

# INTER-AGENCY RESPONSE MIXED MOVEMENTS FROM NCA

## Key figures

**3,500** estimated persons part of the large mixed movements

### CONTEXT

As of 15 January, large mixed movements from the North of Central America departed from Honduras and El Salvador heading north. These include a visible amount of young men and families traveling with children. By 23 January, government figures estimated that the number of people had reached 3,500, the majority concentrated in ① Tecun Uman.

Only those fleeing violence and intending to seek asylum in Mexico, or people holding valid travel documents, have been crossing through official border points. Reports of people crossing irregularly through the Suchiate River have been widely covered by the media. Many of those without the appropriate travel documentation or intentions to seek asylum have been assisted to return to their country and / or deported by immigration authorities. Movements have since 27 January stabilized.

On January 23, OHCHR, IOM, UNHCR and UNICEF expressed their concern about the consequences of



the use of force during immigration control operations that took place in Chiapas (Mexico/Guatemala border), when some 1,200 people crossed Suchiate River towards Mexico, affecting children and women. ②

Considering the imminent needs, UN Agencies have been providing a response in collaboration with the civil society and the local Guatemalan government.

**1 out of 5**  
**Persons with specific needs**

**36%**  
**Single head household**

**15%**  
**of children are unaccompanied (11%) or separated (4%)**

**Reasons**  
**43%** Caregivers send their children to family or friends  
**14%** Parents died

## NEEDS AND PROTECTION CONCERNS

While the majority of people among the large movement were young and adult men, there was a notable number of families with children, adolescent women, LGBTI people, pregnant women, young children, elderly persons, and people with disabilities. The main humanitarian needs assessed are: food items, shelter, access to safe water for drinking and domestic use, health services, security and protection of vulnerable people.

Misinformation and confusion about rights, particularly about the right to seek asylum of those fleeing violence and persecution, was notable. Once information was provided, people indicated their intention to apply for asylum in Guatemala or in another country. People in need of international protection mentioned gender-based violence, gang-related violence, persecution based on sexual orientation, political or religious persecution as reasons to flee.

**Intentions to apply for asylum**

- 44%** Yes, in another country
- 26%** No
- 25%** Dont Know
- 6%** Yes, in Guatemala

**90%**   
**plan to go to a third country.**

**United States 76%**  
**Mexico 3%**  
**Other 1%**

 **16%**

**did not enter regularly**

Reasons

**42%** had no documents

**30%** feared being deported, detained or security incidents

**Documents held by respondent**

**84%** held a valid identity card

**5%** a valid passport



## INTER-AGENCY RESPONSE

UN Agencies, local and national authorities, consular bodies from Honduras and Mexico, and civil society organizations have been working together to provide a comprehensive response to identified urgent needs. UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF, WHO and WFP are currently in Tecun Uman providing humanitarian assistance in coordination with the civil society and members of the protection network.


③ Through its Protection Monitoring Tool, UNHCR has identified specific needs of people moving across Guatemala. The information gathered has been able to inform the response provided at the local level, including counselling of people in need of international protection and referral of people with particular vulnerabilities. These include people with health problems, unaccompanied and separated children and people referred to appropriate channels to lodge their asylum claims in Guatemala and Mexico. Moreover, UNHCR has been present at all borders to provide information and counselling to people who have fled violence and persecution about their right to seek asylum.

 **69%** walking

 **31%** by bus

## Information source used

 **36%** Facebook

 **28%** Talk to other connational

 **27%** TV

 **16%** None

 **16%** Whatsapp

**51%**  
**undertake risky activities along the route**

IOM is monitoring the situation at strategic points such as the Rodolfo Robles Bridge, the Suchiate River, and El Ceibo border . An information survey was carried out in Hidalgo border through focus groups to learn about the profile of the members of the mixed movement and to identify needs. Likewise, based on the monitoring, cases of people with international protection needs and people in vulnerable conditions were recognized and channeled. At least 200 people were provided with guidance on access to services and migration regularization processes.

Communication and coordination was maintained with United Nations agencies and international organizations to follow up on the group at El Ceibo border. ④

Following needs assessments, IOM has begun the voluntary return programme for those without international protection needs and wishing to return to their countries. To date, IOM has assisted 164 people to return to Omoa reception center in Honduras, where they receive support to return to their communities of origin, as well as guidance to access various labor and social reintegration programs. IOM is also supporting Casa del Migrante in Guatemala with assistance in kind (food and basic grains).

In Guatemala, UNICEF supported the installation of 14 mobile bathrooms, six showers and four portable sinks to benefit around 2,500 people; and provided 12,000 gallons of water for hygiene, to benefit 3,500 people. In addition, UNICEF is supporting the Office of the Human Rights Prosecutor, the Office of the Attorney General of the Nation and the Secretariat of Social Welfare by deploying Monitoring Protection Officers' brigades to identify and provide services to unaccompanied children. Key messages on protection and prevention of violence are disseminated via Radio spots, and families traveling with children receive information materials along the way. UNICEF is also providing inflatable mattresses, blankets and hygiene kits.

**35**

**Incidents reported in country of origin**

**29%**

**of families suffered or witnessed an incident**

**31%** Intimidation or threats

**20%** Physical violence

**11%** Murder

**9%** Torture

**9%** Rape