

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
12,782

Honduran nationals sought asylum in Mexico from 1 January to 30 April 2024, ranking as the first nationality in the number of asylum requests to this country.

54

people sought asylum in Honduras from 1 January to 30 April 2024 and are mainly from Venezuela and Nicaragua, but also from Ecuador, El Salvador, Colombia and Russia. 45% were made by men, 20% by boys, 16% by women and 19% by girls.

Mixed Movements
173,748

refugees and migrants in mixed movements entered Honduras irregularly from 1 January to 30 April 2024 and registered with the National Migration Institute (INM), more than double than the same period in 2023 and a new all-time record.

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.

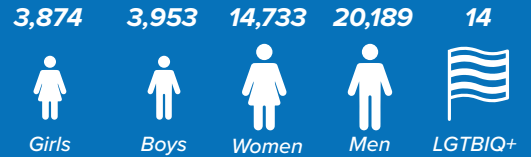
Refugee
187

recognised refugees are currently living in Honduras. The Refugee Commission in Honduras has analysed and recognised six cases as refugees so far in 2024, totalling 10 people. No cases have been rejected.

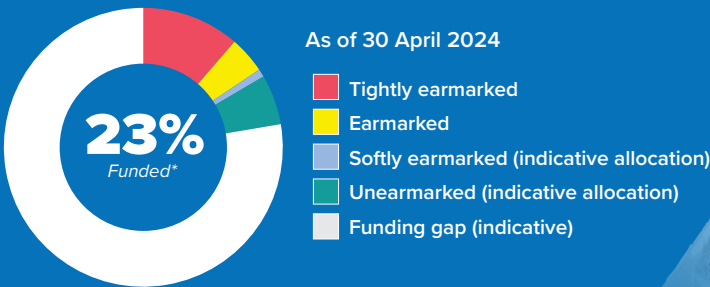
Our response

42,763 personas

By April 2024, UNHCR and its partners reached 42,763 people, 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



*UNHCR appealed for USD 30.8 million for its 2024 programme, of which only USD 7 million (23%) was funded. USD 23.8 million is still needed to continue supporting people forcibly displaced, at risk of displacement, asylum-seekers, refugees, and persons in mixed movements.



Context

In April 2024, Honduras grappled with a multifaceted crisis, encompassing a surge in dengue fever, deteriorating air quality from forest fires, and escalating gender-based violence:



Violence and extortion

Approximately 90% of the population perceives insecurity in the country, with eight to nine homicides reported daily, according to the National Autonomous University (OV-UNAH).



Since December 2022, **+190 municipalities deemed the most dangerous within the nation, have remained under a state of exception.**

This measure was implemented to confront rampant crime and this week, it has once again been prolonged until 19 May. Despite this being the eleventh extension (each extension lasting 45 days) crime and violence persist.



Children and youth remain among the most vulnerable groups affected by the country's violence, often compelling them to flee.

A young person is violently killed every 37 hours

According to the Observatory for Children's Rights of Casa Alianza in Honduras. Marking a 13% surge of violent killings in children and youth during the first quarter of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023. Thus far, approximately 25,000 children and youth have left the country irregularly and constitute a 31% of returnees in 2024.

Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence has reached such critical levels that it is now referred to as an emergency.

Civil society voices and other figures are demanding that addressing femicides be elevated to the top of the governmental agenda.



Gender-based violence is a leading root cause of forced displacement.

Amidst this, Honduran women remain resilient and demand their rights to land and to work the land, to provide for their families.

Over **60 legal actions** were initiated to address violence against women, and a chatbot named "Maria" was designed by the National Police to help prevent violence against women and girls by facilitating the reporting and identification of such violence cases.



A legislation was proposed to allocate **15% of electoral funding specifically for the political participation of women**, aiming to enhance gender equality in political representation and decision-making processes.

Human rights situation

Honduras has been highlighted in the 2024 Annual Report on International Parental Child Abduction for non-compliance with international standards,

indicating challenges in managing cross-border custody disputes and protecting children's rights.

An alternative report presented to the UN Committee Against Torture revealed **severe human rights violations against activists and young people in Honduras, including cases of torture and other cruel treatments.**

Legal professionals in Honduras faced increased risks of violence, threats, and displacement too, complicating their ability to practice law safely.

Context

Aggravating factors

Political and Legislative Challenges

The designated presidential appointee resigned from his position, marking a significant shift in the political landscape of Honduras and the upcoming election period.

The right to access public information has become increasingly restricted in Honduras, reversing progress made since the establishment of the Transparency and Access to Information Law in 2006.

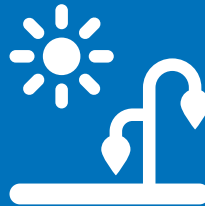
Advisors have suggested that the installation of the **International Commission against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (CICIH) could proceed without waiting for legislative reforms proposed by the UN**, aiming to tackle systemic corruption and improve transparency.

Desafíos ambientales

So far in 2024, Honduras has over one million people affected by food insecurity.

This is primarily attributed to the impacts of climate change and the ongoing drought in the Dry Corridor.

Climate change impacts, notably severe heat waves, have been linked to the nine deaths reported in the southern region of Honduras.



Different parts of the country have been shrouded in smoke, specially the capital city.

The smoke came from nearby forest fires, severely impacting air quality and visibility. This haze has also led to road incidents due to reduced visibility. Additional climate change-related impacts remain with alerts issued for **40 neighbourhoods in Tegucigalpa** potentially affected by the impending rainy season.

The Municipal Emergency Committee is taking proactive measures to raise awareness with the **“War Against Trash”** initiative, urging residents of these communities to collect waste to prevent flooding. In the past two months, approximately 400 tons of trash have already been collected, allowing for ease of water flow in these areas.

A rise in dengue cases has prompted health authorities to ramp up efforts to control this disease, which has been particularly prevalent in densely populated areas, placing a strain on healthcare resources.

In the Gracias a Dios region, land invasions and deforestation by illegal logging activities **threatened biodiversity and increased risks of forced displacement for indigenous communities.**

Several garífuna communities urged the State and environmental experts to **address the situation of the alarming coastal erosion threatening to destroy their homes.** This slow-onset disaster could lead to hundreds of people being forcibly displaced.

Results

Internal Displacement

UNHCR Honduras welcomed UNHCR’s Assistant High Commissioner for Protection.

During her mission, she toured local schools and communities which shed light on the primary factors fuelling internal displacement including violence and territorial gang control.

She listened to the proactive protection measures these communities are taking to confront these challenges by creating safe spaces for its residents. Additionally, she engaged with Government officials, reaffirming UNHCR’s commitment to supporting the Government’s efforts in enacting the Law on Prevention, Assistance and Protection of Internally Displaced Persons.

Context

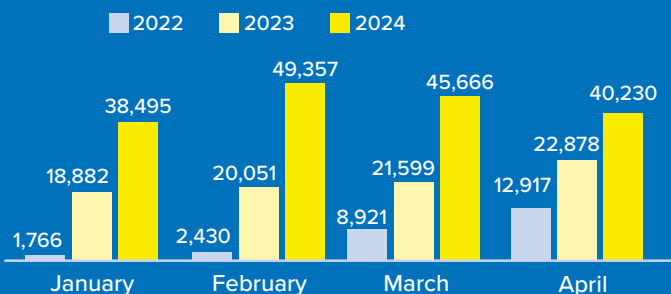
Mixed Movements

From January to April 2024, the total registration of people in mixed movements after irregular entry escalated by **108% from 83,410 in 2023 to 173,748 in 2024**, based on data from the National Migration Institute (INM).

This substantial rise highlights a deepening trend in mixed movements, with each month registering significant jumps in entries compared to the same period in 2023: January saw a 103% increase, February a 146% rise, March a 111% upsurge, and April a 76% climb.

UNHCR's observations suggest that the actual number of irregular entries of people in mixed movements could be as much as 20% higher than those recorded by the INM, as not all people in transit choose to register with the INM to obtain a transit permit. This underreporting presents significant challenges in fully understanding and responding to the scope of mixed movements through Honduras.

Monthly Irregular entries to Honduras 2022 - 2024



Between the 1 January and 16 April 2024, over 7,500 people on the move have been sent back from Guatemala to the Honduran border of Agua Caliente, and 167 people to the border of El Corinto.

77% were Venezuelans, 9% Colombians and 6% Ecuadorians, among other nationalities.

In the humanitarian space near El Pescadero, El Paraiso department, UNHCR has identified labour exploitation among people in mixed movements, including unpaid labour, long working hours, incurring debts, and degrading working conditions.

Children have been involved in child labour and accompanying their parents to work.



Most people are exploited while trying to earn enough funds to pay for onward transport. Additionally, fraudulent sales of transit permits were reported at the Las Manos border. In Choluteca, roadblocks have disrupted the movement of people in mixed movements for some days, and there is a noted limited access to water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities in the surroundings of the Centre for Attention of Irregular Migrants (CAMI) in Choluteca.

Previous funding from various sources for projects in the Machuca humanitarian space at the exit border of Agua Caliente with Guatemala have ended,

reducing the number of organizations providing humanitarian aid from over eight to three, which is vastly insufficient given the numbers of people in transit crossing every day through that area. UNHCR and local institutions highlight the need for specific attention for survivors of gender violence and on sexual and reproductive health.

Protection risks for people in mixed movements include limited access to basic services, such as water, food, and health care, especially for vulnerable groups like persons with disabilities and children.



It is key to continue to provide information to people on the move to enhance their knowledge on the Honduran migration policies and the Honduras asylum process to diminish the risk that people are susceptible to exploitations by smugglers and facing challenges in accessing support. Strengthening protection efforts is essential as many people in transit are vulnerable to these risks, particularly, girls and women to various forms of abuse and exploitation along their journey.

On 22 April, a cruise ship, on its way to Honduras, helped rescue 27 Cuban refugees travelling in the open sea on a makeshift wooden boat. A similar situation occurred in March where another cruise ship helped rescue 14 Cubans close to the shores of Honduras.

RESPONSE

PROTECT

In April 2024, UNHCR effectively expanded its support and protection for vulnerable populations across Honduras, engaging in comprehensive training, capacity-building initiatives, and strategic regional collaborations that directly reached over 140 people.

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The month started with UNHCR facilitating training sessions **on gender-based violence (GBV)** as part of the Diploma in Training of Trainers in Gender and Human Rights, empowering 15 participants from municipal women's offices in the southeast, including Nacaome and Goascoran, in the Department of Valle. Also, Ciudad Mujer, the Secretariat of Women's Affairs and UNHCR started a community program in Las Flores, San Marcos de Colón on gender-based violence prevention and response. Concurrently, UNHCR delivered refugee protection and internal displacement workshops in Nacaome, Valle and El Triunfo, Choluteca. 55 local officials and law enforcement officers were trained enhancing their capacity to support and protect the rights of displaced persons.

Furthering its community engagement, UNHCR and the Secretariat of Human Rights conducted consultations in La Ceiba with **42 representatives from diverse ethnic communities, aiming to influence the development of the IDP Law to better meet their protection needs.** This dialogue is part of UNHCR's ongoing efforts to ensure that laws and policies are effectively tailored to the realities on the ground.

In San Pedro Sula, additional training sessions focused on GBV response strategies benefited around 15 officials from various organizations, bolstering local capacities to address and manage GBV incidents effectively. This was complemented by legal workshops that discussed creating expedited judicial processes for children in the

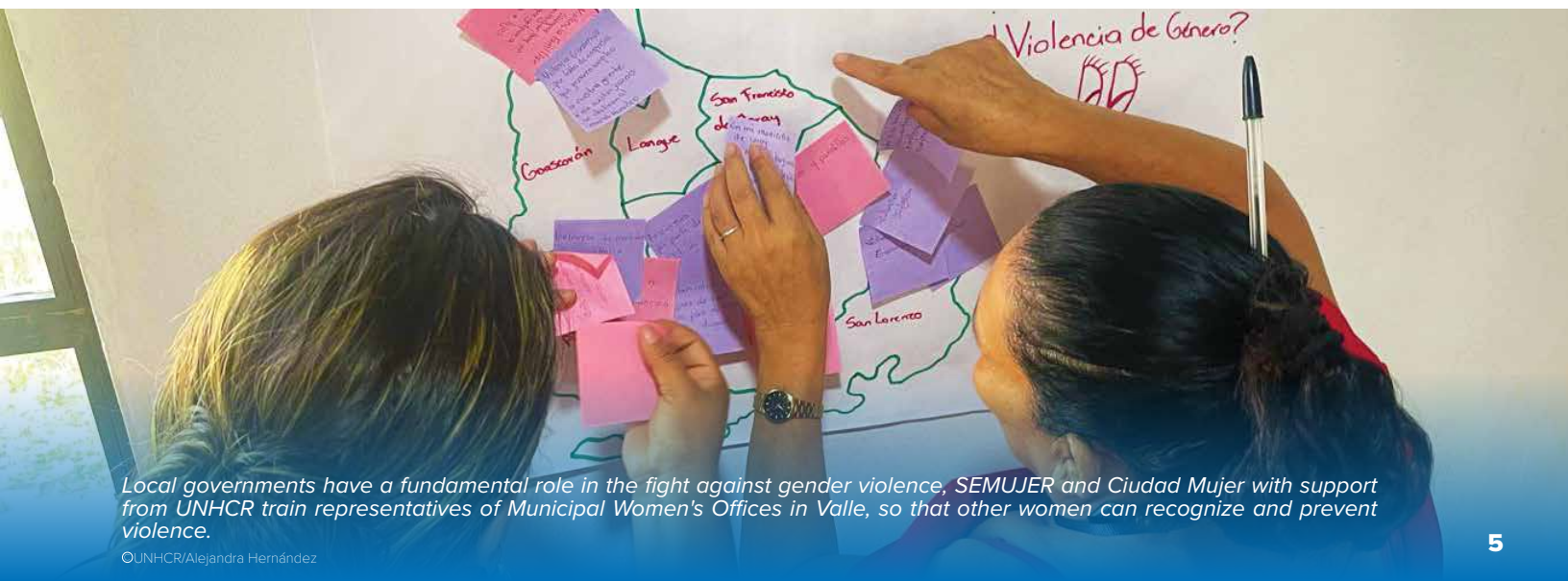
resettlement process, aiming to streamline legal protections and reduce waiting times for vulnerable groups.

UNHCR also undertook a monitoring mission in El Olvidito, a community in Ocotepeque, to assess human smuggling routes and strengthen community education initiatives aimed at combating smuggling activities. This monitoring is crucial for enhancing safety and security measures for communities affected by smuggling and trafficking.

In addition, the National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH) and UNHCR carried out monitoring missions in Comayagüela and Tegucigalpa where each month hundreds of people in mixed movements, many of them Venezuelan women and children, **require medical assistance, food, shelter, and information on their rights.** People who get stranded in the capital are often the most vulnerable and with very limited financial resources, forcing them to sleep in public spaces exposing them to severe protection risks.

Amidst these activities, **UNHCR supported an assessment on access to justice** with the The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law (HiiL) HiiL for the internally displaced population in Choloma, Concepción de María, Duyure, El Triunfo, Macila, San Pedro Sula, Soni and Tela, where over 1,000 surveys were implemented. These surveys provided vital data to better understand and address the justice needs of displaced people, informing future UNHCR interventions and advocacy.

The month also saw significant regional collaboration through the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS), with the National Technical Team participating in strategic planning sessions to integrate the needs of displaced populations into Honduras' Annual Operational Plan for 2025. **This ensures that these needs are prioritized in national budgeting and planning processes,** reflecting a concerted effort to align national policies with the realities of displacement.



Local governments have a fundamental role in the fight against gender violence, SEMUJER and Ciudad Mujer with support from UNHCR train representatives of Municipal Women's Offices in Valle, so that other women can recognize and prevent violence.

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The ancestral experience and knowledge of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples offer unique perspectives on the territory, resources and cultural practices. UNHCR accompanied the CIPPDEF in the consultations for the regulation of the Displacement Law.

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In mid-April, INM and UNHCR Honduras attended the regional virtual MIRPS session of the Working Group on Reception, Admission and Processing of Asylum Cases. As part of the session, UNHCR presented guidelines on child-friendly procedures.

Notable missions included support for an initiative led by the Secretariat of Women's Affairs in Danlí on 16 April, focusing on **enhancing support for women in mixed movements through working with local governments and other key actors** to improve prevention and response efforts.

On 20 April, UNHCR participated in a mission led by CARE with senior US Congress and Senate staff to the southeast border of Honduras, providing US policymakers with firsthand insights into local humanitarian challenges and discussing protection risks and operational gaps regarding people in mixed movements. The CARE-led mission also visited the Rivera Hernández sector of San Pedro Sula. **This mission facilitated discussions on the main protection risks, needs, and impacts of violence and climate change**, with active participation from the Garífuna community and youth volunteers linked to the NGO Jóvenes Contra la Violencia. This event not only raised international awareness but also highlighted the urgent need for targeted interventions to mitigate risks and enhance community resilience of internally displaced people.

These efforts collectively aimed to **improve the safety, rights, and well-being of displaced persons and communities in Honduras**, demonstrating UNHCR's

commitment to addressing complex challenges through informed, responsive, and collaborative approaches.

A representative of INM and the Vice-Chancellor of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs participated in the First Regional Thematic Consultation of the Cartagena +40 Process on “Protecting people on the move and stateless people”, which took place in Mexico City. Countries will jointly work on the adoption of the 2024-2034 Chile Declaration and Plan of Action, planned to be adopted in December 2024. Among the issues raised by the Honduran delegation is **the need to expand the protection response to mixed movements as well as the establishment of a temporary protection status for people fleeing natural disasters**.

To enhance access to information about the rights of people in mixed movements as well as the existing mechanisms to report Human Rights violations, **CONADEH and UNHCR published two articles on ICRC's RedSafe application which is widely used by people on the move**. To ensure CONADEH's staff members who are managing its 24/7 national hotline are aware of the most common Human Rights violations committed against people on the move as well as on their right to seek international protection, UNHCR provided a capacity building workshop to them in Tegucigalpa.

In addition, **UNHCR installed information billboards in different languages at El Pescadero humanitarian space**, located close to Las Manos entry border, on the available protection services. The humanitarian space is currently being rented by INM with support of UNHCR.

RESPOND

In April 2024, UNHCR continued its efforts to address the challenges of mixed movements and forced displacement in Honduras, effectively combining monitoring activities, cluster coordination, public outreach, and emergency response.

Through collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council, UNHCR registered **+1,300 people for case management**, primarily focusing on those internally displaced or at risk of displacement.



400 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 1,615 people.

Furthermore, **UNHCR identified and registered 31 cases of 116 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. This decrease is aligned with the low number of returnees registered since January due to administrative changes to the return process in Mexico.

To improve reception conditions for refugees and migrants on the move, in April 2024, **UNHCR's Mobile Information Service reached over 21,000 people in mixed movements in Choluteca, Danlí, Trojes, as well as 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.

UNHCR published its latest Mixed Movements Protection Monitoring report, which provides critical insights into the experiences of refugees and migrants on the move. Among the 156 individuals interviewed, **35% cited violence and persecution as their reasons for leaving their country of origin**. Furthermore, 33% reported experiencing mistreatment or abuse during their journey, with 8% facing such issues in Honduras. The primary needs identified were food (57%), water (31%), clothing and footwear (24%), and shelter (14%), alongside information on available protection services. The report can be accessed here in English and here in Spanish.

Furthermore, regional mixed movements trends, profiles and protection needs of people on the move have been released in a report reflecting the results of almost 4,000 people interviewed, **including the results from Honduras**.

In addition, UNHCR and its partners **provided temporary shelter to over 2,300 people in mixed movements** in

vulnerable situations who were transiting through Honduras in April, across six different shelters located in the departments of El Paraíso, Choluteca, and Ocotepeque.

The Local Response Group of the Protection Cluster at the south-east border, co-led by UNHCR and Child Fund, engaged in five meetings with more than 15 organizations to discuss trends, gaps, and coordinate efforts **to improve the humanitarian response to persons in mixed movements**.

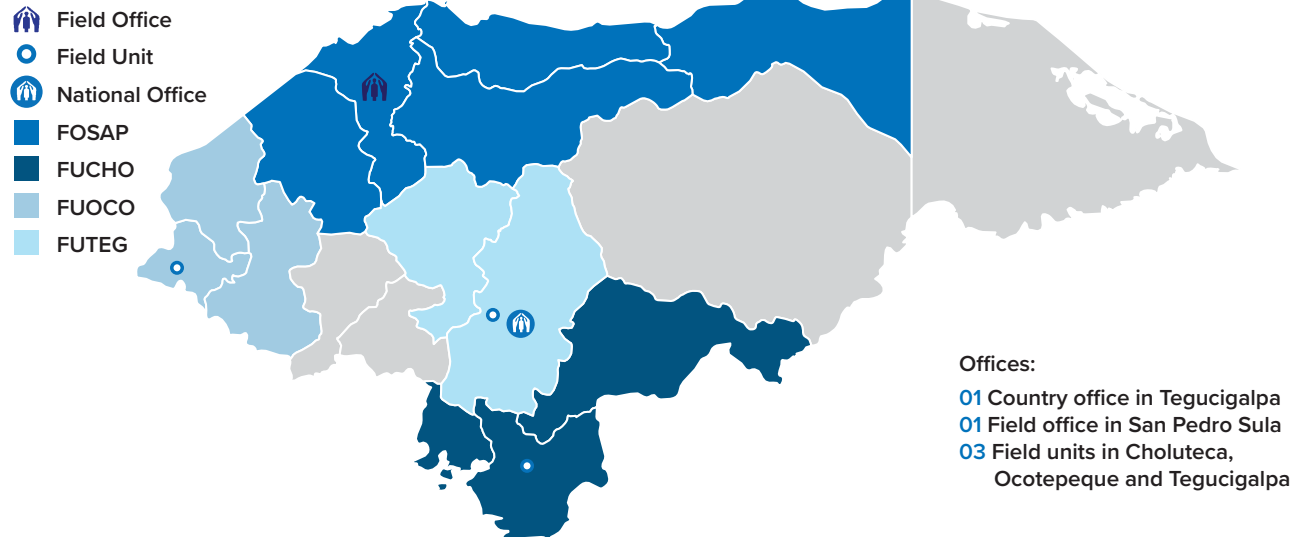
Similarly, the Local Group at the western border, together with co-leader ADRA, met four times to coordinate actions **to address the response in the Machuca humanitarian space**.

UNHCR led the first bi-national meeting with 22 humanitarian actors from Honduras and Guatemala **to improve coordination at crucial border points**, aiming to foster ongoing collaboration and more effective response strategies. On the same day, UNHCR facilitated a key meeting between the Public Policy Directorate of the Social Development and Integration Secretariat (SEDESOL) and the Humanitarian Network to develop **public policy that protects people displaced by climate change**, leveraging technical expertise from the Network to advance policy development.

UNHCR engaged in public outreach, with the Honduras Representative interviewed by the media outlet Criterio about the impacts of violence on women and children and the causes of forced displacement. These interviews highlighted **the need to avoid discrimination against children and youth recruited by criminal organizations** and stressed the importance of including the voices and specific needs of internally displaced people in institutional responses.

EMPOWER

In April 2024, UNHCR continued to intensify its response to the challenges faced by displaced populations across Honduras, implementing a wide array of activities aimed at enhancing protection, supporting community empowerment, and fostering social cohesion.



UNHCR facilitated Accountability to Affected Populations sessions in the urban areas of Nueva Capital, Izaguirre, San Miguel, y San Buenaventura in the Central District, areas at high risk of violence-driven displacement. These sessions engaged over 70 community leaders from women's groups, youth networks, and other community structures to **assess risks and prioritize protection initiatives**. During this period, feedback on UNHCR operations and those of its partners was also collected, aiding in the evaluation and adaptation of ongoing efforts.

UNHCR facilitated municipal services fairs in the communities Generación 2000 y San Buenaventura where **over 600 people accessed a range of services including medical attention and legal counselling**. UNHCR also conducted a menstrual hygiene workshop for the community of La Izaguirre supported by the local Women's Network with 22 girls participating.

In an effort to create safe spaces and promote peaceful coexistence, **UNHCR supported infrastructural enhancements at Generación 2000's community centre, part of a tactical urbanism initiative**. The centre, temporarily hosting a local school undergoing renovations, saw active participation from over 30 children and leaders.

In collaboration with Save the Children and Honduras' National Commission for Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (CONDEPOR), UNHCR delivered four sessions of sports activities at the Villa Olímpica complex. Engaging

more than 180 people, including children and youth from high-risk communities, these activities aimed to **reduce the risk of forced recruitment and foster social cohesion**.

Concurrently, UNHCR and Children International held sessions for Sports for Protection activities in five high-risk areas in San Pedro Sula. These sessions, attended by 65 community leaders and volunteers, emphasized the creation of cohesive, peaceful, and safe spaces while addressing risks of forced recruitment and gender-based violence. **Self-care workshops were also conducted in communities affected by territorial disputes**, involving 20 leaders and volunteers to address the resultant forced displacement. Children International, Doctors of the World, and UNHCR also collaborated on a community protection plan in Chamelecón Sur, enhancing the community's medical clinic and building local capacity for community-based protection.

Significant emphasis was placed on legal and protective frameworks. In collaboration with UDIMUF and the Calidad de Vida Association, UNHCR engaged with La Ceiba's Municipal Committee to enhance the operational capabilities of the "Ixchel Safe House". This involved refining **risk assessment protocols and strengthening support measures for women survivors of gender-based violence**, with local justice and police authorities, the Prosecutor's Office, and other relevant agencies participating.



In rural areas, radio is a crucial channel for disseminating vital information. With support from UNHCR, Cholula Triunfeña radio strengthened its capabilities to prevent xenophobia, educate about a culture of peace, and protect the community with its messages.

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Further strengthening community support, in Ocotepeque, the "Friendship Festival" organized by UNHCR in San Antonio de los Sitios brought together more than 100 community members, emphasizing the role of public services in **fostering community integration**.

Additionally, **UNHCR supported women entrepreneurs in Ocotepeque, enhancing their business skills and planning**, with a focus on displaced persons, asylum seekers, and those at risk of displacement. A training session on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse was also conducted for 40 security inspectors of the national police, reinforcing protective measures within law enforcement.

In the south-east, UNHCR initiated a collaboration with the Casa de la Cultura in Danlí to integrate cultural activities that raise awareness of the challenges faced by people on the move and forcibly displaced individuals. This innovative approach aims to promote peaceful coexistence with host communities at a time when Honduras faces significant forced displacement challenges.

To support the local radio Radio Cholula to strengthen their capacities and increase the impact of their work, the first session of a **training program on "Radio diffusion with a Protection approach"** was facilitated to 18 members of the community radio. On this first session, data protection concepts, principles and considerations were discussed.

Throughout the month, UNHCR actively engaged with local governments and community organizations **to ensure a comprehensive response to the needs of refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons**. This included collaborating with the Secretariat of Women's Affairs (SEMUJER) to strengthen case management for forcibly displaced women and supporting the design of regulations for the protection of women in humanitarian crises. These efforts were part of a broader strategy to ensure that displaced populations in Honduras receive the support they need to live safely and with dignity.

SOLVE

In April 2024, UNHCR continued its work in Honduras to enhance economic opportunities and support self-reliance among forcibly displaced persons, while also facilitating third-country solutions for the most vulnerable cases facing imminent life-threatening forced displacement.

In the city of Choluteca, on 16 April, UNHCR’s partner, the Business Development Centre (CDE), held training sessions for 16 local entrepreneurs who have been forcibly displaced. These sessions focused on refining business profiles, identifying promising business ideas, and equipping participants with the skills to confidently present their business plans. This initiative is part of UNHCR’s broader strategy to foster local entrepreneurship and stimulate economic growth within displaced communities.

Additionally, CDE and UNHCR conducted an awareness-raising and capacity-building day for parents, mothers and vocational trainees participating in the livelihood programme in Choluteca. 30 people strengthened their knowledge on protection issues and the importance of integrating youth into the labour market.

Throughout the month, UNHCR also engaged in substantial efforts to support resettlement opportunities, conducting outreach briefings for 39 staff from nine

partner institutions. These briefings aimed to enhance the process of referrals and identification of the most vulnerable cases of people forcibly displaced or at-risk and facing life-threatening situations, ensuring that those most in need have access to third-country solutions. During this period, UNHCR referred 108 cases for third-country solutions and by the end of April 317 people had been successfully resettled to third countries.

Additionally, UNHCR collaborated with the National Service for Entrepreneurship and Small Businesses (SENPRENDE), a presidential program that provides livelihood and market insertion support to vulnerable groups, including returnees. This partnership aimed to develop referral routes and other cooperative mechanisms for seed capital and social enterprise programs in high-risk communities. This included facilitating initial coordination between SENPRENDE and the Secretariat of Human Rights (SEDH) to establish a response mechanism for displaced persons.

Through these multifaceted initiatives, UNHCR is addressing both the immediate and long-term needs of displaced persons in Honduras. By supporting local economic empowerment and providing pathways for resettlement to third countries, UNHCR is helping to ensure comprehensive support for those facing the challenges of displacement.



Thanks to the contributions of donor countries such as



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As of 30 April 2024

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