

HONDURAS EXTERNAL UPDATE 13

November 2022

KEY FIGURES

CONTEXT

847,154

people were estimated to be victims of extortion in Honduras in 2022 (9% of the population), according to data from the Association for a More Just Society (ASJ).

800

children and youth lost their lives **violently** in 2022 in Honduras. 50% of all violent deaths in the country are committed against children, youth, and young adults less than 30-years-old, according to the OV-UNAH.

166,340

persons of different nationalities entered Honduras irregularly. The highest number ever reported by **INM** in one single year. According to the INM data, **37%** were Cubans, **20%** Ecuadorians and **15%** Venezuelans.

RESPONSE

90,631

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

40,269

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

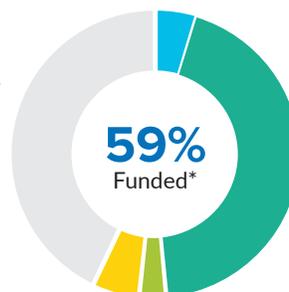
HIGHLIGHTS

After more than three years of having been submitted to the National Congress, the Bill for the Prevention, Assistance and Protection of Internally Displaced People was finally debated for the first time on November 30th. The Secretary of the Congress read 28 of the 82 articles, to which there were no objections or changes. The remaining articles will be read and discussed in the following sessions of the plenary, and once concluded, they will proceed to the voting round. Luis Redondo, President of the Congress, highlighted UNHCR's support to the initiative, which will contribute to improve the quality of life of the population.



FUNDING

UNHCR is appealing for USD 28.6 million for its 2022 programme, of which USD17.0 million is already funded. USD11.6 million is still needed to continue supporting people forcibly displaced, at risk of displacement, asylum-seekers, refugees, and persons in mixed movements. For 2023, UNHCR is [appealing](#) for USD30.1 million.



*as of 24 November 2022

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

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

CONTEXT

November saw two important events in relation to the context of internal displacement. First, the Government of Honduras under the Presidency of Xiomara Castro has also **declared war** on extortion on 24 November, a move that had been requested several times by different bodies of society. Second, the National Congress brought to debate the Bill for the Prevention, Assistance and Protection of Internally Displaced People for the first time on 30 November, a milestone in the solutions for the IDP context in the country.

The crime of **extortion** is one of the main triggers of internal displacement identified in Honduras, a country that is impacted by generalized violence caused by organized crime. This crime often ends up without a conviction despite several detentions, contributing to the fear of victims to denounce the cases. According to data analyzed by the Investigative Unit of the newspaper El Heraldo Plus, as the judicial process progresses a funnel is created that reduces the number of prosecuted and investigated, to the point that only **eight percent** of the detainees have a conviction. The Association for a More Just Society (ASJ) estimates that more than 200,000 households in Honduras were **victims** of extortion in 2022, generating up to US\$737 million in extortion payments per year.

Considering the growing number of cases in the latest months, members of the transportation sector carried out a **large mobilization** on 22 November demanding support and better security strategies to fight extortion in the country. They **protested** in front of the presidential house asking for the government to take action.

On 24 November, President Xiomara Castro launched a **comprehensive strategy** for the treatment of extortion and related crimes, and stated that extortion is one of the main causes of violence and forced displacement in Honduras. The main actions include the creation of a School Police to prevent forced recruitment of children by gangs; strengthening the investigation of related crimes; creation of a compensation fund for extortion victims; implementation of rechargeable electronic cards for the transportation system; creation of municipal boards on security; among others. The government of Honduras also **declared war** on extortion, meaning the suspension of constitutional guarantees when warranted and the use of Armed Forces and Military Police for border control.

UNHCR RESPONSE

COORDINATION

MIRPS | On 23 November, the first of three virtual trainings on the Determination of Refugee Status and Gender took place as part of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) efforts. 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

LEGAL FRAMEWORK | In 2022, UNHCR engaged key institutions in the design of legal frameworks and promote agreements to produce, collect, and analyze data about forced displacement causes, dynamics, and impacts in Honduras. One of the main achievements of **working alongside** the institutions this year is the **favorable opinion** released by the Migration and Human Rights Commission of the National Congress on the Bill for the Prevention, Assistance and Protection of Internally Displaced Persons on 30 November. The Bill includes a new disposition (Article 58) which establishes that the National Statistics Institute (INE) and the Human Rights Secretariat (SEDH) have to generate data about the enjoyment of rights and advances toward durable solutions for internally displaced people, aligned with the recommendation provided by UNHCR.

HLP | Following the donation by UNHCR to the Honduran Property Institute (IP) of four drones and four cadastral georeferencing base stations in 2021, on 17 November 10 IP technicians completed the certification process in drone remote piloting systems. These technical and operational capacities will contribute to strengthen IP's cadastral processes in high-risk areas where abandoned properties have been identified by UNHCR and partners.

On 21 and 22 November, with support of UNHCR, the Property Institute (IP) and partner Caritas identified 15 abandoned properties due to violence in six communities in the northern and southern sectors of Chamelecón, Cortés, a small area in severe risk of internal displacement. These were abandoned after the families were forcibly displaced due to territorial disputes of criminal groups on invisible borders, extortion, gender-based violence and for being witnesses of crimes.

ADVOCACY | UNHCR, jointly with the Municipality of San Pedro Sula, Children International, Warriors Zulu Nations and Youth Against Violence, organized the **¡Que Pinta!** Colour Run to sensitize the population (particularly young people) on internal displacement due to violence and advocate for the approval of the Internal Displacement Bill in Congress. Around 1,300 persons participated in the advocacy campaign and the final cultural event was closed by the singer Cesia Saenz. Include picture and twitter link.

In the framework of international children's day, UNHCR jointly with the Municipality of San Pedro Sula, Children International, Warriors Zulu Nations, Youth Against Violence and COALICO, organized a **Forum** "Por mi Futuro Sí a la Ley de Desplazamiento" on the differential impact of forced displacement on children. Organizations and institutions specialized in child protection participated as panellists in the Forum, such as UNICEF, COIPRODEN, Public Ministry, Childhood Adolescence and Family Department (DINAF), National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH) and Youth Against Violence. A deputy from Congress, Silvia Ayala, also spoke in the Forum.



¡Que Pinta! Color Run in San Pedro Sula.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM | In Tegucigalpa, in celebration of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, 45 women from the Young Women's Network in the Central District were sensitized by UNHCR on the disproportionate effects of violence on women forcibly displaced.

UNHCR in Ocotepeque initiated the international campaign of 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence on 25 November with a movie forum at the Cultural Centre of Ocotepeque with 103 participants where UNHCR engaged with them on calling for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls. In addition, on 27 November, UNHCR and Help for Action in Ocotepeque **organized** the second edition of a sport event where 218 children, youth, women and men from the local community walked, run and biked to promote this year's campaign: "UNITE! Activism to end violence against women and girls". Local institutions such as CONADEH, ASONOG, Prosecutors Office and the Municipal Women's Office also supported the activity.

On November 15, UNHCR held a workshop with 15 participants to support the Valle de Sula LGBTIQ+ Committee in San Pedro Sula in building an awareness campaign on gender-based violence affecting diverse women, as part of the 16 days of activism to end violence against women and girls. The participants, including lesbian and transgender women, prioritized to address sexual violence committed against women with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC), and its impacts such as forced displacement and hate crimes.

TACTICAL URBANISM | As part of UNHCR's Community-Based Protection strategy, 33 community leaders, San Pedro Sula Municipality officials, and partners Children International, Jóvenes Contra la Violencia, Fe Y Alegria, and Children International participated in a 3-day workshop on Tactical Urbanism: Public spaces recovery to mitigate violence. The events aimed at strengthening Tactical Urbanism understanding and capacities of key stakeholder for public spaces recovery, developing impact measurement tools adapted to the high-risk urban violence context, and co-designing two Tactical Urbanism interventions plans for two interventions with San Pedro Sula Municipality, community leaders, and partners.

SPORTS | On 9 November, UNHCR launched sports activities as part of the cooperation with the National Commissioner of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (CONDEPOR) with the participation of 40 children and youth from two high-risk communities, Izaguirre (24 children and youth) and San Miguel (16 children and youth), both located in the same department as the capital of Honduras. The purpose of this activity is to provide safe spaces for communities through sports and enhance the protection environment.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS | 41 young persons from high-risk communities in San Pedro Sula and Francisco Morazan started their graphic design studies in the GraphXAcademy, a lead employer of graphic design specialists in Honduras. In November, participants received the first cash assistance instalment from UNHCR to guarantee their full participation in the course. As part of the collaborative work between UNHCR and the Honduran Foundation for Corporate Social Responsibility (FUNDHARSE), the Foundation facilitated the studies with stationary and studying materials. The cooperation with GraphXAcademy is part of UNHCR's engagement work with the private sector in Honduras.

SEED CAPITAL | After a series of trainings, 45 people from communities at high-risk of internal displacement due to violence received seed capital for business start-ups.



Honduras Livelihoods Fact Sheet

UNHCR conducted a course on financial inclusion for 17 Garifuna women-entrepreneurs in La Ceiba. The training was organized jointly with the Network of women-entrepreneurs and municipality of La Ceiba. In addition, a beneficiary of the UNHCR seed capital program, a Garifuna internally displaced woman, displaced in the north of the country, was recognized as a successful young entrepreneur by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Cortez, thanks to her active development of the business over the past year. By 17 November, by an invitation of the Chamber of Commerce she participated in a training in the United States of America, being a champion case of UNHCR's programs.

MIXED MOVEMENTS

CONTEXT

Local media sources reported dozens of Venezuelan migrants on **street-like situation** due to the lack of shelters in Honduras in November 2022. The country currently disposes of five shelters managed by civil society organizations in Ocotepeque, Danlí, Tegucigalpa, Tatumbula and Choluteca, and another one is being built by the Honduran National Migration Institute (INM) with UNHCR's support in Danlí.

Considering that from 1 January to 30 November a record number of 166,340 people entered Honduras irregularly, mainly from Cuba (40%), Venezuela (32%), Ecuador (11%) and Haiti (5%), according to INM data. In addition, 126,457 Nicaraguans entered regularly, transited, and exited regularly to Guatemala for "tourism/transit". In total, more than 292,000 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 880 people in mixed movements entered per day. However, the situation worsens when only October and November are considered, as both saw the highest number of irregular entries this year, the former surpassing January by 1,642%. That is, only in the former two months, the typical irregular entry was 960 people per day. Each shelter can host on average less than 100 people per night, meaning that the influx greatly exceeded 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), 20 new asylum applications were filed in Honduras in November (14 Venezuelans, 4 Nicaraguans, 1 Cuban, 1 Colombian). In total in the first eleven months of 2022, 141 asylum applications were made, what is more than the total number of applications registered in the whole year of 2021 and the highest number ever registered in one single year in Honduras. 67% of the applications made in 2022 correspond to Nicaraguans, 14% to Venezuelans, 8.5% to Salvadorans, 7% to Cubans, and the remaining to persons from Ecuador and Colombia.

UNHCR RESPONSE

PROTECTION CLUSTER | The National Congress of Honduras approved on 23 November the extension for six months (until 1 June 2023) of the **amnesty** on the payment of an administrative fine to persons in transit or in an irregular situation. The Protection Cluster, in coordination with the Humanitarian Country Team, dedicated itself to advocate for this extension, as it contributes to increased protection in Honduras, particularly to those with specific needs.

On the other hand, the Local Response Group for the Southern Border led by UNHCR and co-lead by Action Against Hunger, continues being the space where the humanitarian response implemented by 19 humanitarian organizations in the southern border is being coordinated for new arrivals of persons in mixed movements. The Response Group served 90,631 people so far this year with humanitarian assistance.

INFORMATION | UNHCR provided information on international protection, the asylum-system in Honduras and on available services in Ocotepeque to 351 people (57% Venezuelans) to mitigate protection risks through the Mobile Health Spot in the Sinuapa Triangle, an area of Honduras that receives people in mixed movements aiming to leave Honduras to continue their journey northward.

UNHCR and its partner World Vision through its Mobile Information Services on the southeastern border of Honduras provided information to 2,114 persons in mixed movements on international protection and the right to seek asylum to persons that enter Honduran territory.

UNHCR and its partner Pastoral Group on Human Mobility (PMH) finished the design of a flyer for persons on mixed movements that 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. Initially 10,000 copies of the flyers will be printed.

ASSISTANCE | 299 returnees and persons in mixed movements with protection needs were assisted in Casa Migrante Ocotepeque, financed by UNHCR.

HEALTH | On 24 November, UNHCR participated in the inauguration of a Multi-Purpose Room for a Youth Health Clinic that was supported in infrastructure and equipment by UNHCR, in partnership with World Vision. The space will be used for different activities of the Clinic, including nursing classes for 200 students. The Clinic benefits more than 3,000 students including youth from at-risk communities. As part of the agreement, in the Clinic, asylum seeker, refugees and youth in mixed movements can receive health services when needed.

RETURNEES

CONTEXT

In November, a total of 6,462 Hondurans, including 355 unaccompanied children, were returned to the three Centers for Returned Migrants, representing an increase compared to the months of September and October. So far in 2022, more than 88.000 Hondurans were returned to the country, a 60% increase in relation to the previous year.

UNHCR RESPONSE

CASE MANAGEMENT | UNHCR attended 31 cases (92 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.

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, so far in 2022, 34 cases (153 persons) were referred from KIND to UNHCR, out of which eight cases (29 persons) were eligible. The protection situation of the remaining 26 cases (124 persons) is currently being analysed by UNHCR to provide them with a different durable solution, including through the Protection Transfer Arrangement program (14 cases until now, 78 persons).

To increase case identification, on 21 November UNHCR socialized the “Juntos” family reunification program with the Foreign Ministry, including with the Head of the Office for the Assistance of Honduran Returnees. In addition, UNHCR has shared the video and radio spot on the program that will be disseminated by the Foreign Ministry in Centres for Returned Migrants CAMRs and through other government channels.

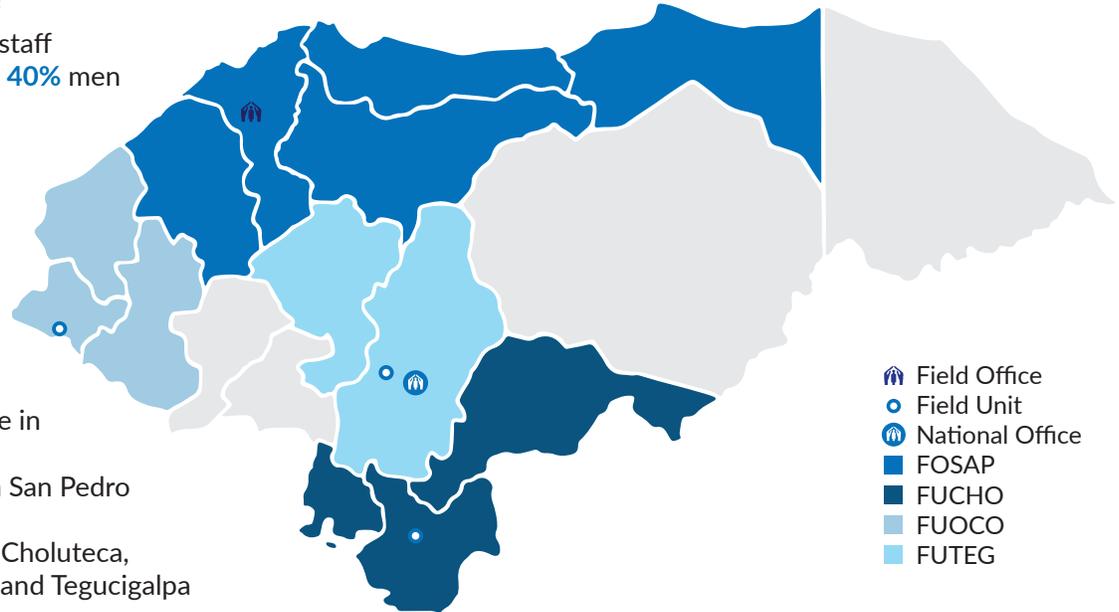
UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

61 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



- Field Office
- Field Unit
- National Office
- FOSAP
- FUCHO
- FUOCO
- FUTEG

UNHCR is thankful to the donors who provide funds to Honduras



UNHCR also thanks private donors and private donors from:



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