MIRPS



Annual Report

Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework

MIRPS 2026

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and Solutions Framework

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Acknowledgments

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ES26 PRESIDENCIA PRO-TÉMPORE MIRPS

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Acronyms

AMN	National Migration Authority
ANE	National Employment Agency
BELTRAIDE	Belize Trade and Investment Development Service
BEMIS	Belize Education Management Information System
BPP	Border Presence Project
CAJP	Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs
CAM	Commission on Migration Affairs
CAMR	Returned Migrant Assistance Center
CCSS	Costa Rican Social Security Fund
CECC	Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination
CEEX	Extracurricular Education Centers
CETC	Complementary Temporary Special Category
CIIE	Comprehensive Emotional Intelligence Center
CIPPDEF	Interinstitutional Commission for the Prevention and Protection of Forcibly Displaced Persons
CMS-T	Tapachula Multiservice Center
CODER	Commission for Refugee Status Determination
COMAR	Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance
CONAMYPE	National Commission for Micro and Small Enterprises
CONAPINA	National Council for Children and Adolescents
CONARE	National Refugee Commission
CRM	Regional Conference on Migration
CSM	South American Conference on Migration
CUBO	Urban Centers for Well-being and Opportunities
CURP	Unique Population Registry Code
DGME	General Directorate of Migration and Foreign Affairs
DGPHM	General Directorate for the Protection of Honduran Migrants
DIGEEX	General Directorate of Extracurricular Education
DIPPDIV	Directorate for the Protection of Persons Internally Displaced by Violence

DRER	Refugee Department of the Guatemalan Migration Institute
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EMIBISUR	Temporary Migrant Assistance Center in Southern Costa Rica
ENCOVI	National Living Conditions Survey
EPHPM	Permanent Multipurpose Household Survey
ETN	MIRPS National Technical Team
ETR	Regional Technical Team
FAG	Migrant Assistance Task Force
FINABIEN	Financial Institution for Well-being
FLACSO	Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences
FOSOFAMILIA	Solidarity Fund for Families
GAMI	Migrant Assistance Management Office
GARLOS	Refugee-Led and Forcibly Displaced Persons' Organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IGM	Guatemalan Migration Institute
IMRF	International Migration Review Forum
INA	National Learning Institute
INCAF	National Institute for Training and Education
INE	National Institute of Statistics
INEA	National Institute for Adult Education
INM	National Migration Institute
ISDEMU	Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women
ITVET	Institute for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
MEP	Ministry of Public Education
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
MINTRAB	Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare
MIRPS	Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework

MITRADEL	Ministry of Labor and Workforce Development
MTSS	Ministry of Labor and Social Security
NHI	National Health Insurance
NNA	Children and Adolescents
NSS	Social Security Number
OAS	Organization of American States
OFAMIR	Returned Migrant Assistance Office
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
ONPAR	National Office for Refugee Assistance
OPORTUGUATE	National Employment Opportunities Platform in Guatemala
PDD	Platform on Disaster Displacement
PEX	Overseas Employment Platform
PGR	Office of the Attorney General of the Republic
PIL	Local Integration Program
PNC	National Civil Police
PNVLV	National Policy for Women's Access to a Life Free from Violence
PODE	Educational Supply and Demand Plan
PPSH	Humanitarian Security Protection Permit
R4V	Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela
RAP	Quito Process Academic Network
REDLAC	Regional Group on Risks, Emergencies and Disasters for Latin America and the Caribbean
RFC	Federal Taxpayer Registry
RNPN	National Registry of Natural Persons
RROCM	Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migration
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
SACE	Educational Centers Administration System
SART	Early Warning and Response System
SBS	Social Welfare Secretariat
SEDH	Secretariat of State for Human Rights
SEDUC	Secretariat of Education
SETRASS	Secretariat of Labor and Social Security

SICA	Central American Integration System
SINARDEFI	National Response System for Internal Forced Displacement
SINARE	National Refugee System
SIRE	Refugee Information System
SNE	National Employment System
SNIS	Integrated National Health System
SRE	Secretariat of Foreign Affairs
SRECI	Secretariat of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services



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Foreword

It is an honor for El Salvador, in its capacity as Pro Tempore Presidency of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS), to present the IX MIRPS Annual Report 2026, which highlights the main advances and results of a year of regional cooperation aimed at strengthening protection and promoting solutions for refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, returnees with protection needs, and stateless persons.

The presentation of this report takes place in a particularly significant year. In 2026, we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, a cornerstone of the international protection system, and the 25th anniversary of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, which reaffirms the close relationship between human rights and recognition of the dignity of every person, without distinction. These commemorations invite us to renew our commitment to the principles underpinning our responses and to reflect on their continued relevance in the face of current challenges.

In a regional context marked by increasingly complex human mobility dynamics, emerging forms of displacement, and challenges that transcend national borders, spaces for cooperation among countries, such as MIRPS, take on particular importance. Their principal value lies in providing a trusted space for dialogue, the exchange of experiences, and the development of shared responses, enabling States to learn from one another, strengthen their capacities, and develop regional tools and public goods that endure beyond the term of any single Pro Tempore Presidency.

Throughout 2026, El Salvador carried out this responsibility with a vision centered on strategic coordination and regional cooperation. The Presidency's priorities—strengthening national asylum and refugee protection systems; promoting durable solutions and socioeconomic inclusion; protection

In 2026, El Salvador advanced a regional agenda that translated shared priorities into institutional capacities, knowledge, and cooperation mechanisms to support MIRPS States.

in situations of disaster-related displacement; and strengthening MIRPS and its regional coordination—translated into enhanced institutional capacities, knowledge, regional tools, strategic partnerships, and cooperation mechanisms that remain available to States beyond this term.

Coordination between MIRPS and other regional mechanisms and stakeholders was also strengthened, expanding opportunities for dialogue, knowledge generation, and the development of complementary responses to the challenges of human mobility and displacement.

El Salvador expresses its gratitude to the MIRPS Member States, their National Technical Teams, the Technical Secretariat comprising the OAS and UNHCR, the MIRPS Support Platform, and the MIRPS Dialogue Mechanisms, all of which have contributed to this collective effort.

As MIRPS approaches its tenth anniversary, El Salvador hands over the Presidency with the conviction that, in the current context, maintaining and strengthening spaces for dialogue and cooperation among countries is more necessary than ever. The progress achieved provides a foundation for sustaining and deepening this collective effort, guided by the principles of cooperation, solidarity, and shared responsibility. We thus reaffirm our commitment to an increasingly coordinated MIRPS, guided by solidarity and focused on protection and durable solutions.

MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency
El Salvador, 2026



Third MIRPS Plenary Meeting, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador



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Regional Context

+237,000 **New asylum applications** in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2025.

Mexico in the Regional Context



36%

of asylum decisions made in the region.



50%

of positive asylum decisions made in the region.

Returns in the Region





+33,000

returns between January and August in Honduras.



+39% compared to the same period in 2025.



+91,000

people returned from the United States during the first half of the year.

Internal Displacement Due to Violence



+420,000

people have experienced displacement associated with violence at least once in Honduras.

~390,000

people remained displaced due to violence and insecurity at the end of 2025 in Mexico.

Discrimination and Socioeconomic Inclusion



42%

of surveyed households report that discrimination affects their relationships with host communities.

In 2026, the countries of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) continue to face complex dynamics of displacement and human mobility, with differing impacts on refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, returnees with protection needs, and persons at risk of statelessness. These dynamics are shaped by the increasingly close interplay of violence, insecurity, barriers to accessing rights, and the impact of disasters and phenomena associated with climate change, with varying effects across Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico, and Panama. These countries simultaneously serve as places of origin, transit, destination, and return for refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, returnees, and others with protection needs.

Despite changes in human mobility dynamics over the past two years, particularly the decline in mixed movements toward North America, displacement levels in the Americas remain high, and protection space continues to be under pressure. This shift has not led to a decrease in protection needs; rather, it has transformed regional dynamics, with an increase in asylum applications in countries across the region, longer stays, intraregional movements, returns, and onward movements.

In 2025, more than 237,000 new asylum applications were registered in Latin America and the Caribbean, while substantial backlogs of pending cases persist in several countries. This situation calls for sustained efforts to strengthen national protection systems so they can respond not only to new arrivals but also to needs arising during transit, stay, return, and reintegration. In this context, the main challenge for MIRPS countries is not merely to respond to cross-border movements, but also to strengthen their ability to address protection needs that arise and evolve along increasingly complex journeys encompassing transit, stay, return, and reintegration.

Mexico plays a central role in these dynamics, both because of its territorial size and its role as a country of destination, transit, and return. The country accounts for a significant share of asylum decisions issued in Latin America and the Caribbean and continues to face high volumes of applications and pending cases. In 2025, Mexico accounted for 36% of asylum decisions issued in the region, including 50% of positive decisions.[1] At the same time, changes in movements toward North America and the increase in returns underscore the need to strengthen reception mechanisms, identification of protection needs, documentation, and access to services.

[1] UNHCR, Global Trends Report. 2025.


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In Central American countries, dynamics of internal displacement, cross-border mobility, and return converge and intersect. Honduras, for example, recorded more than 33,000 returns between January and August 2026, a 39% increase compared with the same period in the previous year. Mexico, for its part, received more than 91,000 returnees from the United States during the first half of 2026.[2] These trends highlight the importance of incorporating a protection perspective into reception and reintegration mechanisms, including risk identification, access to documentation and services, and the prevention of further cycles of onward movement.

Internal displacement remains a significant dimension of the protection context in MIRPS countries. In Honduras, more than 420,000 people have experienced displacement linked to violence at least once, while in Mexico nearly 390,000 people remained displaced due to violence and insecurity at the end of 2025.[3] These situations coexist with cross-border movements and returns, giving rise to protection needs that call for complementary responses from national authorities and regional cooperation mechanisms. This coexistence of internal displacement, cross-border movements, and return requires complementary protection responses, as well as asylum systems capable of adapting to increasingly diverse profiles and journeys.

At the same time, national asylum systems in MIRPS countries continue to face the challenge of strengthening their capacities to ensure effective access to international protection procedures, reduce backlogs, and resolve pending cases in a timely manner. Venezuelans remain one of the main population groups within the region's asylum systems, while Cubans have become increasingly prominent among new applications registered within national international protection systems. This trend is particularly important for MIRPS countries, whose systems must respond to increasingly diverse population profiles and mobility dynamics that may involve several countries in the region.

Strengthening asylum systems is therefore a cross-cutting priority for MIRPS countries. Regional analysis shows that although the number of asylum decisions exceeded the number of new applications in 2025, only 17% were substantive decisions on the merits of the applications, while the remainder consisted primarily of administrative closures and other forms of case resolution. Despite this volume of decisions, national systems continue to accumulate pending cases. For MIRPS countries, this context reinforces the importance of advancing differentiated procedures, case management and digitization, institutional capacity-building, legal assistance, and accessible information, as well as mechanisms to reduce backlogs without compromising the quality of refugee status determination.

[2] R4V; REDLAC. Análisis Regional de Protección - América Latina y el Caribe. 2026.

[3] Idem

The need to strengthen protection systems is also linked to opportunities for inclusion and durable solutions. Refugees and migrants continue to face documentation-related barriers, difficulties accessing formal employment and services, and discrimination. During the first half of 2026, discrimination was identified as the most frequently reported abuse among refugees and migrants in countries of destination and the second most frequent among those in transit. In addition, 42% of surveyed households indicated that discrimination affects their relationship with host communities.[4] In MIRPS countries, these factors directly affect prospects for self-reliance, socioeconomic integration, and social cohesion, and may increase exposure to exploitation and other forms of vulnerability.

Furthermore, across the region, gender-based violence, human trafficking, and other forms of exploitation remain closely linked to mobility and displacement dynamics, generating protection risks that require comprehensive and coordinated responses. Recruitment practices using digital technologies heighten protection risks and call for stronger prevention, identification, and referral of cases, as well as cooperation among institutions and countries. Protection risks are also shaped by environmental phenomena and disasters. Hurricanes, earthquakes, and other natural events, as well as conditions associated with climatic phenomena, can affect communities already facing vulnerabilities linked to poverty, violence, and displacement.

All of this takes place in a context of limited capacities and resources. Regional analysis identifies a widening gap between the complexity of protection risks and the capacities available to prevent and respond to them. The reduction in resources available for protection responses underscores the need to strengthen national and local capacities and promote forms of cooperation that enable countries to share knowledge, tools, and solutions.

In this context, regional cooperation is a fundamental component for MIRPS countries. Current displacement and mobility dynamics transcend national borders and require coordinated responses in the areas of international protection, internal displacement, reception and reintegration, socioeconomic inclusion, and disaster preparedness. Cooperation helps complement national capacities, facilitates the exchange of experiences, and promotes more coherent responses to shared challenges.

MIRPS provides a space to translate this cooperation into concrete, results-oriented action. In a regional environment characterized by growing needs and limited resources, the mechanism's added value lies in enabling States to share solutions, strengthen their national systems, and develop complementary responses to challenges that cannot be addressed solely from a national perspective.

[4] ProLAC. Monitoreo de protección. Enero-junio 2026.

In 2026, this role is particularly relevant to advancing efforts simultaneously to strengthen asylum and protection systems; assist internally displaced persons and returnees; advance the Agenda 50 by 35 through efforts to strengthen socioeconomic inclusion and durable solutions; and prepare for new drivers of displacement.

Thus, the regional context in 2026 reaffirms the importance of maintaining a regional response grounded in protection, State leadership, and cooperation among countries. Accordingly, MIRPS continues to establish itself as a results-oriented platform capable of linking national priorities with regional solutions and adapting to evolving protection needs, while mobilizing capacities and partnerships to respond to displacement in Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico, and Panama.



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MIRPS Regional Progress

Regional Action Plan

Under the leadership of the Government of El Salvador, MIRPS completed the implementation of the Regional Action Plan in 2026, achieving concrete results that consolidated cooperation among the seven Member States and strengthened national and regional capacities to provide protection and promote solutions for refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, returnees with protection needs, and stateless persons.

Implementation of the Regional Action Plan translated the priorities agreed upon by States into strengthened capacities, regional tools, technical cooperation mechanisms, and strategic partnerships. It also expanded MIRPS coordination with strategic partners and other regional processes, generating capacities and outputs that will remain available to States beyond the term of the 2026 Pro Tempore Presidency. The results achieved were concentrated in four priority areas:

1 Strengthening National Asylum and Refugee Systems

With the support of the Government of Costa Rica, as the lead country of the MIRPS Regional Technical Team on Reception, Admission and Case Processing, MIRPS advanced a cooperation agenda that strengthened States' capacities to modernize and reinforce national asylum and refugee systems through practical solutions, specialized tools, and the exchange of expertise among States.

Among the main achievements was the preparation of a mapping of differentiated procedures for asylum-seeking children and adolescents, based on information provided by MIRPS States and by Argentina and Spain as members of the MIRPS Support Platform. This document highlights the significant progress made by MIRPS countries in incorporating child and adolescent protection approaches into asylum systems, recognizing children and adolescents as rights holders who require differentiated procedures tailored to their needs and grounded in the principle of the best interests of the child. This output reflects the particular priority placed by the Government of El Salvador, as Pro Tempore Presidency, on work with displaced children and adolescents.

Following the agreements reached at the Second Regional Meeting of National Refugee Commissions/Committees (CONAREs) and their equivalent bodies in the Americas, held in 2025, MIRPS countries continued the regional technical analysis of the responsible use of artificial intelligence in these systems.

Through exchanges of experiences, common points of reference were established regarding the conditions necessary to incorporate these technologies, including human oversight, transparency, data protection, and the prevention of bias. The regional project proposal “RefugIA2” was also further consolidated as an application of artificial intelligence to facilitate the analysis of country-of-origin information, contributing to the efficiency of refugee status determination procedures.

The “Virtual Diploma Course on International Refugee Law and International Protection” was also held, with participation extended to the Quito Process, enabling more than 200 officials to strengthen their technical capacities in refugee status determination. As a result, the regional pool of specialized officials expanded, and institutional capacities were reinforced to conduct determination procedures that are more efficient, accessible, and consistent with international protection standards.

To achieve these results, MIRPS benefited from the commitment and strategic contributions of the Governments of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and Spain, whose support provided specialized knowledge and technical assistance, strengthened regional outputs, and expanded the exchange of experiences and good practices with MIRPS States.

In addition, the Third Regional Meeting of CONAREs and their equivalent bodies in the Americas was organized in coordination with the Quito Process and the Government of Colombia, a member of the MIRPS Support Platform. This forum expanded regional cooperation toward the inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in national social protection systems and established a framework for promoting shared roadmaps and strategic partnerships among States, financial institutions, and other key partners.



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2 Promotion of Durable Solutions and Socioeconomic Inclusion

The Pro Tempore Presidency consolidated socioeconomic inclusion and durable solutions as central components of the regional agenda for a sustainable response to displacement.

With the support of the Government of Mexico, as the lead country of the MIRPS Regional Technical Team on Jobs and Livelihoods, the seven MIRPS States exchanged experiences and practices concerning displaced persons' access to public employment systems, the identification of mechanisms to facilitate their labour market inclusion, and stronger coordination among the responsible institutions. As a result, practices and mechanisms with potential for adaptation and replication were identified, expanding the range of available solutions to strengthen national labour inclusion policies.

The Pro Tempore Presidency also held the Regional Event on Socioeconomic Integration, Social Cohesion and Durable Solutions to Displacement in San Salvador in August, thanks to contributions from the Governments of Portugal and the Republic of Korea through the Organization of American States (OAS). As a result of the event, 50 officials strengthened their capacities to design and implement initiatives related to socioeconomic integration, social cohesion, and durable solutions, in coordination with key stakeholders such as the private sector and civil society. The meeting reinforced institutional capacities to incorporate approaches aimed at self-reliance, economic participation, and the sustainable integration of displaced persons, complementing assistance-focused responses with medium- and long-term strategies.

3 Protection and Comprehensive Management of Disaster-Related Displacement

In response to the growing complexity of disaster-related displacement, MIRPS consolidated a line of regional cooperation aimed at strengthening institutional preparedness, prevention, and response through a protection-centred approach.

The Pro Tempore Presidency established and strengthened strategic partnerships with the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), bringing specialized knowledge and technical assistance to the MIRPS regional agenda on displacement in disaster contexts.

This work resulted in two regional products that provide States with practical tools and evidence to strengthen their response frameworks: the “Guide on Regional Guidelines for Community-Based Interventions and the Protection of MIRPS Populations of Concern in Disaster Contexts” and the “Regional Study on Community-Based Interventions and the Protection of MIRPS Populations of Concern in Contexts of Disaster-Induced Displacement”.

The Guide sets out regional guidelines to inform community-based interventions and strengthen the integration of a protection approach in disaster contexts, while the Study systematizes and analyzes existing experiences, capacities, and frameworks in MIRPS countries, creating a regional knowledge base to inform decision-making and strengthen national responses.

Through these products, MIRPS made regional reference materials available to States to strengthen institutional preparedness, guide community engagement, and promote more coordinated responses centred on the protection of populations of concern in situations of disaster-induced displacement.



4 Strengthening MIRPS and Regional Coordination

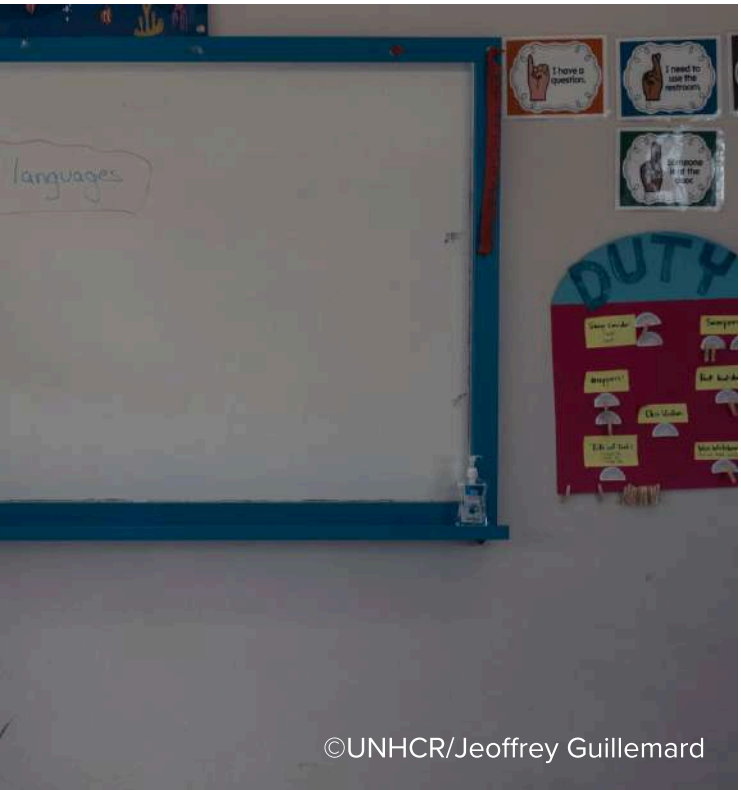
Throughout 2026, MIRPS strengthened its institutional foundations as a platform for cooperation among States, reinforced the capacities of national teams, and enhanced the strategic continuity of the mechanism.

Through the MIRPS ABC training series, 70 members of the National Technical Teams strengthened their knowledge of the mechanism's functioning, tools, and processes, contributing to greater national ownership and the sustainability of regional cooperation.

As part of MIRPS governance, and to ensure the mechanism's strategic continuity, the MIRPS Troika—comprising the Governments of El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Guatemala—held dialogue sessions aimed at establishing a medium-term vision and ensuring a coordinated transition between Pro Tempore Presidencies.

In parallel, synergies were strengthened with other regional forums, particularly the Regional Conference on Migration and the Quito Process. This coordination expanded opportunities for cooperation, facilitated knowledge exchange, and created conditions for more efficient use of the capacities and resources available in the region.

Another strategic achievement was the creation of the Academic Network on Human Mobility in the Americas, which provides a regional space to strengthen the link between research, evidence generation, and public policymaking. The initiative helps consolidate the Academia Mechanisms of MIRPS and the Quito Process into a unified knowledge base that enables States to draw on relevant evidence in addressing emerging challenges related to human mobility, protection, and displacement.



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A Results-Oriented Regional Agenda

Overall, implementation of the 2026 Regional Action Plan transformed national priorities into regional agendas, resulting in strengthened institutional capacities, new regional tools, specialized officials, expanded strategic partnerships, and mechanisms for cooperation and coordination among States. The results achieved reflect the added value of MIRPS as a mechanism that facilitates the exchange of solutions, reduces duplication of efforts, and generates regional public goods that remain available to its Member States. In this way, the mechanism strengthened a regional response grounded in cooperation among States and focused on concrete results for protection and solutions.

The Pro Tempore Presidency of El Salvador thus concluded the implementation of its 2026 agenda, leaving in place institutional capacities, regional tools, and strengthened partnerships that ensure continuity in MIRPS efforts concerning national protection systems, durable solutions, disaster-related displacement, and regional cooperation. These results provide a concrete foundation for subsequent Pro Tempore Presidencies to continue, deepen, and scale up the efforts undertaken in 2026.



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Strategic Positioning of the MIRPS within the OAS

During 2026, the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) continued to consolidate its positioning and influence within the hemispheric agenda of the Organization of American States (OAS), expanding its participation in spaces for political dialogue, regional cooperation, and capacity building. Under the Pro Tempore Presidency of El Salvador and with the support of the OAS-UNHCR Technical Secretariat, the mechanism promoted greater alignment of its priorities with regional discussions on international protection, human mobility, and solutions, contributing to the exchange of experiences and the generation of synergies with other processes and actors in the hemisphere.

In February, the Committee for Judicial and Political Affairs (CAJP) of the OAS Permanent Council received the 2025 MIRPS Annual Report during the session dedicated to the protection of asylum seekers and refugees in the Americas. The meeting featured statements from Costa Rica, in its capacity as the 2025 MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency, and El Salvador, as the 2026 Pro Tempore Presidency, as well as contributions from Member States that highlighted the mechanism's results, identified areas of cooperation, and maintained follow-up on regional commitments. The OAS Department of Access to Rights and UNHCR, acting as the joint Technical Secretariat of the mechanism, provided insights on the value of the political and technical coordination of the MIRPS, the progress achieved by its member countries, and the challenges requiring a coordinated regional response. Their interventions underscored, within their respective areas of competence, the importance of linking national efforts with hemispheric spaces for dialogue and cooperation, as well as promoting partnerships that contribute to the sustainability of protection and solutions responses.

The participation of the MIRPS in OAS bodies also fostered greater coordination with other regional cooperation mechanisms. On April 28, the Committee on Migration Issues (CAM) held the thematic session “Strengthening shared but differentiated responsibility in regional cooperation to improve migration governance and international protection in the Americas.” The session stemmed from the recognition that the coexistence of various regional mechanisms offers opportunities to generate synergies but also requires adequate coordination to avoid duplication and make more efficient use of existing capacities and available resources toward more coherent and effective responses.

In this context, the MIRPS participated in the dialogue alongside other regional mechanisms and processes, including the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), the South American Conference on Migration (SACM), the Quito Process, and the Chile Action Plan within the framework of the Cartagena+40 process. This exchange fostered a joint reflection aimed at strengthening coordination regarding migration and international protection. The CAM session provided a meeting ground for different regional initiatives, allowing for the identification of points of convergence, complementarities, and opportunities for greater coordination in addressing challenges that, by their transnational nature, require coordinated responses.

This dialogue gave continuity to the efforts driven by the OAS to bring together regional agendas on human mobility and protection, promote synergies, and enhance coherence among their respective priorities.

Capacity building and knowledge generation remained another key dimension of the MIRPS positioning within the OAS. On September 23–24, the OAS Department of Access to Rights hosted the seventh edition of the Inter-American Course on Migration and Protection, held under the Memorandum of Understanding between the OAS and the Keough School of Global Affairs at the University of Notre Dame, and in collaboration with the Kellogg Institute for International Studies and the Klau Institute for Civil and Human Rights.



Ambassador Wendy Acevedo, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the OAS, representing the MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency, during the opening ceremony of the VII Inter-American Course on Migration and Protection.



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This edition also received support from the Governments of Korea and Portugal, whose contributions complemented the resources allocated for its realization. Under the theme “Human Mobility, Democratic Governance, and Social Cohesion: Strengthening Regional Responses for the Americas,” this edition promoted a multidimensional perspective on contemporary challenges in human mobility, linking migration, displacement, and integration with democratic governance, social cohesion, and institutional strengthening.

The Course brought together government representatives, international organizations, academia, and other strategic actors such as the private sector to exchange knowledge, experiences, and good practices. The MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency, held by El Salvador, participated in the opening of the event, while discussions addressed, among other topics, regional mobility and protection trends, return, integration, the contributions of migrants to host societies, and responses from local governments.

Furthermore, a new step in cooperation and coordination between the MIRPS and the Quito Process was taken in this space through the launch of the Academic Network on Human Mobility of the Americas, established through the convergence of the MIRPS Academic Dialogue Mechanism and the Academic Network of the Quito Process. This initiative seeks to consolidate a permanent mechanism for technical and academic cooperation to strengthen applied knowledge generation, support evidence-based public policy formulation, and provide technical accompaniment to the regional priorities championed by both mechanisms.

The Network deepens a process initiated in 2025, when both academic spaces held their first regional meeting and laid the groundwork for a joint cooperation agenda. Its consolidation expands the possibilities for conducting applied and comparative research, strengthening institutional capacities, formulating technical recommendations, and exchanging publications, data, and good practices—contributing to narrowing the gaps between evidence generation, regional commitments, and their implementation at the national level.

Taken together, these spaces reflect the political and technical support provided to the MIRPS by the OAS General Secretariat through the Department of Access to Rights. Its work facilitated the link between this mechanism and the political bodies of the Organization, fostered new opportunities for cooperation with other regional processes, academia, and strategic actors, and brought the priorities defined within this framework closer to hemispheric dialogues on the subject. These efforts contribute to positioning the MIRPS as part of a more articulated regional architecture, based on complementary capacities and convergent actions to address protection challenges and solutions to displacement in Central America and Mexico.

MIRPS Fund in Action

Throughout 2026, the MIRPS Fund continued to consolidate its role as a key instrument for translating regional priorities and commitments into concrete action at the national level, strengthening institutional capacities and supporting responses in the areas of protection, integration, and durable solutions. The Fund, administered by the Department of Access to Rights of the OAS Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy, supports initiatives defined and led by the MIRPS States themselves, in line with their national priorities.

With the support of the Government of Spain, the funding partner for the first portfolio, particular emphasis was placed in 2026 on disseminating the results achieved by projects implemented in MIRPS countries. In particular, special sessions were held to present the results of projects completed in 2025 in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama, which collectively reached more than 33,000 people affected by displacement and other human mobility dynamics and generated concrete progress in institutional strengthening, protection, integration, and durable solutions.



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 Modernization of Costa Rica's Refugee Unit Platform, as part of the project funded by the MIRPS Fund, thanks to the contribution of the Government of Spain.

In addition to showcasing the results achieved, these spaces fostered knowledge exchange and the identification of good practices that can inform future interventions in the region. They also highlighted the strategic contribution of the MIRPS Fund to strengthening national responses and consolidating sustainable solutions.

At the same time, initiatives in Guatemala and Belize continued to advance in their implementation, with actions aimed at strengthening institutional capacities and improving protection and integration conditions for displaced populations and host communities.

In **Costa Rica**, the modernization of the platform of the Refugee Unit of the General Directorate of Migration and Immigration strengthened institutional capacity to provide more timely, clear, and accessible services. During its first year of operation, the tool facilitated services for more than 32,000 asylum seekers, streamlining procedures and optimizing case-management workflows, while contributing to the timely identification of individuals with specific protection needs.

In **El Salvador**, the Fund supported the sustainable reintegration of 70 families of returned children and adolescents through a comprehensive response combining humanitarian assistance, technical training, seed capital, and educational support. The intervention made it possible to address immediate needs while strengthening family capacities, helping to reduce risk factors and create more favorable conditions for school retention, socioeconomic inclusion, and the development of sustainable family livelihood initiatives.

In **Honduras**, the Fund contributed to strengthening the State response to internal displacement. More than 100 internally displaced persons received direct assistance and livelihood support, helping to address immediate needs and promote their recovery and socioeconomic inclusion. At the same time, the capacities of local governments to implement national legislation were strengthened, contributing to the institutionalization of sustainable and replicable responses at the local level.

In **Panama**, particularly in Darién Province, the project implemented by the Ministry of Government strengthened assistance, integration, and protection for 800 refugees, asylum seekers, and members of host communities. With a particular focus on women, children, and adolescents, the intervention helped expand access to livelihoods and consolidate a more inclusive and sustainable territorial response.

In **Guatemala**, the Fund continued to promote the labor market inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers by strengthening digital tools and employment intermediation mechanisms. In particular, progress was made in updating the Work Permit Platform for Foreign Nationals (PEX), modernizing and simplifying procedures to expedite permit processing and facilitate access to formal employment. These actions helped reduce barriers to labor market integration and create more favorable conditions for self-reliance and sustainable integration.

In **Belize**, the Border Presence Project continued to strengthen the institutional response for the protection of displaced persons in border areas. Activities included the development of tools and mechanisms to improve access to information and guidance, as well as capacity-building activities for frontline public officials and other key stakeholders. These advances helped facilitate access to the refugee status determination procedure and lay the groundwork for sustainable integration.

With contributions from the Governments of Korea and Portugal to the MIRPS Fund, the actions undertaken under the first portfolio financed by Spain were expanded and complemented, particularly in the areas of socioeconomic integration, employment, livelihoods, and engagement with the private sector. In Guatemala, these resources supported the dissemination of the recently modernized PEX Platform, with the aim of promoting its use and facilitating access to formal employment.

This complementarity of resources also extended to the regional level. In support of the Work Plan of El Salvador's Pro Tempore Presidency, the Regional Event on Socioeconomic Integration, Social Cohesion, and Durable Solutions to Displacement was held on August 26 and 27. This regional forum brought together the MIRPS Regional Technical Teams and strategic stakeholders, including the private sector, to strengthen the exchange of experiences, good practices, and technical tools related to socioeconomic integration, social cohesion, employment and livelihoods, local governance, and durable solutions. At the same time, the event strengthened technical capacities and regional and interinstitutional coordination around these shared priorities.

The exchanges and lessons promoted during the regional event continued through the seventh edition of the Inter-American Course on Migration and Protection, an initiative developed by the OAS Department of Access to Rights within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between the OAS General Secretariat and the University of Notre Dame's Keough School of Global Affairs. Held at OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C., on September 23 and 24, 2026, and aligned with the discussions on the regional agenda, the course provided a dedicated space to broaden regional exchange, share experiences and good practices, and strengthen the capacities of government officials and strategic stakeholders to address contemporary challenges related to human mobility, protection, and integration.

In this way, both initiatives contributed in a complementary manner to a regional strategy that combined technical exchange, training, and knowledge generation to strengthen the institutional capacities of MIRPS governmental and strategic stakeholders and enhance regional cooperation.

The progress achieved during 2026 reflects a new stage in the consolidation of the MIRPS Fund. In addition to supporting the implementation of the first portfolio financed by Spain, the Fund strengthened its capacity to mobilize and coordinate contributions from different partners, creating complementarities between national investments and regional initiatives.

This approach has expanded the scope of interventions in the areas of protection, socioeconomic integration, capacity building, and durable solutions.

The OAS General Secretariat, through the Department of Access to Rights, continued to oversee the financial, operational, and programmatic management of the MIRPS Fund, facilitating the coordination necessary to align available resources with the priorities defined by the MIRPS States and to ensure coherence across the different lines of intervention.

In this way, the MIRPS Fund continues to evolve not only as a financing mechanism, but also as a strategic platform for coordinating cooperation in a manner that maximizes the value of each contribution, promotes complementarity and synergies among partners, and connects national priorities with regional responses. Building on this foundation, the Fund will continue to expand partnerships and mobilize resources around shared priorities in order to sustain the results achieved and deepen the regional impact in the areas of protection, inclusion, and durable solutions.




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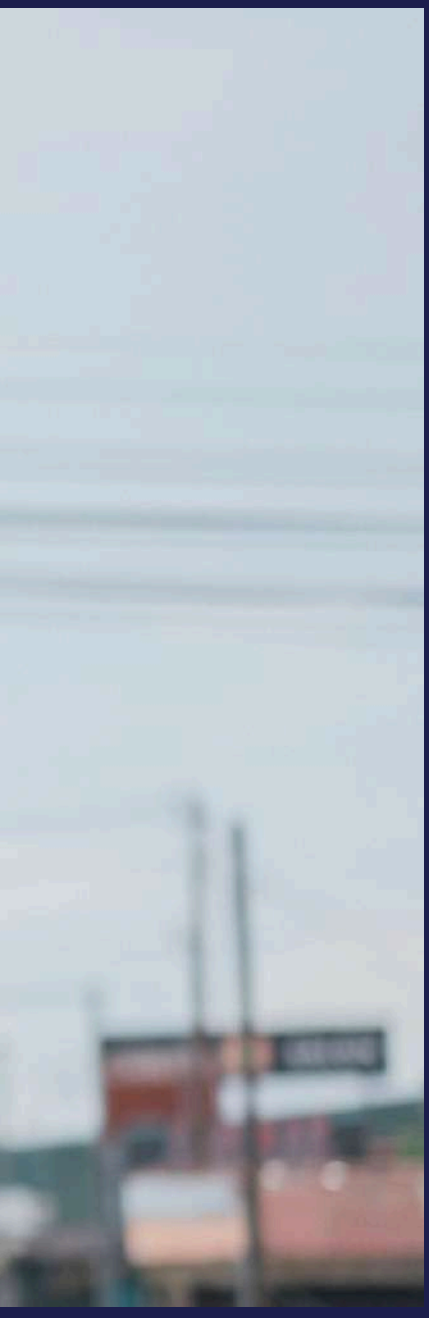

Partnerships with Strategic Partners

MIRPS Civil Society and Refugee-Led Organizations Dialogue Mechanism

In 2026, the MIRPS Civil Society and Refugee-Led Organizations Dialogue Mechanism continued to advance a regional agenda under the leadership of “Apoyo a Migrantes Venezolanos”, which served as Regional Coordinator.

Throughout the year, the Mechanism operated in a context of reduced funding for the humanitarian sector, affecting both staffing levels and the implementation of operational programmes across various organizations. In response, strategic, sustainable and results-oriented actions were prioritized to maximize the impact of available resources and strengthen coordination and the complementarity of efforts.

Participatory development of a strategic agenda. Through a participatory process involving the Mechanism’s member organizations, priorities, capacities and opportunities for capacity development were identified. Contributions were compiled and subsequently validated by the membership, resulting in a shared agenda structured around three lines of action: collaborative technical work, regional coordination and continuous training.

Restructuring of the working model. As a result of this process and in response to the regional context, work under the Protection and Solutions pillars was temporarily restructured. A roadmap was established to update membership, define leadership roles, specify deliverables and strengthen follow-up mechanisms, with the aim of improving internal coordination and consolidating results-oriented management.

Dialogue and proposals for collaboration with the MIRPS. During the year, a dialogue was held with the MIRPS Technical Secretariat and Pro Tempore Presidency to present proposals for collaboration and explore opportunities for synergy. The exchange helped identify areas for regional coordination, capacity-building and technical participation that will serve as a basis for developing a joint work plan with the incoming Pro Tempore Presidency.

Engagement with formal intergovernmental dialogue processes. The Mechanism strengthened its links with civil society participation spaces within the Quito Process, the Cartagena+40 Support Platform and the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), through the Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migration (RROCM).

In this context, the Vulnerability Detection Tool at Borders was jointly presented at the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) as part of the commitment put forward by the RCM under the Pro Tempore Presidency of the Government of Guatemala. This experience highlighted the potential of protection initiatives led by civil society and refugee-led organizations to contribute, in a coordinated manner, to the implementation of both the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees.

Expanded geographic representation. Two organizations from El Salvador and one refugee-led organization from Panama joined the Mechanism, broadening its geographic representation and enriching the diversity of experiences, perspectives and capacities available for regional work.

Consolidation of institutional memory. A commemorative publication marking the Mechanism's fifth anniversary was prepared and published, documenting its history, main milestones and lessons learned. This publication helped strengthen knowledge management, preserve institutional memory and highlight the contributions made by member organizations over the past five years.

Contribution to the global protection and solutions agenda. The MIRPS Regional Dialogue was organized as part of the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Its main contributions were incorporated into the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection and Solutions. The Mechanism also participated in a dialogue with regional mechanisms and the Articulating Group of Organizations Led by Refugees and Displaced Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean (GARLOS), expanding the participation and contributions of civil society and refugee-led organizations in regional and global discussions on protection and solutions.



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Overall Assessment

Over the course of the year, the Mechanism made progress in consolidating its role as a regional forum for collective action, coordination and technical exchange, strengthening both its internal capacities and its engagement with the main regional processes on protection and solutions. The participatory development of a strategic agenda and the reorganization of its working model helped establish shared priorities, clarify responsibilities and direct efforts towards concrete results.

Furthermore, the expansion of geographic representation, the development of knowledge-management products and stronger ties with the MIRPS, the Quito Process, the RCM and other regional forums helped bring the experiences and proposals of civil society and refugee-led organizations into decision-making processes and regional and global agendas.



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MIRPS Dialogue Mechanism with Academia

In 2026, under the leadership of El Salvador as the MIRPS Pro Tempore Presidency, engagement with academia continued to be strengthened as a strategic partner in knowledge generation, the exchange of experiences, and capacity development to help improve States' responses to displacement-related challenges in the region. These efforts sought to foster closer links between academic research and MIRPS priorities on protection and solutions, recognizing the value of evidence and specialized knowledge in supporting the formulation and implementation of public policies.

One of the main achievements of the year was the establishment of the Academic Network for Regional Mechanisms on Migration and Protection in the Americas, an initiative that promotes coordination between the MIRPS Academic Dialogue Mechanism and the Quito Process Academic Network (RAP), as part of efforts to strengthen complementarity and cooperation between the two regional mechanisms. This initiative reflects the recognition that challenges related to human mobility, international protection, and integration require coordinated approaches that draw on existing technical and academic capacities across the region.

Coordination between the two networks aims to consolidate a space for academic cooperation that facilitates applied research, comparative analysis of national experiences, the systematization of good practices, and the development of technical recommendations that contribute to the priorities of the participating countries. It also envisages opportunities for collaboration in specialized training, institutional capacity-building, and technical assistance, with a view to ensuring that knowledge generated by academia can contribute more directly to decision-making processes and the implementation of regional commitments.

The Joint Academic Network was presented during the seventh edition of the Inter-American Course on Migration and Protection, held on September 23 and 24, 2026, at the headquarters of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington, D.C. Organized by the OAS Department of Access to Rights in collaboration with the University of Notre Dame, the Course brought together government representatives, international organizations, academia, and other strategic stakeholders to exchange knowledge and experiences on human mobility governance, integration, social cohesion, and durable solutions. The event provided an appropriate setting to introduce the academic coordination initiative and highlight opportunities for cooperation between the two mechanisms.

To sustain this coordination, the initiative envisages the establishment of coordination mechanisms between the two academic networks to define shared work priorities aligned with the agendas of both regional mechanisms. It also seeks to draw on MIRPS and Quito Process knowledge platforms and repositories to facilitate the dissemination of research, studies, and technical tools, promoting their use by government institutions and other stakeholders involved in the formulation and implementation of public policies.

This development marks an important step toward strengthening the whole-of-society approach promoted by MIRPS, by expanding opportunities for collaboration with academic institutions and research centers and fostering greater complementarity among regional efforts. The Academic Network for Regional Mechanisms on Migration and Protection in the Americas thus lays the foundation for more structured and sustained cooperation, linking evidence generation, capacity-building, and knowledge exchange with national and regional priorities regarding protection, integration, and solutions for displaced persons and others with protection needs.



Ambassador María Fernanda Cortizo, Alternate Representative of Panama to the OAS, representing the Pro Tempore Presidency of the Quito Process, and Ambassador Mayra Valle, Alternate Representative of El Salvador to the OAS, representing the Pro Tempore Presidency of MIRPS, participated in the launch of the Academic Network for Regional Mechanisms on Migration and Protection in the Americas.

MIRPS Dialogue Mechanism with the Private Sector

Throughout 2026, MIRPS continued to strengthen engagement with the private sector as a strategic stakeholder in promoting socioeconomic integration, expanding employment and livelihood opportunities, and contributing to sustainable solutions for displaced persons and others with protection needs. Building on the progress achieved in 2025, regional efforts focused on sustaining spaces for dialogue and cooperation with business stakeholders.

Within this framework, efforts were undertaken to strengthen coordination among government institutions, private sector representatives, and other strategic partners, with a view to aligning the experience and capacities of the business sector with the priorities of MIRPS countries. These efforts helped sustain dialogue on the challenges and opportunities related to access to formal employment, workforce skills development, and the economic inclusion of displaced persons in labor markets.



Regional Event on Socioeconomic Integration, Social Cohesion, and Durable Solutions to Displacement, held in San Salvador, El Salvador, under the framework of the Pro Tempore Presidency.

As part of these efforts, and thanks to contributions from the Republic of Korea and Portugal, the Regional Event on Socioeconomic Integration, Social Cohesion and Durable Solutions to Displacement was held on August 26 and 27, 2026. The exchanges held during the event facilitated the participation of private sector representatives alongside the MIRPS Regional Technical Teams on Employment and Livelihoods and Local Governance, as well as other strategic stakeholders. Discussions provided an opportunity to share experiences and practical approaches concerning labor market inclusion, capacity-building, livelihoods, and opportunities for public-private collaboration.

In this way, the progress made in 2026 sustained efforts to strengthen the MIRPS Private Sector Dialogue Mechanism, reaffirming the importance of fostering partnerships among governments, businesses, and other strategic stakeholders. These efforts provide a foundation for future collaboration on socioeconomic integration, self-reliance, and the well-being of displaced persons and host communities.



Visit to CUBO Santa Lucía as part of the Regional Event on Socioeconomic Integration, Social Cohesion, and Durable Solutions to Displacement, held in San Salvador, El Salvador, under the framework of the Pro Tempore Presidency.



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MIRPS in Action

National Progress



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Belize

National Context

Indicators



177
Registered asylum-seekers.



68
Newly recognized refugees.



104
Refugee status determination (RSD) interviews conducted.



487
Total recognized refugees.

Belize remained a key destination for persons seeking international protection, marked by a notable rise in asylum applications. The Refugees Department registered 177 new asylum-seekers, a clear increase from 129 registrations recorded in 2025, placing greater demand on the national system. While Honduran nationals remained the largest demographic, the overall rise was heavily driven by a nearly ninefold surge in applications from Nicaraguan nationals.

77 persons received refugee cards, bringing the total recognized refugee population to 487. Throughout the year, the Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC) maintained a consistent operational schedule, pairing adjudication with continuous professional development, including specialized sessions on national trends and country-of-origin information.

Against this evolving landscape, Belize advanced efforts to reinforce its legal and institutional frameworks. The review of the Refugees Act (2020) aims to ensure proposed amendments address current protection priorities while remaining aligned with broader national legislation. In partnership with UNHCR, the Department led stakeholder consultations with over 60 representatives across government institutions, civil society organizations, and international partners. These sessions generated technical recommendations designed to modernize the national framework and harmonize domestic legislation with international refugee law and regional commitments.

Concurrently, the national asylum system underwent operational enhancements, including progress toward a digital case management system, expanded border-level access, and updated procedural guidelines. Together, these initiatives seek to boost efficiency, fairness, and overall decision-making quality amidst rising caseloads.

Progress



Protection

STRENGTHENING RSD PROCEDURES AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

The Refugees Department maintained its focus on raising RSD quality and consistency by updating its core operational guidelines. Over the reporting period, the REC held seven sessions and evaluated 70 cases, maintaining the momentum of the national adjudication mechanism. The Committee also hosted its 4th annual workshop to review regional and local asylum trends, credibility assessment standards, and legal frameworks governing safe third country arrangements. This workshop further supported institutional capacity through team-building exercises and a long-overdue revision of the Committee's Terms of Reference, which had not been updated since 2017.

For the first time, the REC established formal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and highlighted additional amendments for the Refugees Act based on their emerging operational realities. In parallel, the Department updated its own RSD SOPs and revised the RSD application form through a collaborative process with RSD staff. To better protect vulnerable populations, a dedicated application form is also being designed for unaccompanied and separated children to assist the Senior Social Worker's targeted protection interventions.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO ASYLUM

The Border Presence Project (BPP) funded by the Government of Spain, through the MIRPS Fund established by the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States and executed by the Refugees Department, has allowed the strengthening of access to asylum by strengthening the capacity of front-line public officers and other stakeholders through workshops held countrywide.

The BPP has as its objectives to sensitize stakeholders on the work carried out by the Refugees Department and to provide asylum seekers with clear and accessible guidance on the asylum application process, their rights, and the opportunities available to them in Belize. As of September 15, 2026, 949 officers from law enforcement agencies and social service institutions throughout Belize have received training on the national asylum system and refugee protection principles.

MODERNIZING THE ASYLUM SYSTEM

Significant headway was made toward digitalizing refugee case management under the Support to Strengthening the Asylum system and Protection for Refugees in Belize project, funded by the Government of Japan and implemented alongside UNHCR. During this cycle, the Department drafted foundational SOPs, finalized technical requirements and Terms of Reference for the digital platform, conducted hardware/software assessments, and procured key equipment.

Human resource capacity was also expanded, with the hiring of Digitization and Data Management Clerks. Additionally, software developers conducted their initial in-country consultations to tailor the system to Belize's specific operational needs. These milestones establish the technical and procedural groundwork to transition from paper-based records toward an integrated digital platform, ultimately improving data accuracy, case tracking, and processing times.

Health

The nationwide expansion of Belize's National Health Insurance (NHI) programme significantly improved healthcare access for over 400 refugees. Under the NHI network, refugees can access 32 primary care facilities, 8 pharmacies, 4 diagnostic laboratories, 4 imaging centers, and 5 ophthalmology providers across the country. The program offers doctor consultations at a standard US$1 co-payment, with other covered services subject to a 10% co-payment (waived for children under five, pregnant women, and adults aged 60 and above). By providing affordable access to diagnostics, consultations, and essential medicines through established public channels, the NHI expansion marks a major milestone toward integrating refugees into national systems and securing long-term health outcome sustainability.



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Education

Belize strengthened the inclusiveness of its national education system through the launch of the Belize Education Plan (BESPlan) 2026-2030, which establishes equity and inclusion as core guiding principles to ensure learners facing systemic barriers receive targeted, differentiated support. BESPlan provides a renewed framework for expanding equitable access, enhancing student welfare, and improving learning outcomes nationwide. Critically, for displaced and migrant populations, the Ministry of Education expanded the Belize Education Management Information System (BEMIS) to record migrant status alongside attendance, special education needs, and other key student-level indicators. This enhanced analytical capacity establishes a vital foundation for identifying and tracking the participation of vulnerable learners, including children from refugee and asylum-seeking families.



Complementing these national policy efforts, 42 refugee and asylum-seeking students at the primary and secondary levels received targeted educational assistance through UNHCR during the reporting period. Together, these legal, data-driven, and direct assistance measures advance a more supportive and protective learning environment that enables displaced children to thrive alongside their local peers.

In Belize, Henrry found a place where he belongs.

Now, he helps others find theirs.

By Anwar Wade



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Arriving in 2017 at age 16, having fled violence with no passport and no knowledge of English, Henrry faced an entirely new environment.

“In times of worry, you don’t think about your passport,” Henrry says. “You just go.”

Despite initial documentation hurdles, within days, he and his family registered through Belize’s Refugees Department. Receiving their official asylum-seeker permits brought a profound transformation. “It gave us an immense sense of relief and security,” Henrry recalls, “granting us protection against deportation, freedom of movement across the country, and access to social services.”

Backed by this legal foundation, UNHCR advocacy, and his mother’s determination, he enrolled in high school. Though his first year felt isolating due to a language barrier, Henrry persevered, ranking among the school’s top five students. “Education helped me feel like I belonged here,” he says. “The structures put in place by the government helped me prepare to integrate”.

He later advanced from asylum seeker status to permanent residency, and earned a scholarship for an Environmental Science degree at Galen University. Today, as a caseworker with Humana People to People Belize, a UNHCR partner organization, Henrry supports others navigating those same systems.

Working closely within these structures, Henrry has witnessed Belize’s national framework evolve. “The system has improved significantly,” he notes. “Asylum seekers no longer wait indefinitely for their RSD, and you can see that the Refugees Department is always identifying gaps in their systems and taking measures to address them.”

“I come from that situation, and now I get to help those people. That is the proudest thing I have done,” Henrry says. His journey, supported by Belize’s proper documentation processes, inclusive education, and durable legal solutions, proves how national commitment helps refugees rebuild their lives.



I come from that situation, and now I get to help those people. That is the proudest thing I have done.



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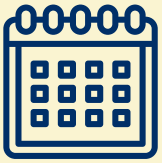
Costa Rica

National Context

Indicators



4 years

Average processing time from the formal submission of an asylum application to a first-instance decision.



17,200

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



3.6%

Proportion of asylum-seekers in the national population.



17,409

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



1,499

Number of asylum-seekers or refugees under the age of 18 living in poverty or extreme poverty who received an education subsidy.



16,978

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

In 2026, with the incoming Fernández Delgado administration (2026–2030), Costa Rica continued to make progress in implementing its national commitments to the protection, assistance, and inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers, reaffirming the country's response to this population as a matter of State policy.

Costa Rica remains one of the leading host countries for people experiencing displacement in the Americas. With a population of 5.3 million, the country hosts 191,059 asylum-seekers (equivalent to 3.6% of the national population) and 26,725 recognized refugees, primarily from Nicaragua. This context continues to pose significant challenges for institutional capacities, particularly in the areas of protection, documentation, integration, and access to rights.

In response to these needs, the country continued to make progress in implementing the National Comprehensive Framework for Refugee Assistance and Response (MINARE), strengthening both access to asylum procedures and opportunities for integration and regularization.

Within this framework, the Directorate General of Migration and Foreigners (DGME) approved Resolution No. DG-0064-05-2026, establishing the Special Temporary Complementary Category for nationals of Nicaragua, Venezuela, Cuba, and Colombia whose asylum applications are pending or have been denied. This measure seeks to provide greater legal certainty through access to official documentation and authorization to engage in paid employment.

Costa Rica also strengthened its approach to socioeconomic integration by opening an Employment Unit within the DGME's Refugee Unit. Developed jointly by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the DGME, UNHCR, and civil society organizations, this initiative facilitates early connections between refugees and asylum-seekers and public employment services, promoting their economic inclusion and access to employment opportunities in line with the objectives of the National Employability and Human Talent Strategy, known as BRETE.

These advances reflect Costa Rica's sustained commitment to international protection and the pursuit of durable solutions. By strengthening interinstitutional coordination, expanding regularization opportunities, and promoting socioeconomic integration, the country continues to consolidate a comprehensive response that fosters the inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers while strengthening social cohesion and development in host communities.

Progress

Protection

MODERNIZATION OF COSTA RICA'S ASYLUM SYSTEM

With technical support from UNHCR, the Government of Costa Rica continued to advance the implementation of its national strategy to strengthen and modernize the asylum system, with the aim of improving the efficiency and responsiveness of refugee status determination procedures. Within this framework, the technical capacities of eligibility bodies were strengthened through specialized training, and simplified and accelerated procedures were promoted to help reduce the accumulated backlog and expedite case decisions. Progress was also made in developing and implementing the Special Temporary Complementary Category (CETC) for asylum-seekers from Nicaragua, Venezuela, Cuba, and Colombia who meet the established criteria.

This initiative offers an alternative pathway to regularize migration status for individuals whose asylum applications are pending or have been denied, while contributing to efforts to alleviate pressure on the asylum system. In parallel, the digitization of historical records continued, with 158,284 physical case files scanned. Together, these actions strengthen institutional coordination, improve case management, and help consolidate a more agile, transparent, and protection-centered asylum system, in line with international standards.



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Jobs and Livelihoods

LINKING REFUGEES, ASYLUM-SEEKERS, AND MIGRANTS TO PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SYSTEMS

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MTSS), in coordination with the National Employment Agency (ANE), Costa Rica strengthened access to public employment services for refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants in 2026, promoting their socioeconomic integration and autonomy. During the year, 1,608 foreign nationals registered on the ANE platform, gaining access to employment guidance, skills training, technical training, and job placement services, which facilitated their entry into the formal labor market. A BRETE Job Fair was also held, bringing together public institutions and private companies to provide access to job opportunities and support services.

The event served approximately 5,000 people, of whom an estimated 1,000 were foreign nationals, including refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants. These actions helped expand access to employment opportunities and strengthen the economic inclusion of people experiencing displacement, promoting self-reliance, income generation, and more effective integration into host communities.


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Education and technical training

SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN COSTA RICA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM AND VOCATIONAL OR TECHNICAL TRAINING SERVICES.

In 2026, Costa Rica strengthened institutional capacities to promote the educational and socioeconomic inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers. The Ministry of Public Education (MEP) enhanced the capacities of 68 staff members, including regional supervisors and school principals, to improve support for refugee students and students at risk of statelessness, while also updating technical tools to facilitate effective access to education. For its part, the National Learning Institute (INA) served 196 refugees, who registered for 366 courses across various forms of vocational and technical training.



Of these enrollments, 328 were successfully completed, and 192 diplomas and certificates were awarded, strengthening technical skills and employability opportunities. Through coordination with specialized organizations serving populations in vulnerable situations, the INA also facilitated referrals of refugees to training, certification, and employment guidance services. These actions helped expand access to training opportunities, promote economic autonomy, and strengthen the sustainable integration of people experiencing displacement in Costa Rica.

Eliana: Building a business that transforms lives

By Melissa Williams



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Eliana proudly shows us her thriving business. The ground floor of her home in a suburb of San José has been transformed into a small factory where products are prepared and packaged in bags. Training certificates and newspaper clippings on the walls tell the story of her success, including a feature in Costa Rica's highest-circulation newspaper.

Her story began when she and her partner fled Colombia after receiving threats from guerrilla groups. “We had to leave that same day; we had no time to prepare anything. We went to Panama, but they found us there very quickly too,” she recalls. “Eventually, we arrived in Costa Rica. We didn't know anyone, and finding work was incredibly difficult.”

For years, they struggled to make ends meet. Then a neighbor gave Eliana a gift that would change her life: several large bunches of plantains. Together with a friend, she began preparing and selling patacones outside a public hospital. The snacks sold out almost immediately.

Realizing that the idea had potential, Eliana sought support from UNHCR and received entrepreneurship training and assistance from Costa Rica's National Learning Institute (INA).

“That opened new doors for me,” she says. “I found people who believed in my project and in me. Through my experience of displacement, I learned that even the smallest opportunities can become something big if you are willing to work for them.”

Today, Maueli products are sold throughout Costa Rica's Greater Metropolitan Area. The company currently employs seven women and three men, expanding opportunities for others and extending the benefits to families in her new community.

Looking back, Eliana reflects on how displacement transformed her life. “Despite all the difficulties,” she says, “it was here, in Costa Rica, that I discovered who I really am. I like this version of Eliana much more.”



Through my experience of displacement, I learned that even the smallest opportunities can become something big if you are willing to work for them.



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El Salvador

National Context

Indicators



10 Number of refugees who obtained Salvadoran citizenship through naturalization or nationalization.



22
Number of asylum-seekers recognized as refugees.



100%
Of all people who sought international protection in El Salvador, 100% accessed the asylum procedure.

El Salvador, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, remains committed to the protection of refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons, returnees with protection needs, and stateless persons. In this context, the country continues to strengthen its asylum system through measures aimed at ensuring effective access to asylum procedures, addressing existing backlogs, and implementing substantive improvements to facilitate access to documentation, among other measures.

This commitment has taken shape, among other measures, through a comprehensive review of the MIRPS National Action Plan, a process through which the institutions comprising the National Technical Team have updated and redefined their actions in response to changing dynamics in the national context. This process recognizes, among other factors, the increase in the number of people seeking international protection in El Salvador, in a context marked by the security measures implemented in the country. The National Technical Team has also expanded its institutional participation, in line with the comprehensive approach adopted by the Government of El Salvador in its response.

Similarly, the country is developing responses aimed at the reintegration of returnees, whose numbers have increased, including people with protection needs who require support for their socioeconomic reintegration and the restoration of their livelihoods.

In terms of solutions, strategies are being promoted to foster integration, generate opportunities, and rebuild the social fabric for people affected by displacement in the past as a result of historical violence, with a view to helping them overcome conditions of vulnerability.

As Pro Tempore Presidency of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS) in 2026, El Salvador has contributed to advancing the regional protection and solutions agenda, promoting government priorities, including the protection of children and adolescents with international protection needs; the digitization and modernization of asylum systems; and strengthening protection for people displaced as a result of disasters.

Progress



Protection

STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL ASYLUM SYSTEM AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE MECHANISMS.

Under the leadership of the Commission for the Determination of Refugee Status (CODER), attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, El Salvador continued consolidating its efforts in international protection and assistance to people with specific protection needs by strengthening its national asylum system and institutional response mechanisms. During 2026, with support from Canada, the relevant institutions enhanced the technical capacities of their personnel at headquarters and in local offices, including border posts, and developed specialized tools to support refugee status determination processes, including eligibility interview guides, checklists, and guidance materials for asylum-seekers. Training sessions were held for personnel of the General Directorate of Migration and Immigration (DGME) and the National Civil Police (PNC) stationed at border points, equipping them with information tools and practical knowledge to provide timely assistance to, and identify, asylum-seekers upon arrival.

The State also promoted the production of informational materials and strengthened the identification and referral of people with international protection needs. As part of efforts to improve the efficiency of the asylum system, follow-up and case-update measures were implemented for pending cases.

As a notable achievement in optimizing the asylum system, CODER developed a simplified decision template that expedites response times and streamlines case processing. In addition, thanks to the extraordinary efforts and coordinated work of the Commission's technical team, the backlog accumulated over previous years in the preparation of draft decisions was eliminated. These achievements were complemented by the development and implementation of a new asylum application form, structured more comprehensively to gather key information from the first point of contact, thereby optimizing the assessment of each case.

At the same time, the State strengthened its capacity to assist returnees by training key stakeholders in international protection, displacement, child protection, and assistance to women and girls who have survived violence.


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These actions helped consolidate the assistance pathway for people in vulnerable situations within the Migrant Assistance Management Office (GAMI), strengthening institutional coordination and the comprehensive protection response.

In addition, CODER is developing the Comprehensive Assistance Protocol for Children and Adolescents in Need of International Protection, which will establish a clear framework for effective interinstitutional referrals. The document is currently undergoing consultations with the relevant institutions to ensure a coordinated response centered on the best interests of the child.

Jobs and Livelihoods

STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMIC INCLUSION OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS.
Through interinstitutional efforts, El Salvador is strengthening the economic inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers. As part of the State's commitment to the labor market inclusion of this population, the Practical Guide to Inclusive Hiring of Refugees and Asylum-Seekers in El Salvador is being developed as a reference tool on their right to access employment.

Supported by Canada, the Guide brings together information on the legislation in force for consultation by employers and the population concerned, so they can understand the documentation and requirements for hiring. In doing so, El Salvador not only strengthens labor market access for people seeking international protection in the country but also helps remove barriers arising from lack of information through the dissemination of the applicable regulatory frameworks.

The work of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare in facilitating job placement for refugees and asylum-seekers with private sector employers is also noteworthy.

El Salvador has also incorporated the National Institute for Training and Education (INCAF) into its National Technical Team to promote access to employment training for refugees and asylum-seekers. Through the development of its skills certification strategy, INCAF is also making progress in improving access to employment for this population.



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Education

ENSURING ACCESS TO SCHOOL AND CONTINUITY WITHIN THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Commission for the Determination of Refugee Status (CODER), in interinstitutional coordination with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MINEDUCYT), is making progress in implementing a referral and educational assistance pathway for asylum-seeking and refugee children and adolescents, with the aim of ensuring their access to school and continuity within the national education system, in accordance with the Crecer Juntos Law, which recognizes the right to education without allowing the absence of documents establishing parentage or identity to become a barrier to its exercise.

The Salvadoran State also recognizes the right of refugees to access university-level higher education, in accordance with the applicable legal framework and academic requirements.

In fulfillment of the commitments set forth in the National Action Plan of the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS), MINEDUCYT is reviewing institutional measures aimed at facilitating the recognition of academic degrees and professional qualifications held by asylum-seekers and refugees, with the aim of contributing to their socioeconomic integration and expanding their opportunities to access decent work.

Regarding returning students with protection needs, MINEDUCYT is implementing the Institutional Guidelines for the Enrollment of Returning and Foreign Students to ensure educational continuity for returning children and adolescents as a fundamental component of their reintegration into host communities.



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Health

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND GENERAL MEDICAL CARE PROGRAMS

Through the Ministry of Health's Office for the Prevention of Injuries from External Causes, El Salvador is updating its psychosocial care model for people affected by intentional injuries, including people on the move, refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons, and returnees with protection needs.

El Salvador is also strengthening refugees' access to the right to health through the Doctor SV platform, which enables people to receive medical care through digital channels. Doctor SV is a primary care telemedicine tool for the population, forming part of efforts to modernize and digitize public services.

To assist communities historically affected by violence and displacement, the National Council for Early Childhood, Childhood and Adolescence (CONAPINA) has strengthened psychosocial care services for children, adolescents, and their families. In 2026, 1,161 children, adolescents, and caregivers received assistance through community-based psychosocial care spaces, promoting self-care and care for their surroundings.

As part of the State's psychosocial support to these communities, the activities of the Comprehensive Emotional Intelligence Center (CIIE), under the Directorate for the Reconstruction of the Social Fabric, also stand out for promoting mental health care at the community and individual levels. In 2026, CIIE provided 1,255 instances of care to the population.

A New Home, One Goal at a Time

Through football, Julio César found a sense of belonging, solidarity, and new opportunities to rebuild his life in El Salvador.

By Juliana Paz



©UNHCR/Jacqueline Henríquez

Julio began playing football at the age of seven and dreamed of pursuing a career as an athlete. However, violence compelled him to flee his country, leaving behind his home, his team, and the life he had built. “When I left my country, I knew that wherever I went, football could open doors for me,” he recalls.

Upon arriving in El Salvador, Julio received support from El Salvador, UNHCR, and partner organizations to meet his basic needs and throughout his asylum process. Later, the Commission for the Determination of Refugee Status (CODER) recognized him as a refugee and supported him through the process of naturalization as a Salvadoran citizen.

With support from UNHCR, Julio also completed technical training and started a small automotive parts business. The income it generates enables him to contribute to the well-being of his wife and daughter as they pursue their dream of building a home of their own.

Football has helped him integrate into his new community. By joining a local team, he has formed friendships with people of different nationalities and strengthened his sense of belonging in the country he now calls home. He also spends time with children and young people in his community, sharing his experience, offering guidance, and donating sports equipment whenever he can.

Through football, Julio has found connections, stability, and a way to support others, demonstrating how sport can bring communities together and help refugees rebuild their lives with dignity.

The Government of El Salvador is working to strengthen the institutional capacities of the Commission for the Determination of Refugee Status (CODER), in line with the country’s commitments under the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS), including strengthening the asylum system and promoting community organization and the reconstruction of the social fabric through sport, art, and culture.



When I left my country, I knew that wherever I went, football could open doors for me.

Guatemala

National Context

Indicators



478

Asylum seekers.



161

Recognized refugees.



82

Asylum-seeking children and adolescents.

47

Refugee children and adolescents.



53

Work permits granted to refugees.

421

Work permits granted to asylum seekers.



1

Children and adolescents in need of international protection assisted at Casa Nuestras Raíces in Guatemala City and Quetzaltenango.

8,559

Children, adolescents, and young people at social risk assisted through the Casa Joven program.

80

Adolescents and young people trained under the 'Servicio Cívico Social' project as part of the Casa Joven Amatitlán model.



3

Training sessions for CONARE members on asylum and international protection.

8

Training sessions on asylum, international protection, and case review procedures for IGM officials.



7

MINTRAB officials nationwide trained in the use of the PEX platform.

39

Refugees and asylum-seekers trained to understand and use the PEX platform.

40

Employers trained in the use of the PEX platform.

In 2026, Guatemala continued to make progress in consolidating its national response to asylum and international protection, against a regional backdrop of persistent and constantly evolving human mobility dynamics. In this context, the Guatemalan State has focused its efforts on strengthening institutional capacities, expanding opportunities for inclusion, and comprehensively addressing the needs of persons requiring international protection.

Taken together, the progress achieved reflects a gradual shift from immediate assistance approaches toward a comprehensive response focused on protection, socioeconomic inclusion, and the identification of durable solutions, through coordination among State institutions, local stakeholders, and host communities.



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The results recorded during the year reflect a response that combines stronger international protection procedures with measures aimed at facilitating the integration of refugees and asylum-seekers. The consolidation of technical capacities, together with the development of tools to facilitate access to employment and other rights, helps create conditions conducive to greater self-reliance and the development of sustainable livelihoods.

Specialized training and the updating of knowledge on asylum, international protection, and case review are important components of efforts to strengthen existing procedures. They also enable more appropriate assistance that takes into account the diverse profiles and needs of those seeking protection in the country, including children and adolescents.

Guatemala has also promoted measures to advance the socioeconomic inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers through mechanisms that facilitate their access to the labor market and familiarize public officials and employers with these tools. Such measures help reduce barriers to formal employment, support the development of sustainable life plans, and are grounded in coordination among State institutions.

The national response has also sought to maintain differentiated assistance for children and adolescents in need of international protection by strengthening identification, assistance, and referral mechanisms. In parallel, institutional decentralization, the participation of local stakeholders, and initiatives linked to Solidarity Cities have helped extend the territorial reach of protection and integration measures, recognizing the role of host communities in building solutions.

These efforts are aligned with Guatemala's commitments under the Global Compact on Refugees and the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS), and contribute to consolidating a national response centered on protection, inclusion, and the pursuit of durable solutions. In this process, the National Technical Team (NTT), led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, plays a central role in interinstitutional coordination and in bringing together efforts to further strengthen the country's response.



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Progress

Protection

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES TO PROVIDE TIMELY, ACCESSIBLE, AND APPROPRIATE RESPONSES TO PERSONS WITH PROTECTION NEEDS

In fulfillment of its national and international commitments on international protection, Guatemala continued to strengthen its institutional capacities to provide timely, accessible, and appropriate responses to persons with protection needs. Between January and September, the National Migration Authority (AMN), with guidance from the National Commission for Refugees (CONARE), reviewed 2,603 asylum applications, reducing the administrative backlog accumulated in previous years by 85%. Of these, 161 resulted in favorable decisions, 948 were classified as abandoned, 1,285 were denied, 22 involved cessation, 134 were withdrawn, and one concerned an unforeseen case.

The Guatemalan Migration Institute (IGM) also strengthened its territorial presence through regional offices in Chiquimula, Zacapa, Izabal, and Quetzaltenango, expanding access to migration services and refugee status determination procedures. As part of comprehensive and differentiated assistance, the Department of Refugee Status Recognition (DRER) provided free mental health care and psychosocial support to 51 persons, including adults, adolescents, and children. In addition, staff training in French and Haitian Creole contributed to more inclusive and accessible assistance that respects linguistic and cultural diversity.

The technical capacities of the national asylum system were also progressively consolidated through training, analysis, and technical assistance for public officials and stakeholders involved in international protection in Guatemala. This process included the presentation of an assessment of the asylum system and training for 50 officials from the Migrant Assistance Task Force (FAG), more than 100 officials and technical personnel from the IGM and DRER, and 24 members of CONARE, as well as specialized sessions for staff from DRER, CONARE, IGM, and the National Office for the Prevention of Torture. Activities addressed international protection principles, country-of-origin information analysis, refugee status determination criteria, and application of the Cartagena Declaration, including specific contexts in Cuba and Nicaragua. Participation by 12 Guatemalan officials in the International Refugee Law course offered by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo was also promoted. These efforts contributed significantly to strengthening the application of national, regional, and international standards and to fostering better-informed, more consistent, and well-founded asylum decisions.

Jobs and Livelihoods

STRENGTHENING CONDITIONS FOR THE LABOR INCLUSION AND LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT OF REFUGEES, ASYLUM-SEEKERS, AND OTHER POPULATIONS IN SITUATIONS OF HUMAN MOBILITY.
Between January and September 15, 2026, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MINTRAB) issued 421 work permits to asylum-seekers and 53 to refugees, facilitating their access to formal employment. With support from the MIRPS/OAS Fund, the Work Permit Platform for Foreign Nationals (PEX) was strengthened through the installation of seven service kiosks, with an additional 14 planned, progressively expanding territorial coverage. In addition, 86 representatives of the business sector, refugees, and asylum-seekers participated in training workshops on the use of the platform.

The institutional response also reached returnees, many of whom have protection needs, with 19,589 persons receiving employment guidance and job placement services. Job fairs, service kiosks, and business forums were organized in various departments to promote decent work opportunities. At the local level, municipalities participating in the Solidarity Cities initiative promoted training, entrepreneurship, and employment placement activities. In particular, Guatemala City Municipality held 32 job fairs. The Employment Bus: Route of Opportunities program also provided career guidance and employment placement support to more than 11,700 persons, including refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced persons, through workshops and job fairs.



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Education

ENSURING CONTINUITY IN EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS AND DEVELOPING SKILLS FOR ENTRY INTO THE LABOR MARKET AS KEY COMPONENTS OF THE INTEGRATION OF PERSONS IN SITUATIONS OF HUMAN MOBILITY

The Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) continued implementing the Educational Integration Strategy, facilitating access to education, retention, and educational progression. In 2026, 1,755 returnees received assistance and guidance and were registered, while 18,158 telephone calls were made to 6,700 persons.

As part of these efforts, mechanisms for recognizing prior learning and ensuring educational continuity were strengthened through the Recognition, Validation, and Accreditation (RVA) Assessment.



During the reporting period, 881 Guatemalan and foreign nationals over the age of 15 registered, of whom 282 obtained a lower secondary education diploma (tercero básico).

At the territorial level, the Departmental Directorate of Education of Chiquimula, in coordination with governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders, promoted vocational training in barbering and baking for young people, including those in contexts of human mobility. These initiatives strengthen employability skills and complement measures to promote social inclusion and create development opportunities for persons in contexts of human mobility.

Health

ORGANIZATION OF COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE DAYS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

As part of the Solidarity Cities initiative, the Municipality of Esquipulas strengthened activities in April to promote protection, inclusion, and access to services for refugees, asylum-seekers, returnees, and host communities. In keeping with this commitment, comprehensive service days were held in the community of Atulapa, in coordination with public institutions, humanitarian organizations, and the Health Center, enabling more than 90 persons to access assistance and guidance services.

The Municipality also organized a medical outreach event in coordination with the Guatemalan Red Cross, Chiquimula Delegation, CONAMIGUA, UNHCR, and other stakeholders, facilitating access to health services for community members and persons in situations of human mobility. During this activity, more than 67 refugees and asylum-seekers received medical care, and information was provided on available protection services.

These initiatives reflect the role of Esquipulas as a Solidarity City and its commitment to strengthening coordinated, accessible local responses that promote the protection and inclusion of persons in situations of human mobility and the communities that receive them.



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Social Protection

SAFE SPACES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

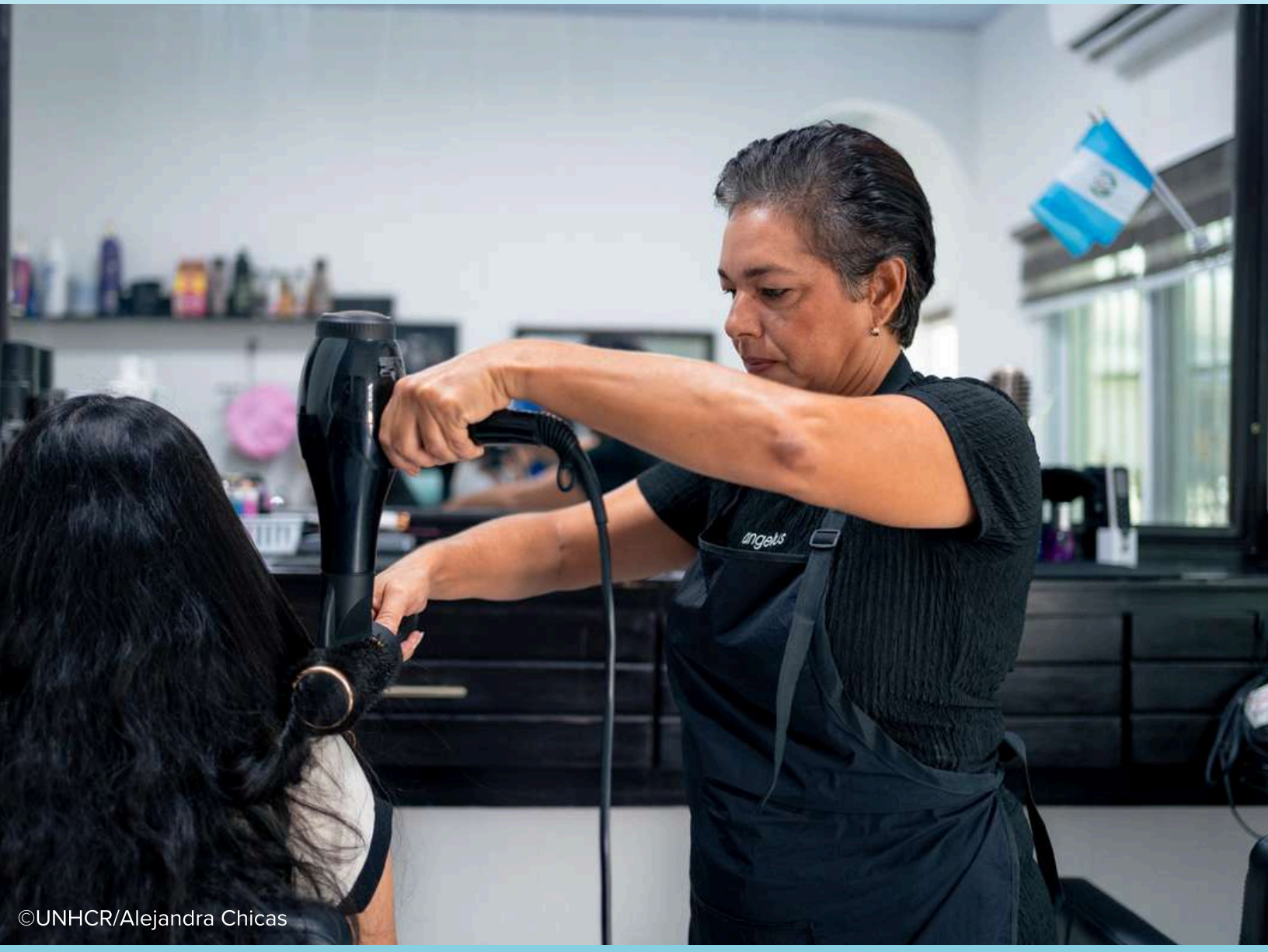
In 2026, the Secretariat of Social Welfare of the Presidency (SBS) continued implementing the MIRPS Good Practices Project, establishing safe spaces at Casa Joven Amatitlán and Villa Nueva where children and adolescents can participate in violence-free environments and workshops focused on preventing migration and violence. Thanks to contributions from the MIRPS Support Platform, prevention, assistance, and support activities were strengthened for 8,550 children, adolescents, and young people, who, together with their families, accessed comprehensive protection services and mechanisms.

The provision of furniture and equipment helped consolidate dignified and suitable environments, promoting the well-being and inclusion of those served. Considered one of the SBS's most comprehensive programs, Casa Joven stands out for its close coordination with local authorities and community stakeholders, its promotion of an atmosphere of acceptance and integration between participants and their communities, the establishment of multidisciplinary support teams, and the coordination of referral mechanisms to public services to ensure timely and coordinated responses.

The program has become a key component of social policy, serving not only Guatemalan nationals but also refugees, returnees, and internally displaced persons. Its activities help prevent violence and irregular migration, while supporting participants as they develop their life plans through educational assistance, training, and tools that facilitate entry into the labor market. In this way, Casa Joven not only addresses immediate protection needs but also strengthens community resilience and the social integration of populations in vulnerable situations. More than 340 children, adolescents, and young people have received support to resume their studies through the CEEX program (primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary education), accredited by the Ministry of Education. These efforts make it possible to access services with dignity and hope.

From Refugee to Entrepreneur: Laymi Rebuilds Her Life in Guatemala

By Jennifer Hamm



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When Laymi Rodríguez Álvarez, a 52-year-old Cuban refugee, arrived in Guatemala with her daughter, she left behind a life marked by limited opportunities and various challenges that had prevented her from pursuing her professional aspirations. A hairstylist since the age of 19, she had to leave her country in search of safety, stability, and a better future for her family.

A few days after arriving in Puerto Barrios, she came into contact with UNHCR and began the asylum application process. From that point onward, she received support to access international protection and integrate into the country with her daughter. With entrepreneurship assistance, she was able to open a small beauty salon, obtaining the basic equipment she needed to return to the profession she had practiced throughout her life.

Through the joint efforts of the Ministry of Education, via the Directorate-General for Extracurricular Education, and the Municipality of Puerto Barrios, via the Municipal Training and Education Center, Laymi was also able to have her professional qualification as a hairstylist validated in Guatemala, strengthening her business and expanding her economic opportunities. At the same time, her daughter received guidance and support to continue her studies and prepare to enter the labor market.

After more than two years of perseverance and support from DRER, Laymi obtained a decision recognizing her refugee status and was granted temporary residency.

This enabled her to apply for her Personal Identification Document (DPI) through the National Registry of Persons (RENAP), a key step toward accessing formal employment, services, and full integration into Guatemalan society.

Today, in addition to running her business, she actively participates in the first Refugee Association of Izabal (ASOREFI), an association of refugees that provides information and guidance to those arriving in the country in search of protection.

“It hasn't been easy, but thanks to the support I've received from Guatemalan institutions and UNHCR, they have made things a little easier and safer for me. You can't give up; you have to get up every day with the desire to grow, to flourish in another country. It is possible, step by step, every day, without losing patience.”

You can't give up; you have to get up every day with the desire to grow, to flourish in another country. It is possible, step by step, every day, without losing patience.

Honduras

National Context

Indicators

413
People in need of international protection identified, assisted, and referred in border/transit areas.

9
Properties identified as presumably abandoned through community-based assessments.[5]

557
Displaced persons or people at risk of displacement assisted through State protection mechanisms.[6]

=

191
Cases assisted.

Breakdown by Profile

96
Girls (under 18).

126
Boys (under 18).

168
Women aged 18 and over.

159
Men aged 18 and over.

8
LGBTIQ+ persons aged 18 and over.

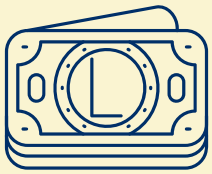
[5] Note: The Directorate for the Protection of Persons Internally Displaced by Violence (DIPPDIV) had 70 abandoned properties registered through 2024.

[6] Between 2018 and August 2026, the Directorate for the Protection of Persons Internally Displaced by Violence (DIPPDIV) provided protection and assistance to 2,161 people internally displaced by violence, of whom 498 correspond to 2026, through case identification, needs assessments, guidance, referrals to specialized services, emergency assistance, cash assistance, and the activation of protection measures.



35,750

Honduran returnees registered between January 1 and September 10, 2026.



L27,000,000

Approximate allocation for the operation of the CAMR in San Pedro Sula, Omoa, and Belén in 2026.

Throughout 2026, Honduras sustained interinstitutional efforts to address internal displacement due to violence, international protection, and the needs of Honduran returnees requiring protection, with an emphasis on effective access to rights. The Ministry of Human Rights (SEDH), through the Directorate for the Protection of Persons Internally Displaced by Violence (DIPPDIV), made substantial progress in implementing the Law on the Prevention, Assistance and Protection of Persons Internally Displaced by Violence, strengthening the regulatory framework, institutional capacities, and prevention, protection and response mechanisms.

Between July and September, the technical review of the draft regulations was completed with assistance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the file was submitted to the Secretariat of the Presidency. In parallel, progress was made on the National Policy for the Prevention of Internal Displacement due to Violence, and the subcommittees of the Interinstitutional Commission for the Prevention and Protection of Displaced Persons (CIPPDEF) were reactivated.

Evidence generation was also strengthened. In April 2026, the National Statistics Institute (INE), in coordination with SEDH and UNHCR, presented the findings of the 2024 Permanent Multipurpose Household Survey (EPHPM), estimating that 423,845 people, equivalent to 4.5% of the population, had experienced internal displacement due to violence. The 2026 Eighteenth Population Census and Seventh Housing Census incorporated variables related to internal mobility, violence, crop losses, and natural disasters.

Regarding protection for returnees, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (SRECI), through the General Directorate for the Protection of Honduran Migrants (DGPHM) and the Office for Assistance to Returning Migrants (OFAMIR), maintained the operation of the Returning Migrant Assistance Centers (CAMR) and coordination efforts for reception, protection, and reintegration. Consolidated final statistics recorded 35,750 Honduran returnees between January 1 and September 10, 2026. In the area of asylum, the National Migration Institute (INM) registered 202 asylum applications involving 413 applicants between October 2025 and September 2026.



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Progress



Protection

RESPONSE TO INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

The Ministry of Human Rights (SEDH) strengthened governance of the response to internal displacement through the Interinstitutional Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence (CIPPDEF) and the National Response System for Internal Displacement (SINARDEFI). Between July and September, the technical review was completed with support from UNHCR, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), following eight technical meetings and validation sessions. The three standing subcommittees were reactivated, and an Ad Hoc Case Management Subcommittee was established.

With technical assistance from UNHCR, SEDH also strengthened its institutional response capacity by developing the first Procedures Manual for Internal Displacement Case Management and 22 technical and legal instruments for case identification, analysis, admission, protection, and follow-up, contributing to more standardized and effective assistance processes for internally displaced persons.

Throughout 2026, the Directorate for the Protection of Persons Internally Displaced by Violence (DIPPDIV) maintained humanitarian assistance and protection measures for 498 people, including temporary accommodation, food, hygiene kits, rental and transportation support, cash transfers, psychosocial assistance, legal support, and referrals.

The Property Institute (IP) also made progress on the Registry of Abandoned Properties (RBA), updated its module in the Unified Registry System (SURE), and strengthened coordination with SEDH.



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INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

In the area of international protection, INM registered 202 asylum applications involving 413 applicants and trained 292 public officials and 125 law enforcement personnel.

CAPACITY-BUILDING

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (SRECI), together with the Ministry of Human Rights (SEDH), with support from UNHCR and the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO Honduras), conducted the "Diploma Program in International Cooperation, Protection and Solutions for Persons Experiencing Displacement," with the participation of 33 officials from 20 institutions. The training program combined theory and practice on protection and durable solutions, incorporating elements of coordination and project development to link national policies and programs with cooperation opportunities.



Education

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

The education response was strengthened through coordination among DIPPDIV, the Ministry of Education (SEDUC), and its departmental structures. Expedited channels were maintained to facilitate enrollment and re-enrollment of displaced children, adolescents, and young people at any time of year and across different educational levels and modalities. With support from civil society organizations, access to books, learning booklets, and technological devices was facilitated for children in pre-primary and primary education.

Regarding the protection of education personnel, progress was made in response mechanisms for teachers at risk of displacement, and two job transfers were arranged for teachers displaced by violence. INM also continued participating in interinstitutional working groups to promote access for refugees and asylum-seekers to essential services, including education, in accordance with the principles of non-discrimination and recognition of their rights.



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Health

FACILITATING ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

SEDH and the institutions comprising SINARDEFI strengthened referrals of displaced persons to public health services, including emergency medical and psychological care, consultations, laboratory services, medicines, and surgical procedures, with priority given to people with specific needs. In San Pedro Sula, municipal general and specialized medical services, dentistry, pediatrics, gynecology, laboratory services, pharmacies, and surgery were coordinated as part of pilot initiatives to expand local access.

INM also maintained interinstitutional coordination to facilitate access by refugees and asylum-seekers to health services and other essential rights. The response was complemented by referral and case-support mechanisms aimed at reducing barriers to access and ensuring continuity of care when needs exceed immediate response capacity.



Social Protection

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Social protection was strengthened through direct assistance, family reunification, and the continued operation of reception services. DIPPDIV coordinated with the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and Families (SENAF) on preventing family separation, locating and reuniting family members, protecting unaccompanied children and adolescents, and establishing differentiated referral pathways guided by the best interests of the child.

ACCESS TO THE SOLIDARITY FUND

Through DGPHM and OFAMIR, SRECI maintained public reception and assistance capacity at the CAMR in La Lima, Omoa, and Belén using resources from the Solidarity Fund for Honduran Migrants (FOSMIH). The response includes registration, guidance, identification of vulnerabilities, referrals to specialized services, food, hygiene, temporary accommodation, and support for transportation or family reunification. SRECI also strengthened coordination through the National Council for the Protection of Honduran Migrants (CONAPROHM), reactivated the “ALHO VOZ” Call Center, and consolidated the Consular and Migration Observatory.

Jobs and Livelihoods

STRENGTHENING SOCIOECONOMIC INCLUSION

Throughout 2026, coordination efforts were strengthened to advance durable solutions and greater socioeconomic inclusion for displaced persons, refugees, and returnees with protection needs. DIPPDIV coordinated with social development, vocational training, and employment institutions, the private sector, and international organizations to identify opportunities for employment, underemployment, training, and entrepreneurship. The Ministry of Labor and Social Security (STSS) provided guidance on labor rights and institutional referral pathways, while training, job placement, and inclusive hiring mechanisms were explored.

Through SRECI/OFAMIR, reception at the CAMR is linked to needs identification and referrals to stakeholders responsible for reintegration, training, and livelihoods. Agreements promoted through CONAPROHM prioritized interinstitutional coordination, information systems, and reintegration processes for returnees.



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Statistical Inclusion

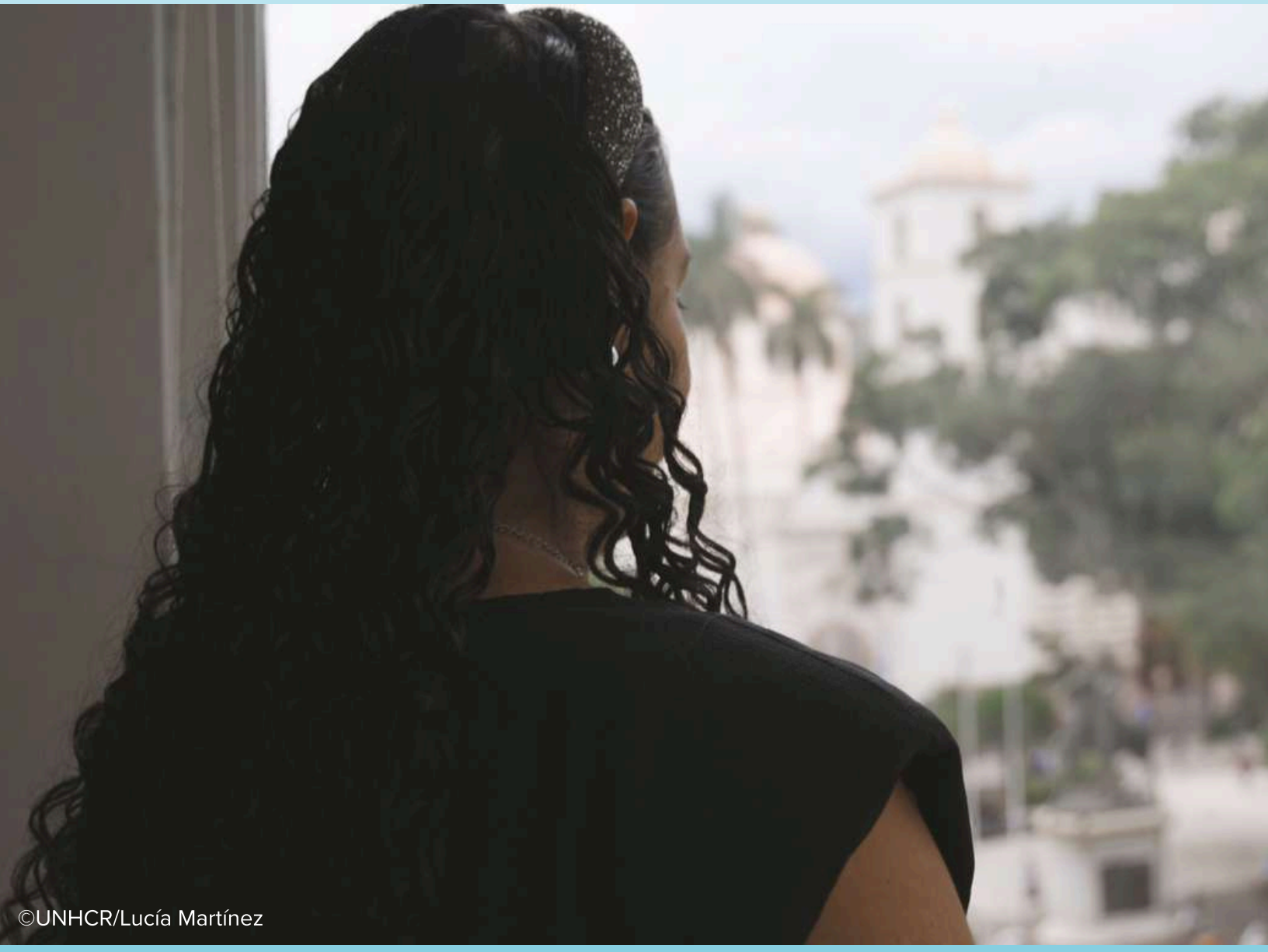
In April 2026, INE, in coordination with SEDH and UNHCR, presented the study “Internally Displaced Population in Honduras: Findings of the 2024 Permanent Multipurpose Household Survey (EPHPM),” estimating that 423,845 people, equivalent to 4.5% of the population, had experienced internal displacement due to violence. DIPPDIV updated forms, databases, and tools for interviews and case follow-up, and consolidated information for the 2018–2026 period.

The 2026 Eighteenth Population Census and Seventh Housing Census incorporated variables on reasons for movement between municipalities, including public insecurity and violence, crop losses, and natural disasters. By October 2026, INE had participated, alongside UNHCR, the Central American Integration System (SICA), the Central American Statistical Commission (CENTROESTAD), and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in a regional webinar on harmonized displacement and migration statistics. Regarding returnees, information from SIAMIR and the Social Development Observatory is used to strengthen monitoring of returnee flows and profiles and to guide responses at CAMR facilities.



It Is Never Too Late to Start

By Gabriela Villeda



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From an early age, Patricia* dreamed of becoming an electrician. She had always been interested in understanding how wires, connections, and electrical devices worked. However, she was unable to complete her studies. Over the years, she became a mother and opened a small grocery store in Tegucigalpa to support her family.

Shortly after opening the business, she began receiving threats and extortion messages. “They demanded money I did not have. My business barely earned enough to support us. I was afraid; I could not even sleep,” she recalls.

To protect her children, Patricia made the difficult decision to relocate to another part of the city. She left behind her home, her business, and the surroundings in which she had built her life. “It was a very difficult process. Even though I was still in my own country, I felt alone and unable to trust anyone,” she says.

In her new community, Patricia received support through community structures supported by UNHCR, which facilitate the identification and referral of displaced persons so they can access protection, services, and opportunities.

Through these structures, she joined an educational program developed jointly by the INTUR Institute and UNHCR, a strategic partnership offering training opportunities to people who were unable to continue their studies. Patricia received a scholarship, as well as transportation and food assistance, enabling her to resume a goal she had put on hold for years.

*Pseudonym used to protect her identity.

In May 2026, her efforts yielded a result beyond her own expectations: Patricia graduated at the top of her class. Returning to her studies not only allowed her to complete a chapter she had left unfinished, but also helped her regain the confidence to set new goals.

She now wants to continue her education and dreams of studying foreign languages at university. “Going back to school gave me something just as valuable: the chance to start again,” she says. After having to leave behind her home and livelihood, Patricia is once again looking to the future with new plans for herself and her family.



Going back to school gave me something just as valuable: the chance to start again.

Mexico

National Context

Indicators [7]



2,000 Asylum-seeking children and adolescents referred by COMAR to child protection authorities.



23,237 Asylum seekers issued a temporary Unique Population Registry Code (CURP).



1,285 Refugees and beneficiaries of complementary protection supported through relocation under the Local Integration Program.



17,800 Interviews conducted to identify specific needs of asylum seekers.

[7] Refugee Information System (SIRE) and COMAR databases. Preliminary data.

Mexico occupies a strategic position within the regional international protection system, as it is simultaneously a country of origin, transit, destination, and return amid increasingly diverse mixed movements. Trends in asylum applications reflect a structural shift: the number of applicants rose from 29,822 in 2018 to a record high of 141,806 in 2023, before declining to 80,833 in 2024 and 70,636 in 2025. Between January and September 2026, the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) assisted 32,807 asylum-seekers, most of whom came from the Caribbean, Central America, and South America; 42% were women and 15% were children and adolescents.

The decline in new applications from the 2023 peak has not been accompanied by a proportional reduction in the need for assistance. The asylum system continues to manage a substantial caseload and numerous procedural actions, while facing more complex protection profiles and a changing geography of asylum. Tapachula remains the principal land-based entry point to the asylum system, while Mexico City has gained importance as a place where people apply for asylum and remain during the process.

This situation calls for maintaining an accessible and reliable procedure, with individualized, well-founded decisions, the capacity to identify specific needs, and differentiated responses, particularly for children and adolescents, women, and others facing heightened vulnerability. In 2026, institutional modernization also progressed through digital management and case-tracking tools and the administrative streamlining of procedures before COMAR.

The challenge, however, extends beyond refugee status determination. Implementing the MIRPS National Action Plan requires translating legal protection into effective access to identity, documentation, health care, education, employment, financial inclusion, housing, and welcoming host communities from the early stages of the procedure, while safeguarding the independence of the asylum process. In a regional context marked by changing mobility patterns and pressures on protection systems, Mexico faces the challenge of consolidating sustainable government capacities and interinstitutional and territorial coordination that links protection with integration and durable solutions.

Progress

Protection

STRENGTHENING THE ASYLUM SYSTEM AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Mexico strengthened the capacity of its national asylum system by combining the assessment of international protection needs with an increasingly comprehensive and differentiated response. Between January and September 2026, COMAR issued 13,372 substantive decisions, achieving a protection rate of over 79% through recognition of refugee status and the granting of complementary protection. At the same time, eligibility assessments became more specialized and differentiated approaches were expanded, leading to the recognition of 343 people on gender-related grounds.

Strengthening the procedure was accompanied by further progress in the digital transformation of application management and institutional assistance. With technical support from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and SOFIS Solutions, work advanced in 2026 on the development of COMAR Digital 2.0 and its integration with the Refugee Information System (SIRE).



Through technical consultations with substantive departments, the functionalities of the new mobile tool and complementary adjustments to SIRE were analyzed and validated, with the aim of making application management and processing faster, more secure, and more efficient, strengthening information traceability, and improving institutional responsiveness. During the same period, COMAR assisted 75,800 asylum-seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of complementary protection through more than 96,000 interventions aimed at identifying needs and barriers at an early stage, facilitating access to the relevant public institutions, and linking protection, identity, health, education, and integration services.

In 2026, progress was also made toward institutionalizing the Assistance and Integration Model (MAI) as a framework for organizing this response: multidimensional identification of needs, capacities, and barriers; activation of differentiated pathways; coordination with the relevant authorities; and the gradual development of follow-up mechanisms so that institutional intervention does not end with a referral but leads toward effective access to rights. The model incorporates intersectional criteria to identify heightened vulnerability associated with age, gender, disability, language, nationality, ethnic background, and socioeconomic status, among other factors.

As part of the Mexican State's commitment to safeguarding the right to family unity, ensuring comprehensive protection for children and adolescents, and upholding the effective enjoyment of family life for recognized refugees and their relatives, COMAR received 525 family reunification applications between January and September 2026, of which 155 were approved during that period.



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Health, education and, social protection

MEXICO MADE PROGRESS IN ESTABLISHING MECHANISMS THAT CONNECT INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION WITH PUBLIC SYSTEMS FOR RIGHTS AND SERVICES, WHILE STRENGTHENING TERRITORIAL CAPACITIES TO RESPOND TO DIFFERENTIATED NEEDS

Between January and September 2026, 29,600 actions were carried out to facilitate access to physical and mental health services for asylum-seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of complementary protection. Interventions included guidance and referrals to medical and psychological services; disease prevention and health promotion; vaccination; sexual and reproductive health; family planning and contraception; menstrual health; pregnancy and breastfeeding care; pediatric and prenatal care; and referrals to specialized services. COMAR's work in this area focuses on reducing administrative, informational, and institutional coordination barriers by linking people with the appropriate public systems and service providers.

This work incorporated increasingly differentiated assistance. Institutional records identified, among other groups, 104 pregnant women, 65 breastfeeding women, and seven women asylum-seekers with disabilities, enabling assistance and referrals to be arranged when appropriate. In addition, 10,451 services specifically related to sexual and reproductive health and menstrual health were reported. Improvements to registration tools and the progressive incorporation of vulnerability indicators strengthened institutional capacity to identify differentiated barriers and guide responses through gender-responsive and intersectional approaches.

During its first year of operation, the Tapachula Multi-Service Center (CMS-T) became COMAR's main territorial platform for bringing together, within a single service network, the refugee status determination procedure and services related to documentation, specialized protection, health, education, social security, and integration. Its importance lies not only in concentrating services in one location, but also in reducing the fragmentation of responses and building a shared institutional framework while each institution retains its respective responsibilities. The Center can serve up to 3,000 people per day and works with at least 20 partner institutions.

During its first year, the CMS-T projected more than 56,000 assistance and guidance actions, including approximately 16,800 related to physical and mental health; 14,400 Unique Population Registry Codes (CURP) issued; 15,300 needs-assessment and guidance interviews; 3,700 social assistance and specialized care actions; and 1,600 procedures involving Social Security Numbers, Federal Taxpayer Registry (RFC) registrations, and electronic signatures (e.firma). These results illustrate the shift toward a multipurpose response in which documentation enables access to other rights and health, education, protection, and integration needs can be identified and addressed within the same territorial platform.

A major qualitative achievement in 2026 was precisely the institutionalization of this coordination. Under the project Multi-Service Center for Inclusion and Development: Local Integration Component for Refugees, implemented with the participation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNHCR, and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the CMS-T Operational Roadmap and standardized operational pathways were developed to identify and refer needs related to gender-based violence, child protection, disability, health, and safety. These instruments establish shared criteria for identification, prioritization, and referral and incorporate the principles of accessibility, safety, confidentiality, consent, and person-centered care.

Information available to individuals was also improved so that they could identify health services and service points, including a territorial guide to physical and mental health services covering primary- and secondary-level facilities, psychological care, mental health and addiction services, HIV and sexually transmitted infection services, and other specialized services. Since February 2026, the Center has also hosted a Support Unit for Women Seeking Asylum, Migrating, and Returning under the Ministry of Women, providing legal and psychological assistance, complemented by menstrual health measures and the development of care and breastfeeding spaces.


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In education, coordination with federal and local authorities strengthened pathways for school enrollment and re-enrollment for children and adolescents; literacy and basic education for young people and adults; examinations and certification; validation and recognition of prior studies; and access to technical and higher education. During the first half of the year, coordination with the Ministry of Public Education and the National Institute for Adult Education was intensified, moving from individual referrals toward a pathway for educational continuity encompassing admission, re-enrollment, retention, certification, and recognition of educational trajectories.

Accordingly, the CMS-T's progress in 2026 offers a model that can be shared at the regional level, not only because of the volume of services delivered, but also because it consolidates a replicable territorial approach: public-sector leadership, multipurpose assistance, multidimensional needs assessment, differentiated pathways, interinstitutional coordination, and progressively developed mechanisms for referral, follow-up, and results measurement. Cooperation from UNHCR, UNOPS, and the strategic partners supporting the project has been essential to strengthening infrastructure, methodologies, capacities, and tools that are progressively being incorporated into the capacities of the Mexican State.

Similarly, Mexico strengthened territorial interventions aimed at ensuring that integration encompasses not only access to rights and services, but also the conditions for peaceful coexistence, inclusion, and a sense of belonging in host communities. In Tijuana, COMAR, in coordination with Proyecto Salesiano, UNHCR, authorities at all three levels of government, and civil society organizations, held eight Inclusion and Peaceful Coexistence Events. These combined cultural, artistic, and recreational activities with information about rights, services, and integration opportunities, fostering interaction among asylum-seekers, refugees, beneficiaries of complementary protection, and local residents. This strategy was complemented by the Inclusion and Non-Discrimination Events organized under the project Multi-Service Center for Inclusion and Development: Local Integration Component for Refugees, implemented by COMAR, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE), UNHCR, and UNOPS, which provides for four territorial interventions in 2026 reaching approximately 1,000 participants. Together, the initiatives strengthen a key dimension of durable solutions: reducing barriers linked to discrimination, racism, and xenophobia; bringing institutions and services closer to communities; and creating opportunities for interaction that promote intercultural coexistence and social cohesion.



Jobs and Livelihoods

ONE OF MEXICO'S MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2026 WAS THE LAUNCH OF MÉXICO INTEGRA—A NATIONAL POLICY FOR PROTECTION WITH SOLUTIONS, WHICH SEEKS TO TRANSFORM ACCUMULATED INTEGRATION CAPACITIES AND EXPERIENCE INTO A COORDINATED, MEASURABLE, AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL PUBLIC FRAMEWORK

México Integra aims to translate legal recognition of international protection into the effective enjoyment of rights, independence, and economic, social, and community integration. Under COMAR's technical coordination and with UNHCR's strategic support, the initiative seeks to connect existing capacities across federal institutions, local governments, the private sector, civil society, and international cooperation around each person's integration pathway.

The initiative's innovation lies in moving from fragmented interventions toward coordinated integration pathways that can be monitored, connecting documentation, the identification of capacities and barriers, training, employment, services, financial inclusion, and community participation from the earliest stages.

The first territorial mechanism under this initiative was the launch of the México Integra Service Events Series, designed to bring together essential documentation, education and training, social security, financial inclusion, protection, and employment opportunities within a single process, starting with an assessment of needs and interests and followed by subsequent support. The first event, held at COMAR's offices in Mexico City, assisted 85 people in need of international protection. Results included 33 services related to Social Security Numbers (NSS), 28 related to Federal Taxpayer Registry (RFC) registrations, 23 related to CURP, and nine referrals to the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA); UNHCR assisted 18 people with financial inclusion, and 12 bank-account opening procedures were completed. In addition, 11 people registered with and received guidance from INTRARE, and 21 received assistance from Programa Casa Refugiados on protection, Spanish-language learning, documentation, and education. On employment, 29 people took part in initial employer screening processes.

The series will continue in Mexico City and Tapachula, with gradual territorial expansion. Its value as a public policy instrument lies in its ability to test and refine, at the operational level, the framework that México Integra seeks to institutionalize nationwide: moving from adding services to building integration pathways, and from recording referrals to verifying integration outcomes.

The policy builds on accumulated capacities and experience. Between January and September 2026, approximately 2,880 asylum-seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of complementary protection received support through local integration processes, including 1,285 beneficiaries of the Local Integration Program (PIL). The PIL combines voluntary relocation from areas with fewer opportunities with documentation, employment, housing, education, and assistance in cities with greater integration capacities. Its experience is therefore beginning to inform the design of the new institutional pathways.

Ten years after its implementation, Mexico's joint experience with UNHCR illustrates the scale of this foundation: more than 175,000 people have received some form of integration support; approximately 120,653 received assistance in the communities where they lived, while 54,622 refugees were relocated, mainly from the south to cities in central and northern Mexico. This scale demonstrates the existence of established capacities, territorial networks, and proven methodologies. México Integra seeks to turn this accumulated experience into coordinated, measurable, and sustainable public capacity.

In this process, UNHCR is envisaged as a strategic, cross-cutting partner of the Government of Mexico, contributing technical and territorial experience, assistance methodologies, links with businesses, improvements to information and evaluation systems, capacity transfer, and partnership-building. Its role is particularly important in catalyzing cooperation and mobilizing resources around specific components of México Integra—employability, training and certification, financial inclusion, monitoring systems, territorial solutions, and the strengthening of local capacities—while preserving the Mexican State's leadership at all times.



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My Story, My Future: A New Home for Daysi

By Angélica Montes



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Filled with excitement, Daysi shows the documents that will allow her to fulfill her dream of owning a home. After years of seeing that milestone as unattainable, she is now eligible to apply for a housing loan. For Daysi, her job is more than a source of income: it gives her the independence to make her own decisions about her family and her future, a freedom she lost when she fled Honduras in 2020.

She now lives in Aguascalientes, Mexico, a city that has given her the chance to live in a safe environment and her two children opportunities for personal and professional growth. She has made many friends; the family is part of a local church, goes on outings, and makes traditional Honduran sweets in her spare time. She is proud that Emely, her younger daughter, attends secondary school and that Allan, her eldest son, is in his third year of university thanks to a scholarship arranged through UNHCR.

Daysi came to Mexico seeking protection after gangs tried to recruit her 13-year-old son to sell drugs at school. Frightened but determined to move forward, they left everything behind and arrived in southern Mexico, where they had to start over. Despite the difficulties, however, she was able to complete her family's asylum application, and they were recognized as refugees.

After enrolling in the Integration Program, she was offered the opportunity to relocate to Aguascalientes and begin a new life. ‘We felt like crying because we did not know the city and everything seemed different, but we already had our documents, and that was what gave me the greatest satisfaction: knowing that the opportunity was there for us,’ she recalls.

Aumovio is a German technology company in the automotive industry. With more than 80,000 employees across locations worldwide, it is an established brand in the global market. In Mexico, it is among the companies working with UNHCR to create formal employment opportunities for refugees and help them build more stable and independent lives.

My job gives me satisfaction; thanks to it, we have food, we rent a home, my children are studying, and what motivates me most is knowing that, because of this job, I will be able to begin the process of buying my own home

‘We needed people to work at the plant, and there were refugees in the city who needed jobs. We did not know that until UNHCR reached out to us. We started recruiting in 2023 and have not stopped; around 60 people have now participated in this process,’ says Andrea Bobadilla, Human Resources Manager at Aumovio in Aguascalientes.

Hiring refugee talent has also been a learning experience for the company. Aumovio has discovered the value these individuals bring to its teams: commitment, a sense of belonging, and retention. What began as a corporate social responsibility opportunity has become an investment that benefits both people and the business. ‘Refugees are important to companies because, in addition to bringing cultural diversity and work experience, their absenteeism is lower or even nonexistent compared with the local population, and this translates into higher productivity indicators,’ Andrea emphasizes.

‘I love what I do. I have a good relationship with my colleagues, and I enjoy their curiosity when they ask me about the Honduran expressions I use,’ Daysi shares. Her job means more than a steady salary and benefits; its impact extends to her family and the plans she hopes to fulfill in Aguascalientes.

Allan will soon complete his degree in Mechatronics Engineering. Emely attends secondary school, receives meals during the school day, has made friends, takes painting classes, and is on track to graduate with good grades this year. Daysi's job at Aumovio provides the family with access to social security and medical care, as well as a year-end bonus. What excites her most is that it has improved her chances of obtaining a housing loan. ‘My job gives me satisfaction; thanks to it, we have food, we rent a home, my children are studying, and what motivates me most is knowing that, because of this job, I will be able to begin the process of buying my own home,’ she emphasizes.

Daysi's story is part of a broader effort in Aguascalientes, where the government, businesses, civil society, academia, and UNHCR work together to promote refugee integration through formal employment. This model shows how private-sector leadership can turn job opportunities into pathways toward more stable and independent lives. For these companies, refugee talent means more committed, stable, and productive teams. Moving toward a model increasingly led by governments and the private sector is essential so that local stakeholders drive and sustain these integration opportunities in their cities.

For Daysi, this integration is reflected in decisions that once seemed out of reach: supporting her children, growing professionally, and taking the first steps toward owning a home. Step by step, she is building a life in Mexico with greater stability, independence, and opportunity—a life no longer defined by what she had to leave behind, but by everything she can now build.



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Panama

National Context

Indicators

3 months
Average processing time from the formal submission of an asylum application to a first-instance decision on the application.

3,708
Asylum-seekers holding legally recognized identity documents or credentials.

108
Refugees and admitted asylum-seekers who were granted work permits during the reporting period.

Panama is a country of transit and asylum in Central America and has become a destination for asylum-seekers due to various favorable conditions, leading to an increased flow of people seeking international protection. To date, Panama has granted refugee status to 2,733 people. The refugee population is composed primarily of Colombian, Salvadoran, Venezuelan, Nicaraguan, and Cuban nationals, among others.

During the reporting period (through September 15, 2026), 1,070 asylum applications were processed. Of these, 22 cases were admitted for processing, and 48 people were recognized as refugees, in accordance with the criteria established under national legislation and international commitments regarding international protection. In addition, 46 passports were processed for refugees who, due to their circumstances, are unable to obtain this document in their countries of origin, thereby safeguarding their right to identity and facilitating their international mobility.


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Progress



Protection

RENEWAL OF IDENTITY DOCUMENTS

This year, the process of renewing identity documents began for hundreds of recognized refugees living in hard-to-reach areas of Darién Province. Due to financial constraints, these individuals had been unable to renew their documents, many of which had expired for several years.

Through joint efforts by various government institutions, fines incurred as a result of expired documentation were waived, identity cards were renewed, and procedures were initiated to obtain permanent residency for these individuals.

To date, 101 previously expired documents have been processed, restoring access to valid documentation for those concerned and strengthening their legal security.

This year, 3,708 asylum-seeker identity cards were issued to both principal applicants and members of their family units, ensuring that asylum-seekers have valid identification documents that allow them to move freely and with peace of mind throughout the national territory.



Social Protection

PERMANENT RESIDENCY FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Steps were initiated to enable minors to obtain permanent residency at the same time as their parents, without having to wait until they reach the age of majority to access this benefit. This change would help reduce the financial burden on families by eliminating the need to pay annual renewal fees for their children's migration identity cards. It would also provide greater legal stability and facilitate their full integration into Panamanian society, ensuring that, upon completing their studies, they can enter the labor market and practice their professions or trades without facing obstacles arising from their migration status.



Jobs and Livelihoods

PROCESSING WORK PERMITS

During the reporting period, applications for 108 work permits were processed for individuals who had been granted refugee status or whose asylum applications had been admitted for processing.



Education

ACCESS TO THE BECA UNIVERSAL PROGRAM

Thanks to the renewal of identity documents for recognized refugees living in hard-to-reach areas of Darién Province, hundreds of families have regained access to important social benefits. Among these, parents are now able to cash the checks issued under the Beca Universal Program, which the Government of Panama provides to low-income students, thereby ensuring continued financial support for their children's education.

A More Certain Future: Ruth's Story

By Melissa Pinel

For 20 years, Ruth lived with one date etched in her mind: the expiration date of her refugee identity card. Renewing it each year meant leaving Vista Alegre, a remote rural Indigenous community in the Emberá Wounaan region, and traveling more than six hours to Panama City.

Ruth arrived in Panama in 2006 with her two daughters. Alongside 11 other families from the Wounaan Indigenous community, she crossed the Darién jungle to escape violence and persecution by armed groups in Colombia. In Panama, they found a place to start over without leaving behind their roots and traditions.

But the identity card remained a burden. Panamanian law allows refugees to apply for permanent residency after three years, but the distance and cost of the procedures kept it beyond her reach. And so, year after year, the same story repeated itself. When her card expired, Ruth feared that the authorities would question her documents, and even accessing medical care became difficult. One of her daughters finished secondary school ranked second on the honor roll, but without the required documents, she could not obtain a university scholarship.

This year, that changed. Thanks to a special effort by the Government through the National Office for Refugee Assistance (ONPAR), Ruth and her family obtained permanent residency. They are now among the first refugees from hard-to-reach areas of Darién to do so.

To make this possible, ONPAR coordinated the process with the National Migration Service, the Judicial Investigation Directorate, the Consulate of Colombia, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This effort built on the support these families had previously received, including from UNHCR, to advance their integration in Panama, helping overcome the distance and financial barriers that had hindered their access to permanent residency.

"I no longer worry all the time about my card expiring," Ruth says. She now dreams of obtaining Panamanian citizenship and of the educational and employment opportunities her children will be able to pursue in the country where they grew up and which they now consider home.


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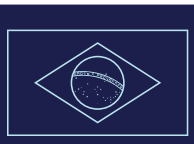
MIRPS Support Platform

In 2026, members of the MIRPS Support Platform and other partners continued to provide essential support to MIRPS States, contributing to the implementation of their national and regional commitments on protection and solutions. Through financial contributions, technical assistance, capacity-building initiatives, and knowledge exchange, Support Platform members backed efforts to strengthen protection and asylum systems, expand opportunities for inclusion, and promote durable solutions for refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, and returnees, as well as affected host communities, in line with the MIRPS 2026 Regional Action Plan led by El Salvador and the MIRPS National Action Plans.

Their engagement at the national, regional, and global levels remains essential to mobilizing resources, supporting the implementation of MIRPS commitments, and fostering more coordinated, comprehensive, and sustainable responses to displacement in the region. The examples below highlight a selection of initiatives undertaken in 2026 both through the MIRPS and bilaterally between MIRPS Support Platform members and MIRPS countries, reflecting the diversity and added value of their support.



Brazil

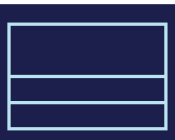
Brazil continues to participate in the MIRPS through regional exchanges of good practices on protection and solutions. Building on its experience leading the MERCOSUR Regional Training Cycle on Refugee Status Determination Procedures in 2025, Brazil's National Committee for Refugees (CONARE) contributed as a speaker to the MIRPS Virtual Diploma Course on International Refugee Law and International Protection in September 2026. Brazil shared its national technical experience in developing strategies to prevent and reduce backlogs in the processing of asylum applications, highlighting practical approaches, lessons learned, and good practices from the Brazilian context. This initiative strengthened the technical capacities of refugee status determination authorities throughout the region and promoted the exchange of experiences and good practices, contributing to stronger, more efficient, and more accessible asylum systems.



Canada

Throughout the year, Canada continued to support initiatives aimed at strengthening partnerships, fostering collaboration, and facilitating the exchange of specialized knowledge and good practices within the MIRPS and its Support Platform. Canada contributed to several technical exchanges, including by sharing experiences related to refugee status determination and the responsible use of artificial intelligence in asylum procedures.

In addition to its ongoing bilateral technical cooperation on asylum with Mexico and Costa Rica, Canada, through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), also provided financial support to UNHCR initiatives to strengthen asylum systems, expand access to protection, and promote durable solutions, underscoring its commitment to regional responsibility-sharing and capacity-building.



Colombia

In 2026, Colombia will host the Regional Meeting on Inclusion in Social Protection for Persons in Need of International Protection and the Third Technical Meeting of the National Commissions for Refugees (CONAREs) and their equivalent bodies in the Americas, to be held in Bogotá, D.C., on November 25 and 26, within the framework of the Quito Process and the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS). The meeting presents an opportunity to strengthen regional dialogue, the exchange of good practices, and cooperation among States in the Americas on international protection and durable solutions for refugees, asylum-seekers, and other persons with protection needs.

As host country, Colombia reaffirms its strong commitment to the principles of solidarity, responsibility-sharing, and international cooperation that guide regional responses to the challenges of displacement-related human mobility. The meeting also reflects Colombia's active role in promoting opportunities for regional coordination and strengthening mechanisms that help ensure protection, inclusion, and access to rights for people in need of international protection.

The meeting of CONAREs in Bogotá, D.C., will also provide a valuable opportunity to advance the identification of good practices, the strengthening of asylum systems, and the development of coordinated responses to address current and future challenges in the region more effectively, in line with the objectives of the MIRPS and the Quito Process.



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Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has committed US$60.8 million in grant resources through its Grant Facility (GRF) and has mobilized US$3 million in donor funding through 14 investment loans in five MIRPS countries: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama. These operations represent a total investment of US$788.2 million and contribute to the socioeconomic integration of migrants, returnees, and host communities.

Among the main results, in Costa Rica, a complementary temporary special category was approved under the grant project to facilitate the regularization of the migration status of certain populations. The project also strengthens the capacity of the Refugee Unit to address the backlog of applications through a specialized team that has made it possible to issue notifications in more than 26,000 cases. In Belize, the Bank is promoting a systemic approach to the socioeconomic integration of migrants through interventions in education, health, urban and rural development, water and sanitation, electrification, labor market participation, and modernization of migration processes, strengthening both access to services and State institutional capacities. In El Salvador, the IDB supports the educational and labor market integration of returnees through university scholarships, technical training, and support mechanisms to encourage students to remain in and complete their studies.

In addition, the Bank has financed 12 technical cooperation operations totaling US$3.94 million to strengthen the institutional capacities of MIRPS governments. In Mexico, it supports stronger management and analysis of information on human mobility. In El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, it has promoted the institutionalization of circular labor migration programs with Spain, benefiting more than 1,400 workers, strengthening recruitment processes, developing digital tools, and training more than 200 public officials. Likewise, in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Panama, the IDB is strengthening systems for reintegration, employment, education, and migration management, including digitalization and institutional modernization initiatives.

Additionally, the Bank is financing implementation of the regional Skills Passport initiative and preparing new measures to promote mutual recognition and portability of occupational skills. These interventions fall under the regional América en el Centro program, which promotes productivity, resilience, and social development in Central America, Panama, and the Dominican Republic, fostering the socioeconomic integration of migrants, facilitating the reintegration of returnees, and helping reduce incentives for irregular migration.

World Bank

The World Bank advanced the preparation and implementation of investments supporting refugees, displaced persons, returnees, and host communities in the MIRPS region. In Guatemala, progress was made toward approval of a grant and an airport infrastructure loan totaling US$250 million, which includes relocating the Returnee Reception Center at La Aurora International Airport to improve reception and assistance conditions for returning migrants.

In Costa Rica, the World Bank supported the Government's vision of promoting the socioeconomic integration of refugees by supporting the establishment of employment and integration services within the Refugee Unit, in partnership with productive sectors. In this context, the World Bank mobilized US$2.2 million from a regional grant provided by the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF) to leverage public-private sector collaboration and create employment opportunities for refugees in key sectors such as construction, the care economy, medical device manufacturing (MedTech), and potentially agricultural value chains such as coffee. Additionally, in Costa Rica, the Legislative Assembly approved the commencement of implementation of the US$370 million Resilient Infrastructure and Territorial Development Project, which seeks to improve infrastructure quality and strengthen the resilience of disaster-affected communities while promoting job creation for refugees and members of host communities. To this end, contractual incentive mechanisms are being designed to reward inclusive businesses, alongside robust evaluation frameworks.

For its part, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) is developing partnerships with universities, technical and vocational training centers, and private sector companies to promote education programs, scholarships, and training for refugees and host communities in strategic sectors in the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica, in line with its partnership with the World Bank to promote more and better jobs in MIRPS countries.


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Technical Cooperation within the Framework of the Regional Technical Teams (RTTs)

The participation of MIRPS Support Platform members in the Regional Technical Team (RTT) on Reception, Admission and Case Processing, led by the Government of Costa Rica, is a concrete example of the added value generated by exchanges of experiences and good practices between MIRPS States and Support Platform members.

In this context, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay actively contributed to strengthening regional capacities by participating as speakers in the Virtual Diploma Course on International Refugee Law and International Protection, held between September and October. Canada also participated in the regional virtual exchange exploring the use of artificial intelligence in refugee status determination procedures. During this exchange, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada shared Canadian experiences and lessons learned that are relevant to the region.

The Governments of Argentina and Spain also contributed to the Regional Mapping of Refugee Status Determination Procedures for Children and Adolescents, an important technical product developed by the RTT during the year. The technical exchanges on strengthening asylum capacities undertaken in 2026 will culminate in the Regional Meeting on Inclusion in Social Protection for Persons in Need of International Protection and the Third Technical Meeting of the National Commissions for Refugees (CONAREs) and their equivalent bodies in the Americas, to be hosted by the Government of Colombia.



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MIRPS

Annual Report

Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework

MIRPS 2026