement Prevention and Protection**

Strengthen institutional frameworks, legislation and policies for the prevention of forced displacement, and protection and assistance in states hosting IDP populations and other persons at risk

- Strengthen refugee protection frameworks and asylum systems and enhance national protection systems, including response to child protection, SGBV, LGTBI, while strengthening the independent role of the ombudspersons.

Community-based protection in communities affected by violence and at risk of forced displacement

- Expansion of UNHCR and partners field presence.
- Increased use of multi-stakeholder area-based approaches.
- Empowerment of, and support to community prevention and protection initiatives
- Support for the presence of state institutions in targeted communities, related to SGBV and child protection programmes.

Diversify **solutions**

- Expansion of internal relocation programme for refugees, asylum seekers and internally

displaced persons, together with the expansion of legal pathways.

- The expansion of identification and referral mechanisms for deportees and returnees with protection needs, including the use of internal relocation programmes, together with activities that support returnees with protection risks and people on the move.
- Expanded sustainable local integration programmes: including livelihood opportunities and involvement of the private sector.

Alignment and Opportunities with **Regional Processes**

- **UNHCR** seeks to foment long-term cooperation among all partners, including development actors, financial institutions, and the private sector.
- This includes linking the the Comprehensive Regional Protection & Solutions Framework (MIRPS) with the Comprehensive Development Plan for Honduras, El Salvador Guatemala and southern Mexico.
- In addition UNHCR aims to strengthen regional collaboration and joint resource mobilization, use the MIRPS support platform and seek engagement and cooperation with development and financial actors such as the Inter-American Development Bank which joined the MIRPS support platform.

UNHCR's humanitarian response in the Americas is made possible thanks to the **generous support** of major donors who have contributed with unrestricted funding to UNHCR's global operations, and to donors who have generously contributed to operations responding to the situation of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

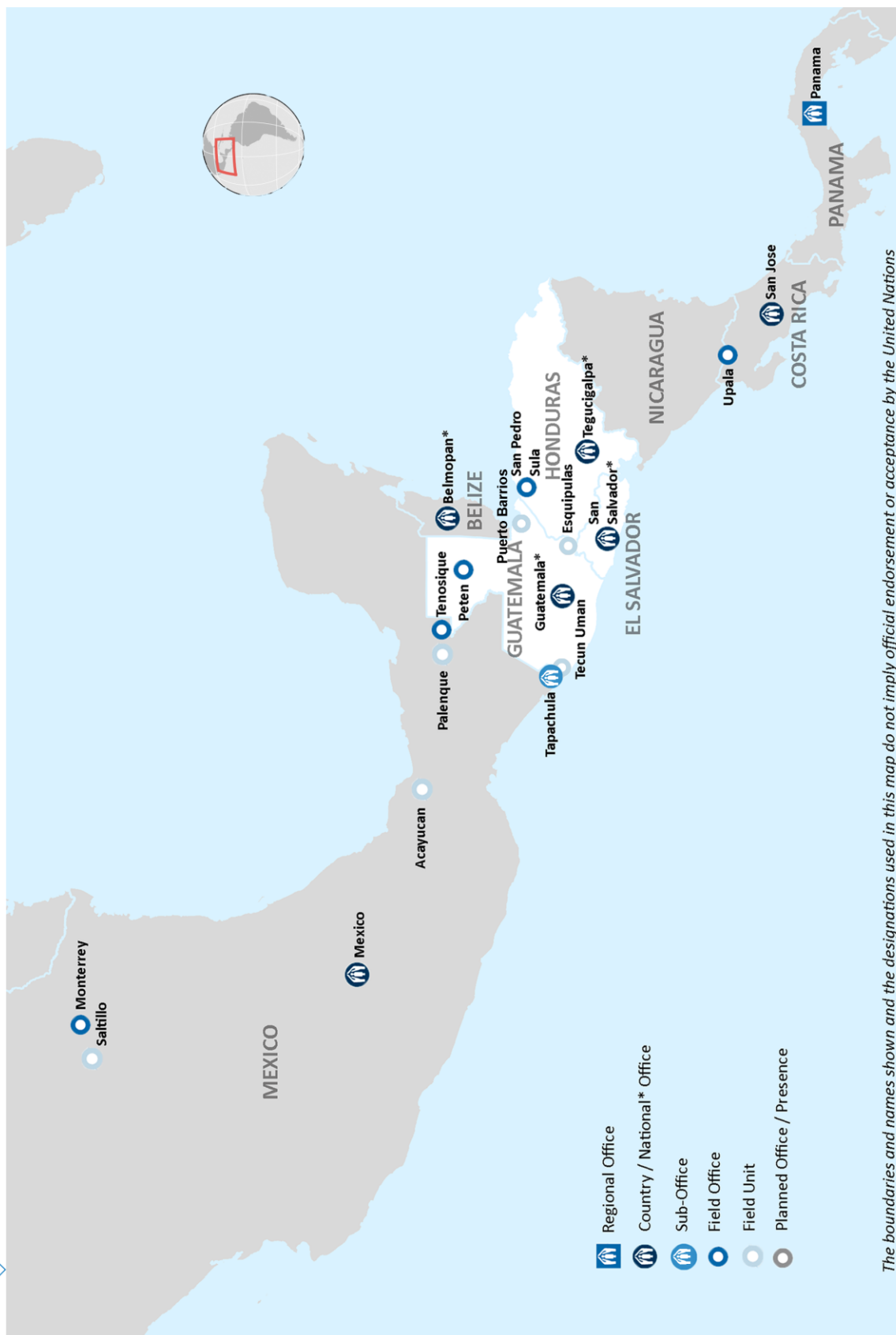
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North of Central America Situation (NCA): UNHCR Presence, 2020



For more information visit: [Central America and Mexico Data Portal](#)