UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

FACT SHEET

ESQUIPULAS FIELD UNIT

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OPERATIONAL CONTEXT AND KEY FIGURES

Guatemala is a country of origin, transit, and return and has increasingly become a destination for refugees and asylum seekers. UNHCR has 7 offices in the country including the Esquipulas Field Unit which covers the departments of Chiquimula and Jutiapa to provide protection responses to people in mixed movements, in particular to persons in need of international protection, through coordination with local authorities, NGOs, communities and four partners.

The Field Unit responds to situations of Guatemalans at risk, as it is evident that Jutiapa suffers high rates of violent crime including homicides resulting in displacement. Human trafficking and human smuggling in mixed movements are controlled by groups criminal groups linked to violence in the region.

366
refugees and asylum-seekers

7,883
Guatemalans at risk

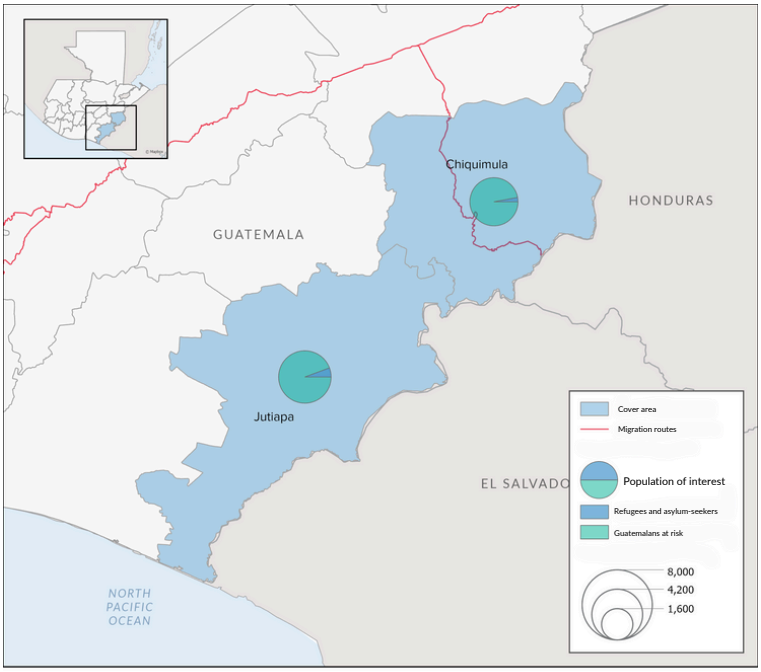
86,867
people served in 2023

171,684
assistance provided in 2023

OTHER RELEVANT DATA

- 27,114 with protection needs (2024)
- 19,520 people in food insecurity (2024)
- 20% of illiteracy (2018)
- 10% of child labour (2018)
- 57% of poverty (2014)
- 338 crimes against women per 100,000 population (2021)
- 47% of unemployment (2018)
- 21% without access to water and sanitation (2018)

Source: Humanitarian Response Plan (2024) and National Statistics Institute (INE). ***Data for the municipality of Esquipulas.***



MAIN IMPACTS OF THE 2023 RESPONSE

Assistance

- UNHCR identified **135** families with international protection needs.
- **411** Guatemalans at risk were referred to the Safe Mobility Programme.
- **218** people received monetary support to cover basic necessities.

Training

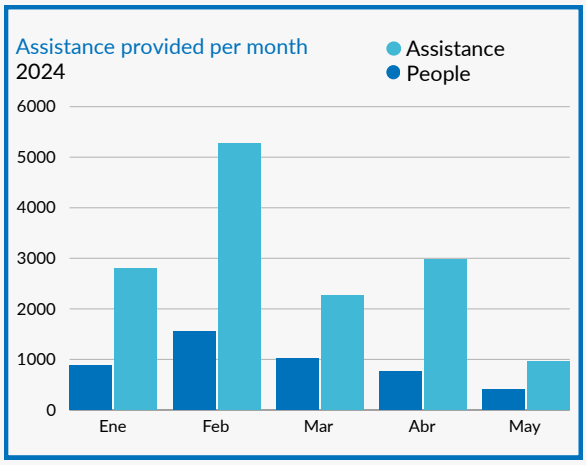
- UNHCR facilitated workshops on inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in community organisations and peaceful coexistence activities with youth and women in Esquipulas.

Community empowerment

- UNHCR supported the training of **5** community promoters to bring health services to communities in Zompopero.

CAPMiR Agua Caliente

The Centre for Attention to Migrants and Refugees (CAPMiR) serves as a key protection space to facilitate access to territory and shelter, provide humanitarian assistance, share official information and identify risks and protection needs. In 2023, five CAPMiRs assisted **25,814** people, **7,147** in Agua Caliente.



Source: Monitoring CAPMiR 2024

UNHCR has qualified staff and a fleet to respond to emergencies in Esquipulas and Jutiapa. ©UNHCR/Víctor Sánchez

Livelihoods

- **109** people received support to strengthen their livelihoods in Jutiapa and Chiquimula. **42** people received employment and **63** people started their enterprises.
- **26** people were supported to obtain their work permits.
- **5** entrepreneurship fairs were held in alliance with the municipalities of Asunción Mita, Jutiapa, Santa Catarina Mita and Esquipulas with the Red Emprende Innova GT. Also, a festival of peaceful coexistence was held, in which more than **125** people participated.
- **5** refugee entrepreneurs received branding, packaging, and social network support thanks to UNHCR's alliance with the Universidad del Valle Guatemala.
- Business advice was provided to entrepreneurs in Chiquimula and Jutiapa to promote the competitiveness and technification of their businesses through the PROMIPYME programme. Business meetings were also held to promote the recruitment of refugees and asylum seekers.

Gender violence

- An information fair on gender-based violence prevention was held in Camotán, on the border with Honduras.