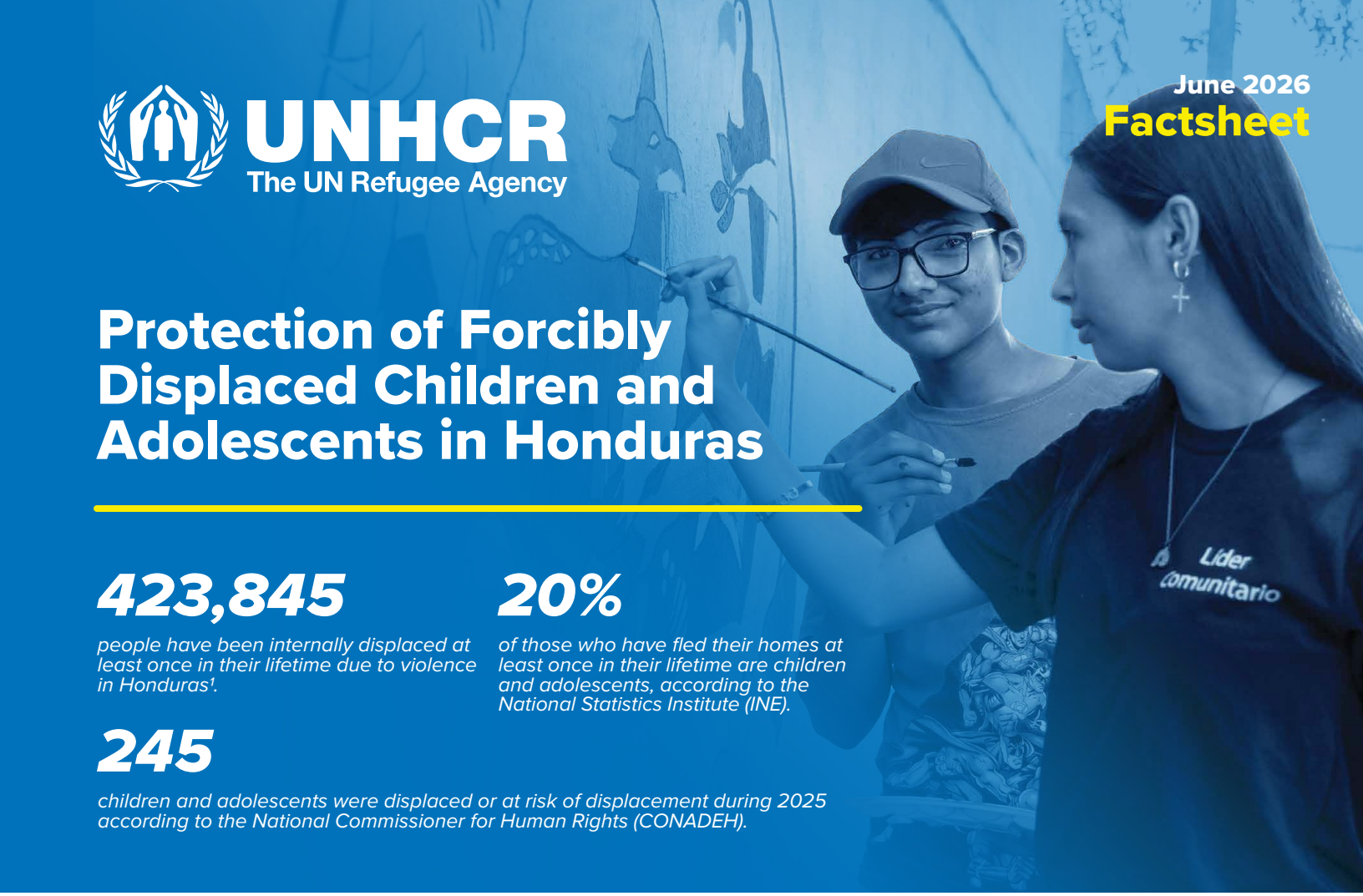
UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

June 2026
Factsheet

Protection of Forcibly Displaced Children and Adolescents in Honduras



423,845

people have been internally displaced at least once in their lifetime due to violence in Honduras[1].

20%

of those who have fled their homes at least once in their lifetime are children and adolescents, according to the National Statistics Institute (INE).

245

children and adolescents were displaced or at risk of displacement during 2025 according to the National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH).

What is the situation of forcibly displaced children in Honduras?

Children are among the groups most affected by violence and forced displacement in Honduras. According to the National Statistics Institute (INE), nearly **20 per cent** of all people who have fled their homes at least once in their lifetime are children and adolescents, highlighting their heightened exposure to risks affecting their lives, liberty and personal integrity.

Displacement is primarily driven by generalized violence, social and territorial control exercised by criminal groups, violence against women and girls, housing, land and property dispossession, forced recruitment, and other forms of violence that directly affect children and their families. The main perpetrators identified include criminal groups, family members, neighbours and other known individuals.

Data from the Secretariat of Human Rights further demonstrates the disproportionate impact on children. Of the **1,133 people assisted between 2023 and October 2025**, **42 per cent** were children and adolescents[2].

Similarly, the National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH), in its 2025 Special Report on Internal Forced Displacement in Honduras, identified **245 children and adolescents** affected by situations of forced displacement or at risk of displacement, representing **17 per cent** of all affected people nationwide.

Violence against children remains alarmingly high. In 2025, at least **470 children and adolescents** were victims of violent deaths in Honduras, reflecting the persistence of unsafe environments that undermine their protection and development.

Forced displacement has profound consequences for children, including interrupted or discontinued education, confinement as a coping strategy to avoid further risks, the loss of family and community support networks, and increased exposure to violence, abuse and exploitation.

[1] National Institute of Statistics (INE). (2024). Internally Displaced Population in Honduras: Results of the 2024 Permanent Multi-Purpose Household Survey (EPHPM). INE: https://ine.gob.hn/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Estudio-Poblacion-Desplazada-Internamente-EPHPM-2024.pdf

[2] Data from the Directorate for the Protection of Persons Internally Displaced by Violence (DIPPDIV).



Communities strengthen their resilience and protection mechanisms through safe spaces restored with the support of UNHCR and its partners.

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Progress in the Legal and Institutional Framework

Law for the Prevention, Assistance and Protection of Internally Displaced Persons: Approved in 2022, this law recognizes the forced recruitment of children and adolescents by criminal groups as a cause of internal forced displacement. It also establishes the State's obligation to prevent such situations, ensure responses guided by the best interests of the child, facilitate the educational reintegration of displaced students, and promote family reunification.

Law Against Trafficking in Persons: This law recognizes forced recruitment as a form of trafficking in persons, extending legal protection measures to children and adolescents who are coerced into carrying out activities for the benefit of criminal groups.

Despite these important legal advances, significant challenges remain in ensuring a comprehensive response to the violence and forced displacement affecting children. In its **2025 Concluding Observations**, the Committee on the Rights of the Child urged the Government of Honduras to strengthen national child protection mechanisms, improve the early identification of children at risk, ensure coordinated inter-institutional responses, and adopt specific measures to prevent and respond to forced recruitment by criminal groups.

UNHCR's Response

UNHCR works alongside the Government of Honduras, civil society organizations and local communities to strengthen prevention, protection and response mechanisms addressing the risks of forced displacement faced by children in contexts of generalized violence, including forced recruitment by criminal groups.

- **Strengthening the national child protection system for internally displaced children:** UNHCR provides technical support to the Secrtariat of Children, Adolescents and Family (SENAF) to strengthen specialized protection mechanisms, Best Interests Procedures (BIP), alternative care arrangements and inter-institutional coordination within the National Response System for Internal Forced Displacement.
- **Protection and alternative care:** UNHCR supports the country's only residential alternative care programme for children displaced or affected by forced recruitment, implemented in partnership with Casa Alianza.
- **Community-based prevention of forced recruitment and displacement risks:** Through partnerships with organizations such as Save the Children and Jóvenes contra la Violencia, UNHCR implements initiatives that strengthen protective factors, participation, social cohesion and community resilience in communities most affected by violence.
- **Protection of returned Honduran children:** UNHCR supports the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (SRECI), SENAF and other institutions in implementing protection pathways for returned children with protection needs, including cases requiring internal relocation due to security risks.
- **Protection of refugee and asylum-seeking children:** UNHCR promotes access to education, school retention and local integration through joint initiatives with the Secretariat of Education and schools.

What is needed to prevent the forced recruitment of children by criminal groups?

Preventing forced recruitment begins long before it occurs. It requires ensuring that children and adolescents grow up in protective environments where they can live, learn and develop safely. This means strengthening institutions, families and communities to identify risks early and provide protection measures before displacement or forced recruitment takes place.

Key elements for prevention:

- **Strengthened protection systems,** with institutions and community actors equipped to identify risks, prevent forced recruitment and provide timely protection responses.
- **Effective legal frameworks and protocols** to guide prevention, case management, inter-institutional coordination and access to justice.
- **Protective communities and safe spaces**, where children and adolescents can participate in sports, artistic, cultural and psychosocial activities that strengthen protective factors, social cohesion and collective care.
- **Evidence generation and awareness-raising** to increase understanding of the impact of forced recruitment, strengthen advocacy efforts and promote a culture of respect for children's rights.

"Voy con Vos"

UNHCR leads the *"Voy con Vos"* ("I'm With You") campaign in partnership with the **Secretariat of Children, Adolescents and Family (SENAF)**, civil society organizations and local communities. The campaign promotes a culture of collective care to help prevent the forced recruitment of children by strengthening the role of families, teachers and community leaders as key protection actors.



Through the “Voy con Vos” campaign, UNHCR and its partners promote protective environments through the participation of children, adolescents, families, teachers and communities.

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Opportunities for Collaboration

- **Strengthen community-based prevention mechanisms** by expanding interventions that reduce the risks of violence, forced recruitment and displacement affecting children and adolescents in the most affected communities.
- **Strengthen the national child protection system** by enhancing inter-institutional coordination, protection pathways, referral mechanisms, and the capacities of institutions responsible for preventing and responding to forced recruitment.
- **Expand access to specialized protection services**, including case management, psychosocial support, alternative care, legal assistance and educational reintegration for children and adolescents affected by violence, forced displacement, return or international protection needs.
- **Promote evidence generation and awareness-raising** by supporting the development of tools, communication campaigns and research that strengthen public policies and foster protective environments for children.

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