

HONDURAS EXTERNAL UPDATE 14

December 2022

KEY FIGURES

CONTEXT

+247,000
people have been internally displaced in Honduras as a result of violence between 2004 and 2018. In addition, **9%** of the Honduras' population, or **847,154** persons were victims of extortion in 2022, according to the Association for a More Just Society (ASJ).

94,339
Honduran nationals were returned in 2022, the second highest number in the past seven years, according to data from the National Migration Institute (INM).

188,858
persons of different nationalities entered Honduras irregularly in 2022, the highest number ever reported by INM in one single year. According to the INM data, **39%** were Cubans, **29%** Venezuelans and **13%** Ecuadorians.

RESPONSE

91,954
people in mixed movements were served with humanitarian assistance in 2022 by the Local Response Group for the Southern Border, led by UNHCR and co-lead by Action Against Hunger.

44,000
mainly internally displaced persons, but also asylum-seekers, returnees, and host community members were served by UNHCR in 2022, with services such as cash and voucher assistance, community protection, case management and risk mitigation.

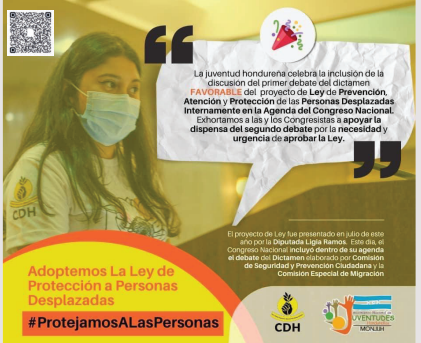
HIGHLIGHTS

On December 21, the National Congress of Honduras passed the landmark Law for the prevention, assistance, and protection of internally displaced persons. This is the first legal framework created to deliver a comprehensive response to internal displacement. It does so by mandating the creation of a national policy to prevent the causes of internal displacement, dispositions to provide humanitarian assistance, and a protection mechanism for abandoned housing, land, and property, among others. This is also the first legal tool in the country of this nature.

UNHCR has continuously provided technical support to the Government since 2015. Part of this support included the exchange of experiences with other governments, design and implementation of protection mechanisms, conduct consultations with persons at risk of displacement, provision of legal advice during the drafting phase and on advocacy actions, and strengthening the operational and technical capacities of key institutions such as the Human Rights Secretariat, the National Commissioner for Human Rights, the Property Institute, the Directorate for Children, Adolescent and Family Affairs and the municipality of San Pedro Sula. The law had been stranded in the Congress awaiting to be discussed since 2019. UNHCR joined efforts with ICRC, NRC and OHCHR, as well as with the UN Resident Coordinator, to position the urgency of adopting the law on the high-level institutional agenda. All along, UNHCR has supported civil society organizations to strengthen their advocacy skills and coordinate the creation of a platform where displaced people and communities affected by violence could raise their voices and demand the adoption, through youth-led organizations such as Jóvenes Contra la Violencia and the Honduran National



¡Es Ley!
Honduras aprobó la Ley para la prevención, atención y protección de las **personas desplazadas internamente**



La juventud hondureña celebra la inclusión de la discusión del primer debate del dictamen FAVORABLE del proyecto de Ley de Prevención, Atención y Protección de las Personas Desplazadas Internamente en la Agenda del Congreso Nacional. Exhortamos a las y los Congresistas a apoyar la dispensa del segundo debate por la necesidad y urgencia de aprobar la Ley.

El proyecto de Ley fue presentado en julio de este año por la diputada Leticia Ramos. Este día, el Congreso Nacional incluyó dentro de su agenda el debate del Dictamen elaborado por Comisión de Seguridad y Prevención Ciudadana y la Comisión Especial de Migración.

Adoptemos La Ley de Protección a Personas Desplazadas
#ProtejamolasPersonas

Youth Movement, and other civil society organizations such as Centro de Desarrollo Humano, the Teachers Committee, Médicos del Mundo, Caritas and Grupo Sociedad Civil. Relevant actors, such as the US Embassy in Honduras, the UN Resident Coordinator and ICRC have congratulated the National Congress on its leadership and commitment on the adoption.



La Juventud Hondureña estamos a la vanguardia de la aprobación del proyecto de Ley de Prevención, Atención y Protección de las Personas...

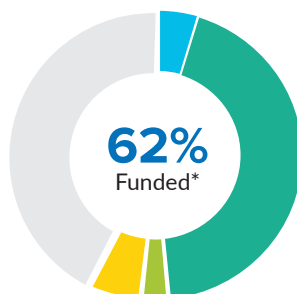
The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (HC), Filippo Grandi, visited Honduras from December 12 to 14. During these days, he visited two high-risk communities profiled both as expeller and receiver of internally displaced persons in San Pedro Sula and Choloma municipalities. The High Commissioner discussed with youth and women organizations as well as community leaders how to prevent and respond to internal displacement due to violence, gender-based violence as well as protection mechanisms, technical training, and community entrepreneurship to provide durable solutions. In relation to the legal framework to protect IDPs and the authorities' response to forced displacement due to the violence, the HC held a meeting with the President of the Congress and the Secretary of State for the Presidency to foster the prompt approval of the Displaced Persons Law. He met with the United Nations Country Team to discuss the situation of human mobility and forced displacement in the country. Finally, the HC met with civil society actors in Tegucigalpa who provide shelter and other assistance to persons in mixed movements, such as information on the right to seek asylum in Honduras, food, water, medicaments, and others.



The High Commissioner participated in the V Annual Conference from MIRPS to reinforce its commitment to addressing forced displacement in Central America and Mexico, together with members and partners.

FUNDING

UNHCR appealed for USD 28.6 million for its 2022 programme, of which USD17.8 million was funded. USD11.6 million more was needed, which prevented UNHCR from providing part of the protection services planned for people forcibly displaced, at risk of displacement, asylum-seekers, refugees, and persons in mixed movements. For 2023, UNHCR is [appealing](#) for USD 30.1 million to continue serving these populations



*as of 29 December 2022

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

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

CONTEXT

Although the National Congress of Honduras approved the landmark Law for the prevention, assistance, and protection of internally displaced persons on 21 December, Honduras awaits its sanction by the President Xiomara Castro. The next milestone for this landmark is the regulation of the law which determines the path to its enforcement and will have to be concluded within six months after its entry into force. The national authorities' capacities must be strengthened to achieve this goal, which UNHCR identifies as a priority in the first semester of 2023.

To fight the significant increase in extortion cases in November 2022 in Honduras, the government decreed a state of emergency, starting at 6 p.m. on 6 December in 87 neighborhoods of Tegucigalpa and 73 of San Pedro Sula, which are allegedly in the hands of maras and gangs, as part of the security plan to reduce extortion and crimes related in the country. The measure will be in force until 6 January 2023, and during this time the Police will be allowed to "arrest the people they determine responsible for associating, executing, or having ties, in the commission of crimes and offenses," according to the decree published in the Official Gazette. The decree does not apply to the rest of the country. 79,115 households and a total of 352,025 residents of the capital Tegucigalpa will be under curfew for the next month. It is important to highlight that no regular strategy to fight extortion and violence was implemented before the state of emergency was decreed.

The National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH) is concerned with the use of force by police officers, since there is no law to regulate its proportional use. The CONADEH also expressed its doubts on the necessity and adequacy of the measure of the State of Emergency itself as an appropriate measure to address extortion considering the restrictions it entails on fundamental rights. UNHCR is concerned with the lack of transparency and clarity of the procedures and absence of limits to the Police to identify, apprehend and prosecute (with the Judicial operators) persons in the targeted communities, especially the youth, women, and children allegedly linked to maras and gangs who are seen as perpetrators rather than victims. UNHCR also notes with concern the lack of an official registry of the detentions conducted under the State of Emergency and inconsistencies in the figures reported by Police forces presented as evidence of the effectiveness of the measure.

In relation to violence indicators, 2022 saw the lowest homicide rate for Honduras in the past 16 years, with 35.79 homicides per 100,000 people. However, the number of violent deaths is still high. In total for 2022, 569 children, adolescents and youth died violently in the country, according to data from the Coordinating Committee of Private Institutions for Children, Adolescents, Youth, and their Rights (RED COIPRODEN). During December 2022, 35 violent incidents were recorded. This represents 48 victims who lost their lives, 40 men and eight women. 16 of them were between the ages of 0 to 18 and at least 32 were between the ages of 19 to 30. Moreover, the collective Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, and Intersex (LGBTI) of Honduras denounced to be unprotected against violence in the country, where at least 46 members of that community were killed this year, according to them.

UNHCR RESPONSE

COORDINATION

STATE OF EMERGENCY | UNHCR is engaging with counterparts and civil society to monitor the evolution of the state of emergency to ensure clear mechanisms are in place to measure the reduction of extortion and related crimes and effective increase of the security and freedom of movement in the areas, and the production reliable data of the results and prosecutions of citizens in the frame of the state of emergency.

MIRPS | Honduras ended its Pro-Tempore Presidency of the Regional Comprehensive Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS), and as part of its functions, the Vice Foreign Minister for Consular and Immigration Affairs, Antonio García, presented a summary of the achievements that the country reached during its management in a press conference to inform the Honduras media. After five years of the MIRPS creation, during the V Annual Conference, Honduras handed over the Pro-Tempore Presidency to Panama, with the presence of UN High Commissioner for Refugees, who reinforced its commitment to addressing forced displacement in Central America and Mexico, together with members and partners.

PROTECTION CLUSTER | On 14 December UNHCR and the Global Protection Cluster launched the "Global Report on Law and Policy on Internal Displacement: Implementing National Responsibility" that highlights several of Honduras' good practices in the design and implementation of public policies. Among those is the role of the Inter-Institutional Commission for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons by Violence (CIPPDV) as the institutional focal point for the design of response measures. This is based on the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of internally displaced persons. In addition, the Report includes the development of consultations with internally displaced persons. These consultations aimed at informing the drafting of the IDP bill to protect, prevent and respond to internal displacement. Finally, Honduras was also represented in the document through the design of the Human Rights Secretariat (SEDH)'s Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Mechanism.

PROTECTION

LEGAL FRAMEWORK | UNHCR conducted three workshops with 42 young leaders of the National Movement of Honduran Youth (MONJUH) in La Ceiba, Gracias and Santa Rosa de Copán to strengthen their advocacy skills for the adoption of the IDP protection bill. Overall, 110 young leaders were trained on advocacy and protection nationwide. As a result, the young leaders have designed advocacy messages that have been published in social media during the sessions where the bill has been discussed in the National Congress. Congress President Luis Redondo and congresswoman Ligia Ramos have shared their posts on several occasions.

HLP | To create a special registry for properties abandoned due to forced displacement, the Property Institute (IP) and UNHCR held a national meeting with the directors of the registry and cadastre offices to design an executive agreement for this purpose. The proposed agreement will be submitted to the IP's Board of Directors for approval, and once it is adopted, it will be the first legal protection mechanism in Honduras for abandoned properties.

COMMUNITY-BASED PROTECTION | UNHCR with the National Sports Commission of Honduras (CONDEPOR) carried out sports activities as part of the work of bringing sports to communities at high-risk of displacement due to violence. These activities were carried out within the framework of the protection strategy based on sports implemented by UNHCR in the Central District, which strengthens social cohesion, integration, risk identification and prevention through sports. In these actions developed with different communities such as San Miguel, November 30, Nueva Capital, San Buena Ventura, and La Esperanza, more than 215 children and youth were benefited in the second semester of 2022.

UNHCR and partner Children International participated in the Graduation Ceremony of 162 participants of the Community Art (Arte Comunitario) Municipal Program in San Pedro Sula. The ceremony was attended by over 250 persons. It successfully concluded the 9-months artistic workshops delivered in four high-risk communities of three sectors of San Pedro Sula profiled as both IDP expeller and receivers. The Community Art Program seeks to mitigate youth-related risks i.e., forced recruitment, mobility restrictions due to invisible borders, and GBV, promoting the use of cultural safe spaces for social inclusion, dialogue and participation of communities affected by generalized violence and forced displacement, and to strengthen youth protection environment by enhancing their skills and abilities to address stigmatization and (re)build positive identities.

In addition, UNHCR jointly carried with partner Children International year end project closure with 110 community leaders and volunteers from seven high-risk communities affected by generalized violence. The session served as platform to exchange experiences and best practices on community empowerment, risk mitigation, and protection initiatives, as well as to strengthen social cohesion a network of volunteers covering the Rivera Hernández, Cofradía and Chamelecón sectors, profiled as major expellers and receivers of internally displaced persons in San Pedro Sula.

In San Marcos, a city close to the Guatemalan border, UNHCR implemented the community-based protection strategy COMUNYCARTe during three days with San Marcos's Municipality, Ocotepeque's Youth Network and Jóvenes Contra la Violencia. 46 youth and children jointly participated and painted a mural to bring a message of peace and colour to the community, together with 20 adults from the community who joined and supported the activity. They all engaged with the local community where displaced people live at risk of exclusion with the host community to empower and promote peaceful coexistence.





INCREASING AWARENESS | On 19 December, UNHCR and World Vision inaugurated a mural in the city of Danlí, one of the main hotspots to host persons in mixed movements, with an act that included different government authorities including the mayor. The mural tries to sensitize regarding displacement. Furthermore, On 20 December a mural was inaugurated in the city of Choluteca where children and youth of the municipality shared their view of forced displacement and opened their doors to refugees.

BEST PRACTICES | On another note, the Coalition against the involvement of children and youth in the armed conflict in Colombia (COALICO) with the support of UNHCR, carried out a visit to Colombia of a commission delegated by public institutions and Honduran civil society whose function is related to the child protection. This joint visit allowed for an exchange of experiences and assessment of action between public institutions and civil society in Colombia related to the child protection in contexts of generalized armed violence and armed conflict in order to strengthen actions in Honduras.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS | 40 young people from high-risk communities in San Pedro Sula and Francisco Morazán successfully concluded the graphic design studies in the GraphXAcademy, a lead employer of graphic design specialists in Honduras, with cash assistance from UNHCR. The cooperation with GraphXAcademy is part of UNHCR's engagement work with the private sector in Honduras and will allow more IDP youth, returnees and at risk of displacement to have access to certified training and increase their opportunities to access to the labour market.

TACTICAL URBANISM | As part of its community-based protection strategy, UNHCR and consultant firm Púchica, finalized the joint curricular design of a pilot Tactical Urbanism, Participatory Urban Planning and Forced Displacement Diploma in collaboration with Honduras National Autonomous University (UNAH). The four modules of this pilot diploma seek to build capacities of 60 municipal officials, civil society and grassroots organizations, and community leaders on Tactical Urbanism methodologies and tools to recover, and foster the appropriation of public spaces, as well as improve the access to services in high-risk communities affected by violence, while addressing root causes of forced displacement in Honduras. Next steps will include detailed content and methodology transfer to UNAH and planification of implementation of the diploma as of 2023 second semester.

UNHCR, San Pedro Sula Municipality, and partners Children International, Warriors Zulu Nation, and Fe y Alegria jointly held a Tactical Urbanism Festival called Lufedu Wadügawagün (stands for Our Identity in Garinagu), attended by more than 210 people from the high-risk Afro-descendent community Alfonso Lacayo in San Pedro Sula, profiled as both IDP expeller and receivers. Its members participated in artistic-cultural activities, including traditional Garifuna dances, muralism, street painting, recreational activities for children and adolescents, and local entrepreneurs stands. This festival focused on strengthening the access to safe spaces and protection services, foster sense of belonging and inclusion, and enhanced dialogue and participation capacity of Garifuna communities and leaders.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP | 114 entrepreneurs internally displaced, returnees and at-risk of displacement successfully concluded the market-related training carried out by the partnership between the Business Development Centre (CDE) and UNHCR (35 in Tegucigalpa, 44 in San Pedro Sula and 35 in Choluteca and El Paraiso). They attended the graduation event where they received the certificate. UNHCR and CDE will jointly provide technical assistance for all these start-ups.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION | UNHCR completed a training on financial inclusion for 20 entrepreneurs in La Ceiba affected by violence, in coordination with the local Municipality Women's Office. 19 women and one man received the course's certificate.



VOCATIONAL TRAINING | UNHCR with Municipality of San Pedro Sula and the local NGO Comisión de Acción Social Menonita (CASM) attended the inaugural event for the new graphic design training offered in the Municipal Training Center in San Pedro Sula. UNHCR support the Municipality with a donation of equipment and the first group of students, 11 young IDPs, with cash-based assistance to guarantee they could cover cost during the four months' course.

In 2022, UNHCR together with Save the Children implemented 21 vocational training days on photography, videomaking, computing, motorcycle mechanics and barbershop, all directed to youth in high-risk urban areas in the Central District, where the capital Tegucigalpa is located.

SEED CAPITAL | UNHCR provided seed capital to 45 entrepreneurs who are internally displaced or who are at risk of displacement to restart their businesses, after having to abandon it due to risks related to forced displacement. The seed capital was delivered following a training conducted by UNHCR's partner Business Development Centre (CDE) in Ocotepeque, Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, Choluteca, Danlí and Intibucá. UNHCR and CDE will jointly monitor the business development processes based on the chosen economic sector. In addition, together with the Human Rights Secretariat (SEDH), UNHCR provided seed capital to 112 internally displaced people, as a livelihoods solution for 26 protection cases.

MIXED MOVEMENTS

CONTEXT

From 1 January to 31 December a record number of 188,858 people entered Honduras irregularly, mainly from Cuba (39%), Venezuela (29%), Ecuador (13%) and Haiti (6%), according to INM data. In addition, 138,434 Nicaraguans entered regularly, transited, and exited regularly to Guatemala for "tourism/transit". In total, more than 325,000 persons in mixed movements transited through Honduras in 2022, the highest number ever reported by INM in one single year. This also means that on average 896 people in mixed movements entered per day, greatly exceeding the country's reception capacities to guarantee services for people in mixed movements such as accommodation, food, medical assistance, and provision for other urgent needs. This is reflected in the number of persons in mixed movements who are on the streets and exposes the dire reception situation for people in mixed movements during the ongoing emergency.

ASYLUM-SEEKERS | According to the Honduran National Migration Institute (INM), eight new asylum applications were filed in Honduras in December (five Nicaraguans, two Venezuelans, one Mexican). In total 149 asylum applications were made in 2022, which is the highest number ever registered in one single year in Honduras (in comparison, in 2021, 108 asylum claims were registered). 67 percent of the applications made in 2022 correspond to Nicaraguans, 15 percent to Venezuelans, 8 percent to Salvadorans, 7 percent to Cubans, and the remaining to persons mainly from Colombia and Ecuador.

UNHCR RESPONSE

COORDINATION

PROTECTION CLUSTER | The Protection Cluster led a cross-sectoral assessment on the impacts of mixed movements and the gaps in the response to refugees and migrants, as well as the host population in the municipalities of Danlí and Trojes. Under the leadership of the protection cluster and the Local Border Team (both led by UNHCR) and the Senior PROCAP Advisor for Central America, two instruments were designed to collect and analyze information for institutions and organizations as well as refugees and migrants and host population. These tools will serve to ensure the centrality of protection in future evaluations. Additionally, the results allowed identification of needs and gaps in UNHCR's response, inform partners, and strengthen advocacy, as well as the coordinated response to this crisis.

MIRPS | Three virtual trainings on the Determination of Refugee Status and Gender took place as part of the MIRPS. The trainings are provided by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada to eligibility officers of different migration authorities in the region. 14 Human Rights / Eligibility Officers of INM Honduras participated. As part of the training, two guidelines were shared on Gender Considerations in RSD Procedures and on Claims involving Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics.

PROTECTION

INFORMATION | During December 2022, over 25,000 people benefitted from information on international protection, the asylum system in Honduras and related services available in the country. These services were provided through different mechanisms. At the Mobile Health Spot in the Sinuapa Triangle and other locations including the shelter Casa Migrante and strategic points at the north-western border, an area of the country that receives people in mixed movements on their journey northward, 100 people received information to mitigate protection risks. Similarly, UNHCR and its partner World Vision through its Mobile Information Services on the south-eastern border of Honduras provided information to 11,509 persons in mixed movements entering the country.

Additionally, UNHCR and its partner Pastoral Group on Human Mobility (PMH) delivered around 7,000 flyers in Ocotepeque and another 3,000 in Tegucigalpa and in the south-eastern border for persons in mixed movements. The material informs about the available humanitarian services in Ocotepeque and along the border with Guatemala. In addition, the flyer informs persons in need of international protection on their right to seek asylum in Honduras.

ASSISTANCE | 198 returnees and persons in mixed movements with protection needs were assisted in Casa Migrante Ocotepeque, financed by UNHCR. In total for 2022, Casa Migrante Ocotepeque assisted a record number of 2,928 persons in transit.

MONITORING | UNHCR piloted the regional High Frequency Survey (HFS) for two weeks in the end of December 2022 to persons in mixed movements in Danli, Trojes, Choluteca, Tegucigalpa, Ocotepeque, and San Pedro Sula. With these surveys, UNHCR gained a better understanding of the mixed movement trends and main needs to enhance UNHCR and partners' protection response. In response to the lack of information reported during the interviews, UNHCR has printed posters and flyers on the right to seek asylum as well as the R4V material on the new U.S. Parole Program that are being distributed to Venezuelans throughout the country.

During the second semester of 2022, UNHCR, together with strategic partners, carried out weekly monitoring of mixed movement flows in Tegucigalpa at the Tatumbula bus terminal, where guidance on rights and international protection was provided. In addition, UNHCR directly supported the Manantial de Vida community shelter located in a neighbourhood of the Honduras' capital Tegucigalpa. Activities included capacity building through workshops on basic aspects and concepts of international protection, rights of people with international protection needs. Likewise, shelter kits were delivered to strengthen its reception capacity.

SAFE SPACES | In Trojes, a transit city for people in mixed movements arriving to Honduras through the south-eastern border, UNHCR inaugurated two community centres. Both will serve to provide safe spaces to communities as well as activities for community development that will target host community, persons in mixed movements, persons at-risk of displacement and internally displaced persons. Said activities aim at mitigating the impact of the influx of mixed movements on host communities and contribute to improving reception conditions for refugees and other persons on the move. Furthermore, they are intended to be safe spaces where communities can articulate, gather and strengthen their network, allowing them to reclaim public



RETURNEES

CONTEXT

In December, according to INM, a total of 5,310 Hondurans were returned to Honduras, representing a decrease compared to the month of November. In total for 2022, more than 94,000 Hondurans were returned to the country, a significant increase in comparison to 73,967 returnees in the previous year.

UNHCR RESPONSE

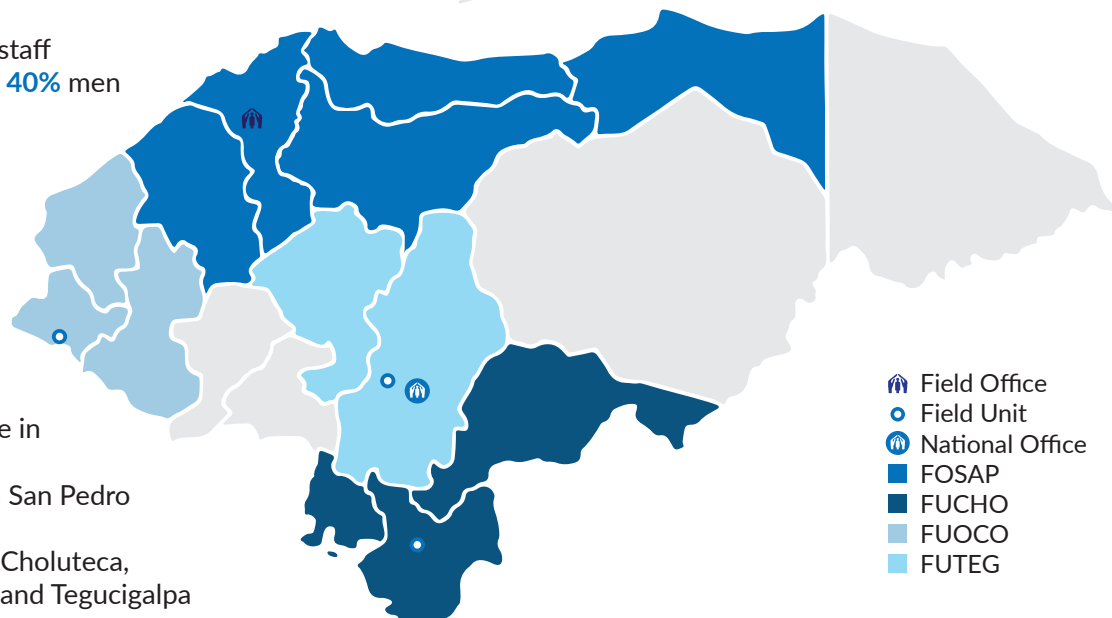
CASE MANAGEMENT | UNHCR attended 35 cases (122 people) of returnees with protection needs at three Centres for Returned Migrants. The deportees received information and were provided with different protection alternatives, including referrals to the Protection Transfer Arrangement program, to Doctors of the World for psycho-social assistance and to Foro de Mujeres por la Vida for gender-based violence cases. In total, for 2022, UNHCR attended 912 cases (2,702 people) of returnees with protection needs, more than triple the number of cases compared to 2021.

JUNTOS | UNHCR jointly with IOM and KIND manages the "Juntos" family reunification programme in Honduras that was established by the United States of America to reunite parents who were separated from their children between 20 January 2017 and 20 January 2021. As a result, in 2022, 36 cases (158 persons) were referred from KIND to UNHCR, out of which 10 cases (34 persons) were eligible. Regarding the protection situation of the remaining 26 cases (124 persons) UNHCR managed a different solution. 14 cases (78 persons) were referred to the Protection Transfer Agreement program and the rest were referred to one of UNHCR's partners to support them through internal relocation in Honduras.

UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

64 National staff
40 International staff
60% women and 40% men



Offices

01 Country office in Tegucigalpa
01 Field office in San Pedro Sula
03 Field units in Choluteca, Ocotepeque and Tegucigalpa

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



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