UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

October 2023

Operational Update 22

HONDURAS

Key Figures

+247,000

people have been internally displaced in Honduras as a result of violence between 2004 and 2018.

604,327

Honduran nationals have been returned between January 2015 and 31 October 2023, according to data from CONMIGHO

442,619

persons of different nationalities entered Honduras irregularly by the end of October 2023, according to the National Migration Institute (INM).

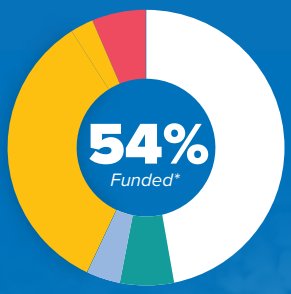
Our Response

122,912

mainly internally displaced persons, but also asylum-seekers, returnees, mixed movements, and host community members were served by UNHCR and its partners by October 2023, with services such as shelter, cash and voucher assistance, community protection, case management and risk mitigation.

11,150	12,187	39,752	59,570	253
Girls	Boys	Women	Men	LGBTQI+

Funding



*As of 31 October 2023

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

UNHCR is appealing for USD 30.1 million for its 2023 programme, of which USD16.2 million (54%) is already funded. USD13.9 million is still needed to continue supporting people forcibly displaced, at risk of displacement, asylum-seekers, refugees, and persons in mixed movements.

ACNUR/Danielle Alvarez

Story

Fernanda Godoy is a 13-year-old girl passionate about boxing. She currently lives in a community in Tegucigalpa affected by significant levels of violence in several forms. This situation has forced many young people and their families to leave everything behind in search of a safe space where they can build their lives.

Despite the context of violence, Fernanda has found in the Community Centre of her neighbourhood a safe space for her personal development and to practice the sport she loves. Thanks to her dedication and hard work, Fernanda has achieved success, becoming a national boxing champion in her category through her participation in the community's Boxing Club.

UNHCR and its partners work closely with the San Miguel Community Youth Centre on strategies that provide youth with alternatives to violence.

Strengthening the sports infrastructure has been fundamental in guaranteeing access to safe spaces within the neighbourhood, where hundreds of young people can interact and develop their talents.

“Boxing provides me a sense of security and freedom.”

Fernanda emphasizes that boxing has not only instilled discipline in her, but also provides her with a sense of security and freedom. **Through her dedication and tireless effort, Fernanda has demonstrated that, with the right support and opportunities, young people in Honduras can overcome obstacles and achieve extraordinary accomplishments.**

¡Learn more about Fernanda!

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

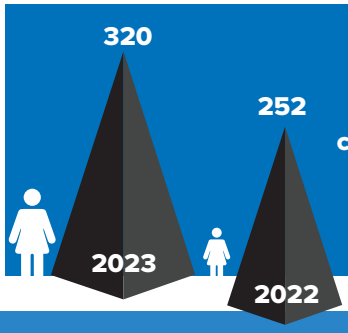
Context

October 2023 in Honduras was marked by violent incidents in the National Congress, after disagreements between ruling and opposition parties on the appointment of an acting Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General. The events that unfolded led to political and social instability, leading to a spark in protests, increasing societal tensions and weakening the rule of law. In addition, local news reported high rates of gender-based violence, a steady increase in robberies, assaults, homicides, criminal activity by criminal organisations and drug trafficking.

Honduras currently has an average of

2 violent deaths every hour

this despite being in a State of Emergency for almost a year.



27% increase in feminicides

compared to the previous year (as of 26 October).

Source: Violence Observatory ofthe National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH).

+100

teachers are not showing up for classes because they have been threatened by criminal structures.

15,678

children and adolescents dropped out of school as of 9 October, 33% after 21 August, leaving children and adolescents without classes and more vulnerable to forced recruitment by organised crime.

Source: Secretariat of Education.

57 violent deaths of children and adolescents so far in 2023.

an increase of 9.6% over the previous year.

Girls between the ages of 10 and 16 are the most common victims.

Source: Honduran Network of Institutions for the Rights of the Child (COIPRODEN).

15 human rights defenders and 1 journalist killed in Honduras between January and September 2023, a period in which 297 attacks on activists and communicators were recorded.

Source: OHCHR.

In October, at least 42 buses stopped travelling on the south-east route of Honduras due to threats by criminal structures and extorsion.

Violence is the main cause of forced displacement in Honduras. Forced recruitment, extortion, and gender-based violence are also amongst its main triggers. Considering the increase in violence, human rights violations, social and political instability, more people are at risk of forced displacement in the country.

Part of the Hondurans who are forcibly displaced due to violence flee the country to safeguard their lives. However, part of them is returned during their intent. By October 2023, a total of 48,497 Hondurans were returned to the three Assistance Centres for Returned Migrants located in the department of Cortés, 3,265 in the last month. UNHCR estimates that 5% of them could be in need of international protection.

RESPONSE

PROTECT

The rights of the people UNHCR serves are recognised and guaranteed through the national legal framework and public policies.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK I The Interinstitutional Commission for the Protection of Forcibly Displaced Persons (CIPPDEF) approved its 2023-2024 work plan, marking the swift advance in the implementation of the IDP protection law. The plan comprised two strategic objectives and 13 outputs. The first strategic objective aims to consolidate CIPPDEF's technical and operational capacities to comply with the IDP protection law through efforts on comprehensive and continuous training, monitoring and accountability, research, and the definition of clear protocols for internal functioning. The second strategic objective seeks to consolidate and coordinate response measures through the mobilization of financial resources, designing the law's regulations, establishing the internal protocols of funds and programmes, and designing public policies on assistance, local responses, and prevention of the causes of internal displacement. UNHCR provided technical assistance for the development of the plan and will continue to support its implementation.

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS I

19 workshops and training to 540 people,
including officials from the National Police, Security Secretariate, National Statistics Institute (INE), and others.
328 women - 189 men.

These workshops aimed to strengthen knowledge of actors working with people forcibly displaced or at-risk of displacement on international refugee law, internal displacement, international protection, PSEA, amongst other.

The goal with these sessions is ultimately to improve their capacity to respond to these populations observing international protection standards.

185 people were trained in prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PEAS), gender-based violence prevention and response, and employment training. In addition, training on protection, children's rights and forced recruitment was provided to 355 civil servants to strengthen the institutional response capacity of the government.

RESPOND

UNHCR seeks that forcibly displaced people and those at risk of displacement have clear and effective responses to protect their lives, safety, liberty and integrity and access to humanitarian assistance.

CASE MANAGEMENT |

So far in 2023, UNHCR has registered
3,230 people in Honduras
through its partner Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

97.5% of the cases are of internally displaced persons and persons at risk of displacement.
Most cases are related to killings, homicides, or manslaughter, accounting for 20%.

Following registration, UNHCR proceeds with case management, which entails referral to required services (such as psycho-social support, health, amongst others) and follow-up until the case is resolved.

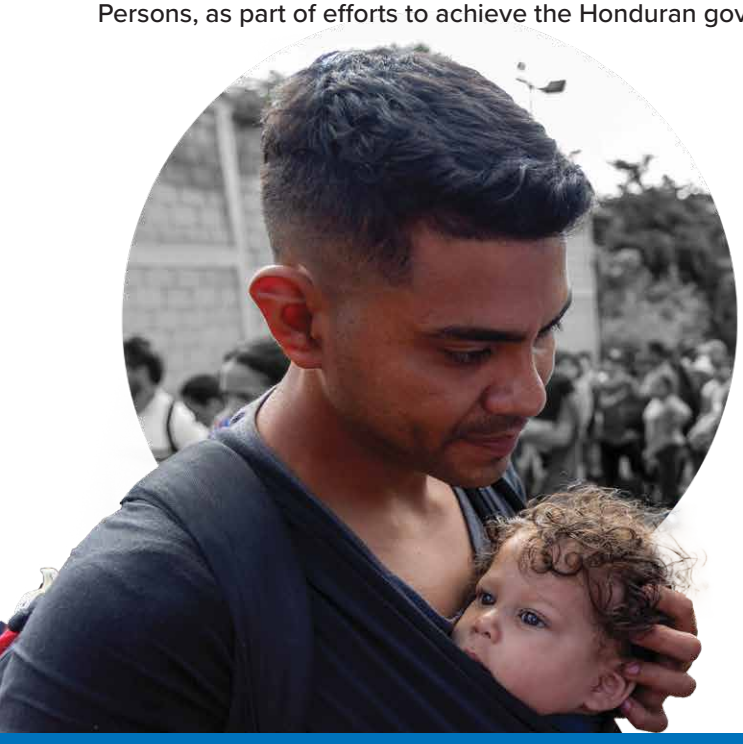
To provide emergency support to those protection cases, **UNHCR has delivered cash-based assistance** to: **2,404 persons** amounting to approximately **787,400.4 USD.**

UNHCR has protection routes in place with other actors to provide individual specialised attention, management of cases of gender-based violence, child protection and other protection-related cases, referring them to relevant actors for response services.

UNHCR also has a strategic presence in the three Centres for Returned Migrants available in Honduras to identify and refer cases of returnees in need of protection. By October 2023, UNHCR attended 42 cases (92 individuals).

The returnees received information on protection alternatives, available services for protection cases, including third country solution's programmes, psycho-social assistance, and internal relocation. In addition, with the support of UNHCR, the National Directorate for Children, Adolescent and Family Affairs (DINAF) is providing some of the children returned with psychosocial support.

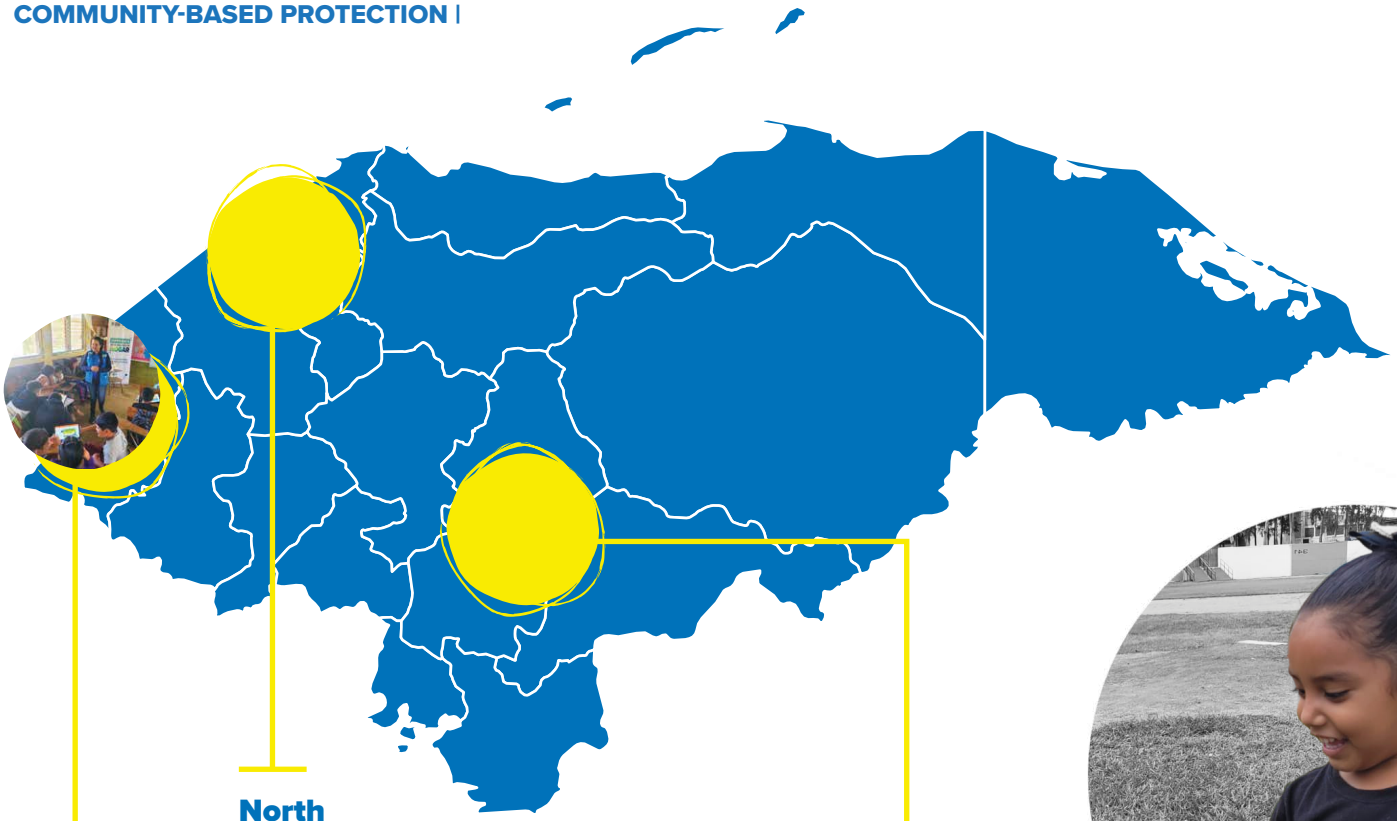
MIRPS | UNHCR organised an exchange mission in Bogota, Colombia, from 24 to 27 October, with the participation of Mexico, El Salvador and Honduras. The Honduran delegation consisted of representatives of institutions that make up the Inter-institutional Commission (CIPPDEF), such as the Human Rights Secretariat, the Property Institute, the Undersecretary of Justice and the National Human Rights Commissioner. The aim of the mission was to facilitate the exchange of good practices and lessons learned in responding to victims of the Colombian armed conflict, which will support the development of the regulations of the recently approved Law on the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons, as part of efforts to achieve the Honduran government's commitments in the MIRPS platform.



EMPOWER

People at risk of displacement and internally displaced have access to protection services, including safe spaces, and communities are actively engaged in prevention, risk mitigation and response to the differential impact of violence.

COMMUNITY-BASED PROTECTION |



North

In San Pedro Sula, the second biggest city of Honduras, 117 girls, boys, and young people completed the second module of the Municipal Community Art Programme (Plastic Arts and Folk Dance) implemented jointly with UNHCR. This programme aims to mitigate specific risks that affect children and youth in high-risk communities.

To promote the use and recovery of public spaces and strengthened protection mechanisms for risk mitigation such as forced recruitment and gender-based violence, 120 people participated in the third replica of Tactical Urbanism activities in Chamelecón, called “The Chicharon and Art Festival”. Different activities were carried out such as artistic presentations by young people, friendly and playful spaces for children, registration for the II module of the Municipal Community Art Program, exhibition of local enterprises, and muralism.

North-west

UNHCR carried out weekly sessions of the community-based protection strategy of “Digital Literacy” and "Mobile Library". 74 children and 32 adults deepened their understanding on digital protection risks that can exacerbate trafficking and gender-based violence risks.

Central District

62 girls and 96 boys participated in sports lessons in the communities of San Miguel, El Pedregal, Nueva Capital, Rosalinda, and San Buenaventura in October to prevent forced recruitment by organized crime through community activities. The activities were delivered by UNHCR’s partner National Commission for Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (CONDEPOR).

To promote the healthy use of information technologies and mitigate protection risks (forced recruitment by organised crime, trafficking and smuggling) for children and youth, UNHCR and Save the Children provided workshops on cybersecurity to more than 537 girls and 547 boys from different communities at risk of forced displacement.

GBV | UNHCR and its partner Doctors of the World promoted an event at the C.E.B Elisa Ch. de Cardona Primary School in Sinuapa, as part of the campaign against gender-based violence aimed specifically at young girls and boys. 92 students and four teachers participated in the workshop, which aims to sensitize the entire educational community.

A three-day workshop was also held in San Marcos, Ocotepeque, by partners Médecins du Monde and the Secretariat of Health, with the training of 25 professionals working in the primary care sector of the Secretariat of Health in Ocotepeque. The workshop focused on the care pathway for survivors of gender-based violence, from arrival to health services, and the sexual violence protocol, which is a fundamental part of the pathway within health care services.

SOLVE

UNHCR works for forcibly displaced persons and persons at risk of displacement to have access to solutions that contribute to breaking the cycle of violence and forced displacement.

LIVELIHOODS | So far in 2023, UNHCR has advanced in supporting people at risk or forcibly displaced to face challenges in recovering livelihoods and meet basic needs. Apart from fostering coordination between public and private actors to promote socio-economic inclusion and provide information and opportunities to this population, UNHCR accomplished:

1,542 people
at risk or forcibly displaced informed on the labour market, self-employment and/or financial inclusion opportunities.

134 people
at risk or forcibly displaced (including refugees) selected to receive cash support for programs to promote job insertion.

75 families (322 persons)
at risk or forcibly displaced (including refugees) received USD 1,000 USD per family in seed capital to develop 75 businesses projects.

Equipment delivered to 23 Technical Vocational Training Centres,
donation valued at USD 260,000. Of these 23 centres, eight were supported also with adjustment of their training curricular to make it more market-relevant.

MIXED MOVEMENTS

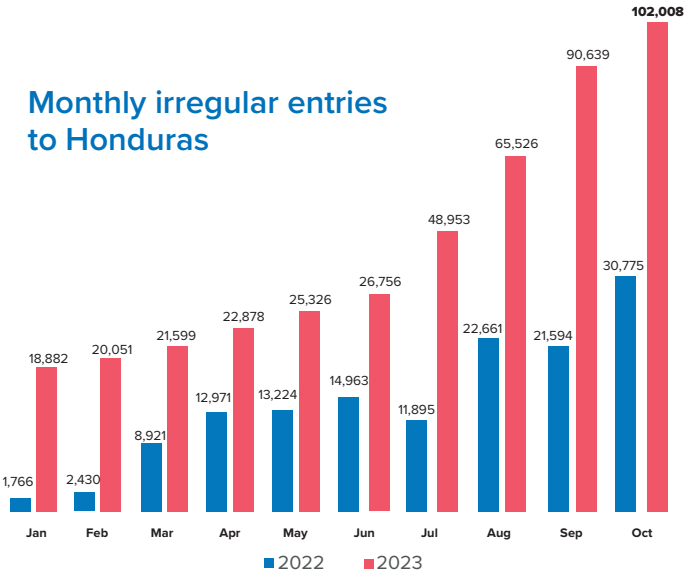
A record number of

102,008

people in mixed movements

entered and transited through Honduras in October 2023, more than double the number in the same period of 2022.

(Source: National Migration Institute (INM)).



The main nationalities were:

- **35%** Haiti
- **34%** Venezuela
- **17%** Cuba
- **3.5%** Ecuador

An increase of 13% in comparison to the previous month.

53% of all people in mixed movements were women and children, significantly above the average for the rest of 2023 (when 46% were women and children).

As not all people in mixed movements register themselves at an INM delegation, UNHCR's monitoring estimates that 140,000 people on the move could have entered Honduras irregularly in October.

The number of Haitians in mixed movements entering Honduras from July to October increased 23-fold (from 1,550 people in July to 35,500 people in October).

The sharp increase is mainly related to the direct flights during this period from Haiti to Nicaragua that were used by people to subsequently head towards the north of the continent. For the first time since January 2023, in October Haiti was the main nationality in mixed movements.

In relation to exits, according to UNHCR's monitoring, the population trend of people in mixed movements crossing through Ocotepeque to exit towards Guatemala slightly decreased in October 2023, reaching 119,350 people approximately. Venezuela is the country of origin of most people, followed by Ecuador and Haiti.

The unprecedented flows are putting more pressure on the humanitarian emergency currently observed in the country with collapsed reception conditions in the main hotspots. Due to the strained reception conditions in Honduras, an estimated 200 to 300 persons in mixed movements (many of them Venezuelans) spend the night on average in public spaces in Tegucigalpa/Comayagüela, including under the Congress and in unused bus stations, exposing especially women, children and LGBTIQ+ people to significant protection risks including gender-based violence.

Furthermore, on 15 October, a bus accident that happened at night between Santa Rosa de Copan and Ocotepeque left four people dead (two Venezuelans, one Ecuadorian, one Honduran) and over 30 persons injured (most of them Venezuelans, followed by Cubans, Ecuadorians and Hondurans). At the moment of the accident, the bus was transporting almost 70 persons, exceeding the maximum capacity of the bus. INM and UNHCR provided them with information on their transit permit, which was allowed to be renewed for several weeks until they are able to recover; on their right to seek asylum in Honduras and elsewhere; on the U.S. Parole Programme; and safe spaces available along the route.

ASYLUM-SEEKERS

According to INM, until 31 October, 87 asylum applications were filed in Honduras in 2023. 36% of the persons are from Venezuela, 31% from Nicaragua, 14% from Cuba, 7% from Colombia, 5% from El Salvador, 4% from Ecuador, and the remaining from Brazil, Guatemala, and Peru. 42% of them are men, 34% women, 13% boys and 11% girls. There are currently 183 refugees and 93 asylum-seekers residing in Honduras.

RESPONSE

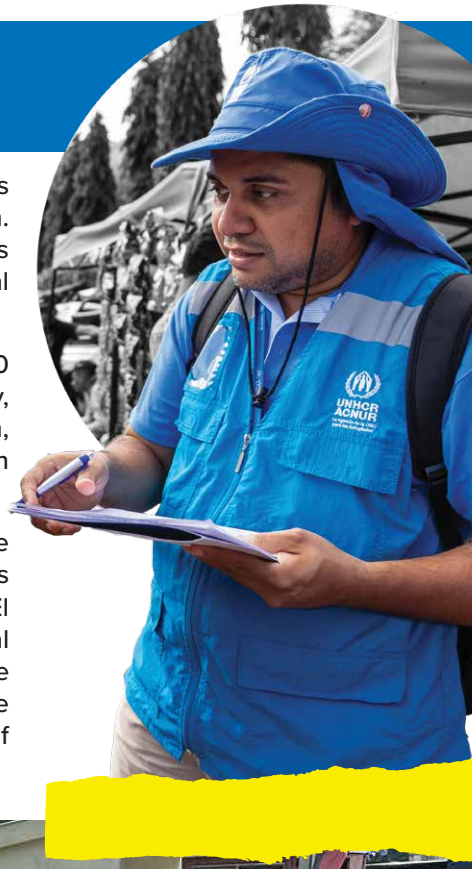
PROTECT

Persons in need of international protection and mixed movements have access to the territory under conditions of dignified reception, fair and efficient refugee status determination procedures and facilitated documentation.

To monitor the situation of people on the move, raise awareness to their needs and protection concerns and respond to them, UNHCR led missions with several organizations to entry and exit points in Honduras; met with members of the protection cluster providing a response in hotspots of people in mixed movements; delivered information through its Mobile Information Services managed by its partner World Vision and shelters; managed cases in need of protection including referral to other organizations for access to shelter, health and child protection services; and trained different institutions to strengthen their response capacities. These actions aim to improve reception conditions and access to international protection by those in need.

MONITORING |

14 monitoring missions completed,
eight to exit border points in the north-western region, and six in entry border points in the south-eastern border.



These missions include one on 11 October led by the UN Resident Coordinator in Honduras to increase visibility of the mixed movements situation and the needs of the population. The mission with ambassadors and donors to the department of El Paraiso included visits to Las Manos entry border with Nicaragua and Danlí and places with an international humanitarian response, as well as meetings with local authorities.

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS | Eight trainings and workshops delivered to 180 people, including government officials, international and national NGOs, and civil society, on topics such as prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, international protection, international refugee law, rights of children on the move in need of international protection and the rights of asylum-seeking and refugee children.

In addition, to prevent a further increase in xenophobic discourses in Danli against people in mixed movements and in order to be improve the infrastructure to better attend this population, INM changed the location of its delegation from Danlí to the community of El Pescadero on 14 October (located between El Paraíso and Danlí). INM with the financial support of UNHCR rented a piece of land located next to the new delegation where different humanitarian organizations (incl. UNHCR's partner organization World Vision) are now providing their services. UNHCR also supported INM with the elaboration of information material and informed persons on the move on the change.

RESPOND

People in mixed movements, refugees and asylum-seekers have clear and effective responses to protect their lives, safety, liberty and integrity and access to humanitarian assistance.

COORDINATION | The protection cluster is active and working with three local response teams, and one in the capital covering the whole country. There are 15 members per team in the north-west region, 10 in the north, 39 in the south-east and 35 at national level. 12 meetings were held in October to coordinate actions to respond to persons in mixed movements transiting through Honduras.

AWARENESS | UNHCR applied the seventh round of its High Frequency Survey to persons in mixed movements in the end of October. **184 persons were interviewed** at the entry and exit borders as well as at the main transit points.

42%
indicated that they had left their country of origin due to generalized violence and insecurity.

9%
due to the fact that they were victims of violence, threats or intimidation.

19%
of the interviewed individuals reported traveling with somebody with specific protection needs.

58%
of the persons from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela are unaware of the U.S. Parole Programe.

Only 16%
of the people indicated that they were able to eat all three meals the day before the interview.

Main needs reported by people on the move:

- Food (64%)
- Water (32%)
- Shelter (23%)
- Clothes and footwear (23%)
- Medical assistance and medicines (15%)
- Food and items for their children (15%)

RECEPTION CONDITIONS |

Over 40,000 people

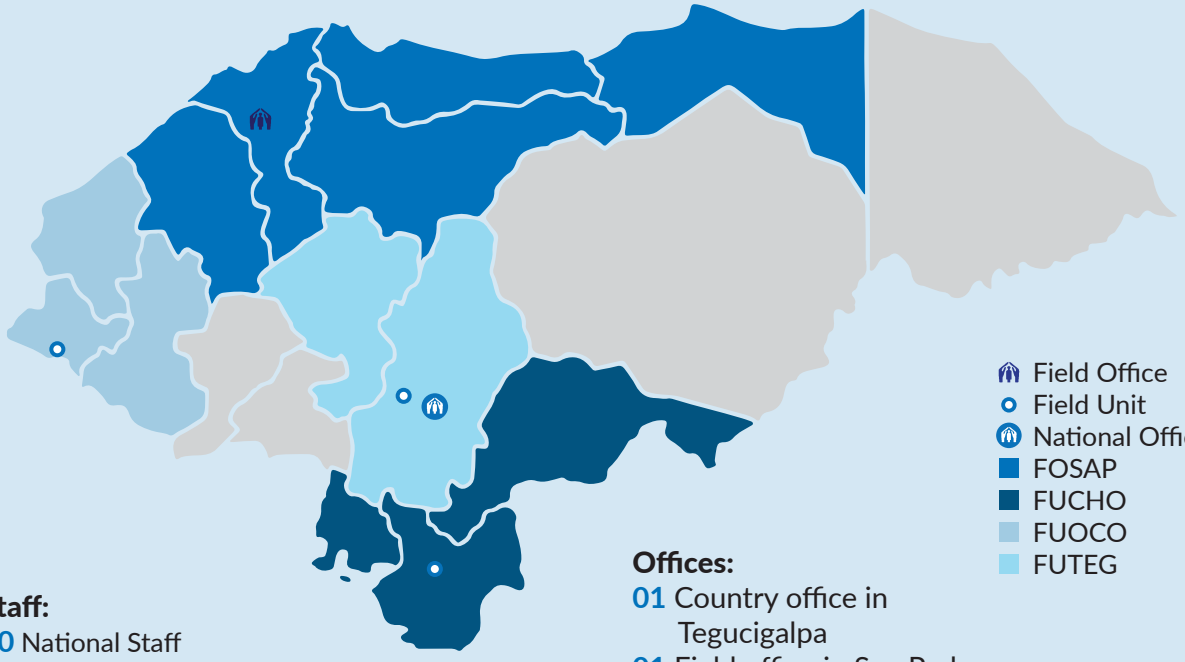
served by UNHCR's partner World Vision with information on international protection, the asylum system in Honduras and related services available in the country in October 2023. Apart from information services, persons also received internet to facilitate communication with relatives.

More than 320 people

were served with shelter in October 2023 at entry and exit border points of Honduras, in the following shelter locations: Casa Migrante in Ocotepeque; Casa Betania in El Paraiso, Copan; Alojamiento Caritás and Hogar Esperanza, both in Choluteca.

During the month of October, the Friendly Protection Space for Women and Small Children in Agua Caliente (EAMI in Spanish), supported by UNHCR, provided attention to 94 persons in transit, consisting of 30 families, mostly from Venezuela. Beneficiaries were able to rest, refresh themselves, receive protection information and five families were referred to health services.

UNHCR PRESENCE



Staff:
70 National Staff
39 International Staff
60% women and 40% men

Offices:
01 Country office in Tegucigalpa
01 Field office in San Pedro Sula
03 Field units in Cholutecа, Ocotepeque and Tegucigalpa

We thank the contributions of our donors

By 31 October 2023

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

Also, we thank the contributions of our global private donors in Australia, Germany, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States of America.

For more information:

Caroline Scotti Vilain
Associate Reporting Officer, Honduras
scottivi@unhcr.org
+504 2270-7155,
+504 3174 3122

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