

El Salvador

November 2024 || Monthly Update #11

The new CODER premises, built with UNHCR support, offer a dedicated space for the attention of asylum-seekers and refugees in El Salvador.
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Our 2024 response in figures

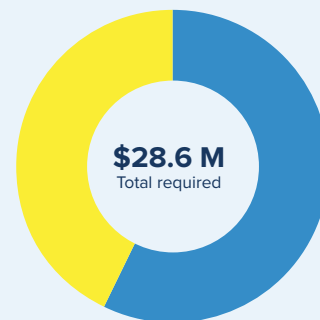


Funding

6,117  individuals at heightened risk received cash assistance.

This support helps cover basic needs such as food, rent, documentation, and facilitates activities for economic integration, education, and naturalization.

43%
Funding gap



57%
Funded

2,892  people registered with biometrics.

57% of UNHCR's financial requirements for El Salvador received by 30 November 2024.

Highlights



The new CODER premises inaugurated with UNHCR's support in San Salvador.
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Shelter focal points from various locations nationwide during the closing session of UNHCR training on protection shelter management.
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The director of CIIE delivering certificates to graduates of Psico-Apoyarte.
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- The Foreign Affairs Ministry, along the Deputy Chief of Mission of the United States, and UNHCR Representative a.i. inaugurated the UNHCR-supported new premises of the Refugee Status Determination Commission (CODER). With the presence of MIRPS Support Platform members and the Diplomatic Corps, the event gathered institutions engaged in the support of refugees and asylum-seekers, such as the General Directorate for Migration and Foreigners, the national institution for women ISDEMU, and the Attorney General's Office (PGR), among others. Since 2017, UNHCR works hand in hand with CODER towards the strengthening of the asylum system through technical capacities, provision of humanitarian assistance and promotion of integration opportunities. [Link](#)
- A series of eight workshops helped 400 national and municipal shelter coordinators to know more about management and coordination of temporary shelters with a protection lens. As a result of the alliance by the National Shelter Directorate and UNHCR - as lead of the Protection Sector and co-lead of the CCCM Sector- participants got a better understanding on the identification of people with specific needs, as children, women, and people with disabilities.
- In Zacamil, Mejicanos, 190 youth completed "Psico-Apoyarte", a six-month capacity-building process by the UNHCR-supported Comprehensive Centre for Emotional Intelligence (CIIE). Through sessions and activities, PsicoApoyarte proved useful to improve mental health and emotional management by young participants, who were better equipped to contribute to social cohesion and peaceful coexistence in communities historically affected by violence. [Link](#)



PGR staff during training sessions on the new protocol for the protection of displaced children developed with UNHCR support.
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Protect

- The Attorney General's Office (PGR) released its "Protocol for the Comprehensive Care of Children, Adolescents, and Their Families in Situations of Internal Forced Displacement or at Risk of Displacement", developed with UNHCR's support. The protocol establishes guidelines to provide comprehensive care for children, adolescents, and their families, ensuring access to essential legal, psychosocial, and educational services.

A total of 44 PGR attorneys and key staff in San Miguel and Santa Ana participated in trainings on this new framework, with similar sessions planned for other regions.



Respond



Women from various regions engage in a dialogue to share challenges and solutions for their communities.
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- The General Directorate for Civil Protection and UNHCR held training sessions on risk management with the communities Brisas del Jiboa (San Vicente) and Primero de Mayo (Mejicanos). The sessions were part of a broader effort to strengthen local capabilities to identify, prevent, and respond to climate-related disasters and to prevent displacement in communities historically affected by violence.
- In the framework of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, UNHCR along the UN Country Team and other actors reached 400 people with awareness-raising activities on violence prevention. Also, UNHCR and partner ORMUSA held a dialogue with 90 women from various regions to reflect on community challenges and best practices.



Empower



Anabel, a volunteer of the Judicial Facilitators programme, shares insights on how she will apply her newly acquired knowledge to help others in her community in Soyapango.
© UNHCR / Jacqueline Henríquez

- The President of the Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ) and its magistrates, together with UNHCR Representative, chaired the closing ceremony of the Judicial Facilitators programme in 2024. Also, part of this event, 79 volunteers of the programme attended the workshop on international protection and forced displacement that UNHCR delivered. Over 700 judicial facilitators enhanced their skills and knowledge on peaceful conflict resolution and prevention of forced displacement in 2024.
- Some 175 community leaders from across El Salvador graduated from the intermediate and advanced levels of the UNHCR-supported School on Human Rights, Leadership, and Community Organization, implemented by partner FUNDASAL. This programme strengthened their skills in community development and human rights advocacy and equipped them to drive positive change in their communities.



Solve



Residents of La Campanera community showcase the recycled fiberglass products they created through UNHCR-supported training.
© UNHCR / Jacqueline Henríquez

- UNHCR kickstarted multiple interventions to improve and re-signify spaces marked by historical gang violence in Las Margaritas and La Campanera - Soyapango district - and Tutunichapa - San Salvador-. These “tactical urbanism” interventions, identified and planned together with residents and representatives from the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the municipalities, and partner World Vision aim at revamping collective areas to promote peaceful coexistence and to strengthen social cohesion.
- Ten residents of La Campanera, Soyapango, completed a 40-hour technical training on recycled fiberglass, supported by UNHCR and World Vision, in coordination with the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. As a result, participants produced items like flowerpots, benches, and fences to use in communal space. This initiative aims to expand livelihoods opportunities by equipping participants with skills to foster circular economy entrepreneurship.



Stories from the field

UNHCR and CONAPINA join forces to enhance protection for children and adolescents in communities historically affected by violence and displacement.

Children in the Tutunichapa community in San Salvador learn about solidarity and resilience through the play “La Travesía de Gualcho”.
© UNHCR / Jacqueline Henriquez

Children make up more than half of the world’s displaced population, and yet, despite challenges, their resilience is extraordinary. Through education, play, and skill development, children can find ways to adapt and heal, often supported by the strength of their families and communities.

Displacement profoundly affects childhood, as it often interrupts education, undermines healthy development, and increases the protection risks children and adolescents face.

Recognizing these challenges, the National Council for Childhood and Adolescence (CONAPINA) and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, signed in 2024 a letter of understanding to further cooperation for the protection of displaced children and adolescents, including those at risk of displacement, refugees, asylum-seekers, and returnees with protection needs.

This agreement supports the development of tools such as care protocols, manuals, and protection mechanisms, as well as case referral to assist those with most urgent needs. Within this framework, four psychosocial support spaces in Las Margaritas, Tutunichapa I and II, and La Campanera, will provide comprehensive support to vulnerable children in these communities historically affected by gang violence and displacement.

As part of their joint efforts, UNHCR and CONAPINA also organized cultural and educational activities in 2024, such as the performance of La Travesía de Gualcho, a play addressing topics like forced displacement, climate change, solidarity, and resilience. This initiative reached over 250 children in San Salvador and San Miguel, offering a space in which they reflected on their experiences while interacting with other children in their communities.

“It’s essential to address these topics so children can understand their surroundings and express their feelings. For a long time, the stigma of violence restricted their access to spaces of art, fun, and learning,” said Matha Sosa, the principal of La Campanera school.

The collaboration between UNHCR and institutions within the national child protection system in recent years has included the construction and improvement of care facilities, adapting shelters, strengthening technical expertise, and providing humanitarian assistance. These initiatives enhance national capacities to address the needs of children in areas long affected by violence, promoting their mental health and emotional well-being.

In 2024, UNHCR is appealing for USD 28.6 million to provide protection, responses, empowerment and solutions to refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced persons in El Salvador. The best way to support UNHCR’s appeal is through unearmarked contributions. Such flexible funding at the global level is key in allowing a timely response to evolving needs wherever required.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the support in 2024 of:



UNHCR is thankful for the support from private donors in Australia, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Spain, and Sweden.

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