

# UNHCR Guatemala

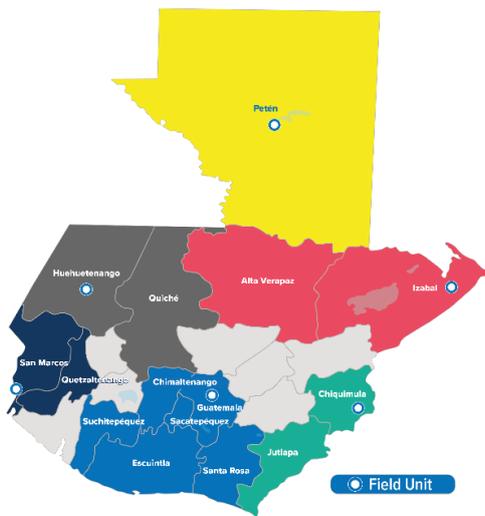
October 2022

Guatemala has a **dynamic context of mixed movements** as it is a country of origin, transit, destination and return of people with different profiles and needs. In addition, it has positioned itself as a destination country, welcoming more and more **refugees and asylum-seekers**. Until September 2022, 710 new asylum claims have been filed.

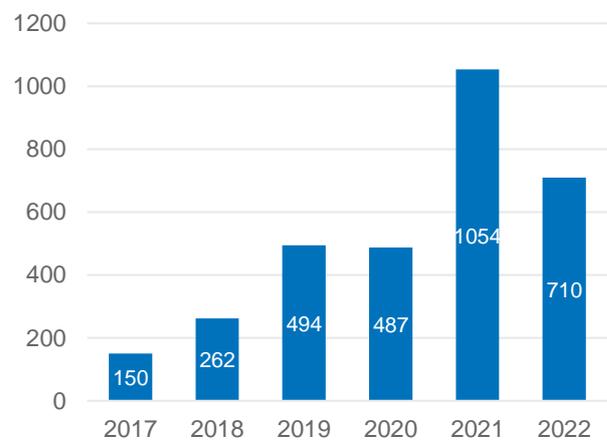
In total, there are currently **708 refugees and 1,472 asylum-seekers** residing in Guatemala. Furthermore, during the first 9 months of 2022, UNHCR and its partners have assisted **83,312 individuals in transit** with information, legal counselling, and humanitarian assistance. In comparison, in the whole year of 2021, around 53,300 people were assisted.

Between 2021 and 2022, UNHCR and its partners have referred around **18,151 Guatemalans at risk** to specialized protection services, many of them from vulnerable communities of high-out migration. In addition, **the number of Guatemalans returnees has almost doubled** from 40,650 in the first nine months of 2021 to 73,808 in the same period in 2022.

## UNHCR's presence in Guatemala



## Asylum Claims in Guatemala Per Year



- 111,387** Individuals assisted by UNHCR and its partners throughout the country.
- 7,991** People aided with in-kind assistance by UNHCR and its partners.
- 6,766** People trained in various subjects, including promotion of human rights and international protection.
- 4,014** People who are part of actions aimed at employability (2,089) and entrepreneurship (1,205) since 2020
- 2,182** Beneficiaries of cash assistance for basic needs.

\*Data as of September 2022



People assisted at the new Attention Center for Migrants and Refugees (CAPMiR) in Esquipulas. ©UNHCR/ 2022

## 2022 UNHCR's activities in Guatemala



- In June, UNHCR, along with UNICEF, IOM, and the Guatemalan Migration Institute, inaugurated a new [Attention Center for Migrants and Refugees \(CAPMiR\)](#) in Agua Caliente, Esquipulas, near the border with Honduras. The Center offers information and guidance on services and programs provided for people on human mobility, including counseling, psychosocial services, pre-hospital care, and basic humanitarian assistance.
- In August, UNHCR, together with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Municipality of Puerto Barrios, and thanks to the support of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) inaugurated the new [Comprehensive Care Center for Women \(CAIM\)](#) in Puerto Barrios, Izabal. The Center is a local initiative by the Municipality and built by UNHCR's partner Refugio de la Niñez to strengthen services for victims of violence, including psychosocial assistance, group therapies, and legal counseling.
- In June, UNHCR inaugurated a [new attention center in Guatemala City](#), where asylum-seekers, refugees, and Guatemalans at risk receive information and assistance and can be referred to protection services accordingly.

- UNHCR donated [4 new field vehicles](#) to the Attorney General's Office to increase access to protection for vulnerable populations across the country. Furthermore, UNHCR also [donated vehicles to partners](#) Guatemalan Red Cross, Save The Children, Tierra Nueva, FUNDAECO and Refugio de la Niñez to strengthen their response in protecting refugees and their host communities.



Water ambulance, "Ambulancha" in Izabal. ©UNHCR/ 2022



- In Izabal, UNHCR provided the local communities with an "Ambulancha" (water ambulance) that reaches the most remote areas of Guatemala to facilitate access to health services. This water ambulance also serves the Maya Q'eqchi' community, transporting women with OB/GYN needs to specialized services in Livingston, the nearest town.
- Within the framework of the Cities of Solidarity program, UNHCR and the Municipality of Esquipulas inaugurated a [new health post](#) and [three clinics](#) to improve the access to health services for an estimated 132,800 inhabitants, including Guatemalans at risk, refugees, and individuals in transit.
- [In response to tropical storm "Julia,"](#) which hit Guatemala in October 2022, UNHCR, together with the local municipalities of Izabal, Peten, and Esquipulas, distributed [Core Relief Items \(CRI\) to benefit 2,500 people](#) affected by the rains in the area, including refugees, asylum-seekers, and members of the host community. These relief items included soap, buckets, kitchen sets, tarpaulin, blankets, solar lamps, face masks, and mosquito nets.



- In August 2022, UNHCR and the Office Against Sexual Violence, Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons' Mobile Units (UNIVETs) commemorated their first anniversary. These 7 mobile units cover 18 prioritized departments responding rapidly to sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation. Up to date, more than **133,000 individuals** throughout the country in 692 municipalities have been reached. Furthermore, 675 people that are part of the mixed movements have been trained and sensitized.
- UNHCR launched its **new automatized information chatbot** that provides information on the Guatemalan asylum system and protection services available. The chatbot can be reached through Whatsapp in Guatemala or outside the country.



*Sports rally held in Esquipulas to promote local integration of refugees in their host communities. ©UNHCR/ 2022.*

- UNHCR in Guatemala joined worldwide celebrations of World Refugee Day (WRD), highlighting the opportunity of **#StartingOverInGuate** through the right to seek safety, promoting awareness, and strengthening unity between the host communities and the refugee population. Commemorations for WRD included a **cultural and art fair** in Flores, Peten; a **4k family race** in Huehuetenango; a bicycle tour throughout the city in Guatemala and a **protocol act** with high-level authorities; a **Model United Nations** with university students in Izabal; a **sports rally** and football matches in Esquipulas; the **inauguration of a sports park** in Ayutla, San Marcos; integration and **information fairs** throughout the country, and **gastronomic festivals** for refugees and asylum-seekers to showcase their own businesses and entrepreneurial projects.



- In Guatemala City, UNHCR delivered a **donation of furniture** to the Municipal Directorate of Women (DMM) of the Municipality of Guatemala for an English course that will benefit more than 250 women asylum-seekers, refugees, and members of the host community.
- As part of UNHCR's support for decentralizing services from the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, work permits can now be processed through a virtual platform. This improvement automates and simplifies the work permit application process, reducing deadlines and avoiding the need to travel to Guatemala City.
- Since 2020, 4,014 individuals have benefitted from UNHCR's livelihoods and economic inclusion programs, including market-based, employment, and self-employment interventions such as internships, training, entrepreneurship processes, and capital seeds.

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#### UNHCR's financial requirements for the Guatemala operation in 2022 (as of 14 September 2022)



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



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