Honduras

Operational Update

N.53 | May 2026

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Population figures

Internal displacement

At least 423,845

people have been internally displaced in Honduras as a result of generalized violence. **Numbers could be higher in 2026**, as triggers of internal displacement persist.

Return

4,493

Hondurans were returned to the country in May 2026, according to the Returned Migrant Attention System of the Secretariat of Social Development. Marking a **10% increase** compared to the previous month (**4,070**) and a **33%** increase compared to the **3,377** people returned in May 2025.

Refuge

298

refugees are currently residing in Honduras. Between 1 and 31 May 2026, the National Migration Institute registered **13 new asylum** applications, marking a **58% decrease** compared to the previous month.

775

people who arrived irregularly registered their entry with the National Migration Institute INM) from 1 to 31 May, marking an approximately **4% increase** compared to the **746** people registered in April. Of those registered in May, 79% entered via Danli, 19% Trojes and 2% via Choluteca. The top five nationalities were Ecuador, Venezuela, China, Cuba, and Dominican Republic. **Among them, approximately 35% were women and children.**

4,260 refugees and migrants that entered and crossed through Honduran territory as of May 2026 represent an approximate **77%** decrease compared with the **18,517 people** registered during the same period in 2025.

287 people traveling north-south direction were identified by UNHCR and partners in May, representing a **37% decrease** compared to **456** people recorded during April.

Around **2,740** people travelling in a north–south direction were identified between January and May 2026.

Our Response

+195

consultations on medical care, mental health assistance, and information on sexual and reproductive health were provided by UNHCR and partners in May 2026.

Between 1 January and 31 May 2026, over **850 consultations** were provided to internally displaced people, at-risk of displacement, Honduran returnees, asylum-seekers, and refugees received this support nationwide.

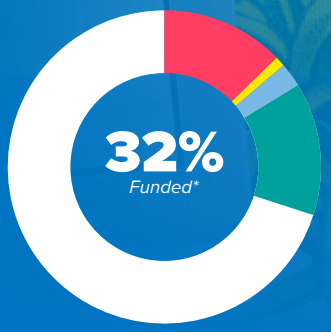
Around 250

individuals received protection information and orientation by UNHCR and partners in May 2026, including guidance on asylum procedures, access to services, and protection pathways.

Between 1 January and 31 May 2026, **almost 3,500** internally displaced people, at-risk of displacement, Honduran returnees, asylum-seekers, and refugees received this support nationwide.

UNHCR supports community efforts to protect children and strengthen resilience.

Funding



As of 31 May 2026

- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

UNHCR appealed for USD 23 million for its 2026 programme, of which only USD 7.3 million (32%) has been funded. USD 15.7 million is still needed to continue supporting people forcibly displaced, at risk of displacement, returnees with protection needs, asylum-seekers and refugees.

Context

May was marked by continued violence, extortion, insecurity and forced displacement risks across Honduras, alongside legal and institutional developments linked to the national security response.

Reports during the month highlighted the continued reconfiguration of criminal structures linked to **extortion, drug trafficking and kidnapping** in several parts of the country. These dynamics continued to affect communities through fear, territorial control and restrictions on mobility. Representatives of the transport sector reported that extortion and generalized crime continued to affect transport workers and daily operations, with the sector reportedly **paying an estimated USD 1.8 million per month**.

Violence continued to affect communities and public security institutions. Separate armed attacks left at least **25 people dead in less than four hours**, including a **mass killing of 20 people in Trujillo, Colón**, and the killing of **five anti-gang police officers** during an operation in Omoa, Cortés. By late May, at least **12 mass killings and 65 victims had been recorded in 2026**, while the National Commissioner for Human Rights reported **118 mass killings over the past 42 months**.

The National Commissioner for Human Rights reported that its Internal Forced Displacement Unit assisted **23,458 internally displaced people or people at risk of displacement** between 2016 and 2024. Between 2022 and 2024, the Unit registered 4,320 complaints affecting more than 11,400 people, with threats, extortion and the killing of relatives accounting for most cases. Civil society actors also warned that forced displacement linked to violence generates economic, psychosocial and social impacts that can deepen vulnerability and affect community cohesion.

Women's organizations reported that **more than 100 women had been killed violently** since the beginning of 2026, while concerns persisted over impunity and access to justice. LGBTIQ+ organizations reported **20 violent deaths** during the first five months of the year and continued to call for improved protection and investigations. Child protection actors also warned of continued risks affecting children and adolescents, including poverty, education exclusion, sexual violence and exposure to forced recruitment.

Reforms approved by the National Congress entered into force, **increasing penalties prison sentences for members of drug cartels and gangs** under the amended legal framework. Press organizations raised concerns that changes to provisions on disclosure of confidential information could **affect investigative journalism on corruption and criminal structures**. Civil society organizations also expressed concern over the definition of terrorism included in the reforms.

Climate-related risks added pressure to communities already affected by violence and limited livelihood opportunities. Climate experts warned that drought and high temperatures could place up to **2.2 million people at risk of food insecurity** by the end of 2026. National and international actors announced coordinated interventions in municipalities of the Dry Corridor to address climate-related risks and food insecurity.

Activities

Protection and Legal Assistance

During May, **UNHCR continued supporting national and local institutions to strengthen access to justice, case management, asylum coordination and protection responses** for internally displaced people, asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees with protection needs and people at risk of displacement.

UNHCR strengthened access to justice through collaboration with the Judiciary. UNHCR and the Judiciary launched a national **training cycle for more than 300 community justice facilitators and 60 justices of the peace** to improve access to justice for internally displaced people, refugees and other people with protection needs. As part of this initiative, UNHCR trained 38 community justice facilitators and justices of the peace in Comayagua and Tegucigalpa to strengthen their capacity to identify, guide and refer cases.

UNHCR also conducted a **capacity-building workshop on differentiated case management for forcibly displaced people**, with a focus on applying an Age, Gender and Diversity approach. The workshop reached **20 case workers** from the National Migration Institute, the National Commissioner for Human Rights, the National Police, the Secretariat for Children, Adolescents and Families, the Secretariat of Women's Affairs, the Interinstitutional Commission against Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons, IRC, Plan International and Caritas.

UNHCR continued to strengthen the national asylum system and protection-sensitive responses in border and reception areas. In Choluteca, UNHCR engaged with the newly appointed delegate of the National Migration Institute assigned to the Migrant Assistance Centre and with the Departmental Committee for the Assistance of

People in Human Mobility and People in Need of International Protection. Discussions focused on **coordination mechanisms, joint actions for the coming months and response and integration measures** for asylum-seekers, including access to childcare and daycare services for families with children.

To strengthen technical knowledge on international protection and humanitarian principles, UNHCR delivered **Module III on Guiding Principles and Humanitarian Action as part of the University Diploma on Migration and Protection offered by the Observatory of International Migration of the National Autonomous University of Honduras**. The training reached representatives from civil society organizations, academia and independent consultants.

UNHCR, with UNFPA, UN Women and the Resident Coordinator's Office, supported coordination between the **Secretariat of Women's Affairs and the National Network of Women's Shelters to advance implementation of the Women's Shelter Law for displaced women.** The meeting brought together staff from nine shelters and strengthened exchanges on survivor-centred care, best practices and self-care for frontline personnel.

Women leading and supporting shelters came together to strengthen coordination, share best practices and promote survivor-centred care for displaced women.

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Child, Women, and Community Protection

UNHCR continued strengthening community-based protection mechanisms to prevent displacement, mitigate protection risks and reinforce community resilience in areas affected by violence and insecurity.

During May, **UNHCR conducted participatory assessments, focus group discussions and community consultations** in Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, Choluteca, Marcovia, San Marcos de Colón, Tela, Tocoa and La Ceiba. The exercises engaged refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people, people at risk of displacement, LGBTIQ+ persons, Afro-Honduran community members, teachers, youth, children, women and community leaders. Participants helped update protection analysis, identify community capacities and coping strategies, and define priority actions to guide community-led initiatives and strengthen protection responses in areas affected by violence and displacement risks.

Consultations with specific groups helped deepen protection analysis and inform targeted responses. In Tegucigalpa, UNHCR and the Kukulcan Association worked with transgender women to identify risks, challenges and opportunities to strengthen protection mechanisms and participation, while UNHCR and Save the Children consulted refugees and community leaders from La Era on differentiated risks and priority actions. In Tela, focus group discussions with Garífuna communities in Tornabé and San Juan identified protection conditions, risks, capacities and locally driven solutions. In Tocoa, Colón, consultations with rural women from settlements and cooperatives in Bajo Aguán, including members of the Bajo Aguán Rural Women's Network, informed protection response planning.

UNHCR continued supporting child protection and prevention of forced recruitment. In Choluteca, UNHCR participated in meetings of the Municipal Council for the

Guarantee of the Rights of Children and Adolescents, including the establishment of the Council's board of directors and follow-up on its workplan. Through the *"Voy con Vos"* campaign, UNHCR also worked with education actors to **strengthen teachers' capacity to identify forced recruitment risks and response mechanisms.**

In San Pedro Sula, UNHCR worked with community leaders, women, youth, LGBTIQ+ organizations, teachers and youth artistic collectives to **update protection risks, strengthen communication channels and support community-led initiatives**. This included coordination with young leaders to explore the **development of a comic as a tool to help mitigate forced recruitment**, promote youth leadership and support protection through artistic spaces.

UNHCR reinforced community protection mechanisms for women and people with specific protection needs. In San Pedro Sula, UNHCR held a **self-care workshop with women leaders and volunteers** from the Rivera Hernández sector, using the "Strong Roots, Light Wings" tool to support wellbeing and resilience. In La Ceiba, UNHCR and UDIMUF held a **safety workshop with women humanitarian workers** providing care, support and advocacy for women victims and survivors of gender-based violence, strengthening skills on personal safety, cybersecurity and road safety.

In Choluteca, UNHCR conducted a **workshop on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse with community leaders** from Soni, El Triunfo, raising awareness on risk prevention, reporting mechanisms and complaint channels.

Voices from Choluteca come together in a participatory consultation supported by UNHCR, where community members share experiences, identify risks and define priorities to strengthen protection and support those affected by displacement.

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Local Capacity Strengthening and Integration

UNHCR continued supporting local institutions, communities and partners to strengthen inclusion, education, livelihoods and self-reliance opportunities for forcibly displaced people, asylum-seekers, refugees and people at risk of displacement.

In Choluteca, UNHCR worked with **education actors to promote more inclusive and protection-sensitive learning environments**. UNHCR conducted a workshop on international protection with 21 teachers to strengthen understanding of refugee rights and introduced UNHCR's "Teaching About Refugees" guide to support protection and inclusion in educational settings.

UNHCR also supported community resilience initiatives in southern Honduras. In Choluteca, UNHCR participated in a meeting organized by Sur en Acción with the European Union, CARE and local stakeholders to **discuss community resilience initiatives** and promote the inclusion of communities from El Triunfo in **resilience-building processes.**

UNHCR continued promoting economic inclusion through partnerships with public institutions, private sector actors and technical partners. In Tegucigalpa, UNHCR met with Asociación Libre Expresión and the Business Development Centre to advance a potential partnership with Espresso Americano, aiming to support displaced people and refugees to access certified barista training through the National Institute for Vocational Training and connect with formal employment opportunities. In Choluteca, UNHCR and the Chamber of Commerce also discussed opportunities to include **refugees in entrepreneurship fairs and strengthen job search preparation**.

UNHCR and FUNDAHRSE launched the second edition of the Inclusive Good Practices Award, a private sector initiative that promotes employment, entrepreneurship and inclusion opportunities for refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people and others facing barriers to economic participation. The initiative encourages companies to showcase and expand practices that contribute to inclusive workplaces and sustainable livelihoods.

In northern Honduras, **UNHCR consolidated a private sector partnership** with the Molino Harinero Sula–Goldstein Foundation and the Business Development Centre to support the construction and donation of the first

two community ovens for the Mariposas Libres women's group in the Garífuna communities of Tornabé and San Juan, Tela. The initiative will support livelihoods opportunities and community-based protection for women in areas affected by displacement risks and extreme climate events.

UNHCR also supported education and livelihoods pathways for displaced people in Tegucigalpa. **Thirteen displaced people** supported through the INTUR-CDE-UNHCR alliance **completed their high school diploma**, while **15 women selected for entrepreneurship capacity-building presented their business plans**. Coordination also continued with Swisscontact, ADRA and SENPRENDE to explore seed capital support and strengthen economic inclusion opportunities.

Strategic Coordination

At the field level, UNHCR and NRC, as co-leads, convened the Valle de Sula Local Team as part of the humanitarian network's local coordination structure, following a transition process coordinated with IOM. **Nine organizations and COPECO participated, reviewing the 2026 humanitarian architecture, climate forecasts, cyclone season risks and protection concerns**, including the suspension of interventions in Chamelecón due to heightened violence. Participants agreed on follow-up actions to strengthen monitoring, preparedness and coordinated response.

UNHCR also coordinated an inter-agency mission to Bajo Aguán with ProCap, GenCap, PAHO, IOM and Save the Children, as a UNICEF implementing partner, to conduct an accountability exercise with the Agrarian Platform and strengthen inter-agency protection analysis. **Agencies shared how CERF-funded activities respond to community priorities, including safety and protection for families** linked to the Agrarian Platform and COPA, capacity-building for rural women leaders and support for social projects in health, education, water, sanitation and housing. As part of the mission, **UNHCR carried out protection monitoring to gather information on local protection risks and guide prevention, mitigation and response actions** in areas affected by violence, land-related tensions and displacement risks.

UNHCR thanks the contributions of donor countries such as

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*As of May 2026

For more information: Danielle Álvarez / External Relations Officer alvareza@unhcr.org