

Ocotepeque

Ocotepeque, on the western edge of Honduras, is a **critical border point** for refugees and migrants in mixed movements, including people in need of international protection. UNHCR conducts border monitoring and provides protection services in key communities along the border.

Due to the unprecedented numbers of people in mixed movements there is an increased need for **basic services** for people in mixed movements. Needs include protection information, WASH, health, food and shelter services. Hondurans who have been forcibly displaced also have unmet basic needs.

The situation at the western border is likely to evolve with continued regional migration shifts. UNHCR will continue to maintain an active field presence and **coordination leadership** to support people in mixed movements, addressing both immediate needs and longer-term protection challenges.

Women and children in transit through Honduras find basic healthcare and other protection services provided by national institutions supported by UNHCR.

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Context

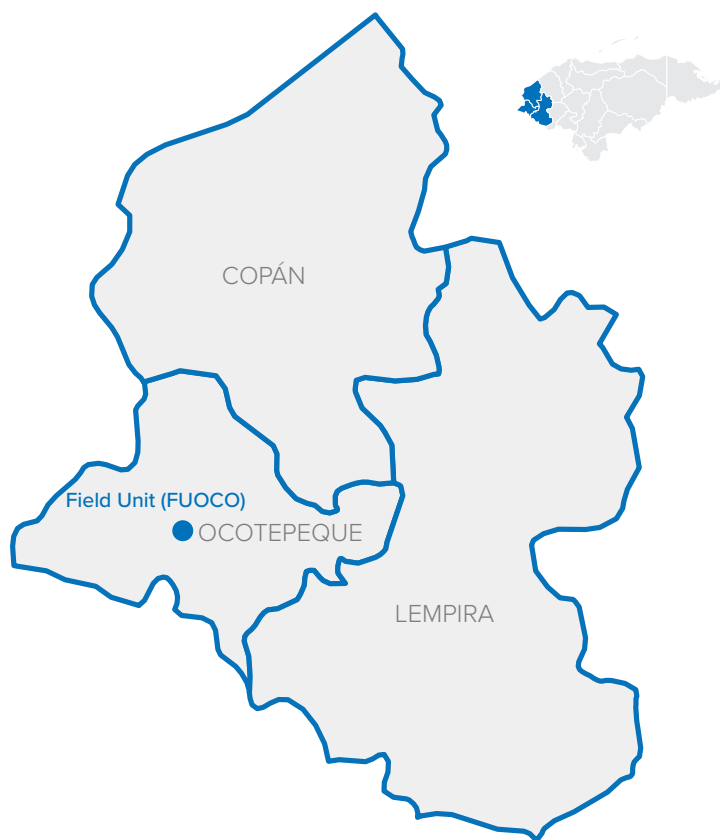
UNHCR's Field Unit in Ocotepeque covers **three departments** that border El Salvador and Guatemala: Copán, Lempira, and Ocotepeque. According to UNHCR's monitoring, an average of 15,000 people in mixed movements leave weekly through regular and irregular border points, such as Agua Caliente and El Florido. Some of these individuals are choosing to seek **international protection in Honduras** rather than continue to the north. To achieve this goal, UNHCR supports the relevant authorities to facilitate access to international protection for those in need. Additionally, these departments also receive forcibly displaced people who are escaping violent situations in other parts of the country.

UNHCR Presence

Staff:
3 National Staff
2 International Staff

Presence:
13 Communities supported
5 Border points monitored

Partners:
8 Partners





Access to information is key to prevent people from falling into scams and other risks. UNHCR, together with its partners, offers information services at strategic border points.

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Working with Partners

UNHCR works with the **Hermanas Scalabrinianas**, **Médecins du Monde (MDM)**, the **Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)**, the **Secretariat of Childhood, Adolescence and Family (SENAF)**, the **National Commission for Human Rights (CONADEH)**, the **National Institute for Migration (INM)**, the **Secretariat for Human Rights (SEDH)**, and **World Vision**.

UNHCR and ADRA co-lead the Western Border Local Team, a coordination group of the protection cluster in Honduras that

addresses the needs of people in mixed movements and provide humanitarian assistance to those in need.

UNHCR also supports the municipalities of Ocotepeque, Santa Fe, Sinuapa, and La Labor in strengthening the response for the host community and people in mixed movements in those areas.

Main Activities

Protection

UNHCR continuously monitors the flows of people in mixed movements passing through border points such as Agua Caliente, El Florido, and El Paraíso, Copán to identify individuals in need of protection and provide crucial information and advice on international protection. Efforts are focused on strengthening state services related to international protection, displacement prevention, and gender-based violence through training for local authorities. UNHCR also provides information services to mitigate protection risks for people in mixed movements at

cross-border points from the country, including through a Mobile Information Service jointly operated with World Vision in Machuca, Agua Caliente. Additionally, UNHCR supports the Secretariat of Childhood, Adolescence and Family (SENAF) to provide protection services for unaccompanied children and victims of human rights violations.

Health and Legal Protection

UNHCR, in partnership with Doctors of the World, provides case management services for survivors of gender-based violence in the entire Department of Ocotepeque, ensuring

health services, psychosocial support, referral to complementary services, and follow-up until case closure to ensure the rights of the survivors.

Shelter and NFIs

UNHCR supports the operation of the Migrant House in Ocotepeque and enhances the technical capacities of staff from Migrant Houses in Ocotepeque and El Paraíso, Copán, to identify individuals in need of international protection. Ocotepeque's Migrant House supports an average of 50 people per week, providing essential shelter services. UNHCR distributes hygiene items to Honduran returnees and people in mixed movements at border points such as Agua Caliente and El Florido, to help vulnerable populations meet their basic needs. Some of those assisted at these border points are in need of international protection. In these cases, UNHCR identifies them for accompaniment to receive the necessary services.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

UNHCR implements a community-based protection strategy to disseminate knowledge on prevention and mitigation of

digital risks for adolescents and women's networks exposed to gender-based violence and trafficking risks. The project includes initiatives such as the "Mobile Library", engaging children from schools in border communities to promote digital literacy and positive communication. Moreover, UNHCR continues supporting the Youth Network of the Ocotepeque and Copán department in western Honduras to prevent internal displacement and gender-based violence among youth in the region. UNHCR facilitates weekly artistic activities in the Las Lajitas neighbourhood in San Marcos to promote peaceful coexistence between the host community and internally displaced people, fostering social cohesion and combating stigmatization. The COMUNYCARTE project, coordinated between the local municipality and UNHCR, engages families and communities to promote understanding and integration.

Durable Solutions

UNHCR has referred people who are internally displaced or at risk of displacement to livelihood programmes with partners who promote protection through entrepreneurship, job placement internships for youth, and vocational training processes.



UNHCR thanks the contributions of donor countries such as



Belgium
partner in development



In partnership with
Canada



Irish Aid
Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



the support of the following organizations



United Nations
Central
Emergency
Response
Fund



PEACEBUILDING
FUND

and contributions from our private donors in

Australia, Japan, and Spain

We thank the fundamental support provided by donors who have contributed to UNHCR's global programs with flexible funding

*As of May 2024

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