UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

June 2026
Factsheet

UNHCR's Response to Honduran Returnees

41,000

Hondurans were returned in 2025, according to official data.*

+20,500

Hondurans have been returned from 1 January to 31 May 2026, according to official data.

2,575

Honduran returnees have been assisted from 1 January to 31 May 2026 by UNHCR.

6%

of Honduran returnees in 2026 were identified as having protection needs.

Overview

Widespread violence in Honduras continues to force people to flee to safeguard their lives and well-being. The leading causes of forced displacement include generalised violence, forced recruitment, extortion, human rights violations, and violence against women and girls. These challenges are further compounded by the impacts of extreme weather events, violence linked to criminal gangs and drug trafficking.

An estimated **423,845 individuals have been internally displaced in Honduras.** High poverty levels (64% in 2024) and persistent gender inequality continue to exacerbate protection risks. In 2025, individuals from Honduras constituted the largest group of refugees and asylum-seekers in Mexico by nationality. Furthermore, Honduras is a key point for refugees and migrants heading north. However, changes in United States migration policies have led to increased southbound movements for refugees and migrants particularly towards Costa Rica, Colombia or Venezuela.

Simultaneously, the country has received significant numbers of Honduran returnees since 2022. The return process has been strengthened through improved reception conditions and the development of protocols to identify individuals with protection needs. However, many returnees continue to face protection risks upon arrival in Honduras. From 1 January to 31 May 2026, based on media monitoring, **at least eight Honduran returnees have been killed** underscoring the importance of tailored protection responses and continued protection monitoring in areas of return.

**Returned Migrant Attention System of the Secretariat of Social Development*

How UNHCR supports the protection of returnees

Policy and Institutional Engagement

In coordination with the Government, UNHCR supports the inclusion of Honduran returnees with protection needs into the national social protection system, in accordance with the Law for the Prevention, Assistance and Protection of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP Protection Law). Honduran returnees with protection needs –in other words, individuals facing risks to life or security in their community of origin– are recognized as displaced people under Honduran law and are protected under the IDP Protection Law.

UNHCR collaborates with key national institutions, including the Secretariats of Children and Families, Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Social Development, and Women's Affairs, as well as the National Migration Institute, to strengthen protection responses. Coordination with strategic allies, including the International Organization for Migration, International Committee of the Red Cross, the Honduran Red Cross, Norwegian Refugee Council, Pastoral de Movilidad Humana and the United Nations Children's Fund, enables timely identification and support for Honduran returnees with protection needs.

Operational Presence at Return Centres (CAMRs)

Since 2019, UNHCR has provided protection staff in the three Centres for Returned Migrants (CAMRs), supporting the Government in the identification, counselling and referral of Honduran returnees with protection needs, in close coordination with NGOs and UN agencies:

- **CAMR La Lima** – Returns by air from Mexico and the United States.
- **CAMR Omoa** – Returns by land from Mexico and by sea from Belize.
- **CANFM Belén, San Pedro Sula** – Returns specialized in families with children, unaccompanied and separated children.

Honduran returnees with protection needs are identified upon arrival at the CAMRs through the reception process. Honduran authorities evaluate the socioeconomic conditions, capacities, and protection risks of each returned individual.

UNHCR also provides specialised training in risks identification to CAMR staff, with a particular focus on detecting human rights violations affecting children, ensuring their referral to specialized services.

Protection Tools and Systems Supported

UNHCR provided technical support for the design and implementation of the following tools to strengthen the identification and protection of Honduran returnees:

- **Protocol for the Attention to Returnees with Protection Needs**

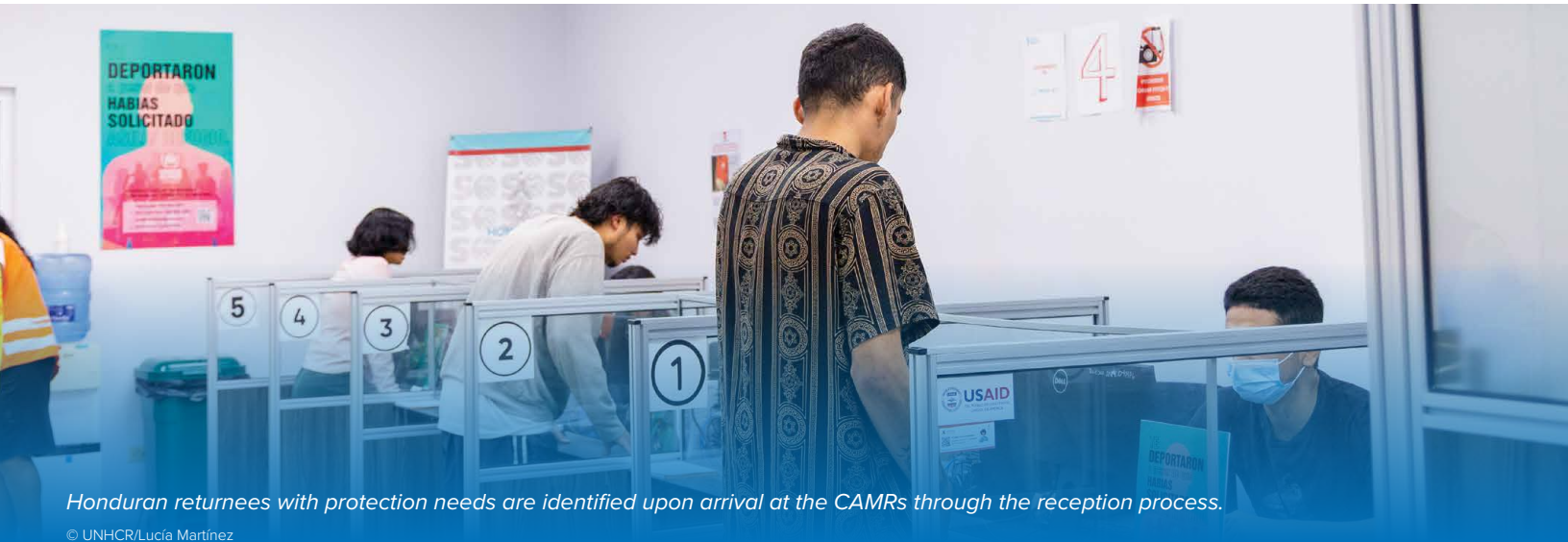
  On 11 March 2025, the Secretariats of Children and Families, Foreign Affairs, and Human Rights endorsed the Protocol for the Attention to Returnees with Protection Needs, defining institutional roles within the CAMRs to strengthen coordinated identification and assistance efforts.

- **Returned Migrant Care Registration Form**

  Implemented by the Secretariat of Social Development in February 2024, this form captures information on departure reasons, protection risks, and international protection requests.

  UNHCR supported the adaptation of the questionnaire to improve protection data collection and identification of Honduran returnees with protection risks.

  This tool provides key data for designing programmes that support re-integration and protection.



Honduran returnees with protection needs are identified upon arrival at the CAMRs through the reception process.

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- **Protection Module within the System of Attention to Returned Migrants**

  Developed to enhance interoperability with government data collection systems and will facilitate case tracking while protecting sensitive personal data.

- **Update of the Vulnerability Identification File**

  Developed to support tailored protection responses for returned children, particularly unaccompanied and separated children.

- **Contextual Analysis and Data Collection**

  To strengthen the Government capacity to address displacement and improving data collection for protection needs identification.

- **Improvement of the Referral Mechanisms**

  To enhance the integration of Honduran returnees into the national internal displacement protection system, led by the Secretariat for Human Rights.

Opportunities for further collaboration

The following areas represent opportunities to strengthen collaboration with UNHCR in support of Honduran returnees. These reflect ongoing gaps and highlight how UNHCR can complement institutional efforts through technical support, a community-based approach, and inter-agency coordination.

Enhanced Identification at CAMRs

Many Honduran returnees do not disclose protection risks during reception due to trauma, mistrust, or time constraints, and may become unreachable after they leave the centres.

Improved Reception Capacity

Limited staff and resources, particularly in La Lima and Omoa centres, delay the effective application of the Returned Migrant Care Registration Form, affecting identification of Honduran returnees with protection needs and data quality.

Border Monitoring and Protection Information

UNHCR's permanent presence at key borders enables the provision of protection information and services to Honduran returnees arriving outside official return flights or buses.

Community-Based Identification in Difficult to Reach Areas

Through sustained presence in high-return areas, UNHCR can identify Honduran returnees with protection needs and facilitate access to services in communities where public services are often lacking.

Trusted Protection Actor

UNHCR can provide counselling and referrals through trusted communication channels for Honduran returnees with protection needs seeking information and support.

Strengthening Information Systems

UNHCR offers technical support for integrating data across institutions, NGOs, and UN agencies to improve case management, protect sensitive personal information and prevent revictimization.

Support for the Social Development Observatory

UNHCR contributes to enhanced data analysis for programme and social protection efforts, in collaboration with government actors.

Inter-Institutional Coordination at Borders

UNHCR promotes coordinated responses to large-scale returns, ensuring access to psychosocial support, health care, education, housing, and livelihoods.

Sustainable Reintegration Support

UNHCR can provide technical guidance for reintegration and economic inclusion programmes for returned Hondurans with protection needs, in particular women, girls, boys and youth.

Tailored support for women and girls

UNHCR and partners offer specialized case management, psychosocial and health services for women and girls who have returned and have protection needs.

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