UNHCR ACNUR
La Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados

FACTSHEET
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OCOTEPEQUE

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

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.

UNHCR PRESENCE

Field Unit
FUOCO

Staff:
3 National staff
2 International staff
40% women y **60%** men

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Response

UNHCR's response integrates regional protection mechanisms and community protection mechanisms at the national level. In addition, UNHCR works with monitoring of mixed movements, identification of people with international protection needs, strengthening of the humanitarian response, amongst several other actions to prevent, care and respond to forced displacement in Honduras.

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. The humanitarian network is evaluating the possibility of formalizing a local protection group to facilitate coordination.

INFORMATION SERVICES | In the western region of Honduras, UNHCR has information services to mitigate protection risks for people in mixed movements at exit points from the country. These services are provided through a Mobile Health Point in the Sinuapa Triangle and other places such as the Casa Migrante shelter and strategic points on the northwestern border, an area of the country that receives people in mixed movements on their way north.

ASSIST

Ensure operational response capacity and lifetime support for the most vulnerable people during emergencies

BASIC NEEDS | In 2022, UNHCR has distributed more than 1,500 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.

COMMUNICATION WITH COMMUNITIES | 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 50 people per week.

UNHCR promoted the creation of a municipal coordination table where, among other efforts, it was coordinated the adaptation of an old COVID-19 triage area to serve as a shelter. The adaption served to create a place of temporary shelter for people in mixed movements with the aim of mitigating the impact of massive returns of population in transit, after the increase in people strained in the region in 2022.

EMPOWER

Empower 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 girls and boys from the San José de San Marcos neighborhood participate weekly since the beginning of August in a project of artistic activities that facilitate peaceful coexistence between the host community and internally displaced people. The COMUNYCARTE project, implemented in a neighborhood suffering from stigmatization against internally displaced people and vulnerable populations, is coordinated between the local municipality and UNHCR, together with the families.

SOLVE

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

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 and other nationalities of people in mixed movements and to coordinate responses to people who did not manage to leave and those who are returned.

We thank the contributions of our donors
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For more information

Caroline Scotti Vilain
Associate Reporting Officer, Honduras

scottivi@unhcr.org
+504 2270-7155
+504 3174 3122

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