

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
10,376

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

29

people sought asylum in Honduras in the first quarter of 2024 and are mainly Venezuelans and Nicaraguans. The remaining are Ecuadorians, Salvadorians, and Russians.

Mixed Movements
133,518

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

Return
11,268

Hondurans were returned to the country in 2024 until 20 March, mainly from the United States of America, Mexico, Guatemala and Spain.

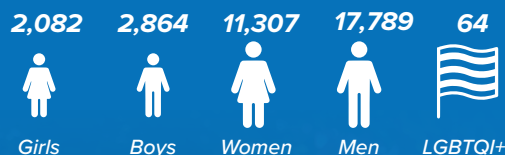
Refugee
185

recognised refugees are currently living in Honduras.

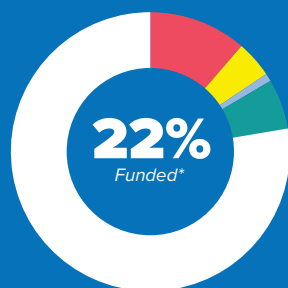
Our response

34,106 people






have been reached by March 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 31 March 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 6.9 million (22%) was funded. USD 23.9 million is still needed to continue supporting people forcibly displaced, at risk of displacement, asylum-seekers, refugees, and persons in mixed movements.



Context

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



Violence and extortion

San Pedro Sula remains one of the most dangerous cities globally, driven by violence that led the government to declare a state of exception in December 2022. Despite these measures, the threat persists, especially among vulnerable populations.



Gender-based violence

Honduras has one of the highest femicide rates globally, as reported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in collaboration with UN Women.



The country registered 3,000 monthly calls for help to 911, and 50 women murdered in early 2024 alone.

In response, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OACNUDH) in Honduras has urged the Honduran State to adopt comprehensive public policies for preventing violence against women.



On 8 March, the Honduran Parliament approved the **Law of Shelters for Women**. The law regulates shelters to protect women affected by gender-based violence, internal displacement, and human trafficking.

Human rights situation

The report “**Indigenous Peoples in Honduras: Rights, Territories and Laws**” released by the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) showed that **indigenous people, Garifunas, and farmers are among the top who are victims of not enjoying their territorial rights**. The report highlights the violence they undergo in the lack of recognition of their land, and it aims to create awareness and a space for dialogue. These violent evictions lead to forced displacement.

Aggravating factors

Political and Legislative Challenges

Employees of the Secretariat of Childhood, Adolescence and Family (SENAF) **seized control of the offices for several weeks** amidst allegations of sexual and workplace harassment and inadequate wages.

Environmental challenges

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has warned of that 2024 will be the **worst dengue fever season in Honduras** and other Latin American countries.

Honduras grappled with the aftermath of severe wildfires, notably affecting La Tigra National Park.

In 2024 alone, more than **800 forest fires** affecting over **57,257 hectares of land** have been documented with a **79% of these attributed to deliberate human actions**. These wildfires not only pose a threat to the environment but also exacerbate food insecurity. Furthermore, **2024 marked the hottest year recorded in the National Territory since 1992**. This context points to environmental degradation and the potential impact on communities.



In Ocotepeque, in western Honduras, UNHCR has observed that the environmental crisis is manifesting through **landslides, house destruction, and severe droughts**, disrupting local agriculture. Farmers are facing increased pest infestations and market prices that do not compensate for their losses, ultimately forcing them to abandon their lands and displace to urban areas, and in some cases, leave the country altogether. These changes are also linked to a rise in endemic diseases, further straining the health system.

Additionally, the **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)** highlighted the human rights of people affected by **climate change-induced mobility**, featuring community leaders from southern Honduras. The discussions underscored the urgent need for comprehensive responses to the human rights challenges posed by climate change, particularly in regions already experiencing severe environmental impacts.

Context

Results

Internal Displacement

As a result of the vulnerable situation of the Honduran population, **several children and youth tried to flee the country, but many are being returned.**

Their movement in search of safety highlight the **severe impact of these conditions on their human rights.**



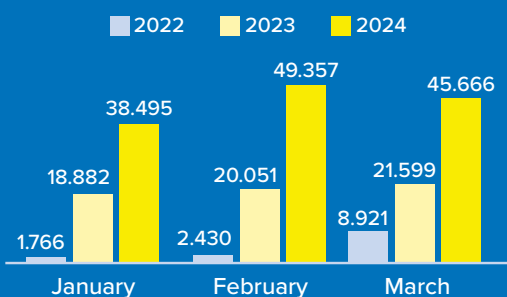
The World Happiness Report 2024 showed that **Honduras is the unhappiest country in the Central American region**

and fell eight places since 2023. The report measures lack of corruption, freedom, generosity, health, income, and social support.

Mixed Movements

During the first quarter of 2024, **Honduras experienced a 121% increase in mixed movements**, with the National Migration Institute (INM) registering 133,518 people after irregular entry, a stark rise from the 60,532 recorded in the same period of 2023 (see graph below).

Monthly Irregular entries to Honduras 2022 - 2024



Nationalities:

47% Venezuela | 15% Cuba | 7,5% Ecuador | 7% Haiti | 5% Colombia

Demographic breakdown: 26% Female 49% Male

Notably, the statistics also highlight the **significant number of children on the move**, with boys and girls constituting 14% and 11% respectively. In March, **97% of the people entered the country through El Paraíso department** (Las Manos and Trojes), while the remaining entered through the department of Choluteca.

The **main protection need identified continues to be access to information**, to avoid smugglers preventing people in transit from accessing humanitarian services. Other protection needs are assistance to survivors of gender-based violence, access to WASH facilities, and menstrual hygiene services and kits for women and girls in transit.

The price hikes for transportation reported by people in mixed movements

and the increase in flight prices according to Haitians on the move have further complicated the situation, particularly affecting vulnerable groups such as children and pregnant women.

Adding to the challenges, the airport in Port-au-Prince, a major exit point for people trying to leave Haiti, is closed, which significantly hinders the ability of people to exit the country. This closure exacerbates the already dire circumstances for those seeking safer environments or reunification with family, limiting their options for mobility, and increasing their vulnerability in a time of crisis.

On another note, the INM issued instructions to end migration pre-checks for Nicaraguans entering Honduras. This may facilitate safer access to Honduras for Nicaraguans in need of international protection. However, this will require awareness raising about the new procedures.

UNHCR also received reports of at least three Venezuelans in mixed movements who died in 2024 in the departments of Tegucigalpa and Francisco Morazán, which reiterates the urgent need to step up the protection response to people on the move not only in border areas but also in the capital city.

RESPONSE

PROTECT

In March 2024, UNHCR continued its efforts to support people on the move and those in need of protection.

Throughout the month, **UNHCR focus was broad and multifaceted, addressing the immediate needs of people in transit**, especially in regions like Guasaule, Danli, Trojes, Agua Caliente and Machuca where economic and logistical barriers have impacted their journey, and climate change has driven young Hondurans to leave their communities.

As part of International Women's Day, **UNHCR highlighted the grave issue of gender-based violence in Honduras**, which has the highest rate of femicides in Latin America. This effort was amplified through the publication of informative materials, including videos and infographics in collaboration with Cattrachas, highlighting the impact of forced displacement on women, especially those from the LGBTQI+ community.

Moreover, sessions with various stakeholders, including government institutions and NGOs, have been crucial in shaping policies and strategies to address forced displacement, protect vulnerable children, and promote youth policies.

The National Congress of Honduras approved the budget for the Law on Internal Displacement, allocating 150 million lempiras to the Fund for the Attention and Protection of Forcibly Displaced People (FAPPDEF), as outlined in the Law on Internal Displacement. UNHCR continues to actively collaborate with the Honduran government to draft regulations that will effectively manage this regulatory framework. This partnership is part of UNHCR's catalytic role in enhancing support and

protection for forcibly displaced people. The process of drafting the regulations for the Law, led by the Inter-Institutional Commission for the Protection of Forcibly Displaced Persons (CIPPDEF), includes extensive consultations coordinated together with UNHCR. **These consultations have involved 128 people who are displaced or at risk of displacement, alongside representatives from 14 civil society organizations and 29 public institutions**, ensuring that the regulatory framework is both inclusive and responsive to the needs of the affected communities. The first draft of these regulations is expected to be finalized by May 2024, marking a significant step in the institutional response to displacement in Honduras.

Community consultations in La Esperanza with 32 indigenous leaders and teachers **marked the first time that indigenous communities were consulted to include their inputs in the regulation of the IDPs Law**. They informed the policy on protection challenges related to defence of land and human rights and violence in rural areas. Another session is planned in La Ceiba with Garífuna, Pech, and Misquito communities, to include their views on addressing the challenges of displacement.

These initiatives, along with workshops for officials from the United for Justice project, aim to **improve the understanding and response mechanisms available for people facing displacement and those in high-risk communities**. Efforts to build capacity were also a priority, with training on international protection provided to 38 public officers in Choluteca, 17 police and security forces officers from Trojes, staff from Caritas' shelter in Danli and staff from a shelter run by the Episcopal Church in Jamastran, El Paraiso.

TU VOZ ES IMPORTANTE

CONSULTAS PARTICIPATIVAS

S VOCE

LAZAMIA

NO EN HO

In La Esperanza, women activists raised their voices for the protection of land, territory and common goods during the consultations to include their inputs in the regulation of the Internal Displacement Law.

A key focus was also on **enhancing the asylum process**, evidenced by the participation of UNHCR's partner INM in the regional MIRPS meeting. This gathering led to the formulation of a comprehensive work plan for 2024, aiming to improve Reception, Admission, and Processing of Asylum Cases through the sharing of best practices on child-friendly procedures, training on Country-of-Origin Information (COI), and the digitalization of procedures.

UNHCR's partner INM printed **1,200 Manuals on the Identification and Referral of Persons in Need of International Protection for INM border delegates**. The manual was jointly elaborated by INM and UNHCR and will be distributed to border officials during capacity building sessions in 2024. These sessions will be part of joint protection monitoring missions in the field.

UNHCR's partner INM also finalized the development of its

new system for refugee analysis and administration called **"SAAR - Sistema de Análisis y Administración de Refugiados"**. The system is now being piloted to register new asylum claims and follow up on the cases during the Refugee Status Determination process.

INM and UNHCR have ongoing work to **promote access to documentation for asylum-seekers and refugees** and promote their local integration in Honduras, as illustrated in this video of a refugee family who fled gender-based violence and found a safe place in Honduras.

UNHCR's engagement in **border monitoring**, and the presentation of the current displacement situation in Honduras to academic and international audiences have been pivotal in raising awareness and understanding of the ongoing challenges.

RESPOND

UNHCR and its partners, including the Norwegian Refugee Council and World Vision, enhanced support for forcibly displaced people and mixed movements across Honduras. Efforts focused on case management, cash assistance, and legal support to address the challenges faced by these populations, aiming to bolster the humanitarian response within the country.

Through collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council, UNHCR registered

1,062 people for case management, primarily focusing on those internally displaced or at risk of displacement.



A total of 304 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 1,295 people.

Furthermore, **UNHCR identified and registered 50 cases of 124 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 March 2024, **UNHCR's Mobile Information Service reached over 17,000 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 and shelter locations, primarily reaching Venezuelans, Colombians, Ecuadorians, Haitians, and Cubans.

In addition, **UNHCR and its partners provided temporary shelter to over 1,800 people in mixed movements in vulnerable situations** who were transiting through Honduras in March, across six different shelters located in the departments of El Paraíso, Choluteca, and Ocotepeque.

The **donation of eight tablets to INM's Human Rights Unit by UNHCR in Tegucigalpa bolsters the capacity for**

identifying and registering people in need of protection in mixed movements who enter the country from Nicaragua. The tablets will be used by INM at the new Comprehensive Assistance Centre in Danlí that is currently being built by INM.

The Local Response Group of the Protection Cluster at the south-east border, co-led by UNHCR and Child Fund, engaged in **four meetings with more than 30 organizations to discuss trends, gaps, and coordinate efforts to improve the humanitarian response** to persons in mixed movements. This Local Group also published its March monitoring report. On another note, the co-leaders of the Local Group, met with Cluster members and authorities to define joint actions to address a surge in gender-based violence cases identified in the region. The Resident Coordinator also visited this region to monitor the situation and address needs and gaps.

Similarly, the Local Group at the western border, together with co-leader ADRA, met at least five times to **coordinate actions to address the response in the Machuca humanitarian space**, including planning for the delivery of refugee housing units to this space. This Local Group also

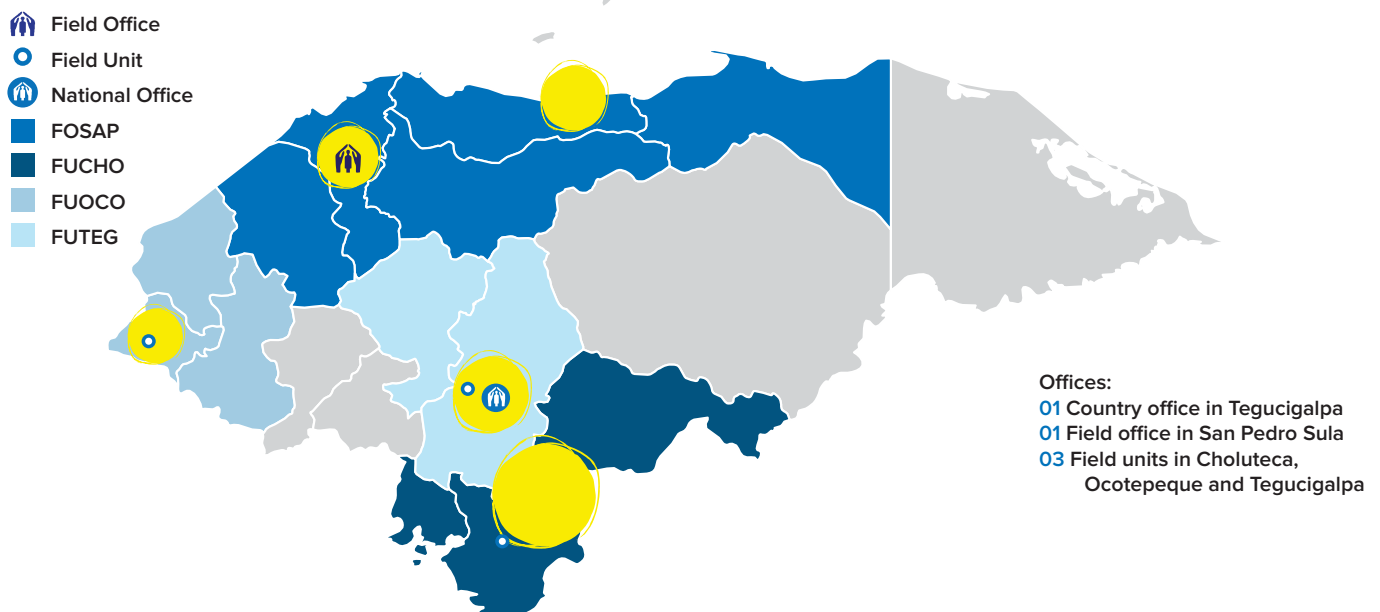
published its March monitoring report.

UNHCR published its newest Mixed Movements Protection Monitoring report which can be accessed here in Spanish and here in English. Of the 176 interviewed refugees and migrants on the move, 33% stated to have left their country of origin due to violence and persecution.

40% reported suffering some form of mistreatment during the journey since leaving their country of origin or last residence. 11% indicated experiencing mistreatment or forms of abuse in Honduras. The main needs reported are food, water, clothing and footwear, medicines, and healthcare, as well as information on protection services.

EMPOWER

In March 2024, UNHCR carried out a series of initiatives aimed at enhancing access to essential services and strengthening community ties across different regions, effectively supporting people forcibly displaced and those at risk of displacement.



In Tegucigalpa, a **municipal services fair** in Rosalinda provided over **220 people with medical services and valuable information** on legal and entrepreneurship opportunities. This initiative was replicated in Villavieja and Nueva Capital, where over 450 and 500 individuals respectively accessed similar services, demonstrating UNHCR's commitment to facilitating access to social services in high-risk communities.

Emphasizing the importance of **women's rights and protection**, UNHCR engaged in community meetings in San Antonio de los Sitios in Ocotepeque, and La Ceiba. Efforts such as the donation of solar lamps in **Ocotepeque** to mitigate assaults and gender-based violence at night and organizing a menstrual hygiene workshop in the **Central District**, highlight UNHCR's comprehensive approach to empowering women and girls and promoting safety in their communities. Additionally, a community protection planning event in **San Pedro Sula**, with 70 participants, focused on creating strategies to address gender-based violence, prevent forced recruitment, and counteract the impact of violence on forced displacement.

In collaboration with Save the Children and the National Commission for Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (CONDEPOR), sports activities held in the Villa Olímpica complex in Tegucigalpa engaged **62 children and youth from communities at high risk of violence**. These activities underscore the role of community engagement in creating a supportive and safe environment for young people.

Furthermore, **strategic planning sessions at a Women's Shelter in La Ceiba and a workshop on gender violence** involved community leaders and stakeholders, reinforced UNHCR's commitment to enhancing the local response to displacement and violence. Additionally, trainings on internal displacement and international protection were provided to 69 LGBTIQ+ persons in Choluteca and Nacaome. These trainings are part of the LGBTIQ+ organizations' work plans in both municipalities.

Through these varied and impactful activities, UNHCR continues to **support communities in building resilience and improving conditions for people in situations of forced displacement** due to violence, fostering stronger, more empowered communities.

SOLVE

UNHCR launched several novel projects aimed at supporting communities affected by generalized violence and internal displacement, with a particular focus on climate change, education, and career development.

One notable initiative involved discussions with the Innovation Office in Marcovia, Choluteca, to explore collaborative efforts to **address the challenges posed by climate change on displacement**, showcasing a forward-thinking approach to creating sustainable solutions.

A significant effort was made to **enhance the skills and employability of people internally displaced and those at risk of displacement**. UNHCR organized training on basic protection principles for 12 community and Technical and Vocational Training centres in Tegucigalpa. This effort aimed to bridge the gap between the National Vocational Training Institute (INFOP) and these centres, facilitating official recognition of skills and improving pathways for displaced people and those at risk to find meaningful work and support themselves and their families. Additionally, UNHCR aided INFOP and the Secretariat of Labour, Social Security, and Decentralisation (SETRASS) in drafting a proposal for creating internship programs that offer financial support, training in essential workplace skills, knowledge of workers' rights, and help with finding employment for people forcibly displaced.

To raise awareness about the importance of supporting those forcibly displaced and to provide practical job placement opportunities, a job fair was held, drawing over 1,000 participants. Here, UNHCR helped 28 participants to enrol in a program designed to assist them

in starting their careers, in coordination with the Centre for the Development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CDEMIPYME).

Further demonstrating its commitment to empowering community members through skill development, **UNHCR initiated a program in Choluteca to support three forcibly displaced entrepreneurs in kickstarting their business ideas**. This initiative is part of a broader effort, in collaboration with partners, to strengthen the local economy and provide sustainable income sources for those affected by forced displacement.

Moreover, **38 forcibly displaced people embarked on a six-month graphic design course at GraphXAcademy, with venues in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula**. Supported by the training centre San Juan Bosco and the private company GraphiXSource, alongside UNHCR's financial aid, this program exemplifies UNHCR's dedication to offering accessible education that equips people affected by forced displacement with the skills needed in today's job market.

In partnership with The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law, **UNHCR initiated surveys across three regions to identify the needs of IDPs and people at risk** in March, promoting a collaborative approach to improve access to justice services.

Through these initiatives, **UNHCR Honduras is paving the way for long-term community development and resilience**, ensuring that those affected by forced displacement have the tools and opportunities to build a stable and secure future.

UNHCR thanks the contributions of our donors

as of 31 March 2024

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



For more information: Caroline Scotti Vilain / Reporting Officer scottivi@unhcr.org