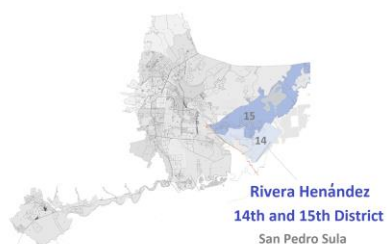


Community-Based Protection initiatives in Cortés Department

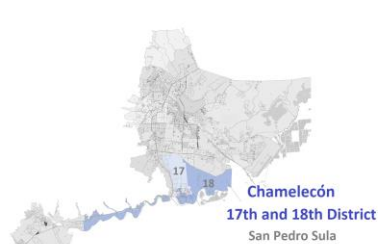
UNHCR implements the “**Community Art**” initiative, a **risk mitigation community-based intervention** led by San Pedro Sula Municipality to mitigate forced recruitment and GBV among youth.

UNHCR funded the construction of the **Integral Care Centre in Chamelecón** to improve community-based protection mechanisms and empowered volunteers’ capacity to identify, attend, and refer IDPs.

74 per cent of funding needs received by 28 September 2021. UNHCR is appealing for **USD 26.7 million** to support vulnerable people in need of protection in Honduras.



Main Risks	Main partners:
Extortion	San Pedro Sula Municipality
Forced recruitment	Médicos del Mundo
Gender-based violence	Catholic Health Pastoral
Gang fights	Children International
Mobility restrictions	Warriors Zulu Nations Honduras Jóvenes Contra la Violencia



Main Risks	Main partners:
Forced recruitment	San Pedro Sula Municipality
Drug sales	Médicos del Mundo
Gender-based violence	Catholic Health Pastoral
Extortion	Children International
Mobility Restrictions	Warriors Zulu Nations Honduras Jóvenes Contra la Violencia



Main Risks	Main partners:
Extortion	Médicos del Mundo
Taxi driver killing	Catholic Health Pastoral
Gender-based violence	MOMUCLAA
Mass murder	Jóvenes Contra la Violencia
Gang fights	

Operational Context

Honduras is characterized by a situation of protracted internal displacement caused 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. Community consultations carried out by UNHCR in Cortés Department in April 2021 revealed a perceived increase of violent incidents and a sense of hopelessness and distrust amongst community members, due to COVID-19 and Eta/Iota hurricanes emergencies. Community leaders reported incidents of housing dispossession and occupation by street gangs, resulting in the forceful displacement of families or, in the case of San Pedro Sula, preventing people affected by Eta and Iota hurricanes to return to their place of origin. In San Pedro Sula, communities stressed major loss of income, assets, community spaces, while elders and community leaders expressed unusual fear over crossing “invisible borders”.

Rivera Hernández sector is located in the eastern sub-urban sector of the San Pedro Sula Metropolitan Area and it is characterized by the presence of low-income marginalized human settlements that make up approximately 72 neighbourhoods. Since 2017, UNHCR has been working through different community-based protection interventions with partners, grassroots organization, community leaders and the Municipality of San Pedro Sula to ensure protection by presence, and fostering protection spaces through art and cultural initiatives, as well as the promotion of livelihoods solutions adapted to the specific needs of persons at-risk.

Chamelecón is one of the largest sectors of San Pedro Sula and is made up of 62 colonies. The sector has historically suffered from the impact of violence and territorial control of gangs, causing many families to abandon their homes in search of safer communities. In 2020, almost the entire sector was affected by the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as Eta and Iota tropical storms, which further increased existing risks. It is also physically the southern-most entry/exit point of San Pedro Sula towards the capital.

Choloma is a municipality in the Department of Cortés, located on the outskirts of San Pedro Sula where most of the national export maquila industry is based. The situation of generalized violence is mainly caused by fragmented street gangs that frequently dispute territories to maintain strategic control over drug trade and the road to the main national port of Omoa. The violence affects disproportionately children, youth, and women, making it one of the municipalities with the highest femicide rate in Honduras. The emergency caused by Eta and Iota has mainly affected the lower sectors of Choloma boarding the Nance River slope and has exacerbated risks of GBV.



Community artistic activity carried out in a school in Choloma, Cortés Department.

UNHCR/Juan Camilo Jiménez

UNHCR Response

The “Community Art” initiative is a risk mitigation community-based intervention led by San Pedro Sula Municipality, implemented by UNHCR and partner Children International, that seeks to mitigate youth-related risks, e.g., forced recruitment and GBV, promoting the use of cultural safe spaces for social inclusion, dialogue and participation of communities affected by generalized violence through artistic workshops in **Rivera Hernández**. In addition, the initiative ensures psychological support to participants. In 2021 the Community Art will also be launched in Chamelecón and Cofradía. The initiative has thus far been aimed at 350 youth and benefitted indirectly their families and other members of their communities.

UNHCR initiated dialogues in 2017 in **Chamelecón** with the Catholic Health Pastoral to strengthen protection environment in high-risk communities through a dispensary strategy. The Office financed the construction of the Integral Care Centre (CAI) in 2018 to improve community-based protection mechanisms and empowered volunteers’ capacity to identify, attend, and refer IDPs.

UNHCR works with the Casa Visitación medical dispensary in **Choloma** to improve community-based protection mechanisms by strengthening basic health services and empowering dispensary volunteers’ teams’ capacity to identify, attend, and refer IDPs. During 2020, Casa Visitación was one of the few local medical centres that maintained its services active, building trust within the community that appreciate its connection with grassroots organizations and local protection and assistance network.

Community-Based Protection

- In **Rivera Hernández**, community-based interventions developed through Children International and Warriors Zulu Nation Honduras target four high-risk areas: Asentamientos Humanos, Llanos de Sula, La Central, and Sinaí. The main objectives are to contribute to San Pedro Sula Municipality comprehensive approach to protect IDPs through different work areas. UNHCR’s support contributed to develop community-based methodologies that allow meaningful participation and inclusion of communities affected by violence and mobilize services to IDPs or persons at-risk of displacement.
- In **Chamelecón**, UNHCR community-based interventions use dispensaries as a platform to secure humanitarian access to most affected communities, provide protection by presence, as well as build youth, women, and men’s leaderships capacities on context/risk analysis to enhance knowledge on protection trends and situational awareness informing communities’ protection and risk mitigation plans. UNHCR works with Chamelecón Positivo Nueva Generación youth group by implementing interventions through arts, culture and sports to mitigate the differentiated impact of violence and stigmatization on children and youth, as well as to promote CAI dispensary health services in the community.
- UNHCR community-based intervention in **Choloma** is based upon alliances with grassroots organizations i.e., MOMUCLAA and Jóvenes Contra la Violencia to enhance capacities on protection and build a local protection mechanism for GBV cases and forced displacement. The inclusion of both community-based organizations in the municipal working group represents a significant dialogue space to advocate and bring forth specific protection issues affecting women and youths in Choloma.

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

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