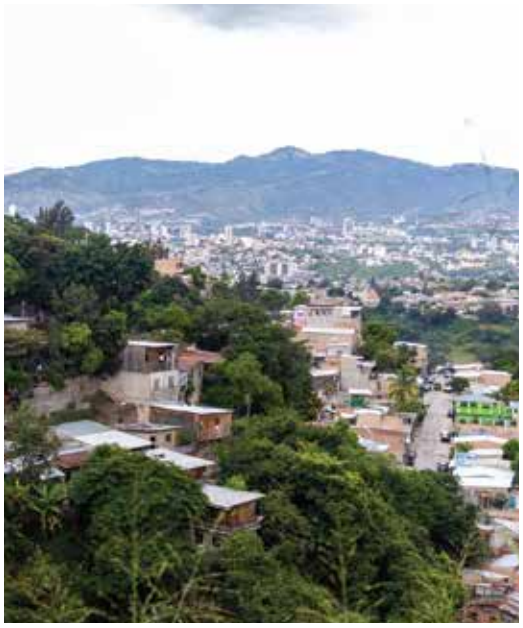
FACT SHEET
HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY | HONDURAS

December 2025

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency



What is the housing, land, and property (HLP) situation in Honduras

Honduras faces a complex situation regarding property rights, with significant gaps in the land registration system. **Less than 30% of properties are registered**, limiting legal certainty and resulting in forced evictions, costly and prolonged legal disputes, and, in many cases, violence and displacement which is disproportionately affecting women, environmental and land defenders, and climate-vulnerable communities.

Land disputes may also contribute to uncertainty for public and private investments in infrastructure, agricultural production, resource extraction, and public policy to protect the environment and tackle climate change. This insecurity undermines livelihoods, hinders climate adaptation planning, limits access to justice, and remains a barrier to development, economic growth, and social wellbeing.

With **2.5%** of the country's population internally displaced by violence and **68%** of them reporting losses to their homes, land, or assets, **weak property rights have nationwide impacts**. In this context, strengthening property rights is a solution that builds long-term stability, reduces future protection and climate risks, and helps prevent new cycles of displacement.

What is UNHCR doing?

Since 2018, UNHCR has partnered with the Property Institute to strengthen land survey and property registration systems and to protect the property rights of Hondurans as a preventive measure to reduce conflict and forced displacement. UNHCR is often the only actor with safe access to high-risk communities, building trust and bringing new actors, including government institutions to enter and deliver services that would otherwise not reach these areas.



Personalised property-rights assistance provided during a community information fair.

Development of Legal Framework and Tools

- Provide technical assistance to develop regulations and manuals to ensure land survey systems and registry procedures incorporate conflict- and violence-sensitive criteria.
- Technical assistance and advocacy to include property rights in the Law on Internal Displacement, to recognize the international right of internally displaced people to later claim their property if they are forcibly displaced.
- Development and piloting of the "Registry of Abandoned Properties" to document houses, land, and assets of people who were forced to flee.
- Modernisation of land survey measurement processes through the donation of drones, laptops, tablets, and technical support, improving accuracy, reducing measurement times, and ensuring measurements by drones in areas that are too difficult or dangerous to access due to violence.

Institutional Strengthening

Capacity-building for judges, prosecutors, lawyers, land registry staff, through training, expert thematic groups, and specialised operational manuals and protocols.

Support for Awareness-Raising

Launch of the "Your Home Registered, Your Rights Protected" public awareness campaign to promote housing, land and property registration, and to foster trust in the registration process and an understanding of the importance of property registration.

UNHCR HLP achievements in 2025

437 plots of land measured and georeferenced through a community-based process in an area highly affected by violence and controlled by criminal groups. This process will allow owners to obtain a certificate of possession, an essential requirement for property registration.

358 individuals receiving specialised legal orientation on property rights.

8 national information fairs targeting cities highly affected by forced displacement.

Over **150** participants engaged in **4** community meetings on property rights.

Development of **institutional tools and workflows**, including:

- Identification Form for Housing, Land, and Property Abandoned Due to Disasters or Violence
- Process Manual of the General Directorate of Land Surveys
- Land Survey Regulation.

Land registration pilot

The initiative is being implemented in an informal settlement of over 2,000 residents facing both violence and climate-related risks, including floods and landslides. The community was formed after families were displaced by Hurricane Mitch in 1998, when they were relocated from a riverside area. Although the government allocated the land to the community, it did not provide formal ownership documentation to individuals. Residents themselves divided the land into plots and designed the streets.

UNHCR worked with the community to gain their trust, and in doing so, identified the high level of violence stemming from property disputes, intrafamilial, and gang-related control. UNHCR proposed to the Property Institute a pilot project to map, measure, and georeference plots, **enabling residents to obtain a unique property identity code, the first key step toward formalizing their property rights.** This pilot is expected to reduce violence, strengthen legal certainty, facilitate investment in housing and property, and boost community resilience.


Land survey teams conduct mapping as part of the pilot.

Benefits of land registration	Government	Private Sector	Individuals
Legal Certainty & Stability	Reduces land conflicts, strengthens rule of law, improves governance.	Lowers investment risk, protects property rights, increases predictability.	Protects from forced eviction and land grabbing, protects property rights.
Economic Growth & Finance	Improves property tax base, supports planning and land-value management.	Enables access to credit using land as collateral; lowers cost of capital.	Enables access to loans, supports housing upgrades and productive investment.
Access to Services & Development	Improves targeting of subsidies, infrastructure planning, and service delivery.	Simplifies transactions, facilitates expansion and efficient land markets.	Enables eligibility for public programs, services, and post-disaster support.

How does the protection of property rights help reduce conflict?

- Protecting property rights reduces conflict and violence by preventing land disputes, diminishing inheritance disputes, limiting violent evictions, and reducing risks linked to land control by criminal groups.
- Legal certainty over assets strengthens social and economic stability, increases trust in institutions, and promotes investment in communities.
- Effective land registration and titling systems clarify boundaries, prevent overlapping claims, reduce legal cases and the burden on the justice system, and provide a sustainable foundation for community development and well-being across rural and urban areas, including Indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities.

Building blocks to improve property rights

- A reliable land identification, measurement, mapping and georeferencing system, implemented to provide certainty on the location and dimensions of the plot of land.
- A trusted and transparent property registration system, designed to eliminate overlapping titles, secure property rights, reduce territorial disputes, and protect individual land ownership rights.
- Government incentive and support programmes that facilitate access to property rights for individuals and support policy planning and development.
- Accessible and fair land restitution processes for individuals and communities affected by dispossession, respectful of gender and conflict-sensitive approach.

How You Can Support Access to Property Rights In Honduras



- **Modernize and expand the Unified Registry System (SURE):** nearly 40% of registry offices in the country are disconnected from the system and are paper-based.
- **Strengthen land survey teams and municipal capacities:** expanding and equipping land survey offices with drones, laptops, and surveyor equipment, certifying municipal staff, and standardising procedures at the national level.
- Promote conflict-sensitive dialogue with communities affected by violence and climate change to create trust to facilitate access to property rights.
- **Scale-up property registration campaigns,** this could be supported with a one-time discounted property tax for residents if they register, or other incentives.

For more information:
Kathryn Lo, UNHCR Representative in Honduras - lok@unhcr.org
Danielle Alvarez, External Relations Officer - alvareza@unhcr.org