

El Salvador

September 2024 || Monthly Update #09

Participants of the "MUN 4 Everyone" Model United Nations, including youth from UNHCR's prioritized communities during the closing event of the capacity-building programme for leaders.

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Our 2024 response in figures



Funding

5,024  individuals at heightened risk received cash assistance

This support helps cover basic needs such as food, rent, documentation, and facilitates activities for economic integration, education, and naturalization.

2,336  people registered with biometrics.



56% of UNHCR's financial requirements for El Salvador received by 30 September 2024.

Highlights



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- UNHCR and the National Council for Childhood and Adolescence (CONAPINA) renewed their Letter of Understanding to further collaborate in support of children and adolescents. As such, works are ongoing to rehabilitate four centres that will offer psychosocial attention to children in communities historically affected by violence and forced displacement.

- Seventy-five migration officials from land border points and the international airport began a diploma on international protection organized by the Migration School of the General Directorate for Migration and Foreigners and UNHCR. The three-month programme expands participants' knowledge on refugee law and forced displacement towards improved identification of people at heightened risk and access to asylum.

- The Ombudsperson's Office, with UNHCR support, organized in San Salvador the VI Ibero-American Summit on Human Mobility and Human Trafficking. Representatives from national human rights institutions attended UNHCR-led sessions on the Cartagena +40 Process and the Global Compact on Refugees, among others on human mobility and forced displacement



Staff members from GAMI engaging in group dynamics during a training on emotional intelligence. © UNHCR

Thirty-five staff members working at the returnee reception centre GAMI, enhanced their knowledge of emotional intelligence and psychological first aid through a workshop facilitated by UNHCR and World Vision. Participants from the General Directorate for Migration and Foreigners (DGME), the Directorate for the Attention of Victims (DAV), the National Council for Childhood and Adolescence (CONAPINA), and the Salvadoran Institute for Women's Development, learned about referral pathway and services available for people with specific needs.



Some 200 people in Puerto El Triunfo, Usulután department, received information on rights and services, as well as medical and psychosocial attention in a service fair "By Your Side" (Feria A Tu Lado) organized by UNHCR, IRC and the municipality. The Directorate for Attention of Victims, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Attorney General's Office (PGR), partners Doctors of the World, ORMUSA, World Vision, and other organizations joined forces in the event.

In Las Margaritas, 12 community leaders participated in a session on the prevention of gender-based violence as part of the efforts to enhance their leadership skills.

In Puerto El Triunfo (Usulután department) the mobile unit of UNHCR's Support Space "By Your Side" delivered information on rights and services. © UNHCR

La Campanera community (Soyapango district), with UNHCR support, reactivated its communal board after seven years of inactivity due to gang control. This contributes to a comprehensive effort to boost community structures in areas historically affected by violence and forced displacement. The 11-member board will foster participation and positive change, also as contributors to UNHCR's *Tactic Urbanism* interventions.

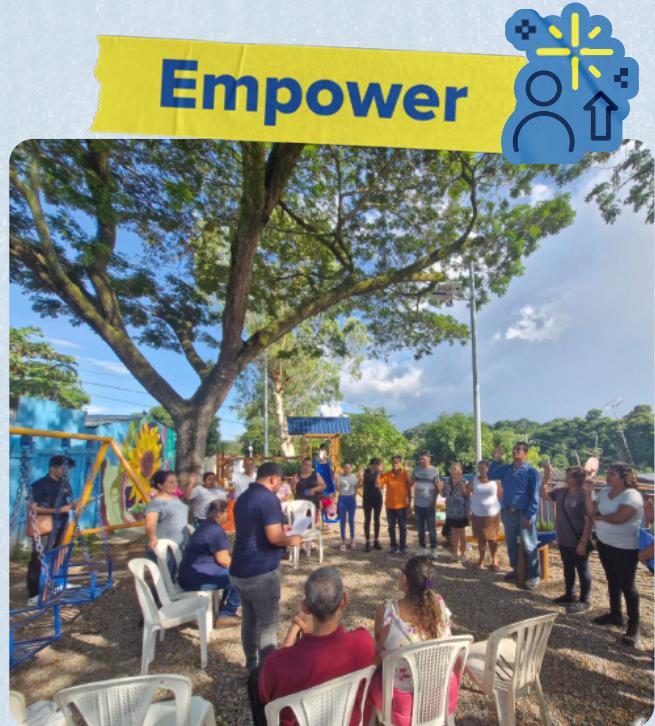
Along volunteers from the Supreme Court's Judicial Facilitators programme, UNHCR reached 150 people from communities and the local courts with information about rights, services, and referral pathways in workshops conducted in Santa Ana and Chalatenango.

UNHCR concluded annual participatory assessments with 44 prioritized communities nationwide. In this exercise over 1,230 individuals identified protection risks, needs, capacities, and solutions to inform UNHCR 2025 work plans.

UNHCR and partners World Vision and FUNDASAL held a workshop on psychological first aid for 45 people in La Campanera, Soyapango. Children, women, and men learned techniques for improving mental health and emotional wellbeing.



Participants of the Súper Pilas programme in Metapán, Santa Ana engage in sessions to develop life plans. © UNHCR



People in La Campanera community voting to elect their community board. © UNHCR / Mariana Cocolo

The fourth cohort in 2024 of Súper Pilas began with 165 participants, including 60 women referred by the national institution on women ISDEMU and funded by the MIRPS support platform. So far in 2024, UNHCR has provided capacity-building for self-employment and entrepreneurship for 261 people and aims to provide at least 100 participants with seed capital by year-end, supporting entrepreneurial projects that promote self-reliance.

At the final stage of the Súper Pilas programme for "Graffitour" entrepreneurs in Santa Lucía, Mejicanos, 12 individuals presented their business ideas to an evaluation panel by UNHCR, the Directorate for the Reconstruction of Social Cohesion, and experts from the small and medium enterprise sector. This pilot links UNHCR Tactical Urbanism efforts to revamp spaces with entrepreneurship in communities previously controlled by gangs. Eleven small businesses will receive seed capital.

Under the Creating Opportunities programme, 35 participants in Santa Ana completed training in the ILO's methodology to expand their small businesses. Also, 20 participants received technical training as commercial cashiers. So far 2024, over 150 individuals have benefited from vocational training supported by UNHCR and partner Fe y Alegría.

800 Stories from the field

Youth leadership: global perspectives that inspire local transformations.

Raquel (second from left to right), a 26-year-old community leader from San Vicente during a learning programme supported by UNHCR to expand her perspectives for problem-solving in her community.

© UNHCR / María Elena Enriquez



Raquel, a 26-year-old woman from Apastepeque, in the San Vicente department of eastern El Salvador, strengthened her skills through the UN Model “MUN For Everyone”, a three-month capacity-building programme of the Higher School of Economics and Business (ESEN) with UNHCR’s support.

The programme introduces youth to global issues, diplomacy, and negotiation techniques, giving Raquel a broader perspective on challenges facing youth worldwide and inspiring her to take action at the local level. “I enhanced my leadership skills and learned about different perspectives”, she mentions. “The knowledge I acquired empowered me to carry out concrete actions”.

Historical violence exerted by gangs impacted negatively in Raquel’s community as people avoided interacting in public spaces due to fear. Curfews and invisible borders imposed by criminal groups also hindered youth’s participation in community processes and initiatives.

Despite security improvements in the country, Raquel observed that community engagement remained low and felt she had to do something about it.

After her participation in the UN Model, Raquel led a community initiative with the support of UNHCR, putting her newly acquired skills into practice. Together with other young people, she brought the community together and organized activities for environmental conservation through clean-up and recycling days and reforestation campaigns. They also revamped public spaces with benches, garbage bins and artistic murals.

Raquel continues to actively engage in the local youth committee, which is part of one of six youth networks supported by UNHCR, and from there she motivates others to participate in community projects.

These youth-led efforts have enhanced social cohesion and community participation in Apastepeque. “Thanks to these activities, we have a stronger sense of belonging. We see the community as our home”, Raquel says with enthusiasm.

UNHCR works with 20 youth committees in communities affected by violence and forced displacement, providing access to opportunities, and helping young people develop the skills they need to reach their full potential.

In 2024, UNHCR is appealing for USD 28.6 million to provide protection, responses, empowerment and solutions to refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced persons in El Salvador. The best way to support UNHCR’s appeal is through unearmarked contributions. Such flexible funding at the global level is key in allowing a timely response to evolving needs wherever required.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the support in 2024 of:



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