



SITUATION SUMMARY

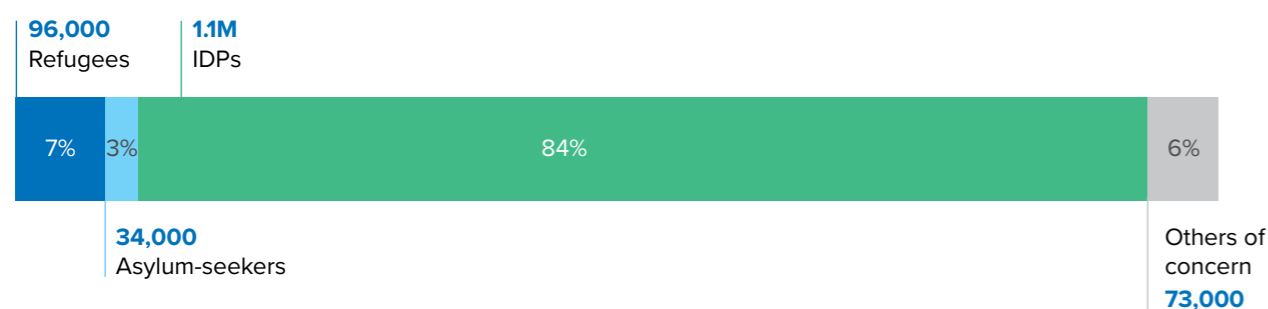
Marcos, a Honduran refugee employed in Saltillo, Mexico, is one of many refugees benefiting from UNHCR-supported private-sector partnerships promoting refugee inclusion and sustainable solutions in the region. © UNHCR/Victor Sánchez Mejía

El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras situation

Country operations involved in the response: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama multi-country office.

2025 year-end population figures

1.2 million Honduran, Guatemalan and Salvadorian refugees in neighbouring countries and IDPs



Context

In 2025, insecurity and violence – including violence against women and girls – persistent poverty, food insecurity and climate-related hazards continued to drive forced displacement across the North of Central America. While security and mobility dynamics varied across the subregion, mixed movements, internal displacement and protection needs remained complex and closely interconnected in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

In Honduras, high levels of violence persisted throughout 2025 despite a gradual decline in homicide rates. Extortion, gang control of neighbourhoods and the forced recruitment of children continued to trigger internal displacement, with teachers and small business owners among the most frequently targeted groups. During the year, approximately 260 women were killed, and 1,472 individuals were identified as being at risk of displacement due to threats, extortion, or violence. Children represented 1 in 5 people displaced by violence.

Honduras also remained among the countries facing the highest combined disaster and protection risks, where natural hazards intersect with insecurity and human mobility. Although northbound movements declined sharply compared to 2024, mobility patterns became increasingly complex, including return movements and a growing intention among some populations to remain in the country. Honduras registered 716 asylum applications – the highest number on record – placing additional pressure on the asylum system and essential public services.

In Guatemala, official estimates available for the first time indicated that 573,000 people were internally displaced due to violence, underscoring both the magnitude of protection needs and the importance of reliable data to inform effective responses. Asylum applications continued to rise steadily in 2025, reaching 1,300 claims, primarily from nationals of Honduras, El Salvador, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Nicaragua.

In El Salvador, security continued to improve. The homicide rate fell from 18.1 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2021 to 1.3 in 2025, while overall crime dropped by 52% between 2024 and 2025. Although official data from 2018 estimated that 71,500 people

were internally displaced, recent trends suggested fewer new displacements. Nevertheless, previously displaced people, women and girls affected by violence, and returnees with specific vulnerabilities continued to require tailored protection responses. In 2025, the number of returnees had increased by 7%, reaching 16,051 people, many of whom faced stigma, limited livelihood opportunities, and challenges accessing housing, education and basic services. El Salvador also hosted 523 refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from Cuba, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Significant numbers of Salvadoran, Guatemalan and Honduran nationals sought protection elsewhere in the Americas, especially in Mexico. Many remained exposed to protection risks along migration routes or faced obstacles in accessing asylum, legal residency and essential services in countries of transit and destination.

UNHCR in action

In coordination with UN agencies, government counterparts, academia and 39 partners, UNHCR supported access to asylum, strengthened protection systems, and advanced solutions for refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people (IDPs), returnees and host communities across the three countries. UNHCR maintained a regional approach, complementing in-country responses with cross-border coordination and advocacy to ensure continuity of protection and durable solutions.

Major achievements across El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras

- 83,500+** people received protection services
- 5,500+** people received financial aid
- 23,600+** people received non-food items
- 14,800+** people received shelter and housing assistance
- 10,200+** individual consultations provided through UNHCR-supported health-care services

In Honduras, UNHCR adjusted its protection strategy to strengthen registration and case processing capacity, promote fair and efficient asylum procedures and reinforce institutional mechanisms to prevent and respond to internal displacement. Community-based protection approaches were further scaled up to enhance resilience, support early risk identification and facilitate solutions for displaced populations. In 2025, 3,090 people received financial aid, 15,737 people received non-food items, 8,930 people received shelter and housing assistance, and 3,045 individual consultations were provided through UNHCR-supported health-care services.

In parallel, livelihoods, economic inclusion and housing support in Honduras reached thousands of displaced. Nearly 1,000 benefited from training and employment initiatives, over 3,700 IDPs received support to restore livelihoods, and major progress was made on land tenure security through property registration and legalization efforts benefiting over 1,900 families.

In Guatemala, UNHCR supported the strengthening of the national asylum system through technical assistance, capacity-building and decentralization efforts, improving access to fair and efficient procedures in line with international standards. Humanitarian needs remained acute across population groups, leading UNHCR to prioritize access to rights and essential services – including protection, documentation, shelter, livelihoods, and basic services – while expanding community-based protection and partnerships with municipalities hosting displaced populations. In 2025, 783 people received financial aid, 6,129 people received non-food items, 2,398 people received shelter and housing assistance, and 6,471 individual consultations were delivered through UNHCR-supported health-care services.

Guatemala also made significant progress on refugee self-reliance and local integration by expanding access to identity documents, work permits, and formal employment. Labor barriers were reduced by 90%, 756 work permits were issued through a fast, free online system, and over 400 people received livelihood support.

Positive developments in El Salvador created opportunities to advance solutions for internal displacement, support the reintegration of returnees with protection needs, and promote solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers. Through employability, skills development and entrepreneurship programmes, 302 individuals enhanced their livelihood opportunities, while 23 refugees progressed towards naturalization, marking a substantial step toward stability and inclusion. UNHCR’s humanitarian assistance continued, with 1,724 people receiving financial aid, 1,819 receiving non-food items, 3,507 receiving shelter and housing assistance, and 731 individual consultations provided through UNHCR-supported health-care services.

Coordination and partnerships

Across El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, UNHCR ensured a protection-centred response in close coordination with governments, humanitarian and development actors, civil society organizations and displaced communities. UNHCR led the Protection Sector in all three countries, co-led Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) in Guatemala and co-led both the CCCM and the Shelter sectors in El Salvador.

At the regional level, UNHCR – together with the Organization of American States (OAS) – continued to serve as Technical Secretariat of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS). This role supported coordinated regional responses to displacement, positioned forced displacement as a priority within the OAS agenda, and promoted peer exchange, inclusion in national development plans and strengthened accountability across the region.

UNHCR also strengthened engagement with line ministries, the private sector and international financial institutions – including the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank – to promote integration and development solutions addressing the root causes of forced displacement.

Use of flexible funding

Despite notable progress, funding gaps constrained the scale of essential protection, shelter, health and livelihoods interventions, limiting the sustainability of medium- and long-term solutions. Flexible funding remained crucial for core protection and life-saving work, helping UNHCR direct resources where needs were greatest and maintain support for underfunded activities. In El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, flexible funding accounted for more than 50% of total income. Most of this funding supported well-being and basic needs, community mobilization, protection policy and law, gender-based violence and child protection. Thanks to flexible funding, UNHCR maintained operations in underfunded areas and delivered protection services to more than 64,000 refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs across Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Mexico.

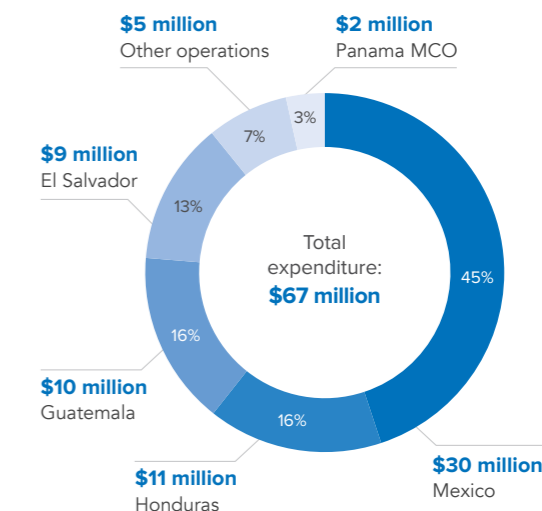
Operational spotlights

In Guatemala, UNHCR supported the first official statistics on internal displacement through the 2023 national survey of living conditions (*Encuesta Nacional de Condiciones de Vida*). Released in September 2025, these data marked a major step towards evidence-based policymaking.

In Honduras, UNHCR’s partnership with the Hague Institute for Innovation of Law delivered the first comprehensive assessment of justice and protection needs for internally displaced and at-risk populations. The finding informed the implementation of the national law on the prevention, care and protection of IDPs and strengthened institutional readiness for a protection-centered response.

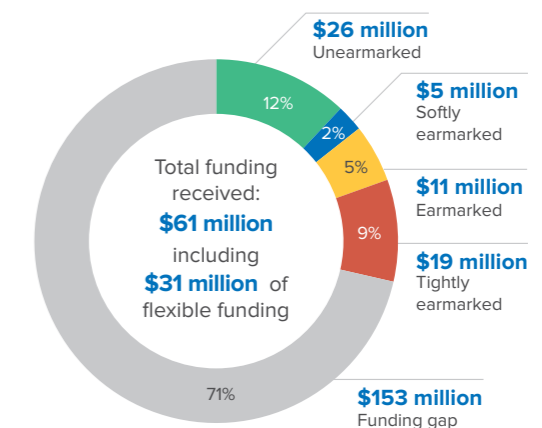
Financial overview

Expenditure by operation

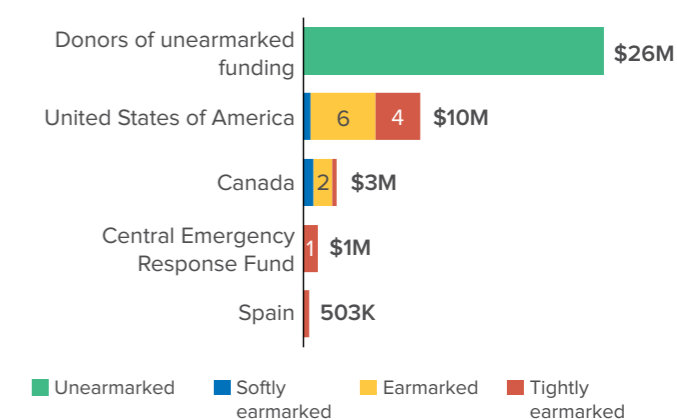


Funding received (USD)

In 2025, UNHCR required a total of \$215 million to address the situation in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador and in neighbouring countries but received only 29% of that amount.



Top 5 donors



Voluntary contributions from all other donors, carry-over and other adjustments were \$21 million.