

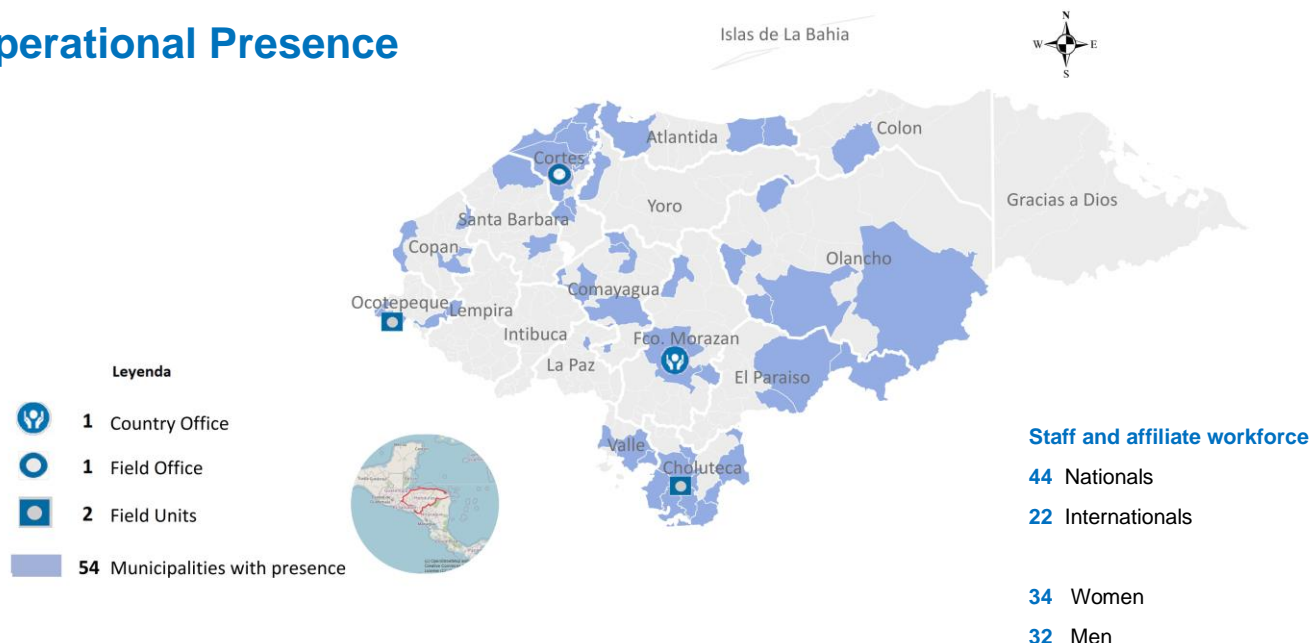
Honduras

247,090 internally displaced people between 2014 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.

67 per cent of funding needs received by 31 August 2021. UNHCR is appealing for **USD 26.7 million** to support vulnerable people in need of protection in Honduras.

Operational Presence



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. 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 nine caravans have been organized allowing for 17,000 to 25,000 Hondurans to leave. The caravans, while highly visible, eclipse continuous outflows, which are better reflected in deportation figures: since 2018 to 19 July 2021, 250,978 Hondurans have been deported.

Honduras has also seen a recent increase in refugees. Since 2018 to 1 January 2021, 278 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.

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. Despite a reported decrease in homicides (3,496 in 2020 compared to 4,082 in 2019), in 2020 more than 300 violent deaths against women were registered, including cases with evidenced torture, and there was an increase of extortion and land conflicts. In 2021, 184 femicides have been registered and 109 persons from the transport industry were killed as of 10 August.



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

Photo: UNHCR/Juan Camilo Jiménez

UNHCR Response

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. In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR assisted 92,119 persons through community interventions: of those, 72,200 in high-risk areas with food assistance, PPE and hygiene kits. UNHCR also supported 7,400 IDP-like displaced persons due to hurricanes Eta and Iota with humanitarian assistance in 2020. From 2020 to 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. From 2020 to first quarter of 2021, the Office assisted 2,260 people of concern with urgent needs with a protection alternative.

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, which by 2020 was able to have national coverage—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.
- 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.
- UNHCR prioritizes the consolidation of the protection and humanitarian assistance network, to respond to protection risks of IDPs and those at risk of displacement, and to assist the basic needs of vulnerable refugees and asylum-

seekers. To this end, UNHCR has implemented a comprehensive case management strategy that enables the activation of assistance or protection alternatives (including internal relocation and humanitarian evacuation) for people at risk. During 2020 and the first quarter of 2021, UNHCR supported 2,260 individuals at risk.

Child Protection and GBV

- UNHCR has technically supported an enhanced presence of the National Directorate for Children, Adolescent and Family Affairs (DINAF) in border areas to enable the identification of children at heightened risks and created a forced displacement unit.
- UNHCR supports specialized programmes to address the needs of children and youth at risk (displaced, returnees, and forcibly recruited). Through partner Casa Alianza, 435 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 presented in March a 2020 research on GBV and its relations with forced displacement, drafted in alliance with a local NGO for women's rights, with recommendations for State Institutions and available services for victims and survivors.

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 -including youth, adult, women, religious, LGBTI, people with disabilities and African descent community leaders- remote community-based protection monitoring during COVID-19 and Eta.



- 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 155 children and youth.

Durable Solutions

- 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 Human Rights Secretariat (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.

*A group of Garifuna women in Tornabé, Atlántida Department, commemorate WRD 2021 with a traditional Mandala. Photo: UNHCR/Johanna Reina

- 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-based interventions (CBI) for shelter and basic needs through the internal relocation process.

Working with partners and other institutions

UNHCR contributes to a whole-of society approach to internal displacement through a wide range of partnerships with national authorities, local organizations, UN agencies and international organizations.

- UNHCR directly supports seven government institutions, including the Human Rights Secretariat, CONADEH, DINAF, 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 directly with eight 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, which was activated in 2021 to ensure adequate protection response to the Eta and Iota emergency and carries over the action plan of the former Protection Group to enhance a coordinated response to the complex protection situation in Honduras.
- Comprised of 19 member organizations (13 NGOs, five UN Agencies and the Red Cross), the Cluster includes three subclusters: Child Protection, Prevention of GBV, and a subnational cluster in San Pedro Sula.
- The protection clusters are key to implement protection streaming in the humanitarian architecture while ensuring the implementation of protection alerts and contingency responses to mixed movements.

MIRPS

Honduras adhered to the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) in 2017. 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.

Funding UNHCR's Response

UNHCR is appealing for USD 26.7 million to support vulnerable people in need of protection in Honduras. 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. By 31 August 2021, **UNHCR Honduras has received 67 per cent of funding needs.**

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

| Belgium | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Netherlands | Norway | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America | UN Peacebuilding Fund | Private donors Italy | Private donors Japan | Private donors Republic of Korea | Private donors Spain | Private donors Sweden