



ANNUAL REPORT

# MIRPS 2025

COMPREHENSIVE  
REGIONAL PROTECTION  
AND SOLUTIONS  
FRAMEWORK

## CREDITS

We recognize the contributions of the MIRPS Pro-tempore Presidency Costa Rica 2025, National Technical Teams of MIRPS countries, and their partners for the development of this report.

## PRODUCTION

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# ACRONYMS

<b>AMN</b>	National Migration Authority
<b>BELTRAID</b>	Belize Trade and Investment Development Service
<b>CAMR</b>	Reception Center for Returned Migrants
<b>CCSS</b>	Costa Rican Social Security Fund
<b>CECC</b>	Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination
<b>CEEX</b>	Center for Extracurricular Education
<b>CIPPDEF</b>	Inter-Institutional Commission for the Protection of Forcibly Displaced Persons of Honduras
<b>CODER</b>	Commission for Refugee Determination of El Salvador
<b>COMAR</b>	Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance
<b>CONAMYPE</b>	National Commission for Micro and Small Enterprises
<b>CONAPINA</b>	National Council for Early Childhood, Childhood and Adolescence of El Salvador
<b>CUBO</b>	Urban Welfare and Opportunity Centers
<b>CURP</b>	Unique Population Registration Number of Mexico
<b>DGME</b>	General Directorate of Migration and Foreigners
<b>DIGEEX</b>	General Directorate for Extracurricular Education
<b>DIPPDV</b>	Directorate for the Protection of Persons Internally Displaced by Violence in Honduras
<b>DRER</b>	Department for the Recognition of Refugee Status of Guatemala
<b>ECLAC</b>	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>EMIBISUR</b>	Temporary Assistance Center for Migrants in Southern Costa Rica
<b>ENCOVI</b>	National Survey of Living Conditions
<b>FINABIEN</b>	Financial Services for Well-being
<b>FLACSO</b>	Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences
<b>FOSOFAMILIA</b>	Solidarity Fund for the Family
<b>GAMI</b>	Migrant Assistance Directorate
<b>IDB</b>	Inter-American Development Bank
<b>IGM</b>	Guatemalan Migration Institute
<b>INCAF</b>	National Institute for Training and Education
<b>INE</b>	National Institute of Statistics of Honduras
<b>INEA</b>	National Institute for Adult Education of Mexico
<b>INM</b>	National Migration Institute of Honduras
<b>ISDEMU</b>	Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women

**ITVET** Institute for Technical and Vocational Education and Training

**ME/CECC** CECC Ministerial Education Resolution

**MINARE** National Response Mechanism (MIRPS National Action Plan in Costa Rica)

**MINEDUCYT** Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

**MINEC** Ministry of Economy

**MINSAL** Ministry of Health

**MIRPS** Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework

**MITRADEL** Ministry of Labor and Workforce Development

**NTT** MIRPS National Technical Team

**OAS** Organization of American States

**ONPAR** National Office for Refugee Assistance

**OPORTUGUATE** Guatemala's National Platform for Employment Opportunities

**PEX** Electronic Platform for Work Permits for Foreigners in Guatemala

**PGR** Office of the Attorney General of the Republic

**PNVLV** National Policy for Women's Access to a Life Free from Violence

**PODE** Educational Supply and Demand Plan

**PPSH** Humanitarian Security Protection Permit

**RNPN** National Registry of Natural Persons

**SACE** Educational Centers Administration System

**SART** Early Warning and Response System

**SBS** Secretariat of Social Welfare

**SEDH** Secretariat of Human Rights

**SEDUC** Secretariat of Education

**SETRASS** Secretariat of Labor and Social Security

**SICA** Central American Integration System

**SINARE** National Refugee System

**SINARDEFI** National System for the Response to Internal Forced Displacement

**SNIS** Integrated National Health System

**SNE** National Employment System

**UN** United Nations

**UNHCR** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



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# Foreword



In 2025, the Government of Costa Rica, as the Pro Tempore Presidency (PPT) of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS), achieved significant progress in the implementation of its Regional Action Plan, positioning MIRPS as a mechanism for generating key lessons learned and strengthening the strategic and effective regional response to displacement in Central America and Mexico. This period was pivotal in transforming political commitments into concrete results, demonstrating the capacity of MIRPS to provide protection, promote solutions, and mobilize partnerships in an increasingly complex context.

Under Costa Rica's leadership, the centrality of a human rights-based and international protection approach was reaffirmed as the guiding principle of MIRPS, with States upholding commitments and taking firm steps toward their implementation in both global and regional forums. Within this framework, the 2025 Global Refugee Forum Progress Review was leveraged as an opportunity for collective learning and accountability.

In a regional context marked by new dynamics of displacement and evolving forms of cooperation, Costa Rica prioritized the generation of data and concrete results as the strongest argument to advocate for the relevance of collective action underpinning MIRPS. In this regard, the actions undertaken and the coordinated regional work reaffirmed that multilateralism and financial sustainability of regional

processes are indispensable. Accordingly, MIRPS promoted collaboration with other global and regional agendas, including the Regional Conference on Migration, the Quito Process, the Chile Action Plan, the Platform on Disaster Displacement, and the Committee on Migratory Affairs of the Organization of American States.

Through the implementation of the Regional Action Plan, Costa Rica achieved concrete milestones, including the reform of the MIRPS Statutory Charter, a decisive step toward continuing to strengthen governance and ensuring the institutional sustainability of this mechanism. Additionally, a series of technical documents were developed to compile good practices, serving as guidance and reference to ensure continuity in regional efforts.

Moreover, a whole-of-society approach was strengthened, as the PPT promoted coordinated actions with the MIRPS Support Platform, under the leadership of the Government of Colombia, and strengthened Dialogue Mechanisms with civil society, academia, and the private sector. Another notable achievement during Costa Rica's PPT was the activation of the Troika, ensuring continuity of actions initiated under the previous Presidency.

As part of this legacy, the country deemed it essential to adopt practical management tools, complementing the MIRPS Regional Action Plan with a detailed follow-up plan aimed at monitoring agreed actions

# Under Costa Rica’s leadership, the centrality of a human rights-based and international protection approach was reaffirmed as the guiding principle of MIRPS.

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and deliverables. This approach, together with the roadmaps of the Regional Technical Teams, progress reports, inventories of good practices, and other key resources, has helped consolidate a stronger, more transparent, and results-oriented regional management architecture.

A fundamental component of this management effort has been the generation and systematization of evidence on the impact of MIRPS, reaffirming Costa Rica’s commitment as Presidency to lead with responsibility, strategic vision, and a vocation for regional service.

Finally, the year 2025 demonstrated that the success of MIRPS depends largely on strong national capacities and the effective mobilization of resources. Collective reflection emphasized that financial commitments made in international forums must translate into tangible benefits for displaced persons.

This report presents the strategic vision of MIRPS, based on the national action plans of the seven Member States, the coordinated work of the Regional Technical Teams, the Support Platform, and the dialogue mechanisms. It also provides an update on the implementation of projects financed by the MIRPS Fund, administered by the General Secretariat of the OAS through its Department of Access to Rights, as well as the Good Practices Implementation Projects (GPIP).

The progress reflected in the regional and national chapters of this Annual Report demonstrates that MIRPS has evolved beyond being a space for regional coordination. Today, MIRPS stands as a strategic regional framework that drives concrete and sustainable solutions to the challenges of displacement in the Americas.

As its mandate as MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency comes to a close, Costa Rica reaffirms that evidence-based management, rigorous follow-up, and practical cooperation are essential pillars for strengthening collective action. This commitment, shared among MIRPS Member States, marks the path toward more effective, humane, and lasting responses in the Americas..





# Regional Context

In 2025, MIRPS countries experienced new dynamics in both mixed and onward movements, characterized by a notable decrease in northbound displacement and an increase in multidirectional movements, primarily toward the south. This transformation of traditional routes was shaped by evolving migration policies across the region, the discontinuation of regular stay alternatives, and increased control measures in response to irregular crossings by displaced people.

According to data reported by UNHCR in its Mid-Year Global Trends Report, by mid-2025, the Americas were hosting 21.8 million forcibly displaced people and others in need of protection and assistance. In addition, more than 2,496,000 refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced persons from Central America and Mexico were reported worldwide.<sup>1</sup>

In the first quarter of 2025, irregular crossings through the Darién fell by 99% compared to the previous year.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, 17,900 people were reported crossing from Panama to Colombia, revealing new displacement patterns and spontaneous return movements toward the south, mainly to Venezuela and Colombia.

In this context, the need to seek alternative routes, combined with the impact of reduced humanitarian assistance, has heightened existing protection risks due to limited access to services and decreased humanitarian presence at borders. This situation increases exposure to protection risks, particularly for women, girls, boys, and adolescents.

**Regarding internal displacement, structural causes persist and, in some countries, are worsening.**

**This also affects returnees with protection needs who are unable to go back to their communities of origin because threats to their safety remain.**

Within this evolving regional landscape, national asylum systems continue to serve as fundamental pillars of protection. During 2024, more than 121,700 new asylum claims were registered across Latin America and the Caribbean, and States issued over 178,000 decisions. A sustained increase in asylum applications is evident in countries such as Mexico, which received 79,000 applications in 2024 and 45,500 in the first quarter of 2025, and Costa Rica, which received 16,100 applications.<sup>3</sup> These figures reflect not only the scale of the situation but also the region's institutional commitment to international and inter-American standards.

1 UNHCR, Mid-Year Trends Report, 2025

2 Idem

3 Idem

Despite these shifts in displacement dynamics, the region continues to demonstrate a strong tradition of solidarity. In 2025, several countries recorded significant increases in asylum applications: Honduras registered a fivefold increase in applications compared to 2024, while Costa Rica (39%) and Mexico (10%) also reported notable increases. A substantial increase has also been observed in the number of people declaring their intention to remain in Mexico.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, although the future trajectory of disaster-related displacement remains uncertain, such movements are expected to continue, further exacerbating structural vulnerabilities such as inequality, food insecurity, economic fragility, situations of generalized violence, and the impacts of climate change — including their effects on internal and cross-border displacement. MIRPS countries continue strengthening institutional capacities to respond in a timely manner.

In the face of persistent forced displacement challenges, the MIRPS is more relevant than ever. This regional mechanism provides an essential platform to renew political commitments, strengthen international protection, and advance sustainable solutions for people facing displacement amid growing demand for these public goods. Within the MIRPS, shared responsibility becomes concrete action. Political dialogue translates into coordinated responses to address the needs of asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees with protection needs, and people on the move in mixed movements. Across the region, the MIRPS enables us to contribute meaningfully to the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. For this reason, we call on all actors to maintain and strengthen this collective effort under the upcoming 2026 Pro Tempore Presidency of El Salvador.







# MIRPS Regional Progress

# Regional Action Plan

Under the leadership of the Government of Costa Rica as the 2025 MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency (PPT), four strategic priorities were defined to address the evolving displacement context in the region. These priorities were formalized in the Regional Action Plan, which guided and aligned collective efforts during the year. This section outlines the most significant achievements under each of these priorities.

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**The first MIRPS priority in 2025 focused on **strengthening** initiatives that support the protection and socio-economic integration of refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, returnees with protection needs, and stateless persons.**

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The expected results under this priority—focused on enhancing asylum systems, improving responses to internal displacement, advancing labor integration and livelihood opportunities, and reinforcing local governance—were carried out through the Regional Technical Teams. The outcomes of these efforts are detailed in the following chapter of this report.

The second priority of the plan focused on strengthening **regional coordination with other platforms and key actors to reinforce the protection and solutions framework**. This coordination is strategic for mobilizing technical and political capacities and generating synergies that enhance the regional response to displacement. It also helps prevent duplication of efforts, capitalize on accumulated experience and good practices, and promote a shared vision for protection and solutions. In this context, all MIRPS activities are aligned with the priorities identified in the Chile Plan of Action and the pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum, contributing to the achievement of concrete results through various mechanisms.

Notable achievements include the participation of the Pro Tempore Presidency in the session of the OAS Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs, where MIRPS Member States highlighted key progress and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening regional political dialogue. Additionally, the MIRPS and Support Platform work plans were presented to the Permanent and Observer Missions to the OAS, as well as to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva, during events co-organized with Colombia in its role as Chair of the MIRPS Support Platform.

In coordination with the Quito Process, the PPT also advanced joint efforts, including the “Second Regional Meeting of CONAREs and their equivalents in the Americas,” a meeting between the academic networks of the Quito Process and the MIRPS, and participation in a workshop presenting the updated



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version of the Regional Strategy for Socioeconomic Integration (ERISE).

Likewise, in collaboration with the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) and the Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migration (RROCM), the “Regional Model Tool for Identifying Vulnerabilities and Needs

of Persons in Mobility Contexts at Borders” was introduced. This tool has strengthened responses in border areas and will be implemented in coordination with the MIRPS Civil Society Dialogue Mechanism and refugee-led organizations. To ensure continuity of this joint effort and foster new synergies, the PPT prepared

a document capturing the lessons learned and a series of recommendations arising from this collaboration.

The third priority of the Plan focused on **strengthening responses to disaster-related displacement**.

In coordination with the Platform on Disaster Displacement, progress was made in developing a dedicated line of work on this issue, including a consultative process with MIRPS Member States to update the mapping of relevant national institutions, existing legal frameworks, and preparedness and response mechanisms. The results of this exercise

will provide a robust technical foundation to guide further analysis and inform regional recommendations aligned with international standards.

Capacity-building was further strengthened through technical sessions delivered by experts from the PDD, UNHCR, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). These exchanges contributed to a comprehensive analysis from legal, technical, and public policy perspectives, providing a reference framework for developing coordinated, human-rights-



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# A noteworthy aspect of Costa Rica's leadership as the Pro Tempore Presidency of the MIRPS has been the establishment of innovative multi-stakeholder coordination spaces.

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based responses to displacement linked to disasters and climate change.

The implementation of this priority was conducted in close cooperation with the MIRPS Regional Technical Teams on Internal Displacement and Local Governance, led by Honduras and Guatemala City, respectively. These teams continue to drive this effort in coordination with Member States and strategic partners, promoting a preventive and risk-management approach throughout the region.

Finally, under the fourth priority of the Regional Action Plan, focused on **strengthening the MIRPS and its working structures**, the reform of the Statutory Charter was a milestone in reinforcing governance and enhancing coordination among Member States. In the area of communications, transparency and accountability were strengthened through the publication of two newsletters and the Mid-Year Report. These documents not only assessed progress and challenges but also highlighted the interaction between the MIRPS, the Support Platform, and the Dialogue Mechanisms, thereby consolidating a more inclusive and participatory cooperation model.

A noteworthy aspect of Costa Rica's leadership as the Pro Tempore Presidency of the MIRPS has been

the establishment of innovative multi-stakeholder coordination spaces. Among these is the launch of the MIRPS Academic Dialogue Mechanism, which currently brings together 12 academic institutions from public and private universities across the region. This mechanism held its first regional meeting in coordination with the Quito Process Academic Network, laying out the foundations for an academic cooperation agenda aimed at generating evidence and knowledge. Another significant milestone was the launch of the MIRPS Private Sector Dialogue Mechanism, designed to foster strategic partnerships and expand socio-economic integration opportunities for displaced and refugee populations. Both events took place during the Inter-American Course on Migration and Protection, held at the OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C. These efforts reaffirm the commitment to building sustainable solutions through regional collaboration and the inclusion of key sectors in the response to forced displacement.

The highlight of the year was the VIII MIRPS Annual Meeting, which not only reaffirmed the progress achieved in 2025 but also positioned the MIRPS as a strategic and innovative regional mechanism capable of coordinating joint responses to the displacement challenges facing the region.

# Regional Technical Teams



## MIRPS Regional Technical Team on Reception, Admission and Case Processing

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As part of the Regional Action Plan's Outcome 1, during 2025, MIRPS countries made significant efforts to strengthen their asylum systems, carrying out actions that include the digitalization of registration and case management; the adoption of differentiated modalities and more agile procedures; the application of the expanded refugee definition of the Cartagena Declaration; the implementation of temporary and humanitarian protection mechanisms; and the promotion of complementary regularization programmes that guarantee access to rights and services. These measures not only reinforce protection, but also promote local integration, reduce secondary movements, and strengthen the coherence and integrity of protection systems.

The regional work of the MIRPS Regional Technical Team on Reception, Admission and Case Processing supported these advances, implementing a roadmap to assist countries in moving forward with the aim of achieving greater efficiency, fairness and quality in these processes, as well as in protection responses for vulnerable populations.

Under the leadership of the Government of Costa Rica, key regional milestones were achieved, including in April, the presentation of the “Regional Model Instrument for the Identification of Vulnerabilities of Persons in Need of International Protection”, developed jointly with the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), its Regional Network for Civil Organizations on Migration (RROCM), and the MIRPS Civil Society Dialogue Mechanism and refugee-led organizations.

The Team also worked closely with the MIRPS Support Platform in holding sessions on recommendations and strategies to prevent and reduce backlogs; meetings on differentiated modalities for case processing within asylum systems; as well as the “MIRPS Workshop on Considerations for the International Protection of Women and Girls.”

Furthermore, on 24 and 25 September, the Second Regional Technical Meeting with the National Commissions for Refugees and their equivalents in the Americas was held in Panama City, within the framework of the Quito Process and the MIRPS. This meeting reflects the benefits of coordination between

Key regional milestones were achieved, including the presentation of the “Regional Model Instrument for the Identification of Vulnerabilities of Persons in Need of International Protection”.

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intergovernmental processes and fora, and the regional commitment to continue strengthening and innovating asylum systems.

This Regional Technical Team also finalized the Results-Based Management document, which presents an

analysis of the situation of asylum systems in MIRPS countries and establishes a results framework to guide work over the coming years.

## Regional Technical Team on Internal Displacement

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Under the leadership of the Government of Honduras, the MIRPS Regional Technical Team (RTT) on Internal Displacement, also composed of El Salvador and Mexico, positioned itself as a key technical platform for addressing this situation. Throughout the year, the Team made significant progress in developing technical tools and cooperation spaces that contribute to strengthening States' capacities to prevent, respond to, and provide durable solutions for people affected by internal displacement in the region.

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**One of the most significant achievements was the publication of the “ Toolkit – ABC on Internal Displacement.” This document was developed collectively, based on the experiences shared during the working sessions held between 2023 and 2024.**

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The ABC includes references to good practices, legal frameworks, technical instruments, and concrete actions implemented across the region, establishing itself as a practical tool to support the design of public policies and comprehensive programs for the care of internally displaced persons.

The development of this document was supported technically by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UNHCR, the OAS Department of Access to Rights, and the members of the RTT Expert Advisory Group, whose contributions were essential to strengthening regional capacities. Furthermore, on May 29, the document was recognized by the OAS Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP) for its valuable contributions.

The Team also learned about initiatives implemented in El Salvador aimed at strengthening the social fabric, community coexistence, and violence prevention. Another strategic priority for the Team was strengthening the evidence base for decision-making. In this regard, a technical session on statistical inclusion was held for MIRPS Member States and their national statistics offices, aimed at enhancing the registration, classification, and analysis of data on internally displaced persons.

The RTT also held a working session with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, Paula Gaviria. This space allowed for an in-depth technical exchange on international standards, emerging challenges in protracted displacement contexts, and priority areas for inter-agency cooperation

A technical session was also organized on access to housing, land, and property, recognizing that ensuring these rights is a central element in advancing toward durable and sustainable solutions.

Finally, the RTT took an active role in addressing disaster displacement within the MIRPS framework, strengthening technical coordination with the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) to advance joint



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actions focused on prevention, preparedness, and response. The progress achieved in this area is further detailed in the corresponding section of this report.

These advances reaffirm the sustained commitment of Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico to strengthening the MIRPS as a regional cooperation platform and underscore the strategic importance of the RTT as a coordinating mechanism linking public policy, technical assistance, and the generation of solutions.

In 2026, the Team plans to advance the dissemination and implementation of the “ABC on Internal Displacement” among Member States, strengthen partnerships with regional mechanisms, and deepen technical cooperation in areas such as prevention, protection, and durable solutions for internally displaced persons.

## MIRPS Regional Technical Team on Jobs and Livelihoods

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Within the framework of Outcome 3, aimed at strengthening initiatives to promote self-reliance and access to sustainable livelihoods for refugees, other displaced communities, and stateless persons, the MIRPS Regional Technical Team on Jobs and

Livelihoods—led by the Government of Mexico—implemented a set of key actions to advance the socioeconomic integration and labour inclusion of this population in MIRPS member countries.



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During the year, the regional analysis of the most in-demand and most offered labour profiles, as well as the specific needs of refugees and displaced persons, was updated with the aim of strengthening their inclusion in public employment systems. This exercise provided inputs to guide labour policies and to promote the implementation of effective mechanisms within the MIRPS National Action Plans. Likewise, in August, MIRPS countries participated in the Regional Workshop on “Competency Certification Strategies,” organized in cooperation with the International Labour Organization, as part of a hemispheric effort to advance the implementation of this strategy. This dialogue space helped strengthen national capacities to recognize prior learning, harmonize professional qualifications, and align technical training with the actual demands of the labour market.

A key pillar of the Team’s work was strengthening collaboration with other relevant actors. A milestone in this regard was the organization of two joint sessions on labour integration with the Regional Technical Team on Local Governance, members of the MIRPS Civil Society Dialogue Mechanism, and refugee-led organizations. These meetings made it possible to identify good practices in coordination between central and local governments, as well as innovative models of labour integration led by refugee-led organizations. Joint recommendations were also formulated to strengthen the implementation of labour integration programmes at the national and regional levels. As a result of these discussions, MIRPS countries recognized the urgent need to expand job opportunities and sustainable livelihoods for displaced persons through strategies focused on linking labour supply and demand, technical and vocational training, entrepreneurship, fair hiring practices, competency certification, and access to financial services. These actions reinforced the principle of shared responsibility and the benefits of multilevel and cross-sector coordination, recognizing

that the proximity of local governments and civil society to displaced communities is key for designing effective and sustainable responses.

As a result of the activities carried out in 2025, the Team formulated a set of recommendations structured around three strategic pillars—joint initiatives, information management, and partnerships—aimed at guiding national and regional action toward more inclusive, sustainable, and impactful labour integration.

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**This Regional Technical Team also finalized the *Results-Based Management* document, which presents an analysis of the changes needed to facilitate the socioeconomic integration of displaced persons in MIRPS countries.**

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The work of this Team during 2025 reaffirmed the role of the MIRPS as a regional platform for cooperation and durable solutions, strengthening links between member countries and key actors involved in the economic integration of displaced persons.

These advances contribute to building more inclusive, productive, and sustainable environments in which refugees and displaced persons can fully exercise their right to decent work, contribute to local economies, and rebuild their lives in conditions of dignity and safety.

## Regional Technical Team on Local Governance

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In 2025, the leadership of the Regional Technical Team on Local Governance was held by Guatemala City, which, together with other municipalities and localities in the region, consolidated a space for cooperation aimed at strengthening local capacities for the care and integration of displaced and refugee populations.

As such, the Team reaffirmed that local governance constitutes an essential pillar for advancing toward durable and inclusive solutions, recognizing the strategic role of local governments as the first point of contact with communities affected by displacement.

Within this framework, the Team strengthened its role as a technical platform for knowledge exchange, territorial coordination, and the promotion of local public policies grounded in human rights and a gender-sensitive approach.

Throughout 2025, the prevention of and response to violence against women and girls remained one of the Team's central priorities. As a result, the document *"Guidelines for Local Programs on the Prevention of and Response to Gender-Based Violence against Women in the Context*

of Displacement” was published. This instrument sought to strengthen local capacities and provide practical tools for municipalities in the region, aimed at addressing this issue from a human rights, gender, and protection perspective.

The document incorporated substantive contributions from MIRPS States and reflected local experiences and good practices. Its development was carried out in close coordination with the RTT Expert Advisory Group, composed of UN Women, the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the OAS, the OAS Department of Access to Rights, and UNHCR.

In line with its roadmap, the Team identified local services available for displaced persons and host communities, enabling a more effective response to community needs.

Recognizing the importance of coordinated action, a joint session was held with the Regional Technical Team on Jobs and Livelihoods, with the participation of representatives from the MIRPS Civil Society Dialogue Mechanism and refugee-led organizations. This space facilitated the exchange of experiences between local governments and strategic partners, highlighting initiatives on vocational training, skills certification, and support for entrepreneurship. Particularly noteworthy were the experiences shared by municipalities in Guatemala, which demonstrated how coordination between different levels of government and community actors can create real opportunities for labor inclusion of displaced and refugee populations.

Finally, in coordination with the Regional Technical Team on Internal Displacement, the community-based approach to disaster-induced displacement was strengthened, with progress detailed in the corresponding section of this report.

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The Team concludes the year by reaffirming its commitment to regional collaboration and the pursuit of concrete solutions that directly benefit communities affected by displacement. The progress achieved reflected the value of cooperation among local governments, international organizations, and strategic partners, as well as the importance of maintaining a territorial, inclusive, and sustainable approach in building durable solutions.

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# Strengthening the Response to Disaster-Induced Displacement

In the San Pedro Sula Declaration, MIRPS States recognized that population movements in the region are mixed and multi-causal in nature, with particular characteristics and responses in each country according to their national legislation, which include, among others, the consequences of natural disasters. Subsequently, in the Belize City Declaration, MIRPS countries agreed to strengthen cooperation and the exchange of good practices regarding legislation, institutional policies, and national coordination mechanisms for the protection and pursuit of comprehensive and sustainable solutions for internally displaced persons or those at risk of displacement, particularly efforts to address internal displacement caused by the adverse impacts of disasters and climate change.<sup>1</sup>

In this context, the MIRPS has promoted technical dialogue spaces to strengthen regional coordination on this matter. In 2022, under the Pro Tempore Presidency of Honduras and in coordination with the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), a first virtual consultation was held to share good practices related to the Protection Agenda of the Nansen Initiative. In 2024, Belize and Honduras convened a

second consultation to update this information and further analyze the impacts of disaster-related internal displacement.

Building on this foundation, the MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency held by Costa Rica, which also leads the PDD in 2025, strengthened this line of work by prioritizing the response to disaster-related displacement. This effort was aligned with the implementation of Costa Rica's Regional Action Plan and the roadmaps of the Regional Technical Teams on Internal Displacement and Local Governance, led by Honduras and Guatemala City, respectively.

In this context, on September 29, a joint thematic session was held between both Regional Technical Teams on community-based responses to disaster-induced displacement. The session included a training segment led by the PDD, with the technical support of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and UNHCR, and also featured an update from the Government of Chile, as Chair of the Cartagena +40 Process, on the commitments outlined in the Chile Declaration and Plan of Action in this area. This meeting contributed to generating technical and legal

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<sup>1</sup> MIRPS, *Belize City Declaration: Expanding Partnerships and Strengthening Coordinated Regional Responses for Displaced Populations in Central America and Mexico*, 2024, pp. 2–3.



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knowledge, as well as public policy guidance, which will serve as the foundation for consolidating a common regional approach to this form of displacement.

As a complementary effort, an exercise was carried out to identify national institutions responsible, existing legal frameworks, and response mechanisms addressing disaster-induced displacement in MIRPS countries. In this regard, on November 11, a second thematic session was organized to present and discuss the results of this process.

Based on this information, over the next year the development of a regional technical document will be finalized. This document will systematize successful models of community-based interventions, identify existing institutional capacities, and set out strategic recommendations to strengthen regional coordination and operational action in this priority area for the MIRPS.





# Strategic Positioning of the MIRPS within the OAS and MIRPS Fund



During 2025, the MIRPS strengthened its strategic role within the OAS hemispheric agenda through sustained participation in deliberative and decision-making spaces, promoting a comprehensive approach to addressing displacement in Central America and Mexico. This strategic positioning has been reinforced by its integration across various OAS fora, as well as by its capacity to mobilize cooperation and strengthen multilateral partnerships at the highest hemispheric level.

On May 8, the Presentation Meeting of the Work Plans of the MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency and the Support Platform was held with the Permanent and Observer Missions to the OAS in Washington, D.C. This meeting reaffirmed the political commitment of the MIRPS countries and the members of its Support Platform, while promoting collaboration around the priorities defined for 2025.



# The technical bodies of the OAS continued to play a fundamental role in strengthening the MIRPS and its Regional Technical Teams.

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Likewise, the OAS Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP) received a comprehensive update on regional progress, common challenges, and lessons learned within the MIRPS framework. Notable contributions were presented by the MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency of Belize, highlighting key achievements from its 2024 leadership, as well as by Costa Rica, in its role as the 2025 Pro Tempore Presidency. Additional inputs were shared by other MIRPS States and the Technical Secretariat. During this session, the MIRPS was recognized for its pivotal role in coordinating responses to displacement in the region, demonstrating how regional commitments have been translated into public policies, integration programs, and national legal protection frameworks, among other initiatives.

On May 29, the CAJP specifically addressed the situation of internally displaced persons in the Americas, in response to OAS mandates in this area. During this session, the work of the MIRPS and its Regional Technical Team on Internal Displacement was recognized, particularly the development of the *ABC on Internal Displacement* as a substantive contribution to strengthening national and regional capacities. Both the MIRPS Member States and Colombia, in its capacity as the Support Platform Chair, highlighted the progress achieved in implementing various responses and reaffirmed their commitment to continue promoting coordinated action across the region.

The MIRPS also participated in the annual thematic session of the OAS Committee on Migration Issues, which focused on strengthening regional cooperation to improve migration governance and international protection in the Americas. In this space, the convergence of MIRPS actions with those of other regional processes—such as the Regional Conference on Migration, the South American Conference on Migration, the Cartagena+40 Process, and the Quito Process—was highlighted, underscoring the complementarity of efforts and the importance of enhancing regional coordination.

The technical bodies of the OAS continued to play a fundamental role in strengthening the MIRPS and its Regional Technical Teams. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) provided technical training to MIRPS States on the Inter-American standards applicable to disaster-induced displacement, while the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) provided technical assistance to incorporate responses aimed at the comprehensive protection of displaced women and girls at the local level. In addition, the Program for the Universalization of Civil Identity in the Americas (PUICA) shared initiatives to facilitate access to documentation and identity for returnees with protection needs. These joint actions fostered knowledge exchange, peer learning, and the strengthening of national capacities, enabling MIRPS



States to advance in the design and implementation of more comprehensive, coordinated, and human rights-based responses.

In the area of technical development and knowledge exchange, the OAS General Secretariat, through the Department of Access to Rights and in collaboration with UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the University of Notre Dame, organized the Sixth Edition of the Inter-American Course on Migration and Protection in October 2025, in Washington, D.C.

This training initiative brought together more than 150 representatives from Permanent and Observer Missions to the OAS, other diplomatic representations, national MIRPS institutions, and international partners, fostering joint learning and intersectoral dialogue. Within this framework, three complementary MIRPS

events took place: the official launch of the Private Sector Dialogue Mechanism, the Regional Meeting between the MIRPS Academia Dialogue Mechanism and the Academic Network of the Quito Process, and the Roundtable on Strategic Partnerships for Cooperation Programs on Protection and Solutions in Central America and Mexico.

In the area of statelessness prevention and eradication, the OAS, as a member of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness, co-organized with UNHCR, the Council of Europe, and the Latin American and Caribbean Council of Civil Registry, Identity and Vital Statistics Registration, Identity, and Vital Statistics (CLARCIEV) the event *“Regional Action, Global Impact.”* The discussion focused on exchanging regional approaches and the role of intergovernmental organizations in this field. During the event, the importance of coordinating efforts with the MIRPS was reaffirmed, as, according

to its Charter, stateless persons are among the populations of concern covered by the mechanism.

Finally, the OAS, through the Department of Access to Rights, continued providing support to the Permanent Missions of MIRPS Member States in implementing their priorities related to displacement. This support was particularly significant during the negotiation process of the Heredia Declaration, adopted at the VIII MIRPS Annual Meeting.



The OAS General Secretariat has reaffirmed its commitment to the MIRPS through ongoing support to Member States in their political and technical processes, providing substantive assistance for the implementation of the 2025 Regional Action Plan and the coordination of the Regional Technical Teams. This effort will continue to focus on promoting comprehensive responses that strengthen the protection of displaced persons and facilitate durable solutions, grounded in effective, multisectoral, and innovative regional cooperation.



# MIRPS Fund



Throughout 2025, the MIRPS Fund continued to develop as a regional instrument for action and coordination, transforming national priorities into concrete progress on the ground. Driven by the leadership and commitment of the governments of Central America and Mexico, the Fund has demonstrated its ability to mobilize resources, strengthen institutions, and generate measurable impact in advancing protection, inclusion, and self-reliance for displaced and refugee populations across the region.

Thanks to the contribution of the Government of Spain, the Fund has financed its first portfolio of projects, composed of six initiatives designed and led by the MIRPS member States themselves. By the end of 2025, four of these projects have been successfully completed in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama, benefiting more than 24,000 people. These initiatives have strengthened refugee status determination systems, reinforced institutional capacities, expanded access to sustainable livelihoods, and promoted socioeconomic inclusion,

with a particular focus on women, children, and individuals in situations of heightened vulnerability.

In Guatemala and Belize, ongoing projects are under implementation, promoting labor inclusion and access to information and regularization mechanisms, while strengthening good practices that reinforce national responses.

At the beginning of 2026, the implementation of the project “Institutional strengthening of the operational

capacity to recognize the identity of asylum-seekers, with a focus on children and adolescents,” led by the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR), is expected to begin.

The MIRPS Fund thus reaffirms its role as an effective and sustainable regional cooperation mechanism, aimed at strengthening national capacities, promoting shared responsibility, and advancing durable, inclusive, and transformative solutions for displaced persons across Central America and Mexico.



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A decorative border of stylized flowers and leaves in red, blue, and white is positioned on an orange background. The flowers are arranged in a repeating pattern along the top and bottom edges of the slide.

# Alliances with Strategic Partners

# Civil Society

## MIRPS Civil Society Organizations and Refugee-Led Organizations Dialogue Mechanism

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### REGIONAL COORDINATION 2025 – ASSOCIATION OF NICARAGUANS IN MEXICO (NICASMEX)

#### CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

In 2025, the MIRPS Dialogue Mechanism that brings together civil society organizations (CSOs) and refugee-led organizations (RLOs) was led by the Association of Nicaraguans in Mexico (NICASMEX). This mandate represented a significant challenge given the recent changes in human mobility policies and the crisis in international cooperation. These conditions required a strategic reorientation of the Work Plan approved in January 2024, prioritizing adaptability, the strengthening of alliances, and the meaningful participation of refugee- and forcibly displaced-led organizations.

### STRATEGIC REORIENTATION AND PROGRESS

During the first semester, a survey was carried out among member organizations to identify priority themes and modalities for joint work. Based on this exercise, the Mechanism's Terms of Reference were revised, incorporating for the first time the formal recognition of the active leadership of RLOs within its structure. This change marks a milestone in the history of the Mechanism by consolidating an inclusive and collaborative governance model between States, CSOs, and RLOs.

Additionally, in September, regional coordination was strengthened through the co-organization with the RCM's Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migration (RRCOM) of the first joint meeting among the three main protection mechanisms in the region: the Quito Process, Cartagena+40, and the MIRPS—opening a pioneering space for interregional dialogue.

The Mechanism collaborated with the RCM's RRCOM in the pre-piloting of the Vulnerability Detection Tool in Tapachula and in a training for the staff of the Human Mobility Coordination Office of Mexico City to adjust their needs-assessment questionnaire based on this tool.



## CAPACITY STRENGTHENING AND COOPERATION WITH STATES

A cycle of four training sessions was developed, designed around the priorities identified by the organizations. The topics addressed were: i) Introduction to the MIRPS and its operational structure; ii) International and national protection legal frameworks; iii) Inter-American Human Rights System and strategic litigation; iv) Advocacy strategies (ongoing).

Likewise, at the request of the organizations, direct dialogue with States was promoted for the first time. In coordination with Costa Rica as the Pro Tempore Presidency, and the Government of Mexico (leader of the Regional Technical Team on Jobs and Livelihoods), two sessions were held to exchange good practices from organizations working on the ground, at both the

local and regional levels. These meetings produced recommendations on socioeconomic integration, compiled in a technical document submitted to Member States.

## REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

As part of the Mechanism's objective to participate in and support regional mechanisms of solidarity and shared responsibility through dialogue, the Mechanism submitted an official pledge to the Global Refugee Forum titled: **“Inclusive Governance and Synergies for a Strengthened Asylum System in the Americas.”** The pledge includes goals for the 2025–2027 period focused on documenting good practices and evidence from the field, promoting intersectoral coordination spaces, strengthening engagement with other regional mechanisms (Cartagena+40, Quito Process, etc.), and



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reinforcing the technical, legal, and political capacities of RLOs and CSOs.

Furthermore, for the first time—and with support from the MIRPS Technical Secretariat—the official inclusion of a delegation from the Dialogue Mechanism was secured for the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review event, to be held in December 2025 in Geneva. This represents a key step toward direct participation of civil society and RLOs in global refugee governance spaces.

Similarly, the regional coordination participated in the 2025 Women Leaders Summit held in Peru in September, where the work of the Mechanism was presented jointly with the Technical Secretariat, highlighting progress in the participation of refugee

women and community leaders in regional advocacy processes.

In September 2025, the Mechanism took part in the Second Regional Meeting of CONAREs, where it presented the good practice developed at the Multiservice Center in Tijuana, Mexico, underscoring coordination between organizations and States and demonstrating how cooperation between both sectors generates positive results in protection and integration.

Additionally, the Mechanism participated in the virtual MIRPS Regional Forum on Sustainable Integration, where the MIRPS 2024 Good Practices Manual was presented, consolidating successful experiences of collaboration between governments and civil society.

# Academia

## MIRPS Academia Dialogue Mechanism

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Through evidence generation, capacity building, scholarships, legal clinics, and other initiatives, universities and academic institutions play a strategic role in strengthening responses to displacement. Within this framework, the MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency, held by Costa Rica, launched the

Academia Dialogue Mechanism as a permanent space for regional academic cooperation.

This mechanism aims to coordinate efforts with public and private universities, as well as other knowledge institutions, in order to formulate recommendations



for decision-makers and strengthen academic engagement in MIRPS countries.

Following the launch of this mechanism in 2024 and a consultation process strengthened through participatory exchanges with MIRPS States, a new stage of cooperation between universities, research centers, and MIRPS Member States began in 2025. Currently, twelve academic institutions are part of this mechanism.

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**In coordination with the MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency of Costa Rica and with the support of the MIRPS Technical Secretariat, the first two working sessions of the mechanism were held, aimed at defining its operational structure and next steps. As a result, the Terms of Reference were adopted, establishing its purpose, priority research areas, internal governance, and coordination lines with the Regional Technical Teams and other MIRPS Dialogue Mechanisms.**

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As the mechanism's first regional activity, on October 9, the MIRPS and Quito Process Pro Tempore Presidencies—Costa Rica and Ecuador, respectively—organized the First Regional Meeting between their academic networks within the framework of the Sixth Edition of the Inter-American Course on Migration and Protection, held at the headquarters of the Organization of American States. This meeting provided an opportunity to highlight relevant research on human mobility and displacement in the region and to promote knowledge exchange. Representatives from academic institutions in Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Chile, and Costa Rica participated.

At the VIII MIRPS Annual Meeting, the Academia Dialogue Mechanism presented a joint statement emphasizing the importance of strengthening knowledge production to guide evidence-based public policies and ensure the sustainability of national and regional responses. In doing so, the mechanism positioned itself as a strategic pillar of the MIRPS structure and as a legacy of Costa Rica's Pro Tempore Presidency, in favor of institutionalizing multi-stakeholder partnerships for protection and durable solutions in Central America and Mexico.



# Private Sector

## MIRPS Private Sector Dialogue Mechanism



The MIRPS Charter established the Private Sector Dialogue Mechanism as a network-based working space whose main objective is to facilitate dialogue and collaboration with Member States and strategic partners to identify avenues for cooperation and joint

actions aimed at improving economic opportunities, livelihoods, and self-reliance for refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, stateless persons, and returnees with protection needs in the region.

Following the consultations initiated in 2024 with representatives of the private sector, and through a participatory process with MIRPS Member States, strategic actors with the potential to join this mechanism and contribute to its technical and multisectoral orientation were identified.

Building on these advances, and under the leadership of Costa Rica as the 2025 MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency, in coordination with Colombia as Chair of the MIRPS Support Platform, the official launch of the Private Sector Dialogue Mechanism took place on October 10, 2025, during the Sixth Edition of the Inter-American Course on Migration and Protection. The event featured the participation of the Chamber of Commerce of Costa Rica, CentraRSE Guatemala, SILGAN Mexico, and Foundever Brazil—entities that have demonstrated a strong commitment to inclusive employability and productive opportunities with a focus on social responsibility and sustainable development.

**The launch of the mechanism marks a milestone in the implementation of the whole-of-society approach set out in the Global Compact on Refugees, which the MIRPS embraces by engaging the private sector as a key partner for socio-economic integration and the generation of sustainable solutions for displaced populations.**

Looking ahead to 2026, efforts will focus on the operational implementation of the mechanism, including the definition of a roadmap and the coordination of concrete actions in collaboration with the Regional Technical Teams and the 2026 Regional Action Plan. These actions will aim to promote initiatives on employability, entrepreneurship, and technical training, thereby contributing to the commitments undertaken by MIRPS countries in the areas of protection, durable solutions, and economic inclusion.









Belize

# National Context

## Indicators (Jan-Sep 2025)

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**129**

**Registered** asylum-seekers

**103**

**Newly recognized** refugees

**79**

**Refugee status determination**  
(RSD) interviews conducted

**8,439**

**Approved** Amnesty applications

Belize continues to serve as an important destination country for forcibly displaced persons arriving from Central America and the broader region. The Refugees Department continues to serve as the primary governmental body responsible for the registration and processing of asylum applicants, operating its main office in the capital, and maintaining a presence at the Western Border. As of September, the Department had registered **129 new asylum-seekers**.

To ensure fair and effective decision-making, the Department convenes monthly Refugee Eligibility Committee meetings. These crucial meetings involve representation from various government agencies, civil society groups, and UNHCR, creating a multi-sectoral approach to reviewing cases and establishing

eligibility for refugee status. As of September, **103 forcibly displaced persons** have been officially recognized as refugees, granting them greater protection and stability.

Beyond processing, the Department plays a leading role in advocacy to ensure the full inclusion and local integration of refugees. This involves engaging with other government agencies to remove administrative barriers that impede access to essential services. Furthermore, the Department is actively leading efforts to ensure the adoption of necessary amendments to the current Refugees Act and synergy with other domestic legislation to create a more comprehensive protection landscape for forcibly displaced persons in Belize.

Belize continues to serve as an important destination country for forcibly displaced persons arriving from Central America and the broader region.

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As the application review period for the current Amnesty program winds down, the Department is proactively looking toward potential future

regularization exercises to ensure the continued inclusion and long-term security of refugees.

# Achievements

## Protection



The Government of Belize remains committed to enhancing the asylum system and securing durable solutions for forcibly displaced persons (FDPs). The Refugees Department has improved its processing efficiency with most new asylum applications being adjudicated within three months, and appeal applications processed rapidly. Through inter-agency engagement with the Border Management and Immigration Services, the department ensures the early identification and referral of FDPs for asylum processing. Furthermore, the department received funding from the OAS and the Government of Spain with the goal of providing quality and timely information on asylum at border crossing points. The Amnesty program has facilitated access to

permanent residency for many asylum-seekers and discussions are underway regarding potential future regularization exercises to include other recognized refugees and FDPs.

Strategically, the department is focusing on legislative and administrative modernization. The department has advanced its proposal of amendments for the legislative review of the Refugee Act. Additionally, the digitization of physical files and development of a customized case management system are ongoing, though hindered by funding shortfalls. The department has proactively initiated the systematic review and closure of dormant files to optimize the existing case management system.

## Education



Significant progress has been made in ensuring universal access to primary education for all children in Belize, regardless of their legal status. This achievement is strongly supported by the Government of Belize's commitment to inclusive policies, notably through the Education Upliftment and school feeding programs, which continue to provide essential assistance to asylum-seekers and refugee families. These initiatives ensure that all children are enrolled

in school, fostering an environment of stability and opportunity. Building on this governmental effort and in partnership with UNHCR, **29 vulnerable forcibly displaced children** were supported with school enrolment for the new school year. This direct assistance helped overcome logistical and financial barriers to accessing education, fulfilling the children's right to learn while also facilitating their local integration into their new communities.



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## Health



Displaced populations gain practical access to essential services through a dual strategy of humanitarian aid and legal inclusion. The Refugees Department, through international organizations, coordinates with implementing partners to provide cash-based assistance to cover basic necessities, including previously prohibitive costs such as health fees and transportation to attend medical

appointments, alongside vital psychosocial support services to address trauma. As asylum-seekers move successfully through the legal system and obtain either recognized refugee status or permanent residency (facilitated by the national Amnesty program), they achieve full inclusion. This regularization grants them long-term access to Belize's national healthcare system and social security benefits.

Displaced populations gain practical access to essential services through a dual strategy of humanitarian aid and legal inclusion.

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## Social Protection

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The Refugees Department has actively promoted awareness of refugee protection by participating in primary school Career Days where staff showcased the department's mandate and responsibilities. This initiative promoted understanding and generated general interest in the field of protection

among younger students. Following its successful engagement, the department is preparing similar outreach activities targeted at secondary schools to ensure continuity in reaching and educating the younger demographic.





## Jobs and Livelihoods



Tangible progress in promoting economic integration is evident, with **23 forcibly displaced persons** successfully completing vocational training in hospitality and electrician work. This training was delivered at local vocational schools as part of the 2024 Good Practice Implementation Project funded by the United States. The resulting professional certification will allow participants to access formal employment in in-demand fields in Belize and contribute meaningfully to the country's economy. While the project covered tuition for a limited cohort, a longer-term benefit has been an established relationship between educational

institutions such as ITVET and BELTRAID and the government of Belize.

This effort has also greatly enhanced awareness and sensitization about the forcibly displaced population in Belize. Simultaneously, the Refugees Department, in partnership with UNHCR, continues to advocate with the Social Security Board to ensure recognized refugees receive social security cards, which is essential for facilitating their legal access to employment and social benefits.



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## Refugees Find Stability in Belize Through the Amnesty Process

BY MATEO PRIVITERA TORRES

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“There is a peace here that has no price. My dream is to have my own workshop and offer jobs to others. For me, Belize means happiness — for my entire family.”

From his small workshop in a Belizean town, Josué\* carefully polishes the final details of a freshly painted car. Beside him, his eldest son learns the craft that has defined Josué’s life: automotive mechanics and painting. “I’ve done this all my life. It makes me happy because it allows me to move forward with my family,” he says with a smile.

Josué had to flee his country to protect his family. “They threatened my son, they came to the workshop and wanted to kill him,” he recalls. Gang violence forced him to escape and start over in Belize, leaving behind the business he had built over the years. “You work so hard to have everything, and suddenly crime takes it all away from you.”

When he first arrived in Belize, he spent several nights sleeping outdoors, without knowing anyone or what the future would hold. Soon, he met a Belizean friend who helped him begin the asylum application process through the Refugee Department. “The happiest part was that Belize opened its doors to me and allowed me to stay here without having to pay a dollar,” he says.

Over time, he was reunited with his wife and children. Together, they started over by setting up a small workshop at home. “Little by little, I’ve been finding

stability, especially thanks to the opportunities we’ve been given,” he explains.

In 2022, Josué and his family applied to the Amnesty Process launched by the Government of Belize with support from UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. The initiative offers refugees and migrants a pathway to residency, as well as access to employment, education, and healthcare. “When I heard about the amnesty, it was a moment of joy for me. Having stability in this country filled me with hope. It feels like I’m living a dream,” he says.

Today, Josué and his family have already obtained permanent residency in Belize, a milestone that gives them safety and the possibility to continue building their future. He dreams of formalizing his business, buying a house, and teaching his trade to young people who lack opportunities. “There is a peace here that has no price. My dream is to have my own workshop and offer jobs to others. For me, Belize means happiness — for my entire family.”





# Costa Rica

# National Context

## Indicadores

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**4 years**

**Average processing time** from the formalization of the asylum application to the adoption of a first-instance decision on the asylum claim.

**3,164**

Number of **asylum-seekers or refugees living in poverty** or extreme poverty.

**33,980**

Number of **asylum-seekers** with legally recognized **identity documents or credentials**.

**1,425**

Number of **asylum-seeking or refugee children living in poverty** or extreme poverty who received an educational subsidy.

**25,209**

Number of **asylum-seekers who were granted a work permit** during the reporting period.



## The demand for international protection continues to rise worldwide, as each year, the number of people forced to cross borders in search of safety for their lives increases.

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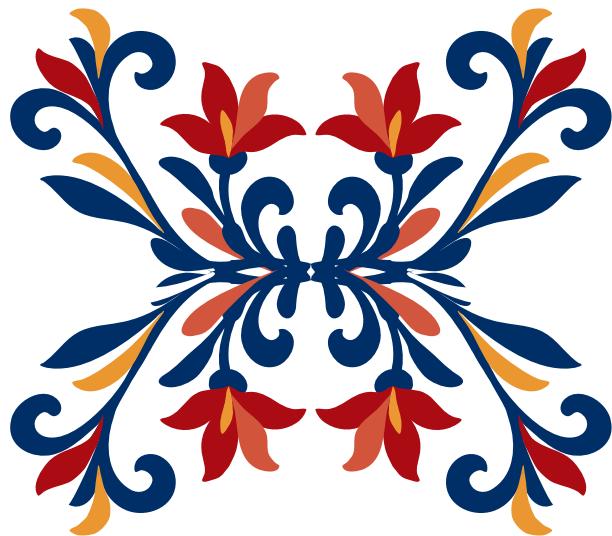
The demand for international protection continues to rise worldwide, as each year, the number of people forced to cross borders in search of safety for their lives increases. According to UNHCR data, the emergence of new displacement situations, together with the worsening of pre-existing crises, has led to a sustained increase in the flows of people forced to flee. This trend has given rise to new humanitarian emergencies and has further intensified existing ones.

The Americas region is no exception to this reality. It encompasses countries of origin, transit, and destination, making it a complex space for human mobility. Nevertheless, it has also been a stage for remarkable demonstrations of solidarity toward refugees and asylum-seekers, reflecting the commitment of several States to international protection and the integration of these populations.

In 2025, the human mobility landscape in the region incorporated new dynamics that demand greater efforts from States, particularly in light of the increasing reverse movement of people. The rise in returns to countries of origin presents additional protection challenges, as many of these individuals face risks that may lead to exploitation and abuse by criminal groups.

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**In this context, Costa Rica has reaffirmed its commitment to international protection, remaining steadfast in its adherence to international law and in guaranteeing the right to seek asylum. Currently, the country hosts 17,283 refugees, 205,122 asylum-seekers, and 347 stateless persons, consolidating its role as a space of hospitality and protection.**

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In response to the growing number of people in transit and in situations of vulnerability, the Costa Rican State established the Temporary Migrant Assistance Center (known as EMIBISUR) in the southern part of the country. This temporary shelter ensures adequate access to food, sanitation, and health services. In addition, mechanisms have been put in place to allow persons with protection needs to access the refugee status determination procedure.

During 2025, Costa Rica continued implementing its National Action Plan, known as MINARE, and reviewed the actions set forth therein to align them with the current displacement context. The review also included additional measures aimed at assisting persons arriving through the northern border post for the identification of those with protection needs, strengthening the inclusion of refugees in the public employment system, and generating data on the State's investment in services for refugees and asylum-seekers.

At the regional and international levels, and particularly through its leadership in various regional mechanisms during 2025, Costa Rica has advocated for multilateralism to move beyond isolated responses. In its interventions, the country has called for strengthened joint action to protect democracies, human rights, and the safety of people affected by forced displacement and human mobility.

These actions reflect the country's commitment to a comprehensive, rights-based response that seeks to guarantee the protection, inclusion, and dignity of persons in situations of forced displacement both within the country and across the region.



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# Progress

## International Protection



### PROGRESS IN THE MODERNIZATION STRATEGY OF THE COSTA RICAN ASYLUM SYSTEM.

In May 2024, the Government of Costa Rica adopted a strategy to modernize the national asylum system, which includes two components: reducing the backlog and ensuring the efficient management of new applications. In 2025, progress was made in implementing this strategy, achieving the following results: a) a risk profile analysis for Nicaragua was conducted, complemented by a profiling exercise of Nicaraguan individuals with protection needs; b) organization of the archives was completed; c) the

early closure of approximately 67,000 case files was finalized; d) a data updating and verification exercise covering approximately 10,000 case files was carried out; e) differentiated case processing modalities were implemented (the simplified/accelerated procedure is now in place); f) progress was made in the digitalization of the asylum system, and phases 1 and 2 of the National Asylum System (SINARE) were completed and are ready to be launched. These advances have contributed to a 33.3% reduction in the backlog and to more efficient management of asylum applications handled by the Refugee Unit.

## Socioeconomic Integration



### INCLUSION OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN THE NATIONAL EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY.

As part of the country's efforts to promote the socioeconomic integration of refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security has strengthened its commitment to the labor inclusion of these populations through their active participation in the National Employment System (SNE). Thanks to these efforts, 2,522 foreign nationals—including migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees—are currently registered on the SNE digital

platform, enabling them to access key employability programs and services such as counseling, guidance, and job placement support. In addition, six free BRETE job fairs have been organized in different regions of the country, with the participation of public institutions and the private sector. These fairs provide guidance on migration procedures and information on available job vacancies. They have served as inclusive spaces facilitating direct contact between refugees and employers, fostering real opportunities for labor market integration and strengthening the connection of these populations with national institutions.

## Health

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### IMPLEMENTATION OF A COLLECTIVE HEALTH AGREEMENT UNDER THE MODALITY OF TEMPORARY VOLUNTARY INSURANCE FOR ASYLUM-SEEKERS AND REFUGEES TO GUARANTEE THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO MEDICAL CARE AND FACILITATE THEIR INTEGRATION INTO COSTA RICAN SOCIETY.

Since 2020, the Government of the Republic, through the Costa Rican Social Security Fund (CCSS)—an autonomous institution of Costa Rica’s social security system—has signed an agreement with UNHCR to provide basic health insurance to 6,000 asylum-

seekers or refugees with chronic health conditions who are unable to qualify under any other insurance scheme. Since then, annual agreements have been signed to maintain this benefit. In 2025, a sixth agreement was concluded, extending health insurance coverage to 3,303 individuals who now have access to public health services at any state-run health facility in the country. This initiative safeguards the right to health and fosters the early integration of refugees and asylum-seekers into Costa Rican society. It stands as a result of effective coordination within the Costa Rican public sector, with the support of international cooperation.



# Nicaraguan refugee finds hope in Costa Rica

BY MATEO PRIVITERA TORRES AND MELISSA WILLIAMS

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In 2018, María René and her family fled their home in Nicaragua after receiving threats for supporting social protests. “We were at risk of being killed, so we decided to run away,” she recalls. María René arrived in Costa Rica with her mother and her two children, ages 16 and 7. “We left our house on July 15. That day we will never forget—it was the last day we spent in our home.”

Although she is a systems engineer, she had never practiced her profession. “It has been difficult—not only being in a foreign country but also lacking work experience. I started by taking care of my nephews, then worked in a supermarket, and later at a small diner on the night shift,” she explains. The loss of her maternal grandfather during that time made things even harder: “He was like a father to me, and it was devastating to say goodbye over the phone—not being able to hug him or say, ‘Dad, I love you.’”

With the support of the Government of Costa Rica, UNHCR, and its partners, María René and her family were able to apply for refugee status in the country and were recognized as refugees. They also gained access to entrepreneurship training, legal assistance, and health coverage through the agreement between UNHCR and the Costa Rican Social Security Fund (CCSS). “Every three months we do routine checkups and renew our prescriptions, because we depend on medication for asthma and rhinitis,” she explains.

During the pandemic, she lost her job and began selling Nicaraguan food with her mother, starting their own business **“Variedades La Concheña.”** In 2024, they opened a small diner-café. “I never imagined

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**“He wants to give back a little of what we’ve received and help others in the same situation.”**

that after arriving with only the clothes on my back, I would be able to say, ‘This is mine too,’” she says. Her faith and the solidarity of the community helped them overcome the initial challenges.

Her children have also been able to continue their integration process. Her daughter enrolled in the public education system and the National Music System, while her son graduated in Sociology from the National University of Costa Rica and is now pursuing a bachelor’s degree in Migration and Refugee Studies. “He wants to give back a little of what we’ve received and help others in the same situation,” María René says proudly.

She also participates in the **Pinolera Women’s Network**, supporting other refugee and migrant women to start their own businesses. “When I joined, my life changed. They taught me that women must value ourselves, take care of ourselves, and believe in ourselves,” she says. Her dream is to expand her business to employ more people from Nicaragua and share the flavors of her homeland. “The secret ingredient is love. When I cook with my mom, everything makes more sense—and it tastes even better.”





# El Salvador

# National Context

## Indicators

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**67<sup>5</sup>**

Number of **instances of assistance provided** through the “A tu Lado” service centers

**7 months**

**Maximum processing time from registration to the adoption of a first-instance asylum decision.**

**842**

Number of **individuals** who have accessed **formal employment** through the “Mi Primer Trabajo” program of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MTPS) from 2021 to date.

El Salvador, committed to the care and protection of persons in situations of human mobility, has achieved significant progress in the implementation of its MIRPS National Action Plan during 2025, demonstrating the Government's commitment to the Global Compact on Refugees. Advances in the areas of protection and durable solutions, within the framework of the country's evolving security context, represent an opportunity to ensure the full inclusion of refugees, asylum-seekers, returnees with protection needs, and those who were internally displaced as a result of past violence in El Salvador. A noteworthy national achievement is the recent adoption of the Special Law on Benefits and Protection for the Diaspora and Persons in Human Mobility.



<sup>5</sup> Data on assistance provided by the Victim Assistance Directorate (DAV) of the Ministry of Public Security and Justice in the “A tu Lado” Support Spaces, as of September 2025..

El Salvador, committed to the care and protection of persons in situations of human mobility, has achieved significant progress in the implementation of its MIRPS National Action Plan during 2025.



# Progress

## Protection

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**El Salvador approved the Special Law on Benefits and Protection for the Diaspora and Persons in Human Mobility**, which establishes measures to ensure the full inclusion of all Salvadorans wishing to return to their country, as well as returning individuals with protection needs. Likewise, this legal framework

recognizes the rights of foreign persons in human mobility as they transit through Salvadoran territory, including their right to apply for refugee status should they present international protection needs.

Regarding regulatory frameworks, **El Salvador has also made progress by updating four protocols**

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**aimed at providing an integrated, immediate, coordinated, and inter-institutional response to persons in situations of human mobility.** These updates are tailored to changes in mixed flows of migrants and persons with international protection needs, and to ensure differentiated assistance and respect for human rights. The protocols are: the Reception and Immediate Assistance Protocol for Returned Salvadorans; the Comprehensive Care Center Protocol for Foreign Migrants; the Psychosocial Assistance Protocol for Returned Salvadorans, Sheltered Foreign Nationals, and Public Officials of the Migrant Assistance Office (GAMI); and the Protocol on Prevention and Action against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants.

Ensuring the inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers has become a State commitment that has enabled their integration into society, thereby reaching the highest goal of durable solutions.

Since 2023, the **Commission for the Determination of Refugee Status (CODER)**, the General Directorate of Migration and Alien Affairs (DGME), the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic (PGR), and the National Registry of Natural Persons (RNPN), with the support of the Norwegian Refugee Council and the UNHCR Office in El Salvador, have carried out the nationalization and/or naturalization process of **31** refugees of various nationalities. Additionally, **11** refugees are currently undergoing naturalization procedures. It is important to highlight that **25** refugees have also received support in processing a change of status to Permanent Residents since 2023. These advances have been possible thanks to the support of civil society organizations and donor countries, including Canada and the United States.

Likewise, this support has enabled the continuation of ongoing training on international protection for public officials, particularly those stationed at border

points. In 2024, **276 public servants and partners strengthened their technical capacities in this field. Furthermore, the first Specialized Diploma in International Protection was offered jointly with the “José Gustavo Guerrero” Diplomatic Institute and CODER.**

The important role of the refugee system led by CODER is also reflected in recent improvements to the documentation process. The migration authority has extended the validity of the provisional stay card for asylum-seekers—**previously issued for 30 days and renewable monthly under the Law on the Determination of Refugee Status—to a six-month period**, with the aim of facilitating protection for this population. Finally, in 2024, CODER initiated an assessment to identify opportunities and strengthen the asylum system, ensuring fair and efficient procedures.

Complementing these actions, the **Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU)**, within the framework of the National Policy for Women’s Access to a Life Free of Violence (PNVLV 2021–2025), is expanding specialized assistance for displaced women and those at risk, strengthening the National Care System and coordinating with the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, the Ministry of Public Security and Justice, and the Supreme Court of Justice. ISDEMU provides specialized services in counseling and psychological, social, and legal assistance to vulnerable women, including those displaced or at risk. Through the Attention Center 126, 24/7 phone and WhatsApp hotlines, it offers remote, confidential, and free support at the national and international levels. Additionally, its Specialized Women’s Centers offer in-person medical services and economic empowerment support, helping advance El Salvador’s MIRPS commitments with a human rights and equality-based approach. As a result, in 2025, 5,958 services have been provided through the Attention Center 126.

Regarding assistance and protection for persons displaced by disasters, the Directorate General of Civil Protection, Disaster Prevention and Mitigation has initiated the process of updating the **Community Civil Protection Plans for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation**, aimed at strengthening and planning collaborative work with Community Civil Protection Commissions at the local level.

In terms of advances related to durable solutions to forced displacement, El Salvador has completed the systematization of the **National Strategy for Urban**

**Centers of Well-being and Opportunities (CUBOs)**, developed by the Directorate for the Reconstruction of the Social Fabric. This document outlines a strategy focused on preventing violence in communities and preventing forced displacement. In addition, the Victim Assistance Directorate of the Ministry of Public Security and Justice maintains a continued presence in the “A tu Lado” Support Spaces and within the Migrant Assistance Office, where comprehensive care is provided for victims and returnees with protection needs.

## Jobs and livelihoods



The “**My First Job**” Program of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare continues to be implemented. Since 2021, **842 individuals have been integrated into formal employment through apprenticeship contracts**. This initiative forms part of the Government of El Salvador’s priorities in economic development and labor inclusion. Since the program’s launch in 2021, more than **1,599** people have received training in soft skills to access employment opportunities.

In 2024, within the framework of “My First Job,” six Youth Employment Routes (REJ) were carried out nationwide, offering job orientation sessions, registrations in the Public Employment System platform “Oportunidades,” and the administration of psychometric assessments.

Complementarily, ISDEMU promotes the Institutional Strategy for the Autonomy and Economic Empowerment of Women (2022–2024), which includes MERCAMUJER and partnerships with CONAMYPE, FOSOFAMILIA, banking institutions, and the Ministry of Economy (MINEC), aimed at strengthening the economic autonomy of vulnerable women, including returnees with protection needs or

at risk of displacement. These actions are aligned with the durable solutions promoted by MIRPS, fostering the self-reliance and empowerment of Salvadoran women.

Likewise, the Government of El Salvador continues advancing toward the full inclusion of returnees with protection needs through coordinated efforts between the Vice Ministry for the Diaspora and Human Mobility and the National Training and Education Institute (INCAF), in order to **facilitate technical training for returnees**, including those with protection needs.



## Health

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The Ministry of Health (MINSAL) has implemented the **Comprehensive Health Care Standard for Individuals with Intentional Injuries**, including those in situations of forced displacement. This standard **incorporates measures for the promotion of peaceful coexistence, as well as prevention, detection, care, and rehabilitation, following a human rights and social determinants of health approach. It is applicable across institutions of the National Integrated Health System (SNIS)**. By the end of 2025, it has been disseminated in five regions, with training provided to 540 health professionals and 105 personnel from other institutions, including the Office of the Attorney General, the National Civil Police, ISDEMU, Municipal Governments, and NGOs, aimed at strengthening comprehensive care for victims. In addition, virtual training sessions have been conducted with 150 MINSAL participants. During the last quarter, with UN support, the Protection Project for People on the Move began implementation. Through this

initiative, the care pathway for returned migrant women and girls will be disseminated to 125 health resources through GAM, including support to returnees with protection needs.

Additionally, **669 children and adolescents received psychosocial care services from CONAPINA through four newly established spaces in 2025**, located in communities historically affected by violence and forced displacement. These spaces were created to provide comprehensive support to children, adolescents, and their families, bringing services closer to the most vulnerable populations and generating opportunities for development and peaceful coexistence. Complementarily, **CONAPINA provided 3,358 services to early childhood, children, adolescents, and families** through consular offices in Mexico (Tapachula, Tijuana, Monterrey, San Luis Potosí, Ciudad Juárez, Acayucan, Villahermosa) and the United States (Houston, McAllen, Los Angeles).

## Education

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The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MINEDUCYT) **provided assistance to 6056 individuals identified as “Returned Migrants” through the Equivalency Exam and Alternative Education Modalities**, including returnees with protection needs.

6 Figure reported by MINEDUCYT as of mid-year 2025.



# A New Beginning: From Uncertainty to Belonging

BY JACQUELINE HENRÍQUEZ

Carlos arrived in El Salvador in 2009, when he was only nine years old. Together with his family, he was forced to leave his country due to violence and threats. Starting over in a new place and adapting to a different environment was not easy, but little by little they managed to adjust and found support that helped them integrate into their new community.

"At that time, it was more difficult to enroll in school, and I couldn't join the soccer academy because I didn't have documents," Carlos recalls.

Over time, and thanks to the coordinated efforts of national institutions and the support of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, Carlos obtained Salvadoran citizenship. This achievement opened doors to access services, opportunities, and fully participate in Salvadoran society.

Today, Carlos and his family live in a community located in a small municipality in eastern El Salvador. There, they have built strong friendships and developed a small family business that continues to grow. With their documentation in order, they now plan to formalize the business and continue contributing to the local economy: "We want to give back a little of what this country has given us," says Carlos proudly.

For Carlos, obtaining Salvadoran citizenship has meant rights, belonging, and the ability to rebuild his life in a safe environment. He also values the solidarity of the community that welcomed him: "Even if it's not your place of origin, being received as if it were your home is truly admirable."

Carlos's story reflects how durable solutions create opportunities for refugees and strengthen communities. These efforts are part of El Salvador's commitment as a member of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) and resonate with the principles of the Cartagena Declaration, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2024.

UNHCR has supported El Salvador for more than four decades, working to strengthen the national asylum system. As part of these efforts, in 2024, new facilities for the Commission for the Determination of Refugee Status (CODER) were inaugurated within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to provide dignified and efficient services to asylum-seekers and refugees.

“Even if it's not your place of origin, being received as if it were your home is truly admirable.”

© UNHCR/Jacqueline Henríquez







# Guatemala



# National Context

## Indicators

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**270**

Number of persons recognized  
as refugees in 2025

**1,147**

Number of asylum-seekers

**6**

Training processes on Refugee,  
International Protection, and Case  
Review Procedures for IGM officials

**3**

Training processes for members  
of the CONARE on Refugee and  
International Protection

**259**

Children and adolescents  
applying for refugee status

**68**

Refugee children and adolescents

**19**

Agreements signed under the  
framework of Cities of Solidarity



In 2025, Guatemala reaffirms its role as a key actor in regional human mobility.

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**66**

Work permits issued to refugees

**565**

Work permits issued to asylum-seekers

**66**

Refugees and asylum-seekers trained to access and use the PEX platform

**190**

Employers trained on the use of the PEX platform

**127**

MINTRAB officials nationwide trained on the use of the PEX platform

**1**

Children and adolescents with international protection needs assisted at Casa Nuestras Raíces Guatemala and Quetzaltenango

**7,980**

Children, adolescents, and youth at social risk assisted in the Casa Joven program

**53**

Adolescents and youth trained in the Civic-Social Service project under the Casa Joven Amatitlán Model

© UNHCR/Nicolo Filippo Rosso



In 2025, Guatemala reaffirms its role as a key actor in regional human mobility, characterized by complex dynamics in which the country simultaneously serves as a point of origin, transit, destination, and return. The Government of Guatemala has undertaken multiple efforts to address and respond to these dynamics through a human rights-based and solutions-oriented approach.

This line of work has positioned Guatemala as a regional reference in the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees, through national and regional actions carried out within the framework of the MIRPS.

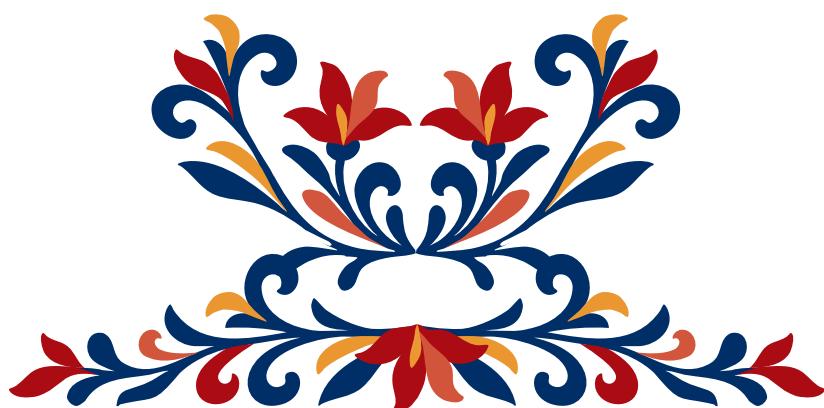
The State of Guatemala is taking decisive steps toward strengthening its institutional framework for the development of evidence-based durable solutions aligned with regional commitments. Most recently, the National Institute of Statistics (INE) of Guatemala, within the framework of the National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI), has for the first time incorporated specific questions on internal displacement.

This effort constitutes the first official statistical approach to understanding the magnitude and characteristics of the population affected by internal displacement, bringing visibility to a reality that had until now remained absent from the national public agenda.

In this regard, the State of Guatemala reaffirms its commitment to advancing the generation of information and findings that enable a comprehensive response to the needs of people in situations of internal displacement, in the short, medium, and long term. This institutional decision sends a clear message of responsibility and openness toward the development of durable solutions.

These advances, combined with continued improvements to the strategies already being implemented, have a direct impact on the visibility and attention given to protection needs, while simultaneously strengthening key areas such as access to education, labor insertion, livelihood enhancement, and the expansion of social protection. In this way, the country moves toward a more comprehensive approach, in which public policy can be aligned with international standards and national development priorities.

The National Technical Team (NTT), under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has maintained a strong commitment to supporting assistance, protection, and solutions for refugees within host communities.



# Progress

## Protection



In response to migratory movements in Guatemala, the State has strengthened its institutional and regulatory framework with a human rights-based approach. Mechanisms to assist refugees and returnees have been strengthened. As of September 2025, the Guatemalan Migration Institute (IGM) reported 1,651 recognized refugees, mainly from Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. Of this total, 16.96% are minors, 49.55% are women, and 3.03% belong to the LGBTIQ+ community. From January to September of the current year, the National Migration Authority (AMN) recognized 270 new cases, reflecting institutional strengthening.

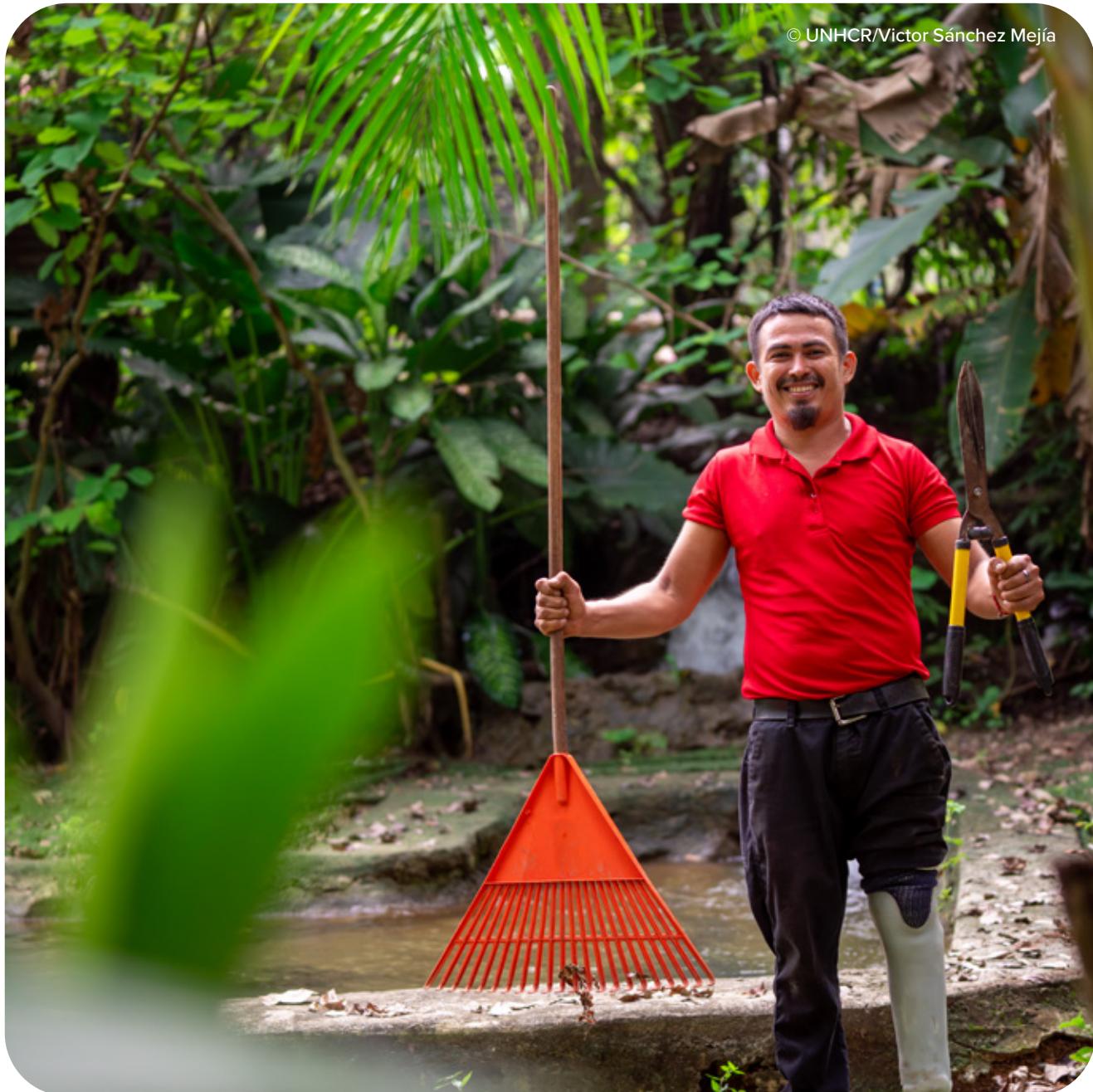
The DRER-IGM has improved its registration system, allowing for updated and disaggregated data to better understand the profile of refugees. In addition, initiatives such as the “Return Home Plan” and “Cities of Solidarity” have been promoted to support dignified and sustainable reintegration, including the establishment of the Returned Persons Assistance Center. A Mechanism for the Search for Missing Migrants (AMN-03-2025) was also approved. Finally, the Regulation on Guatemalan Residencies (IGM-016-2025), approved under National Migration Authority Agreement No. AMN 06-2025, was updated to incorporate specific measures aimed at protecting the rights of refugee and asylum-seeking children and adolescents.

## Jobs and livelihoods



Between January and September 2025, 565 work permits were issued to asylum-seekers and 66 to individuals recognized as refugees. A key development was the reform of the Work Permit Authorization Regulation (Governmental Agreement 178-2025), which now includes asylum-seekers. Through the Technical Training Program for Employment, 382 people (194 women and 188 men) in situations of return or migratory risk received support. The PEX,

TU EMPLEO, and OPORTUGUATE platforms facilitated employment pathways. A total of 3,491 individuals were registered in OPORTUGUATE and assisted by the Returned Migrants Assistance Unit. Additionally, 135 job fairs were held with the participation of 876 companies, offering 42,632 positions. Employment services supported 24,268 job placements and provided guidance to 24,529 individuals, including 111 asylum-seekers and refugees.



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Complementing these institutional efforts, the municipalities participating in the Cities of Solidarity initiative are strengthening the inclusion of women and refugees through technical training and entrepreneurship programs. San Benito promotes women's self-reliance by facilitating access to credit

and business plans. Meanwhile, the Municipality of Guatemala has implemented innovative service models and the "Employment Bus" program, which provides training and guidance to support effective labor insertion and new development opportunities.



## Education

In 2025, the Ministry of Education, through the Vice-Ministry of Extracurricular and Alternative Education and the General Directorate of Extracurricular Education (DGEEX), reaffirmed its commitment to expanding educational coverage and ensuring the continuity of learning pathways with a rights-based approach, particularly the right to education. DGEEX has strengthened its efforts to reach populations historically excluded from the school system, promoting and disseminating programs, services, and competency certification processes across the country's 22 departments. These actions prioritize access, retention, and completion of studies for Guatemalan, returned, and refugee populations.

In coordination with municipal authorities, evaluation processes have been developed to recognize and certify experience in technical occupations such as construction, gardening, cooking, electricity, and plumbing, among others. This initiative is aimed at youth and adults who, despite possessing acquired skills and knowledge, had not previously had the opportunity to formally validate them.

The decentralization of programs, services, strategies, and certification processes reflects the institutional commitment to ensuring the dignity of and integrating vulnerable populations into the National Education System. Thanks to these efforts, conditions are being created for more people to strengthen their personal, social, and professional development.



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## Social Protection



In 2025, the Secretariat of Social Welfare of the Presidency (SBS) continued implementing the MIRPS Good Practice Project, equipping the Casa Joven facilities in Amatitlán and Villa Nueva. With the support of the MIRPS Support Platform, prevention and assistance initiatives were strengthened for 7,500 children, adolescents, youth, and their families, who accessed comprehensive protection services. The provision of furnishings helped create dignified environments that foster inclusion.

Casa Joven, one of the most comprehensive programs of the SBS, is characterized by its coordination with local authorities, multidisciplinary teams, and referral

mechanisms to the public system. It serves Guatemalan populations as well as refugees, returnees, and internally displaced persons, helping prevent violence and irregular migration. Additionally, it supports the development of their future through education, training, and job placement.

A total of 432 children, adolescents, and youth resumed their studies through the CEEX program (Primary, Basic, and Upper Secondary), accredited by the Ministry of Education. These efforts strengthen community resilience and promote social inclusion with dignity and hope.

# Quili Gives Back with Love, the Solidarity She Once Received

BY MATEO PRIVITERA TORRES, ADAPTED FROM A STORY WRITTEN BY NAYSHA LOZADA

© UNHCR/Jorge Pezantes



“

One day, I was in their place, and now I want to give back what I once received. That's why serving people in need fills my heart.”



In the kitchen of the Casa del Migrante in Guatemala City, the aroma of freshly prepared food blends with the warm voice of Quili\*, who carefully prepares each dish she serves to people arriving in search of refuge and protection. Her story is also one of resilience — and of how solidarity can transform lives.

In 2016, Quili was forced to flee her country due to threats and extortion from criminal groups that endangered her life and that of her family. Although Guatemala was not her intended destination, the dangers along the journey compelled her to remain in the country. Without resources or support networks, she spent nights without a place to sleep and faced significant hardships in order to survive.

Quili fondly remembers the day she first arrived at the Casa del Migrante, a space that provides humanitarian assistance to refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants in situations of vulnerability. There, she found food, medical care, and—above all—a safe place where she could begin again.

Over time, Quili began volunteering, helping with cleaning and cooking. Her dedication and talent did not go unnoticed; in 2018, she was offered the opportunity to work as a cook. “They gave me the chance to work there, and that changed my life,” she says with joy. Since then, she has prepared meals for nearly 200 people a day, offering not only food, but also hope.

“One day, I was in their place, and now I want to give back what I once received. That's why serving people in need fills my heart,” she says with a smile.

Today, Quili has fully integrated into her community in Guatemala. She lives with her granddaughter and great-grandson, and dreams of building a small home of her own. “I’m not looking for luxuries, just a place where my family can live in peace,” she says.

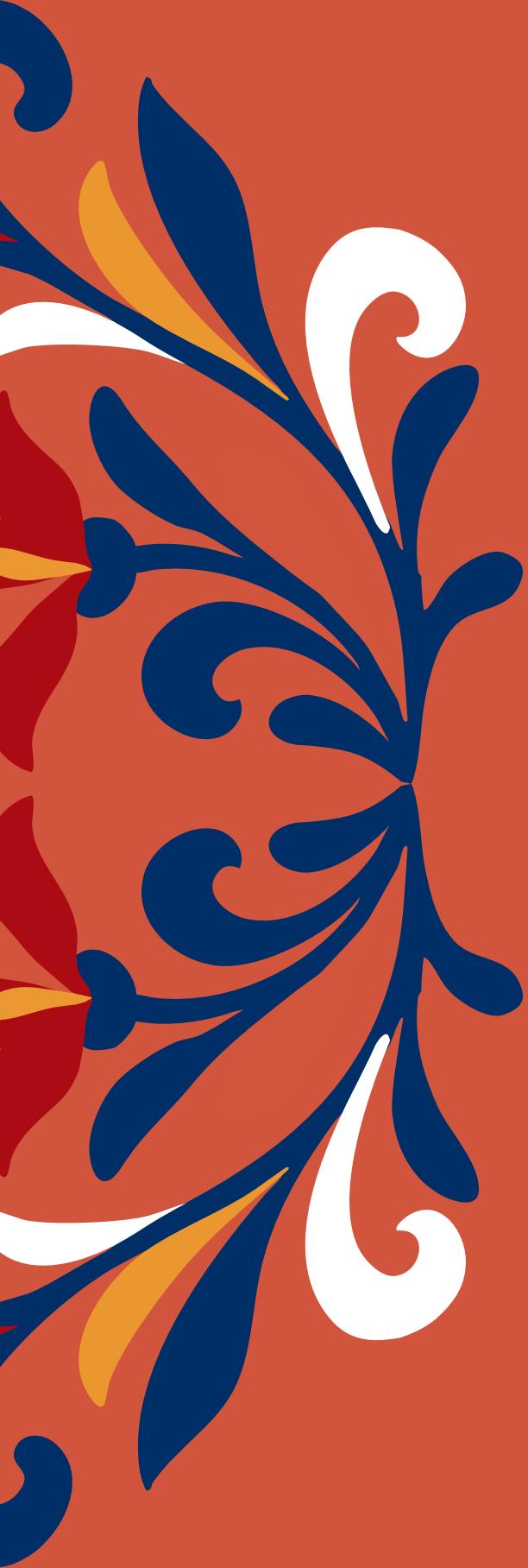
\*Name changed for protection purposes.

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# Honduras



# National Context

## Indicators

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**356<sup>7</sup>**

Number of displaced persons or those at risk of displacement assisted by State protection mechanisms

**67<sup>9</sup>**

Number of allegedly abandoned properties identified through community exercises

**56<sup>8</sup>**

Number of returned persons in priority intervention municipalities who accessed programs that support conditions of safety and dignity

**582<sup>10</sup>**

Number of persons in need of international protection identified, assisted, and referred in border/transit areas.

7 The Directorate for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons by Violence assisted 102 cases involving 356 individuals, of whom 107 were women, 95 men, 71 girls, 81 boys, and 2 LGTBIQ+ persons.

8 The Directorate for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons by Violence identified, in the municipalities prioritized by the project from January to September 2025, a total of 22 cases of returnees with protection needs, corresponding to 56 individuals, of whom 14 are girls, 13 boys, 13 women, and 16 men.

9 The cases handled by the Directorate for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons by Violence have reported abandoned real estate and movable property: 34 homes, 9 plots of land, 7 businesses, and 17 vehicles, for a total of 67 assets reported as abandoned.

10 During the reporting period, the National Institute of Migration registered 582 new asylum applications.

As a transit country, Honduras continues to face the humanitarian challenges of south–north transit and reverse flows.

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Honduras has strengthened its response to the challenges of human mobility, as a country of origin of displaced persons, asylum-seekers, refugees, and migrants; of return for Honduran nationals; of transit for people in mixed movements; and as a destination country.

As a country of origin, the most recent study estimates that at least 247,090 people have been displaced.<sup>11</sup> As

of 2024, 237,701 people had applied for asylum, and 109,969 had been recognized as refugees.<sup>12</sup>

In 2025, the return of 30,638 people was recorded, many of whom had protection needs.<sup>13</sup>

As a transit country, Honduras continues to face the humanitarian challenges of south–north transit and reverse flows. In 2025, 26,320 people entered the country en route to the north of the continent.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Second Study on the Characterization of Internal Displacement due to Violence in Honduras, 2004–2018. <https://www.jips.org/uploads/2019/12/Honduras-Estudio-Caracterizacion-Desplazamiento-2019-LR2.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.acnur.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/Global\\_Trends\\_2025\\_Intro\\_SPA.pdf](https://www.acnur.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/Global_Trends_2025_Intro_SPA.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> National Institute of Migration. Honduran returnee figures. From January 1 to September 30, 2025. Available at: <https://inm.gob.hn/retornados.html>.

<sup>14</sup> [Migración-Irregular/Instituto Nacional de Migración](#)

The country registered 521 asylum applications, representing a 365% increase compared to 2024.<sup>15</sup>

In this context, Honduras has reaffirmed its commitment to human-rights-based management of human mobility.

The Inter-Institutional Commission for the Prevention and Protection of Forcibly Displaced Persons (CIPPDEF), as the highest governing body of the National Response System to Internal Forced Displacement (SINARDEFI) and headed by the Directorate for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons by Violence (DIPPDV), led the development of the draft Regulation of the Law on Displacement. Additionally, it advanced in structuring the Assistance Fund for Displaced Persons.

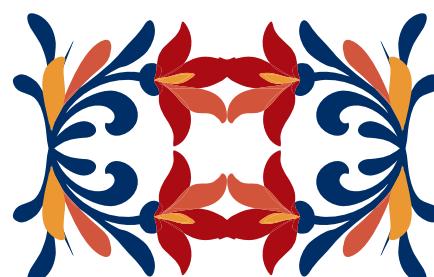
The Protocol for the Care of Returned Persons with Protection Needs was implemented in the Returned Migrant Care Centers (CAMR), along with the “Brother, Sister, Come Back Home” Program, which promotes their reintegration.

The National Institute of Statistics, in coordination with the Secretariat of State for Human Rights (SEDH) and UNHCR, strengthened the production of official statistics on displacement. Among other actions, relevant data were collected through the Permanent Multi-Purpose Household Survey, a question was included for the 2026 Census, and participation in the CEA-CEPAL Regional Working Group was prioritized.

Likewise, the Migratory Amnesty Decree was extended through December, allowing for the issuance of temporary transit permits, the waiver of fines for irregular entry, and the facilitation of the identification of individuals with international protection needs.<sup>16</sup>

**At the same time, Honduras signed the Cooperation Agreement for the Review of Protection Claims with the Government of the United States and adopted measures to strengthen its capacity for case processing.**

Finally, with a view to advancing comprehensively in the fulfillment of these commitments, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in coordination with FLACSO and UNHCR, launched the Diploma in International Cooperation, Development, and Human Mobility. In 2025, it trained 50 officials and developed seven project proposals.



<sup>15</sup> National Institute of Migration. Statistics of the Human Rights Directorate.

<sup>16</sup> The State of Honduras has managed and implemented six migratory amnesty decrees (42-2022, 79-2022, 137-2022, 39-2023, 06-2024, and 106-2024, the latter currently in force)

# Progress



## Protection



Honduras made progress in protecting displaced, returned, refugee, and asylum-seeking persons by strengthening its legal, institutional, and operational frameworks.

DIPPDIV implemented 41 protection measures.<sup>17</sup> As part of efforts to strengthen local governments, municipal guidelines for responding to displacement were developed, humanitarian assistance pathways were established, and progress was made in incorporating displacement response measures into the Annual Operating Plans (POA). The SEDH held two service fairs with the participation of the institutions that make up the CIPPDEF.

The Property Institute advanced the creation of the Registry of Abandoned Properties and the

modernization of the Unified Registration System, ensuring the traceability and geolocation of properties.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, it carried out informational fairs that benefited more than 300 people.<sup>19</sup> A cadastre of 472 plots was completed in a pilot initiative that defined replicable methodologies for property regularization in areas of high vulnerability due to violence and disasters.

Additionally, the Judiciary established five specialized groups on internal displacement.<sup>20</sup>

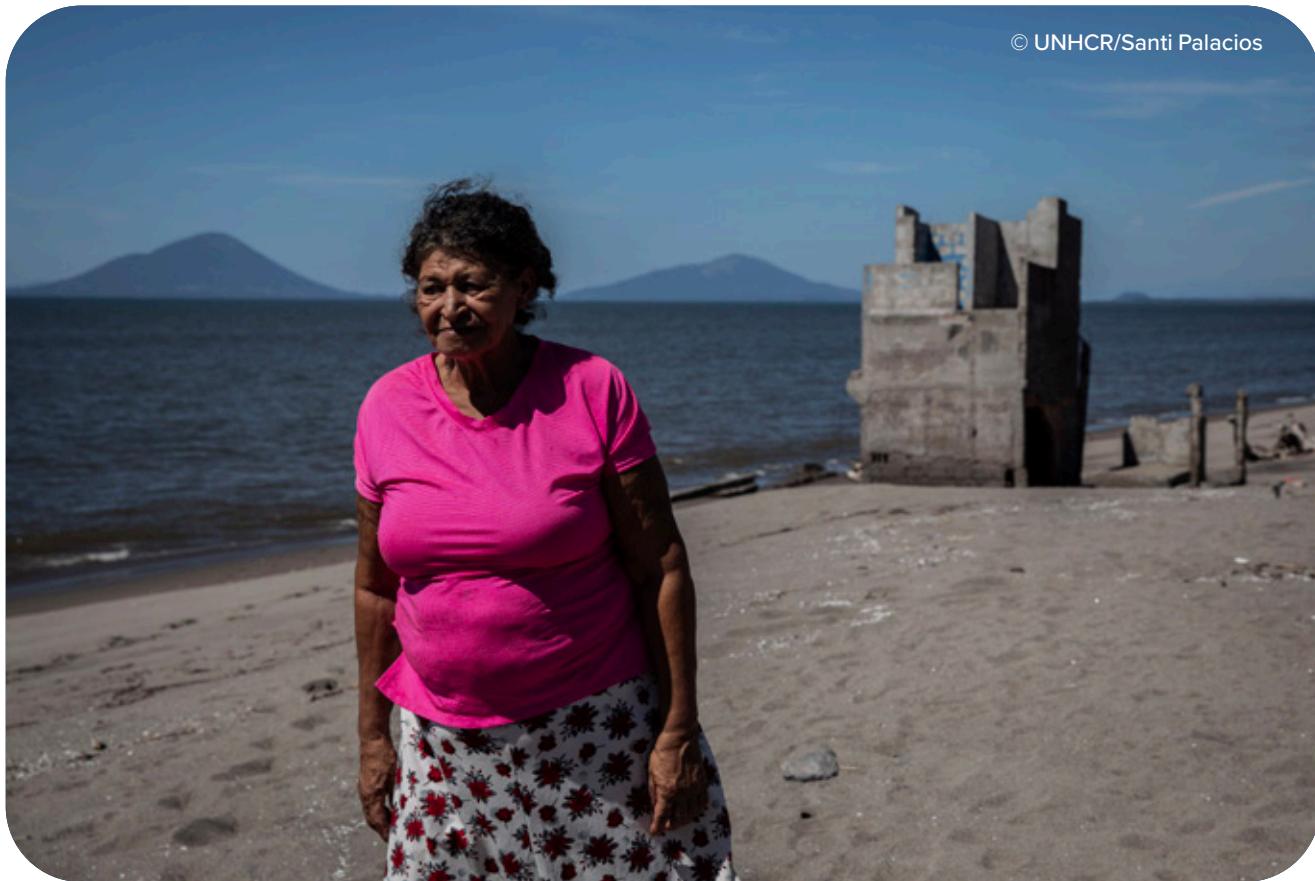
The National Institute of Migration (INM) provided 582 legal orientations, 675 health and psychological support services, trained 694 people, and issued 610 Temporary Stay Authorizations.

<sup>17</sup> Through these measures, the rights to education (6 measures); work (2); health (19); gender-based violence protection (2); identity (8); child protection (2); and suspension of credit deadlines (2) were guaranteed.

<sup>18</sup> Executive Agreement establishing the regulatory framework of the RBA was designed and validated with the participation of 70 officials from the Institute's key directorates, defining guiding principles, procedures for receiving applications, and coordination mechanisms with the Secretariat of Human Rights.

<sup>19</sup> The Property Institute of Honduras carried out the campaign "Your Registered Home, Your Secured Right" through informational fairs in eight municipalities with high land-related conflict, reaching more than 300 people with specialized legal guidance on property registration and regularization as a mechanism to protect their rights, thereby strengthening the legal security of families in areas of greater vulnerability.

<sup>20</sup> The judicial operators who make up these groups were trained through an intensive train-the-trainers course, which will ensure the transfer of the capacities needed to implement the intervention plans on: (i) the criminal offense of forced displacement and related crimes; (ii) forced recruitment of children and adolescents; (iii) gender-based violence; (iv) housing, land, and property; and (v) labor rights of displaced persons.



## Education



In 2025, 1,267 children, adolescents, and youth were reintegrated into the education system: 236 asylum-seekers and refugees; 650 displaced; and 381 returnees with protection needs.<sup>21</sup>

The Ministry of Education (SEDUC), in coordination with the INM, implemented the Full Inclusion Strategy for the Guarantee of the Right to Education as part of the Educational Supply and Demand Plan (PODE). It also designed the tool “Special Processes for the Evaluation and Recognition of Studies,” aimed at

advancing non-discriminatory access, retention, and inclusion of refugee and asylum-seeking children, adolescents, and youth in the education system.

Additionally, the Educational Insertion or Reinsertion Protocol was updated to incorporate elements of SICA Resolution ME/CECC 01-2024, with the aim of ensuring greater flexibility in the school admission and re-admission process. Coordination was also strengthened with the Early Warning and Response System (SART) and the Educational Centers

<sup>21</sup> Early Warning and Response System (SART), Module of the Educational Centers Administration System (SACE). National Educational Information System Unit of Honduras (USINIEH), Ministry of Education of Honduras.

Administration System (SACE) to address the lack of certified documentation.

DIPPDV coordinated with SEDUC on actions to protect the right to education in six cases, ensuring a comprehensive response.

## Jobs and Livelihoods

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Honduras made sustained progress in the socioeconomic inclusion of refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons, and returnees with protection needs. During the year, 497 people benefited: 455 displaced; 24 returnees; and 18 refugees. Of these, 194 accessed the Individual Entrepreneurship Strengthening Program, 166 participated in internships and labor insertion activities, 98 received technical

training, and 39 participated in the Program for Reintegration into Formal Education.

The National Service of SETRASS has been strengthened with the aim of improving employability and local integration through the Comprehensive Employment Service in the Returned Migrant Care Centers (CAMR). From March to September 2025, 2,246 returnees were supported with employability





© UNHCR/Tomás Ayuso

services, career guidance, and referrals for entrepreneurship and training. Additionally, 91 internally displaced persons received support through internships and follow-up for training and labor insertion.

The Government of the Republic of Honduras – through the Ministry of Labor and Social Security – has received financing from the IDB for the acquisition of goods and training. The project's main objective is to improve opportunities for formal-sector labor insertion for job seekers in the country.

DIPPDIV assisted seven prioritized cases, providing seed capital for productive ventures and support for employability. This response benefited 22 people (3 girls, 6 boys, 9 women, and 4 men). DIPPDIV provided technical support and promoted participation in

community fairs, highlighting initiatives such as food sales and manual services. Through these actions, progress was made in strengthening economic autonomy, reducing dependence on humanitarian assistance, and promoting sustainable livelihoods.



# A New Dawn in Honduras

BY GABRIELA VILLEDA

© UNHCR/Lucía Martínez



Juan's life took an unexpected turn when violence forced him to leave his country. He arrived in Honduras with only the essentials, but found more than he ever imagined: a community that, despite its own challenges, welcomed him with solidarity and empathy.

"No one imagines becoming a refugee," he says. "But in this town I understood that, even though people also face challenges, they know how to show empathy because they understand what it means to struggle."

“

After darkness, light always comes,” he says with hope. “And that light must be for everyone, regardless of who we are or where we come from.”

Juan’s story is one among hundreds and reflects the country’s progress in protecting and integrating refugees. The support provided by the National Institute of Migration and other State institutions has been essential in enabling more people to rebuild their lives and access opportunities that facilitate their integration. Honduras continues to strengthen its asylum system and promote actions that restore rights such as health, education, housing, and decent work.

With the support of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and its partners, these efforts translate into concrete assistance. In Juan’s case, he received seed capital to start a small family business. Today, he prepares sweet bread, flour “gorditas” with condensed milk, and honey-covered fritters. His business provides him with a stable income, strengthens his integration, and allows him to contribute to the community that welcomed him.

Among the many dreams that motivate him, Juan highlights one in particular: to be more human. For him, that means solidarity, resilience, and the ability to share what one has received. His desire to keep moving forward is grounded in the word that guides his daily life: dawn. “After darkness, light always comes,” he says with hope. “And that light must be for everyone, regardless of who we are or where we come from.”







Mexico

# National Context

## Indicators<sup>22</sup> (period from January 1 to September 30, 2025)

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**3,404**

Number of **refugees and beneficiaries of complementary protection** supported by the Local Integration Program through relocation.

**2,420**

Number of **asylum-seeking children and adolescents** referred by COMAR to **child protection authorities**.

**28,650**

Number of **applicants for refugee status who were issued a temporary Unique Population Registry Code (CURP)**.

**25,860**

Number of **interviews conducted** to identify the specific needs of applicants for refugee status.





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Mexico has played a key role in the human mobility cycle in the Americas, serving simultaneously as a country of origin, transit, destination, and return for mixed flows of people with diverse profiles, protection needs, and drivers of mobility. Evidence of this is that Mexico has been identified as one of the five countries receiving the highest number of applications for refugee status worldwide, involving a population of more than 100 nationalities, mostly from Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.

Between January and September 2025 alone, 57,616 asylum-seekers were assisted nationwide; approximately 17% of this population were girls, boys, and adolescents. To date, the highest peak was experienced in 2023, a year in which a historic total of 141,780 applicants was recorded.

These figures reflect that the complexity characterizing the regional and global context of human mobility—particularly in the humanitarian sphere—has translated into sustained pressure on the national asylum system. In the face of these challenges, Mexico, through the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR), has reaffirmed its commitment to international protection through concrete and transformative actions aimed at safeguarding this system. It has also implemented initiatives focused on strengthening institutional capacities, optimizing processes, and placing asylum-seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of complementary protection at the center of its work.

# Progress

## Protection

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Despite the persistence of significant challenges, Mexico continues moving toward a solid protection policy to guarantee the right to seek and receive asylum. During the period covered by this report, COMAR recorded a protection rate of 80% through refugee status and complementary protection, reflecting a firm commitment to international protection standards and honoring the country's humanitarian tradition. In particular, thanks to the application of the expanded definition contained in the 1984 Cartagena Declaration—which COMAR has applied since July of last year for the adjudication of claims submitted by Haitian nationals—between January and September 2025, the refugee recognition rate for this population in Mexico reached 91%.

As part of the Mexican State's commitment to guaranteeing the right to family unity, the comprehensive protection of children and adolescents, and the effective enjoyment of family life for persons recognized as refugees and their relatives, between January and September of this year, COMAR received a total of 411 family reunification applications, of which 51 were authorized during the same period.

Likewise, progress has been made in creating tangible spaces for assistance and integration. The Ministry of the Interior, through COMAR, inaugurated the Tapachula Multiservice Center, an emblematic multipurpose assistance project resulting from a

joint effort between the federal government, the Government of Chiapas, the UNHCR Office in Mexico, and international donors from Canada, Spain, the United States, Switzerland, and the European Union, among others.

This intersectoral and multilevel initiative brings together, in a single space, the actions, procedures, and services related to the refugee status determination process, as well as the permanent presence of multidisciplinary bodies providing specialized assistance. It also includes the implementation of a holistic integration model for persons with international protection needs. This will allow, in the Center's first phase, for asylum-seekers to begin and complete their procedure with COMAR; receive guidance; access health services, psychosocial support, child protection services, and legal assistance; and be linked to education and employment programs.

Additionally, two sessions of the Local Inter-Institutional Roundtables on Refugee and Complementary Protection were held this year, covering various thematic areas (health, education, employment, documentation, and identity).

## Education



From January to September 2025, COMAR made 727 referrals of persons in need of international protection to educational centers. Likewise, as a result of the presence of the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA) at the COMAR Office in Mexico City twice per week, asylum-seekers receive guidance on the validation of studies completed in their country of origin and can begin literacy programs from their homes. Since this effort began in July, 80 applicants have been assisted, and 16 have already completed and certified their primary-level studies.

As part of the efforts to guarantee asylum-seekers' access to rights and services (including access to education) through the full exercise of the right to identity, from January to September 2025, COMAR

carried out 48,397 actions for the issuance of CURP and the collection of biometric data. In support of these efforts, the process of updating and implementing the cooperation project "Institutional strengthening of operational capacity to recognize the identity of applicants for refugee status, with a particular emphasis on girls, boys, and adolescents in Mexico," approved under the MIRPS Fund, is currently underway.



## Health

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During the period covered by this report, COMAR carried out 1,485 medical assistance actions nationwide, which has enabled the population in need of international protection to access first-, second-, and third-level health services. Likewise, 597 psychosocial care services were provided.

In collaboration with Médecins du Monde, 12 health brigades were carried out in the vicinity of the COMAR Office in Mexico City, providing various services to 214 people, such as medical consultations (169),

psychological consultations (19), and assistance in cases of gender-based violence (26).

Likewise, the Tijuana Multiservice Center, which brings together 23 institutions offering various services to refugees, Mexican nationals, and others in different mobility contexts, has a Mobile Medical Unit. Through this unit, individuals are referred to medical centers closest to their residence and provided with dental services, risk-factor assessments, vaccinations, and family planning services.

## Social protection

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With the aim of promoting local integration, peaceful coexistence, and intercultural interaction among asylum-seekers, refugees, beneficiaries of complementary protection, and host communities, the COMAR Representation Office in Tijuana, in coordination with the Salesian Project in Tijuana and UNHCR, carried out eight Inclusion and Coexistence Days during the period covered by this report. These community spaces host cultural, artistic, and recreational activities that promote intercultural exchange and highlight the diversity of persons in contexts of international forced mobility. In addition, information is provided on rights, services, and support for integration. Likewise, the COMAR Office in Mexico City—in coordination with the local government—has participated in three Service Fairs for People in Contexts of Human Mobility, focused on providing assistance, guidance, and referrals to shelters, services, and procedures for this population.

As a result of the implementation at the federal and local levels of the Quadripartite Mechanism for the Protection and Integration of Refugees, four working sessions have been held within this pioneering space for meaningful participation and direct engagement with persons in need of international protection in Mexico.

As part of the commemoration of World Refugee Day, COMAR, in coordination with INDEPORTE and PILARES Community Education Subsystem, held a free, recreational, and non-profit race in Mexico City, with the participation of approximately 500 people, including asylum-seekers, refugees, and the general public.

A Framework Collaboration Agreement was also signed with the Dr. José María Luis Mora Research Institute, with the aim of strengthening a culture of protection and the full respect for the human rights of asylum-seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of complementary

protection in Mexico, as well as promoting interculturality as a central value of social cohesion. Among the lines of action contemplated in this interinstitutional agreement is the implementation of the “Sergio Vieira de Mello” Chair on Asylum and Refuge, in order to disseminate to the broader community the valuable contributions that have been

developed at the national and international levels in this field, as well as the development of training and capacity-building programs for public servants, with the purpose of strengthening their competencies and specialization to respond to social needs in matters of refugee protection and complementary protection.





## Jobs and Livelihoods

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From January 1 to September 30, 2025, approximately 3,404 refugees participated in the Local Integration Program through relocation, reaching a total of 52,835 beneficiaries since the program began in 2016. Of the population participating in this initiative, 48.4% are family units, while 51.6% are single adults. The nationalities of the refugees participating in the program are 40% Honduran, 25% Haitian, 12% Cuban, 7% Venezuelan, and around 5% Salvadoran, among other nationalities.

As part of the actions to ensure effective and sustainable socioeconomic integration processes for the population in need of international protection, the presence of various companies has been ensured at COMAR offices (Intrare, Tent, Ayuda en Acción, among

others), in order to provide guidance to individuals who receive a positive resolution in their procedure on employment linkage programs, as well as to facilitate their incorporation into the employment platforms of these companies, which offer job openings aligned with each person's skills, competencies, and/or professional profile.

Along these same lines, training sessions and workshops are regularly provided to employment and financial inclusion institutions on COMAR's work and the refugee status determination procedure, in order to facilitate the socioeconomic inclusion of the population in need of international protection. As part of these efforts, the training programs are expected to include the leaders of business associations in sectors

such as commerce, industry, hospitality, restaurants, construction, and others.

Furthermore, within the framework of the 45th anniversary of COMAR's establishment, a Collaboration Agreement was signed with Financiera para el Bienestar (Finabien), aimed at ensuring access to safe financial services for asylum-seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of complementary protection. The lines of action set out in this agreement are based on the recognition that financial inclusion is a pillar of integration.

By facilitating access for people with international protection needs to Finabien's service, while fully

recognizing their legal and social particularities, barriers that have historically limited their inclusion are dismantled. At the same time, the institutional guidance that will be provided will enable refugees and asylum-seekers to understand their rights and make use of the financial instruments available to them, thus promoting their economic self-sufficiency and the possibility of carrying out initiatives that transform not only their own lives, but also those of host communities. This agreement not only enables a service; it broadens horizons to ensure that every refugee can become an active rights-holder, with the ability to contribute to the social, economic, and cultural development of the country that provides them protection.

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# Eighteen Lives Saved: The Story of Shadi Abed and His Family, Palestinian Refugees in Mexico

BY BRENDA PAOLA MARTÍNEZ VALDÉS



On May 25, 2025, at one o'clock in the morning, a flight landed in Mexico City that changed eighteen lives. On board were the mother, sisters, brothers, sisters-in-law, nephews, and nieces of Shadi Abed, a Palestinian refugee who has made Mexico his home since 2018.

Shadi waited with his heart in suspense for his relatives, who managed to leave the Gaza Strip

after months of siege, loss, and despair, thanks to a complex diplomatic and humanitarian operation led by Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was the end of an uncertain journey, but also the beginning of a new life. "Thanks to Mexico, they saved 18 souls," he said as he received them in tears. That phrase captures the

profound meaning of international protection: a human response to suffering, an affirmation of the right to live.

Since Shadi arrived in the country fleeing the blockade and violence in Gaza, he worked tirelessly to bring over his family, who had become trapped after the escalation of the genocide in Palestine. His father, who was also living in Mexico, died in 2024 while trying to help them leave through Egypt. After his death, Shadi's moral and emotional commitment became an unbreakable promise: to continue the struggle his father had begun.

On April 1, 2025, COMAR recognized his entire family group as refugees through derivative status, applying the principles of pro persona, family unity, and the best interests of the child. The decision carried profound legal and human significance, as it restored their rights to international protection and family reunification, including three of his sisters-in-law, mothers of his minor nieces and nephews.

Today, the Abed family is rebuilding their life in Mexico. "Mexico is very big, very wonderful. They really love learning Spanish, Mexican food, Mexican culture," Shadi says with a smile. The Abed children attend school, his sisters cook Palestinian food, and his mother receives medical care through public services — all with coordinated support from the Mexican government, UNHCR, and local organizations.

The case of the Abed family has become a symbol of the Mexican State's humanist commitment. COMAR's decision to restore their rights reaffirmed the principle that international protection is an act of recognition and dignity.

Amid one of the most serious humanitarian crises of our time, Mexico once again demonstrated that its asylum policy and historic tradition are guided by the values of solidarity, hospitality, and justice.



“

Mexico is very big, very wonderful.  
They really love learning Spanish,  
Mexican food, Mexican culture.”



# Panama

# National Context

## Indicators

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**60**

**ID cards for asylum applicants**  
admitted for processing.

**33**

**Documents for individuals** undergoing  
the **statelessness** determination process.

**511**

**Certificates of application for**  
**refugee status** (new applicants).

**38**

**Permanent residence cards.**

**199**

**Renewals of ID cards** for  
recognized refugees.

**2 to 3 months**

**Average processing time for refugee**  
**status determination** applications,  
from receipt to final decision.

**22**

**ID documents for recognized**  
**stateless persons.**

**14**

**Work permits** for asylum applicants  
admitted for processing.



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**56**

**Work permit renewals** for recognized refugees.

**31**

**Permanent (indefinite) work permits** for refugees who have obtained permanent residence.

Panama is both a transit and asylum country in Central America. It has emerged as a host country for asylum-seekers due to various favorable conditions, which has increased the flow of people seeking international protection. To date, Panama has granted refugee status to 2,661 individuals. The refugee population is composed primarily of persons of Colombian, Nicaraguan, Venezuelan, and Cuban nationality, among others.

An important initiative related to migration security implemented by the Government of the Republic of Panama is the enactment of Executive Decree No. 6 of March 11, 2025, which establishes the Humanitarian Security Protection Permit (PPSH). This permit, valid for

one year and renewable for the same period, seeks to provide legal stability to migrants in Panama. It also includes the possibility for asylum-seekers whose cases were not admitted for processing—because they did not meet the criteria to qualify for refugee status—to apply for this migration regularization measure.

During the current year, the National Office for Refugee Assistance (ONPAR) has strengthened its service mechanisms through the implementation of new communication channels. A telephone line was established for receiving calls and messages via the WhatsApp application, as well as an email address dedicated to managing online procedures, through which more than 200 people have been assisted. Additionally, institutional social media accounts were created with the purpose of disseminating relevant and timely information. The incorporation of these digital channels has reduced the need for in-person assistance at ONPAR facilities, optimizing response times and enhancing the efficiency of service delivery.

Another significant advancement was the improvement of ONPAR's offices, made possible with the support of UNHCR. Substantial upgrades were carried out to the infrastructure, ensuring accessible conditions for persons with reduced mobility and an adequate entry point for applicants and their family units. Additionally, a designated space for the care and recreation of children was established, and interview rooms were equipped to ensure privacy and confidentiality throughout the assistance process.

# Progress

## Protection

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In May, Panama resumed the process of issuing asylum-seeker ID cards, both for principal applicants and for members of their family units. To date, 877 ID cards have been issued, thereby ensuring that applicants have a valid identification document that allows them to move safely within the national territory.

A Protocol has been developed between the National Migration Service and the National Office for Refugee Assistance (ONPAR), with the objective of establishing a clear and coordinated procedure for the reception, evaluation, and processing of refugee status applications. This regulatory instrument seeks to strengthen inter-institutional cooperation and ensure timely, efficient, and human-rights-based assistance

for individuals seeking international protection. Thanks to this joint effort, 82 refugee applications were attended to at border entry points and migrant shelters, significantly reducing waiting times.

A document was developed containing proposed amendments to the current legal framework, with the objective of strengthening and improving the refugee status application process in Panama. These proposed modifications aim to align the legal framework with international protection standards, enhance administrative efficiency, and ensure a more agile, transparent, and rights-respecting procedure for individuals seeking refugee status.

## Jobs and livelihoods

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During this period, 99 work permit applications were processed for individuals who have been granted refugee status or admitted for processing. It is important to highlight that recognized refugees, as well as those admitted for refugee status determination, may register in the employment exchange managed

by the Ministry of Labor and Workforce Development of Panama (MITRADEL). This mechanism provides them with the opportunity to apply for job vacancies, offering a pathway for their insertion into the labor market and promoting their self-sufficiency and socioeconomic integration in the country.

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# From refugee to community leader: Shirley's story

BY MELISSA PINEL



© UNHCR/Augusto Revello

Every day, 30 children from a vulnerable community in Panama gather at “Mi Primera Cremita,” a small community kitchen where they find food, support, and affection. The project is led by Shirley Mosquera, a refugee from Colombia who transformed her pain into an opportunity to support other mothers and their children.

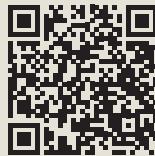
When she was forced to leave Colombia, she had to do so in great haste. “They tell you: you have a few hours

to leave, and you have to grab your passport and run... without looking back,” Shirley recounts. Upon arriving in Panama—having left behind the beauty salon she had invested so much effort in, and the life she had built with her children—she thought about giving up, but little by little regained the strength to move forward.

“Mi Primera Cremita” is part of the driving force that gives her purpose—a space of community and solidarity. For the past six years, Shirley has done

“

Sometimes I think what I do is very little, but when people thank me and show me affection, I realize it's priceless”



everything possible, with limited resources, to provide meals to the children in her neighborhood: Panamanians, Colombians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans. “This has no borders or limits,” she explains. “Here, we help anyone who needs it.”

The community kitchen has also become a gathering place for mothers in the neighborhood, where they receive information and guidance. Shirley has built networks to access training, support her own entrepreneurial initiatives, and accompany women facing situations of violence. “Sometimes I think what I do is very little, but when people thank me and show me affection, I realize it's priceless,” she confesses.

The journey has not been easy, and although some doors closed along the way, she gradually earned the respect of her community and has become a leader. Today, in the small house that hosts the community kitchen, Shirley dreams of continuing to support those who need it most. “God sent me with a purpose,” she affirms.

\*Shirley was part of “With Love from Panama,” an initiative through which refugees and asylum-seekers shared, in letters, the journeys they undertook in search of protection and how, step by step, they are rebuilding their lives in this country.







# MIRPS Support Platform

In 2025, the Government of Colombia assumed the role of Chair of the MIRPS Support Platform. As Chair, Colombia has promoted a coordinated approach to support MIRPS States in the implementation of their National Action Plans, aimed at the protection and pursuit of durable solutions for displaced persons. This strategy is aligned with the priorities of the 2025 MIRPS Regional Action Plan, under the leadership of Costa Rica as Pro Tempore Presidency.

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**During its mandate, the Government of Colombia has prioritized the strengthening of international protection systems through the improvement of technical capacities, the modernization of refugee status determination systems, including their digitalization, and the development of national procedures, systems, and practices that promote greater efficiency, fairness, and quality in asylum and refugee processes.**

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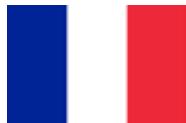
During the first half of the year, and in coordination with the Pro Tempore Presidency of Costa Rica, Colombia presented its Strategy for the MIRPS Support Platform to the Permanent and Observer Missions to the OAS

in Washington, and to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva. These meetings sought to reaffirm the political commitment of MIRPS countries and Platform members, as well as to promote their collaboration around the priorities identified for this year.

In April and May, the MIRPS Learning Event on International Protection was held, focused on the principles and strategies to reduce the backlog in the processing of asylum and refugee applications. In this virtual activity, representatives from the seven MIRPS countries and five members of the Support Platform participated. Experts from the Governments of Argentina, Canada, Colombia, and Costa Rica shared good practices in the field, and support needs and next steps were identified to advance in national contexts, delve into areas of common interest, and strengthen institutional capacities.

In its role as Chair of the MIRPS Support Platform and co-convener of the Second Global Refugee Forum, Colombia has actively promoted follow-up to the commitments assumed at this Forum, with the aim of increasing the visibility of the progress achieved. Likewise, it has sought to mobilize greater backing from the members of the Support Platform, with a view to advancing the implementation of pledges, particularly in support of the four key MIRPS regional pledges: strengthening asylum and refugee systems, socioeconomic inclusion, local governance, and statistical inclusion.

During a hybrid session held in May with the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva, several members of the Platform, including Argentina, Canada, Spain, the European Union, the World Bank, and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), reaffirmed their commitment, including financial and technical support, to strengthen protection systems and solutions in MIRPS countries.



#### Technical Secretariat

Additionally, in September, a virtual session was organized to advance the progress of MIRPS countries in statistical inclusion. In this space, the Directorate-General for International Partnerships of the European Commission (INTPA) shared good practices and its commitment to this priority issue. This work is particularly relevant in view of the upcoming Global Refugee Forum Progress Review Meeting, which will be held December 15–17.

In response to the call made by the Government of Colombia at the beginning of 2025, MIRPS States and members of the Support Platform actively contributed to the MIRPS Inventory of Good Practices, enriching this dynamic resource that guides the development of technical assistance initiatives. The inventory is available on the MIRPS website, in an interactive, publicly accessible section, with the aim of fostering the exchange of experiences and strengthening cooperation among countries in the region. This resource is also expected to serve as a useful tool for organizing bilateral and regional technical support initiatives, as well as for identifying priority

areas in which members of the Support Platform can strategically engage.

As part of the MIRPS Support Platform Strategy 2025, the Workshop on Considerations for the International Protection of Women and Girls was held, structured in two sessions in August and September. The workshop, which included the participation of the seven MIRPS countries and eight members of the Support Platform, enabled continued strengthening of participants' knowledge on regional realities and procedures related to violence against women and girls in displacement contexts. The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRCC), the Asylum and Refugee Office of Spain, and the Mexican Commission for Refugee Aid (COMAR) shared good practices and lessons learned. Complementing these experiences, and with the support of UN Women, the workshop explored regional dynamics that link violence against women and girls with displacement. In addition, with the technical support of UNHCR, it addressed how these situations fit within the legal definition of a refugee. As a result and follow-up, a systematization document was prepared with key learnings, which

will serve as a practical tool for national and regional teams, and to support future technical cooperation initiatives.

The Government of Colombia, in its role as Chair of the Support Platform, together with several Platform members, participated in the Second Regional Technical Meeting of the National Commissions for Refugees (CONAREs) and their equivalents in the Americas, held in September in Panama City. This meeting, convened by the 2025 Pro Tempore Presidencies of the Quito Process and the MIRPS, led by Ecuador and Costa Rica respectively, aimed to make visible the challenges, progress, and opportunities faced by CONAREs and their counterparts in the region in managing refugee status recognition applications. This event is part of the priority actions defined in the 2025 Support Platform Strategy.

As part of the VI Edition of the Inter-American Course on Migration and Protection, held at the OAS headquarters, Colombia organized a roundtable titled “Strategic Partnerships for Cooperation Programs for Protection and Solutions in Central America and Mexico.” The session brought together representatives from MIRPS member states and members of the Support Platform with the aim of fostering dialogue on modalities of technical and financial cooperation to strengthen protection and durable solutions programs and policies in the region. In this space, the World Bank, the IDB, as well as Canada (IRCC), together with representatives from Costa Rica, Honduras, and Mexico, shared good practices and successful cooperation cases in these areas. Common priorities were identified, and financing tools adapted to MIRPS countries’ contexts were explored, related to benefiting refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, returnees, stateless persons, and their host communities.

The session provided MIRPS States with information on the financing mechanisms available through these two international financial institutions. It also illustrated the significant impact that technical and financial cooperation between MIRPS States and members of the Support Platform can have, highlighting recommendations and lessons learned that may guide future forms of collaboration.

The MIRPS Support Platform contributed to strengthening the MIRPS Dialogue Mechanisms, which embody the “whole-of-society” approach within this regional mechanism. Colombia participated in dialogue spaces with members of the MIRPS Civil Society Dialogue Mechanism and Refugee-Led Organizations on the activities and priorities of the Support Platform and recommended continuing this collaboration in the future.

Regarding collaboration in the academic sphere, the participation of the Centre for Refugee Studies at York University in Canada in the “Regional Meeting between the MIRPS Academia Dialogue Mechanism and the Academia Network of the Quito Process” made it possible to share lessons learned and good practices in the reception, care, and integration of migrants and refugees. Enhanced collaboration with universities in Support Platform member countries was regarded positively.

Finally, the launch of the Private Sector Dialogue Mechanism represented an important milestone, as the result of joint efforts over recent years to strengthen private-sector participation in seeking protection and solutions in MIRPS States, including the valuable contributions of Support Platform members. The Government of Colombia participated in the launch event, and Foundever Brazil enriched the exchange on how the private sector can support the integration of displaced persons.

The diverse activities of the MIRPS and its Support Platform during this year have demonstrated the high level of commitment and the impact that can be achieved through international collaboration. Looking ahead to 2026, the Government of Colombia invites members of the Support Platform and other strategic actors to redouble their cooperation efforts with MIRPS States through financial, technical, political, and material support. It is essential to continue raising

the visibility of the significant progress achieved, as well as the persistent needs in Central America and Mexico in terms of protection and durable solutions for displaced persons. Only through a collective, coordinated, and sustained effort will it be possible to face the challenges of displacement and move toward a more just, safe, and hopeful future for all displaced persons in the region.



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## Initiatives of the members of the Support Platform

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### BRAZIL

Brazil, in its role as Pro Tempore Presidency of Mercosur, invited MIRPS States — through the MIRPS Regional Technical Team on Reception, Admission, and Processing of Applications — to participate in the Regional Training Cycle on Refugee Status Determination Procedures. This virtual training program, led by Brazil's CONARE, was conducted through online sessions between September and November 2025.

The training strengthened the technical capacities of eligibility officers, deepening their knowledge of international refugee law and promoting standardized practices in determination procedures. It also sought to harmonize processes and encourage the exchange of experiences among countries, ensuring a coordinated and rights-based approach to international protection.

### CANADA

Canada was pleased to actively contribute to several events organized under Colombia's leadership of the MIRPS Support Platform and Costa Rica's Pro-Tempore Presidency, that enabled the exchange of technical expertise and promising practices to strengthen national asylum institutions responsible for refugee status determination in MIRPS States. These included the MIRPS Learning Event on International Protection and Workshop on International Protection Considerations of Women and Girls.

As part of commitments made at the Global Refugee Forum 2023, Canada also fostered an active bilateral technical collaboration with the government

of Costa Rica to support their Strategy to Modernize the Asylum System. This collaboration included participation in the delivery of training workshops organized with the support of UNHCR, to develop and enhance the legal knowledge and technical competencies of eligibility officers involved in the process of refugee status determination.

Canada, through the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) also provides financial support to capacity strengthening projects in the region. A recent addition includes a CAD \$1 million 2.5 year project with UNHCR Costa Rica aligned with the asylum modernization strategy, which aims to address and reduce the backlog in order to expedite the resolution of pending asylum claims.

### SPAIN

Spain firmly supports multilateral efforts to provide protection and assistance to both refugees and internally displaced persons, and to find durable and sustainable solutions. Spain remains fully committed to the MIRPS. From a financial perspective, in a context of a particularly worsening global humanitarian situation, Spain has not reduced — quite the opposite — its commitment to the region. This year, it has contributed EUR 500,000 through UNHCR, adding to the EUR 7.7 million provided between 2021 and 2024. Beyond this multilateral contribution to the MIRPS, Spain finances, through AECID, protection programs for displaced persons and migrants in each of the MIRPS countries, through the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of the Red Cross and national societies such as those of

Panama and Honduras, as well as through the World Food Programme. From a technical perspective, Spain continues to support the exchange of good practices, both among members of the Platform and MIRPS countries, and globally, with other similar regional platforms.

### EUROPEAN UNION

In 2025, the European Union allocated EUR 149 million in humanitarian aid for Latin America and the Caribbean, of which EUR 28.7 million was earmarked for Central America and Mexico, EUR 18.6 M targeting those affected by violence, food insecurity and forced displacement, and EUR 10.1 million for disaster preparedness. Examples of EU support for MIRPS countries include enhancing protection of persons of concern in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, El Salvador, and Costa Rica through humanitarian and shelter assistance, protection assistance, and cash-based interventions. Additionally, through development funding, the EU has supported initiatives to promote access to decent work for displaced persons in Mexico, and to facilitate the integration of Nicaraguan refugees in Costa Rica.

### INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (IDB)

The IDB has committed USD 61 million in non-reimbursable resources from its ordinary capital (GRF) and mobilized USD 3.3 million in donor funds across 13 investment loans in five MIRPS countries (Belize, Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, and El Salvador), reaching a total investment of USD 698.95 million. These operations support integration efforts in education, health, labor markets, housing, water and sanitation. For example, in Belize, the operations support systemic change in areas such as education, agriculture, livelihoods, water and

sanitation, health, infrastructure, and employment, directly benefiting migrant communities. In Costa Rica, they focus on the regularization and inclusion of migrants and on strengthening the education system. In Panama, the support aims to improve educational quality.

Likewise, through 12 technical cooperation projects, the Bank strengthens the institutional capacities of MIRPS governments, with an emphasis on reinforcing reception systems and on data management as a cross-cutting axis to improve decision-making, design evidence-based policies, and promote sustainable integration. In El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, a comprehensive approach to migration is being promoted, with special attention to returnees and labor migration, in line with national priorities. In El Salvador, the IDB is supporting improvements in educational quality and school resilience to climate change. In Honduras, operations focus on strengthening the education system, promoting job placement, and reactivating employment. Complementarily, regional initiatives on circular migration are being developed, linking NCA countries with Spain in the agricultural sector, as well as a regional technical cooperation initiative aimed at strengthening programs for returned migrants in Mexico and Central America.

### WORLD BANK

The World Bank helped mobilize over USD \$44 million in resources for direct support to displaced populations and host communities across Central America and the Dominican Republic. This included a USD 30 million subcomponent under the Education Project in Costa Rica; USD 5 million for the relocation and upgrading of the Returnee Reception Center at La Aurora International Airport under the Guatemala Civil Aviation Program; USD 3.5 million grant for supporting economic

reintegration and psychosocial support for women returnees in northern Honduras and additional support for cash transfers reaching returnee women with young children as part of a multimillion Social Protection program in Guatemala; a USD \$250,000 grant awarded for locally led climate action in remote areas in Panama, targeting displaced and host communities; and a strengthened partnership between the IFC and the World Bank to provide

analytical and operational engagements with the private sector to create more and better jobs in MIRPS countries, focusing on Mexico and Honduras. Additionally, the World Bank and UNHCR supported the Manual for Journalists covering Migration and Forced Displacement in Costa Rica, which was awarded with an honorific mention for the 2025 National Journalism Award.



