

# OCOTEPEQUE

November 2022

The western border of Honduras is a transit route for people in mixed flows. With the caravans passing through the country since 2018, the need to **strengthen UNHCR's** presence to identify people in need of protection and to **meet the basic needs** of the population has been increasingly necessary.

In the **Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS)**, UNHCR in Ocotepeque is strengthening its presence at the border to identify and provide international protection to the people we serve and facilitate the identification of people at risk when returned.

Due to the changes in migration measures in the region, it has been observed that more people **extend their presence** in Ocotepeque, increasing the magnitude of the situation of people in mixed movements, the amount of this population and their needs.

## THE PEOPLE WE SERVE

### Field Unit Ocotepeque 2022

UNHCR's field unit in Ocotepeque covers **three departments bordering** El Salvador and Guatemala: Copán, Lempira and Ocotepeque. These are located on the exit route of **people in mixed movements** to northern countries. An average of 6,000 people leave through regular and irregular border points through Agua Caliente and El Florido weekly. A part of this population seeks international protection.

To this end, UNHCR strengthens the competent authorities with the aim of facilitating access to international protection for those who require it. In addition, these departments receive **internally displaced people** fleeing violent contexts in the rest of the country.



Coordination on the border between Honduras and Guatemala to strengthen the response and protection of people in transit and with international protection needs that arrive at this point.

## UNHCR PRESENCE

- Field Unit
- FUOCO



**Staff:**  
**3** National staff  
**2** International staff  
**40%** woman and **60%** men

## PARTNERS



# STRATEGY

## PROTECT

Ensuring centrality of protection in the response to forced displacement

**MONITORING** | UNHCR constantly monitors the flows of people in mixed movements that pass through the border points of Agua Caliente, El Florido, and El Paraíso (Copán) to make visible the situation and the profiles of people in need of protection. In addition, UNHCR provides information and advice on international refugee law and, in the case of the Honduran population, legal advice regarding internal displacement. In addition, UNHCR has improved its response capacity, recognizing that due to the use of the territory of Honduras, there might be a need for assistance to a massive group of population at any time.

**PROTECTION** | In order to strengthen the services provided by the State on international protection, displacement prevention and gender-based violence, UNHCR has trained more than 400 people from local institutions and authorities on these issues in 2022.

**COORDINATION** | In response to the risks of human trafficking and smuggling on the Honduras and Guatemala borders, UNHCR relaunched the binational protection network between UNHCR offices from both countries and ten strategic state protection actors working in this area. Ocotepeque and Esquipulas Migrant Houses are also part of this protection network. This coordination mechanism expedited access to international protection for various people in need.

## ASSIST

Ensure operational response capacity and life-saving aid for the most vulnerable people during emergencies

**BASIC NEEDS** | In 2022, UNHCR has distributed more than 500 hygiene items to returned women, men, girls and boys and people in mixed movements at the Agua Caliente and El Florido border points, seeking to support those in a vulnerable situation.

**WASH** | To facilitate access to information on rights and guarantee protection against the spread of COVID-19, UNHCR has installed several sinks with information materials on the wall above the facility in various locations in Ocotepeque. These materials have information on international protection and forced displacement and were located at strategic points of high influx of people in mixed movements, at risk of displacement, and the host community.

**SHELTER** | UNHCR has financed the staff of both Migrant Houses in Ocotepeque Migrant House and in El Paraíso (Copán). In addition, UNHCR has strengthened the technical capacities of its staff to identify people in need of international protection and forced displacement, with the aim of giving these institutions long-term sustainability. Each House serves an average of 70 people per week.

UNHCR also promoted the installation of a temporary transit place to shelter people in mixed movements with the aim of mitigating the impact of massive returns of the population in transit, after the increase in people stranded around the Ocotepeque area in 2022.



COMUNYCARTE activity in Ocotepeque.

Fotografía: ACNUR

## EMPOWER

### Empowering communities

**PREVENTION** | UNHCR supported the creation of the Youth Network of five departments in western Honduras to promote actions to prevent internal displacement and gender-based violence among youth in the western region. A participatory diagnosis was made to identify the protection risks that affected this community and approximately 60 young people were trained to replicate the case identification strategy.

**PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE** | 25 niñas y niños del barrio San José de San Marcos participan semanalmente desde el inicio de agosto en un proyecto de actividades artísticas que facilitan la coexistencia pacífica entre la comunidad de acogida y personas desplazadas. El proyecto COMUNYCARTE, implementado en un barrio estigmatizado por la presencia de población desplazada internamente y en situación de vulnerabilidad, se coordina entre la municipalidad local y ACNUR, en conjunto con las familias.

## SOLVE

### Include the people we serve in national/local services with support for local capacity building

**LEGAL FRAMEWORK** | To promote the approval of the bill for the prevention, care and protection of forcibly displaced persons, after the reactivation of discussions in Congress, UNHCR is creating spaces to disseminate the importance of this legal framework among the local population, municipalities and local deputies to advocate for its approval from the local level.

**CHILD PROTECTION** | UNHCR financed the construction of an office of the National Directorate for Children, Adolescent and Family Affairs (DINAF) to guarantee a permanent presence of the institution in the department of Ocotepeque. This office is providing protection services to unaccompanied children in transit, both in their departure and return, and to victims of human rights violations in urban and rural areas. UNHCR has also worked to strengthen its staff.

**MIXED MOVEMENTS** | UNHCR has created the Protection Discussion Group with key local actors to monitor exit caravans of Honduran people in mixed movements and to coordinate responses to people who did not manage to leave and those who are returned.

### UNHCR thanks donors providing funds to Honduras










Also thanks private donors from:



### For more information

**Caroline Scotti Vilain**  
Associate Reporting Officer, Honduras

 [scottivi@unhcr.org](mailto:scottivi@unhcr.org)  
 +504 2270-7155  
 +504 3174 3122

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