

HONDURAS

Population figures >>

Internal displacement
+247,000

people have been internally displaced in Honduras as a result of violence between 2004 and 2018. Numbers are estimated to be higher in 2024, as triggers of internal displacement persist.

Asylum
7,451

Honduran nationals sought asylum in Mexico in January and February 2024, ranking as the first nationality in the number of asylum requests to this country.

16

people sought asylum in Honduras in January and February 2024 and are mainly Nicaraguans, Venezuelans, and Ecuadorians. The remaining are Salvadorians and Russians.

Mixed Movements
87,852

refugees and migrants in mixed movements entered Honduras irregularly in January and February 2024 and registered with the National Migration Institute (INM), more than double than the same period in 2023.

Return
48,497

Hondurans were returned to the country in 2023 until October, mainly from the United States of America, Mexico, Guatemala and Spain.

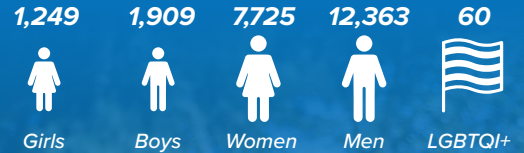
Refugee
185

recognised refugees are currently living in Honduras.

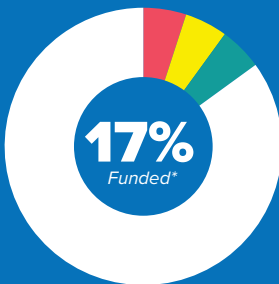
Our response

23,306 people






have been reached by February 2024 by UNHCR and its partners, mainly people in mixed movements and internally displaced persons, but also asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees, and host community members, with services such as shelter, cash and voucher assistance, case management, protection monitoring, livelihoods activities, risk mitigation and through community-based protection activities.



Funding



as of 29 February 2024

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

*UNHCR appealed for USD 30.8 million for its 2024 programme, of which only USD 5.3 million (17%) was funded. USD 25.5 million is still needed to continue supporting people forcibly displaced, at risk of displacement, asylum-seekers, refugees, and persons in mixed movements.



Context

In February 2024, gender-based violence, forced land dispossession, and impacts of climate change persisted as several key drivers of internal displacement as highlighted below:



Violence and extortion

With the National Congress extending the state of exception to combat extortion, civil society organizations and human rights defender have voiced concerns on the effectiveness of the state of exception.



Despite a 13% reduction in homicide rates in 2023 and the continued state of exception, **Honduras remains the second most violent country in Latin America.**

Violence continues to affect children and youth, evidenced in the recent violent killings of two youth showing a 19% surge in violent deaths of youth compared to the same time last year.



Three inmates were murdered inside a maximum-security prison.

In the past eight months there have been 11 male and 46 female inmate deaths in prisons leading to calls for an investigation of the supervising authorities of the penitentiary system.

Gender-based violence

31 women lost their lives due to femicide in the first two months of 2024.



Human rights situation

Indigenous communities face violence through forced evictions, causing internal displacement. A spokesperson for the Lenca Indigenous Council alleges that their land is being exploited for profit.

Honduras was reviewed by the Committee on Enforced Disappearances in Geneva, Switzerland. Questions posed by the Committee were focusing mainly on the prevention of and response to the disappearance of persons in mixed movements as well as the illegal intercountry adoption of Honduran children. The meetings were attended in person by a high-level delegation of the Honduran Government.

Aggravating factors

Political and Legislative Challenges

Honduras declined four points in the Democracy Index. Concerns have been raised about the impact of the low rankings in corruption, justice, rights, and security.

After a 35-day interruption of the work of Secretariat of Human Rights (SEDH), operations resumed. SEDH is a key UNHCR partner.

International and national actors have expressed concern over the unprecedented rotation of constitutional and civil judges.

Environmental Challenges



Honduras is one of the most vulnerable nations to the impacts of climate change.

Water scarcity, severe droughts, and a lack of environmental education significantly exacerbate the climate crisis. Compounding these challenges, approximately 33% of land has become unsuitable for use, contributing to a sense of urgency as the loss of agricultural livelihoods drives migration and abandonment of properties.

According to disaster management and response agencies, **2024 is anticipated to be the second hottest year on record due to the El Niño phenomenon and persistent drought in the region.** The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights will analyse the impact of climate change on internal displacement in Choluteca, Honduras.

Context

Results

Internal Displacement

As reported by the National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH), **extortion, violent deaths, threats, forced recruitment, forced abandonment of property and land, economic instability and corruption remain the primary drivers of internal displacement.**



They also state that so far in **2024**, of those who seek to flee, **an estimated 111 Hondurans are returned daily.**

Mixed Movements

Mixed movements continue to increase through Honduras, with 87,852 people registering with the National Institute of Migration (INM)

to obtain their transit permit after entering irregularly in January and February 2024.

126% increase compared to the same period in 2023.

Through border monitoring, UNHCR estimates that more than 100,000 people on the move entered and transited through Honduras in 2024, as not all persons register with INM.



In comparison to January 2024, **February 2024 saw an increase of more than 28%**

of people in mixed movements, impacting the already stretched reception conditions. In February, **51% of the people on the move were women, girls and boys.**

More than **96% of the people entered Honduras through El Paraíso department.** Venezuela, Cuba, Ecuador, Haiti, and Colombia continue to be the main nationalities in mixed movements.

Of the 176 people on the move interviewed by UNHCR in February at the main entry, transit and exit points, at least **33% stated that they had to flee their country of origin due to violence or persecution.**



Some factors that can contribute to high numbers of people in mixed movements include **fleeing violence in their countries of origin, the accessibility of routes, and expanded registration capacities.**

Their main needs are **food, water, clothing and footwear, medical assistance and medicines, and information on their rights.**

Two severe traffic accidents in February carrying Hondurans, in addition to refugees and migrants, led to at least 19 casualties.

The situation highlights the need for a stronger regulation of the bus companies.

RESPONSE

PROTECT

Throughout February 2024, UNHCR Honduras' activities aimed to build capacity, advocate for legal and policy improvements, provide direct assistance, and raise public awareness to address the needs of forcibly displaced people, those at risk of displacement, returnees, and people in mixed movements.

UNHCR invested significantly in training initiatives, **enhancing the knowledge and skills of more than 200 public officials**, including police officers, National Commissioner for Human Rights staff, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials. Topics ranged from international protection, the rights of persons in mixed movements, internal displacement, to gender violence prevention and the criminalization of human rights defenders. These efforts aimed to strengthen the basis for a more informed and responsive approach to the complex dynamics of displacement and protection in Honduras.

On the legal and policy front, UNHCR's efforts were highlighted by its involvement in the advancement of the IDP Protection Law. Activities included hosting the **first Judicial Congress to discuss legal issues and the challenges to address the prevention, protection and solutions policies and response, according to the Law for prevention, assistance, and protection to internally displaced people, persons at risk and returnees in need of protection**. The unique event involved the academia, civil society organizations, international organizations, and state officials. Also, **UNHCR facilitated consultations with**

civil society organizations on these topics. Both spaces were aimed to develop regulations for the IDP Protection Law, aiming to ensure policies reflect the needs of displaced individuals.

UNHCR's protection efforts targeted women, children, indigenous populations, and other groups in vulnerable situations through a range of activities. These included developing response plans with municipal officials, improving case management mechanisms, and enhancing coordination among humanitarian actors to provide more effective protection and assistance.

Public awareness initiatives focused on **raising awareness about displacement and supporting vulnerable groups through media engagement**. This included publishing videos and content on the consultation process for the IDP Law regulations and the role of youth in community safety, as well as interviews and reports with international media to discuss the causes and impacts of forced displacement in Honduras.

INM presented to UNHCR progress made in the development of their new asylum application registration system, which was developed with the support of UNHCR. In addition, INM presented their new shelter system which will be used to manage the Comprehensive Assistance Centre for people in mixed movements in Danlí once the construction is finished.



With the aim of discussing the challenges faced by the Law for the Prevention, Attention and Protection of Internally Displaced Persons, we held the first Judicial Congress together with academia, civil society, international organizations, and state officials.

RESPOND

UNHCR, together with its partners, focused on enhancing support for people affected by forced displacement, those in mixed movements, and returnees with protection needs.

Through collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council, **UNHCR registered 803 people for case management**, primarily focusing on those internally displaced or at risk of displacement.



A total of 242 incidents were documented, with a significant percentage related to serious incidents such as homicides.

To address these urgent protection needs, UNHCR provided cash assistance to more than 1,128 people.

Furthermore, **UNHCR identified and registered over 70 cases of more than 190 returnees with protection needs at the Centres for Returned Migrants in Honduras**, providing them with protection information, legal assistance, and referral to partners for cases with specific needs.

To improve reception conditions for refugees and migrants on the move, in February 2024, **UNHCR's Mobile Information Service reached over 37,000 people in mixed movements in Choluteca, Danlí, Trojes, as well as people in Machuca, Agua Caliente**. The service, operated by World Vision at the south-east and north-west borders, provided vital information about legal protection, shelter locations, and the U.S. Parole Program, primarily reaching Venezuelans, Colombians, Ecuadorians, Haitians, and Cubans.

In addition, **UNHCR and its partners provided temporary**

shelter to over 1,750 people in mixed movements in vulnerable situations who were transiting through Honduras in February, across six different shelters located in the departments of El Paraíso, Choluteca, and Ocotepeque.

The local response group of the Protection Cluster in the south-east border, co-led by UNHCR and Child Fund, **engaged in four meetings with 23 organizations to discuss trends, gaps, and coordinate efforts to improve the humanitarian response to persons in mixed movements**. Similarly, the Western Border group, together with co-leader ADRA, initiated planning for water, sanitation and health services and humanitarian space improvements at Machuca. The referral route for the care of survivors of gender-based violence in Danlí was finalized and shared with all members, streamlining support for affected people.

UNHCR and its partners provide temporary shelter, basic medical care and other humanitarian assistance to families like Kiara's.

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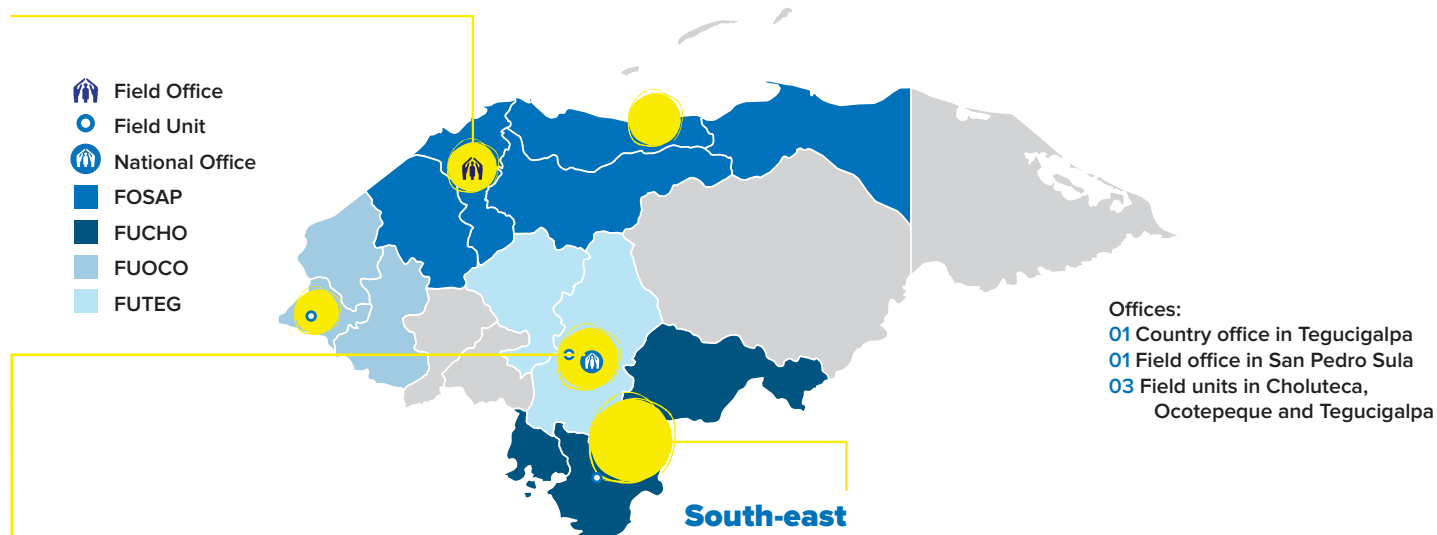
EMPOWER

UNHCR engaged in various activities aimed at empowering communities at high risk of displacement due to violence, addressing needs of people in mixed movements, and promoting social cohesion through sports, community consultations, and advocacy efforts across different regions of the country.

Northern Region

Community consultation processes in Chamelecón and Rivera Hernández sectors engaged 62 people, including women, men, and youth, to kick off the preparation of protection plans.

In San Pedro Sula, **Children International, Doctors of the World and UNHCR are jointly strengthening medical dispensaries.** These community protection spaces serve to empower community structures and their capacity to build protection plans to mitigate their risks, strengthen physical and mental health services, and consolidate referral pathways for cases of forced internal displacement and gender-based violence.



Central District

UNHCR supported 13 community leaders in developing protection plans to mitigate forced displacement risks, involving local community members in identifying and prioritizing strategies. Over 200 youths from at-risk communities participated in outreach activities to raise awareness on forced displacement due to violence, facilitated by Jóvenes Contra la Violencia and UNHCR.

In collaboration with the Honduras' National Commission for Sports, Physical Education and Recreation and Save the Children, UNHCR organized sports activities at the Villa Olímpica complex, **engaging 62 children and youth from communities at high risk of displacement.**

South-east

In El Paraíso, **coordination with the Mayor's Office focused on local economic development and community protection plans, targeting approximately 1,500 undocumented Nicaraguans and others affected by mixed movements.** Pueblo Nuevo, Trojes, saw the inauguration of a Child Protection Space, attended by around 100 community members, aimed at reducing protection risks for children.

UNHCR visited organizations in Danlí, such as the Association of Persons with Disabilities of the Eastern Zone of Honduras and the Luis Braille Foundation, to **identify support needs for persons with disabilities in advocacy and training on various themes.** A meeting with the Ombudsperson for Women and Indigenous Peoples aimed to define a complaints route for indigenous and Afro-descendant human rights defenders.

General Initiatives

The monthly **Protection Cluster meeting highlighted the issue of forced recruitment of children by criminal groups,** with recommendations for linking legal protection programs with humanitarian response.

In partnership with the Interagency Gender Group, **UNHCR conducted training sessions aimed at enhancing understanding of gender issues within humanitarian efforts.** These sessions were pivotal in educating participants on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse and understanding the legal frameworks that safeguard women and girls' rights.

UNHCR also made progress in case management for gender-based violence in Danli, where **UNHCR introduced a new process designed to support both local communities and people in mixed movements.** This initiative aims to ensure that

those affected by gender-based violence have access to the care and support they need.

In the cities of Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, **UNHCR engaged with judges from children's and family courts to introduce and advocate for UNHCR's resettlement program, which aims to provide a lifeline for individuals facing dire threats to their safety.** A significant outcome of these talks was the development of a more streamlined administrative process for children and youth in urgent need of international protection to be able to leave the country safely.

SOLVE

UNHCR's activities in February 2024 emphasized technical education, employment opportunities, social entrepreneurship, and collaborations with both the private sector and governmental agencies to enhance the employability and self-reliance of at-risk youth, adults, internally displaced persons, refugees, and returnees.

A Youth Community Centre in the community La Central (CCJ), with support from Fe y Alegría and UNHCR, **launched technical education courses in Computing, Electricity, and Refrigeration, supporting 55 at-risk youth and adults.** The five-month program, aimed at reaching approximately 120 individuals throughout the year, includes technical soft skills training and culminates in skills certification by the National Vocational Training Institute (INFOP). Additionally, Proli+cen, a social entrepreneurship initiative affiliated with CCJ, achieved official business registration, a step facilitated by the Business Development Centre and UNHCR to expand into larger markets and support the Centre's protection and income-generating activities. The profit generated by this social enterprise will ensure the sustainability of the training center in the community, payment of utilities and training instructors.

In Tegucigalpa, **the first group of 15 internally displaced persons and refugees commenced their formal education programme with Instituto INTUR, a ten-month accelerated study initiative supported by UNHCR and the private sector.** The programme will enable adults who had dropped out of school to obtain their high school degree, facilitating further studies or formal employment.

A collaboration between FUNDHARSE, IOM and UNHCR organized a workshop for 30 enterprises in Honduras, focusing on internally displaced, refugee, and returnee job market inclusion and internal displacement issues. This initiative brought together private sector and community representatives to identify obstacles and opportunities for cooperation, leading to the upcoming announcement of the "Inclusive Enterprise" corporate seal by FUNDHARSE.

UNHCR organized a protection training session for 24 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centres in San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa, aimed to strengthen their capacity in identifying protection profiles among alumni.

Finally, UNHCR and the National Vocational Training Institute (INFOP) finalized their yearly work plan and timeline, focusing on curricular improvement and skills certification, soft skills training for trainers, and cooperation on internships for employment through joint programs. These initiatives collectively aim to **enhance the economic independence and integration of at-risk populations into the workforce, contributing to their long-term well-being and stability.**

Regarding housing, land and property rights of internally displaced people, the **Property Institute (IP) has confirmed the development of the internal process for the operation of the Abandoned Property Registry created by the Displacement Law with support of UNHCR.** To this end, the technical staff of the IP will carry out the adjustments and procedures in the Unified Registry System (SURE), as well as the final review of the Executive Agreement.

UNHCR thanks the contributions of our donors

as of 29 February 2024

UNHCR is grateful for the contributions of donor countries that contribute to the office in Honduras and to global programmes with flexible funding:



*Also, UNHCR thanks the contributions of our global private donors in Spain.
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