

Regional Response to the Northern Triangle of Central America Situation

SUPPLEMENTARY APPEAL 2016

JUNE 2016



Cover photograph:

A man carries a boy on his shoulders during the long walk between Arriaga and Chahuities, Mexico that can take up to 15 hours.

UNHCR / Markel Redondo

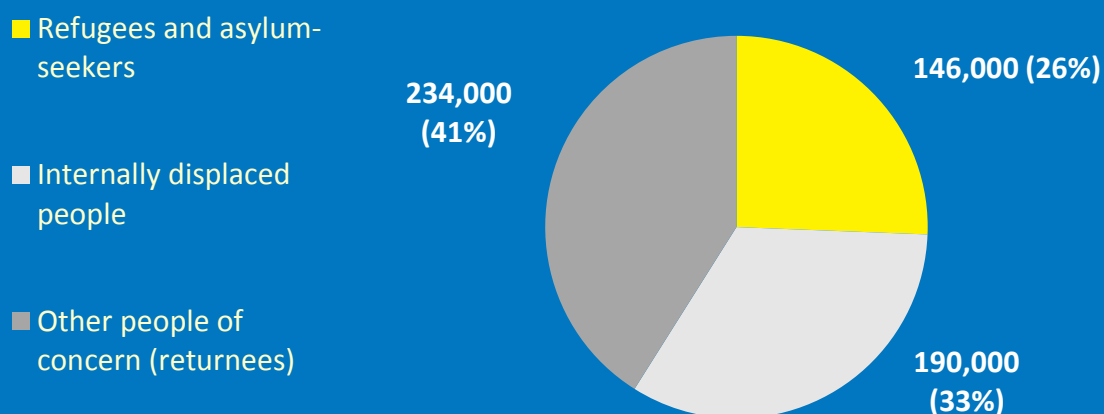
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AT A GLANCE

PEOPLE OF CONCERN

A total of 570,000 people of concern



This supplementary appeal does not cover activities for populations of concern to UNHCR in the United States of America and Canada. Overall figures are displayed above to illustrate regional displacement trends.

A total of **USD 23.7 million*** in financial requirements is needed for the Northern Triangle of Central America situation, including USD 18.1 million in additional requirements, for the period January-December 2016:

- USD 10.5 million for Mexico
- USD 10 million for the Panama Regional Office (including Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua)
- USD 1.3 million for Costa Rica
- USD 1.6 million for Belize
- USD 0.3 million for regional activities

**This total includes support costs (7 per cent)*

Map

Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA) Situation:

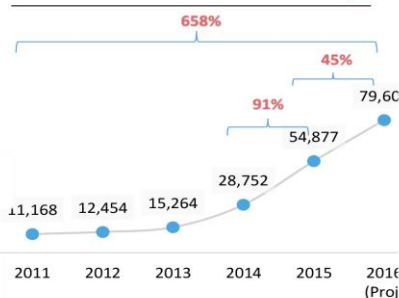
Key Population Figures and Trends in North and Central America



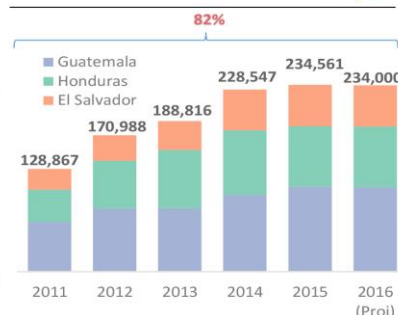
Population of Concern from NTCA Countries *

Refugees + asylum seekers (pending) (cumulative)	108,262	end-2015
	146,000	end-2016
IDPs in Honduras (Government estimate for 20 municipalities)	174,000	2004-2014
	190,000	2004-2016 (projected)
Returned population from USA & MEX to NTCA (mix-migration)	234,561	2015
	234,000	2016 (projected)

Annual Asylum Applications from NTCA Countries *



Annual Returns from USA and MEX to NTCA Countries*



* 2016 figures correspond to UNHCR projections. For refugees / asylum seekers, the estimates are based on new asylum claims observed during the first months of 2016. For IDPs in Honduras, the increase is based on average annual number of IDPs between 2004-14. For returned population, 2016 figures are assumed to be the same as in 2015, given the observed trends in returns from USA (increasing) and from Mexico (decreasing) during the first months of 2016.

Regional Overview of Population of Concern from NTCA Countries in 2015 and Projections for 2016*



Elaboration date: 3 June 2016 Sources: UNHCR / Governments / Migration Directorates / GADM Author: UNHCR-ROPAN Feedback: cardona@unhcr.org

Introduction

This supplementary appeal is presented as a follow-up of the Protection and Solutions Strategy for the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA) launched in December 2015. It outlines UNHCR's protection and solutions interventions planned for 2016 to respond to additional and most urgent needs of refugees, asylum-seekers, returnees and internally displaced people from the NTCA in countries of origin, transit and asylum, encompassing Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama.

In recent years, NTCA countries – El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras – have seen a dramatic escalation in violence by organized criminal groups. Current homicide rates are among the highest ever recorded in the region and are as deadly as many contemporary armed conflicts. Sexual violence is also prevalent, with the overwhelming majority of victims being girls between the ages of 10 and 19 years. Disappearances, forced recruitment into gangs, and the sexual exploitation of girls and women also form part of the pattern of violence. The extraordinary epidemic of violence is compelling a diverse range of people to flee their homes and to seek international protection, particularly in bordering and nearby countries.

In 2015, asylum applications from NTCA citizens reached 54,877 in the region, nearly double the number lodged in 2014 (28,752), while the number of recognized refugees reached 31,219 – a 41 per cent increase over 2014. The majority of the NTCA refugee population is in the United States of America, with a significant and increasing presence in Belize, Costa Rica and Mexico, as well as to a lesser but still significant extent in Nicaragua and Panama. Among those fleeing are growing numbers of women and girls and unaccompanied and separated children who are particularly vulnerable to sexual assault, human trafficking and other protection risks during displacement. The capacity of certain gangs and organized criminal groups in the NTCA to act transnationally generates a risk of continuing persecution for NTCA asylum-seekers and refugees. Protection risks are also high for certain refugees profiles, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, among others.

In 2015, more than 230,000 NTCA citizens were apprehended by authorities and returned¹ to their countries of origin, reportedly mainly from the United States and Mexico. This number has been in constant upward trend in the last five years, progressively resulting in a two-fold increase compared to the 2011 baseline. Many returnees who fled violence fear returning to their neighbourhoods and become internally displaced. Some returnees have been identified by gangs near reception centres and elsewhere in countries of origin, and have been killed shortly after return.

Forced internal displacement due to the violence in the NTCA also appears widespread, although data is fragmented. In Honduras, in just 20 out of some 300 municipalities, the Government identified 174,000 people displaced due to violence between 2004 and 2014, representing some 4 per cent of the population. Most internally displaced people (IDPs) are almost invisible victims of the

¹ These include people returned to their countries of origin either voluntarily or involuntarily, some of whom may have protection needs.

violence, lone individuals and families who leave their communities discreetly and keep a low profile to avoid drawing the attention of their persecutors.

The widespread protection risks for asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees and IDPs require an urgent, strategic and regional response in close coordination with all relevant stakeholders, and UNHCR appeals to its donors for urgent financial support to meet the needs of up to 570,000 people of concern.

Population data

		POPULATION OF CONCERN by 31 December 2015	PROJECTED POPULATION OF CONCERN by 31 December 2016 ¹
Mexico	NTCA refugees and asylum-seekers	2,852	7,600
Belize	NTCA refugees and asylum-seekers	751	6,200
Nicaragua	NTCA refugees and asylum-seekers	432	600
Costa Rica	NTCA refugees and asylum-seekers	1,314	3,400
Panama	NTCA refugees and asylum-seekers	540	1,500
Guatemala	Other people of concern ²	106,488	106,000
El Salvador	Other people of concern ²	52,198	52,000
Honduras	Internally displaced people	174,000	190,000
	Other people of concern ²	75,875	76,000
SUBTOTAL		414,450	443,300
Canada ³	NTCA refugees and asylum-seekers	3,451	3,700
United States of America ³	NTCA refugees and asylum-seekers	98,923	123,000
TOTAL³		516,824	570,000

¹ UNHCR projections. For refugees and asylum-seekers, the estimates are based on new asylum claims observed during the first months of 2016. For IDPs in Honduras, the increase is based on average annual number of IDPs from 2004 to 2014. For other people of concern (returned population), 2016 figures are assumed to be the same as in 2015, given the observed trends in returns from the United States (increasing) and from Mexico (decreasing) during the first months of 2016.

² Returned population from the United States and Mexico to NTCA countries.

³ This supplementary appeal does not cover activities for populations of concern in the United States and in Canada. Overall figures are displayed above to illustrate regional displacement trends.

Financial summary (USD)

UNHCR's budget for 2016 (as approved by the Executive Committee) related to the NTCA situation amounts to USD 5.5 million. The additional requirements presented in this appeal total USD 18.1 million, as shown in the centre column of the table below, including support costs (7 per cent).

OPERATION	EXCOM BUDGET excluding the NTCA situation	NTCA SITUATION			TOTAL REVISED REQUIREMENTS FOR 2016
		ExCom Budget related to the NTCA situation	Additional requirements	Total*	
Panama (including NTCA)	7,430,594	2,550,090	6,936,085	9,486,175	16,916,769
Mexico	2,328,867	2,999,159	7,037,811	10,036,970	12,365,837
Costa Rica	3,137,115	-	1,216,761	1,216,761	4,353,876
Belize	162,083	-	1,473,355	1,473,355	1,635,438
Regional and global activities	2,491,571	-	281,206	281,206	2,772,777
Subtotal	15,550,230	5,549,249	16,945,218	22,494,467	38,044,697
Support costs (7 per cent)			1,186,165	1,186,165	1,186,165
TOTAL	15,550,230	5,549,249	18,131,383	23,680,632	39,230,862

**This supplementary budget includes USD 4.9 million budget presented in the Protection and Solutions Strategy for the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA) launched in December 2015.*

Overall strategy and coordination

A comprehensive response to this protection situation will require distinct but complementary actions at the national level in NTCA countries and in States of transit and asylum, reinforced by cooperation at the regional and international levels, including through the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the support of the wider UN system and the civil society.

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