UNHCR ACNUR
La Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados

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Fact Sheet

San Pedro Sula

Internal displacement is predominantly driven by mobility restrictions, extortion, forced recruitment, and gender-based violence. It is **increasingly affecting urban areas,** especially San Pedro Sula. UNHCR provides **protection by presence** in these urban centres, and services for returnees and people in mixed movements through the north.

People forcibly displaced and at risk of displacement within San Pedro Sula and its surroundings face **heightened risk**s of violence and exploitation. UNHCR's interventions aim to **mitigate these risks** by offering protection and support, emphasizing the importance of strong local organizations and humanitarian assistance in high-risk communities.

The situation in San Pedro Sula is **expected to evolve** with continued efforts to strengthen local capacities and enhance protective measures for those at risk. **Future initiatives** will focus on legal assistance, capacity building, and community-based protection.

High-risk communities in the outskirts of San Pedro Sula with the support of UNHCR are working on strengthening safe spaces to prevent forced displacement and provide humanitarian assistance to those forced to leave due to violence and climate change.

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Context

The San Pedro Sula Field Office covers the north part of the country, working in the departments of Atlántida, Colón, Cortes, Santa Bárbara, and Yoro. It operates in **20 high-risk urban and rural communities**, as well as near the Corinto border with Guatemala. UNHCR has an established presence in the **Centres for Attention to Returned Migrants (CAMR)** in the cities of Omoa and La Lima, and the Centre for Attention to Families and Minors (CANFM) in Belén, in San Pedro Sula. UNHCR's primary **focus** is on supporting people who are internally displaced or at risk of displacement, returnees, and individuals in mixed movements who are in need of international protection.

UNHCR Presence:

Staff:
17 National Staff
6 International Staff

Presence:
20 Communities supported
1 Border points monitored

Partner:
11 partners

Restrictions on mobility and freedom due to territorial control by criminal structures are causes of displacement in the country. UNHCR works with grassroots organizations to strengthen their capacities to mitigate risks and provide safe spaces for people.

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Working with Partners

UNHCR works with Business Development Centre (CDE), Children International, Fe y Alegria, Jovenes Contra la Violencia, Médecins du Monde (MDM), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the National Commission for Human Rights (CONADEH), the National Institute for Migration (INM), the Secretariat of Childhood, Adolescence and Family (SENAF), the Secretariat for Human Rights (SEDH), and the Women's and Family Development Unit (UDIMUF).

UNHCR is deeply involved in coordination mechanisms in Honduras, leading the local protection team within the Protection Cluster, alongside other key actors in the northern region, including San Pedro Sula. UNHCR provides support to municipalities to guide them in the design and implementation of public policy related to the Internal Displacement Law's response mechanisms, as well complementarity with the protection and assistance network. UNHCR also plays a role in coordinating responses for returnees in need of international protection, working closely with institutional authorities in various Centres for Returned Migrants.

Main Activities

Protection

UNHCR focuses on strengthening local and national frameworks to better serve displaced persons and those at risk. Through technical support for the development of Local Plans in collaboration with SEDH in four prioritized municipalities with high rates of expulsion and reception of internally displaced persons, legal assistance for the Municipal Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Mechanism for Internally Displaced Persons by Violence, and extensive training programs, UNHCR aims to enhance the capacity of local institutions. These efforts are bolstered by community-based protection activities that build resilient mechanisms through participatory consultations, with an aim to ensure that all community members can mitigate risks, fully enjoy their rights, and effectively identify and refer individuals with protection needs.

By maintaining a permanent presence in the two Centres for Returned Migrants (CAMR) and the Centre for Returned Children and Families (CANFM), UNHCR ensures that Honduran returnees receive personalized attention from the moment of their arrival. This includes identification, registration, and immediate attention to those with specific protection needs, enabling a smoother transition back into the community or restart their life project in relocation zones. Through these efforts, UNHCR aims to enhance the capacity of these centres to provide a safe, dignified, and supportive environment for all returnees.

Health

UNHCR has funded infrastructure improvements for six health clinics in high-risk communities, improving access to medicines and health services. Partnering with Medicos del Mundo, UNHCR offers comprehensive health services and psychological support to displaced individuals and those at risk.

Shelter and NFIs

UNHCR's initiatives to combat gender-based violence include supporting the safe spaces at Casa Refugio and the

Municipal Health Districts to ensure that survivors of gender violence receive necessary care and support. UNHCR funds essential equipment and hygiene kits for the Office of the Municipal Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Mechanism for Internally Displaced Persons by Violence and supports the development of an Integrated Attention Centre in San Pedro Sula, as part of UNHCR's commitment to providing safe environments and essential services to displaced persons and those at risk.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

UNHCR's community-based protection strategies involve promoting dialogue, enhancing participatory capabilities of community leaders, and implementing risk mitigation efforts through art, culture, and tactical urbanism. These efforts aim to strengthen communities, reduce youth forced recruitment and mitigate the impacts of violence and displacement.

Durable Solutions

By offering training and supporting community social entrepreneurship, UNHCR focuses on breaking the cycle of violence and displacement. UNHCR supports government efforts to coordinate with public and private actors to promote the socio-economic inclusion of people who are forcibly displaced. Through capacity-building events and trainings, UNHCR sensitizes national and municipal level authorities, private sector representatives, and civil society members on the impact of forced displacement and the need to create livelihoods and economic inclusion opportunities with a protection lens and market-based approach.

UNHCR partners with private sector actors, such as Graphx Academy and the INTUR Foundation, to provide opportunities to access the formal education system and technical-vocational training for at-risk and forcibly displaced youth and adults, facilitating their labour market inclusion through demand-driven education in fields such as graphic design. Throughout 2024, around 80 persons will benefit from these programmes in San Pedro Sula.

UNHCR, together with the Business Development Centre (CDE), supported the formalization of Proli+cen, a community entrepreneurship that aims to reinvest its income into activities run by La Central Youth Community Centre (CCJ) in the high-risk Rivera Hernandez sector. This Centre is providing technical courses for 50 youth and adults in the areas of Computing, Electricity, and Refrigeration with the collaboration of partner Fe y Alegria and the National Vocational Training Institute (INFOP), facilitating market-relevant skills to access income-generating activities. The Centre aims to reach approximately 100 people in 2024 through these courses, complemented by employability and soft skills trainings.

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