

AMERICAS MONTHLY REPORT

This document provides an overview of key developments affecting the displacement situation in the Americas and some of UNHCR response activities in line with the 2019 strategic objectives for the region.



Brazil. Venezuelan and Haitian women complete sewing technical course in Boa Vista © UNHCR/Allana Ferreira

VENEZUELA SITUATION

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- 1 The Colombian Government issued a resolution to grant nationality to children born in **Colombia** to Venezuelan parents since August 2015, a protection measure which will benefit an estimated 24,000 children at risk of statelessness and will prevent future cases. The Colombian Institute for the Promotion of Higher Education (ICFES) issued a resolution declaring that Venezuelan children without valid documentation to enroll in Colombian schools would be eligible to take the standardized state exam required for admission to higher education institutions in the country.
- 2 The **Chilean** Government announced during the VIII Peru-Chile Border Integration and Development Committee meeting on 7-8 August, that its consulate in Tacna, Peru, would only receive online applications to process the Democratic Responsibility Visa until August 16th. After then, procedures have to be completed in Lima.
- 3 On 9th August, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior and Public Security of **Chile** approved a resolution authorizing Chilean consulates abroad to issue entry authorizations to Venezuelans holding identity cards or expired passports either for family reunification or for exceptional or humanitarian cases.
- 4 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of **Brazil** announced on 5 August that they would accept Venezuelan passports even if expired up to five years back.

4.3 million

Venezuelans living abroad
(as of August 2019)

3.5 million

Venezuelans in Latin America and
the Caribbean states

601,341

registered asylum-seekers

287,114

in Peru

103,679

in Brazil

85,796

in United States
of America

58,597

in Spain

15,095 in Mexico (as of July 2019)

2 million Venezuelans with regular
status including resident permit

UNHCR RESPONSE TO THE VENEZUELA SITUATION

In the week prior to the **Ecuadorian** government's implementation of new visa requirements for Venezuelans, UNHCR presence was reinforced at the northern border with Colombia to assist arriving Venezuelans. UNHCR provided information and legal assistance to more than 4,200 Venezuelans and referred them to partners and governmental institutions. Additionally, 2,500 hygiene kits and core relief items and 2,000 blankets were distributed. UNHCR was present at the border 24 hours a day to provide information and assistance to the Venezuelan population. Additionally, shelter was provided to children and mothers who had to spend the night at the border.

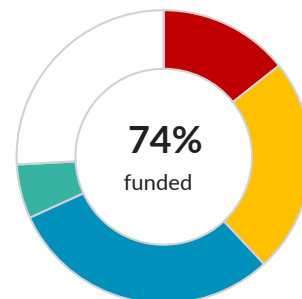
As arrivals also increased in Tumbes, at the border with **Peru**, around 900 people spent the night at the Refugee Housing Units, where 1,000 core relief item kits and 5,500 litres of drinking water were provided. Over 1,200 people received legal orientation; 200 were provided with medical assistance and 60 people with HIV also received psychosocial support. Additionally, around 500 were transported from the border to Tumbes, and approximately 200 received food rations.

UNHCR opened a new Point of Attention and Orientation (PAO) in Norte de Santander, **Colombia**, to provide information and assistance to people from Venezuela who cross into Colombia on foot.

In an initiative led by UNHCR and the **Colombian** authorities, the first "House of Rights" to cover the entire Caribbean region was officially inaugurated in the Atlántico department, offering services such as legal orientation. More than 4,700 people have benefitted since it opened its doors in February 2019.

Around 300 Venezuelans continue to camp outside the **Chilean** Consulate in Tacna, pending their appointments or decisions related to the Democratic Responsibility Visa. The Ombudsperson Office and UNHCR provided information on international protection, health, education and migration issues outside the Chilean Consulate. UNHCR and partners provided

FUNDING (as of 18 September 2019) UNHCR's financial requirements 2019 for the Venezuela Situation



\$158.2 million required

- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

shelter, medical and psychosocial support support, 1,500 litres of drinking water and food, among others.

As part of UNHCR's scale up operational response and its outreach strategy for Venezuelan refugees and migrants in **Argentina**, UNHCR will have a presence in the northern border of Argentina; Puerto Iguazu, La Quiaca and San Salvador de Jujuy by the end of August. UNHCR will establish additional field presence in the cities of Córdoba and Mendoza before the end of the year.

August was the first month of direct implementation of cash-based-interventions (CBI) in **Brazil**, 243 beneficiaries were reached, through a total of 85 multi-purpose grants distributed through prepaid cards in ten States amounting to BRL 67,528 (USD 16,800).

In the **Caribbean**, UNHCR partners launched a "Back2School" campaign, which includes the disbursement of cash-based assistance in support of 55 Venezuelan children enrolling in schools. The package covers registration fees, facilities fees, health insurance and the costs of school uniforms.


INSIDE VENEZUELA

As part of UNHCR multisector community based projects to address the urgent needs of the affected population, during August, UNHCR distributed vital core relief items like nutritional kits, solar lamps, jerry cans and water treatment pills in prioritised communities.

UNHCR San Cristobal, near the border with Colombia, participated in the delivery of healthcare services, during which residents were provided with nutrition diagnosis, internal medicine, gynaecology and paediatric services. Additionally, people were administered HIV and syphilis tests and those identified as undernourished were provided with nutritional recovery kits.

EXPANDING HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS IN THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

[Access here](#)

EXPANDING HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS IN THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

Over 4 million Venezuelans were forced to leave their country in recent years as daily survival became increasingly difficult, and in some instances impossible. Many have left their families behind. Those who remain in Venezuela are forced to contend with the consequences of an escalating humanitarian crisis, marked by food, water, electricity, medicine and medicine shortages. Widespread insecurity and the presence of illegal armed groups are also threatening people's safety and contributing to an escalating internal displacement situation.

An estimated 7 million Venezuelans are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. According to the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2019, of which 2.2 million are in need of protection.

- 2.2 million children
- 3.8 million adults
- 1.6 million elderly
- 2.7 million people in need of protection

The United Nations System in Venezuela is responding to the ever-growing needs with a significant scale-up of its activities in coordination with State institutions and other partners. UNHCR, with its presence in the country in a key role in the coordinated response to the needs of people in the Protection and Subsistence/Non-Food/Health/Energy Cluster.

UNHCR is working through a community-based approach to prevent displacement, mitigate protection risks and support resilience of affected communities in 2019. UNHCR is looking to expand its operational footprint to respond to the growing needs of the affected population. The National Network of Venezuela, which includes the shelter response as well as health, communication and coordinated relief from concerned governments and humanitarian actors.

NORTH OF CENTRAL AMERICA SITUATION

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

People from the **North of Central America** keep fleeing violence, persecution, insecurity and deteriorating economic conditions. Since the signature of a bilateral agreement on asylum claims between Guatemala and the United States on 26 July, official border crossings of Honduran people transiting through through Esquipulas, on the border of Guatemala and Honduras, have reduced.

To date, 75,509 people have been deported back from the United States, Mexico and other countries to **Honduras**, according to the Consular and Migration Observatory (CONMIGHO), the highest figure in the last four years.

The National Registry of Persons of **Guatemala** announced that they will now issue a new Identity card for asylum seekers upon finalization of their claims. The document will be the same as any ID for foreigners requesting temporary or permanent residency in Guatemala. Additionally, the first bank account opened using a refugee ID was opened in Guatemala on August 21. This constitutes a step forward for the visibility and local integration of refugees in Guatemala.

Since August, the University of San Carlos, in Izabal, **Guatemala**, allowed people of concern to access the services of the university's law firm, and benefit from internship programmes for students. They will also carry out academic research on topics related to forced migration and refugee protection; capacity building and awareness raising efforts.

UNHCR RESPONSE IN LINE WITH 2019 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

During the month of August UNHCR partners provided assistance to over 1,100 people along the Izabal-Peten route towards the north of **Guatemala**. People in transit were provided with information regarding international protection in Guatemala and Mexico, with legal and psychological support, contact with family members, pre-hospital medical care, food and shelter.

UNHCR inaugurated its new Field Unit in Esquipulas, **Guatemala**, on August 21, to strengthen its presence in the field, supporting local authorities and governmental institutions to ensure that access to services and safe transit are guaranteed. The Office is located 12 km from Agua Caliente, the border between Honduras and Guatemala, one of the main entry points for migrants and refugees seeking protection in or transiting through Guatemala.

In an effort to support capacity building in processing registration appointments of the **Mexican** authorities to respond to the increasing reception needs of people of concern, UNHCR has set up a team to reduce the backlog for registration. Since the beginning of May 6,198 people have been assisted and the backlog has been reduced by 82 days as a result of the exercise. From January to 31 August 2019, 48,254 people applied for asylum in Mexico, which accounts for a 231% increase when compared to the same period of 2018.

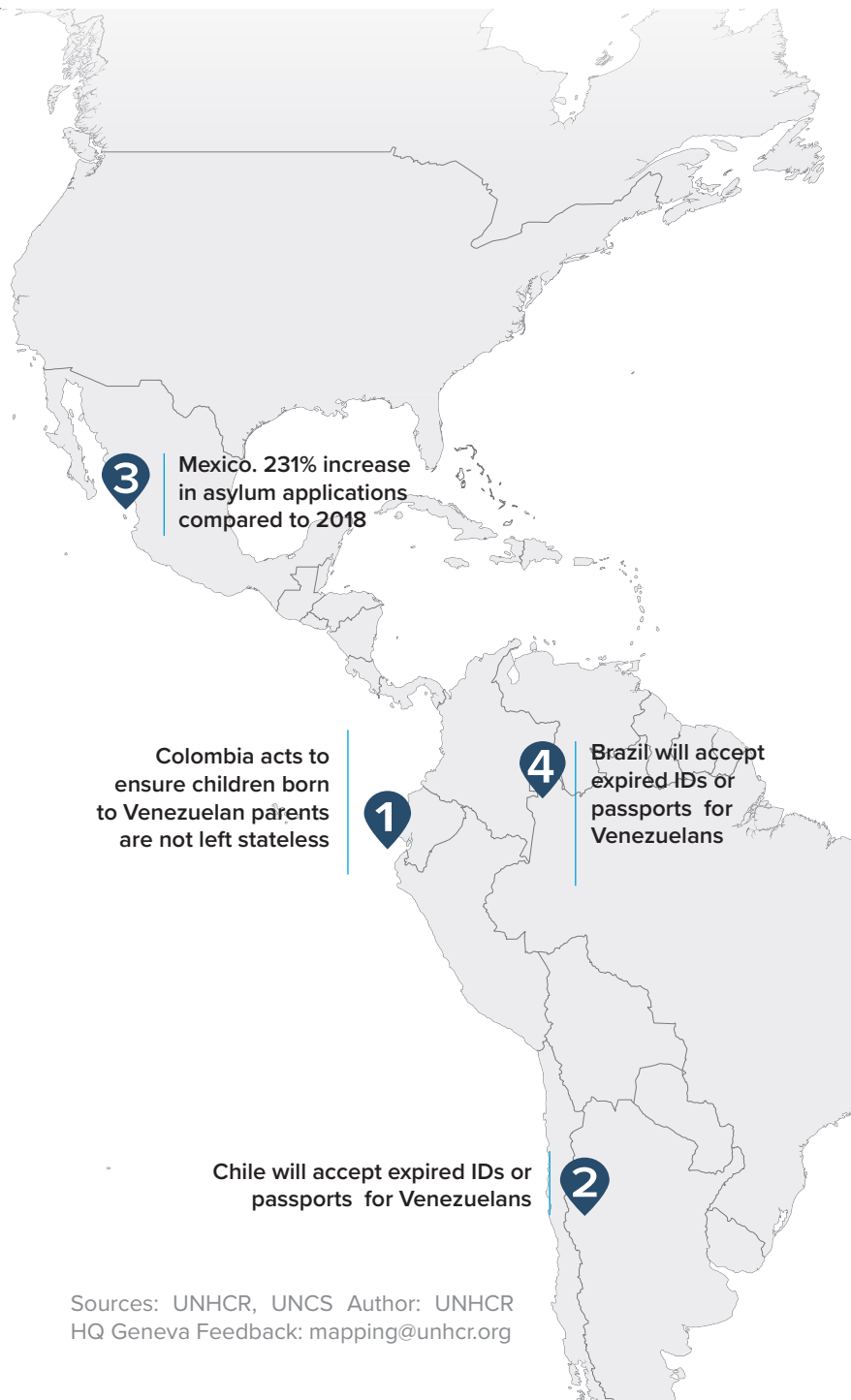
367,000 people of concern in Central America by the end of 2018

353,200 refugees and asylum seekers from North of Central America worldwide

245,500 IDPs in Honduras and El Salvador by the end of 2018

48,254 asylum claims in Mexico since January 2019 (205% increase over the same period of 2018, as of 21 July 2019)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

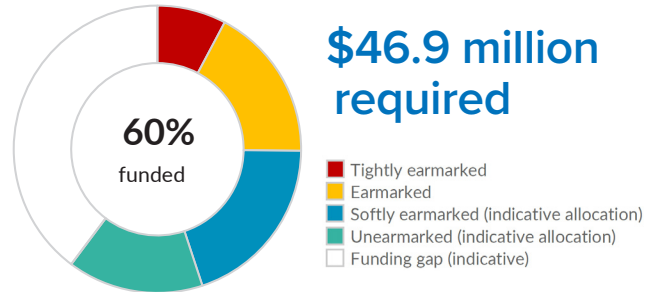


Under the initiative for improving reception conditions in shelters for refugees and migrants in **Mexico**, 41 assessments have been undertaken to provide recommendations and intervention proposals. Thanks to UNHCR's capacity building strategy, most shelters have thus been capacitated to provide information and basic legal orientation about asylum in Mexico.

UNHCR and partners are training staff members at the reception center for returned children and families in **Honduras**. The capacity building sessions are aimed to strengthen the identification and referral mechanisms implemented by the different organizations and institutions present at the centers for deportees in need of protection.

Since deportees numbers are expected to further increase in the final months of the year, UNHCR and partners will continue the identification and support of people with protection needs in the Centers for Assistance of Returned Migrants (CAMR).

FUNDING (as of 18 September 2019) UNHCR's financial requirements 2019 for the North Central America Situation



OTHER SITUATIONS

NICARAGUA SITUATION

Negotiations between the Nicaraguan government and the opposition group on electoral reforms recommended by the Organization of American States (OAS) set to achieve a peaceful solution, came to an end on 30 July. The government declared that the opposition group, which was formed in the aftermath of the socio-political outburst in April 2018, is not legitimate, and it would only discuss the electoral reform with political parties.

Continuous human rights violations in the country have forced more than 88,000 Nicaraguans to flee, the majority to neighboring Costa Rica. UNHCR Refugee Information Center, a service to provide information, orientation and legal assistance to displaced people in the host country, received a total of 619 calls, emails and visits during the month of August, a steep increase compared to the 484 registered in July. More than half of the communications were made by Nicaraguan citizens, primarily inquiring about cash-based interventions and the asylum procedure.

88,105 Nicaraguan asylum applications in neighbouring countries since April 2018

70,339 Nicaraguan asylum applications in Costa Rica as of July (30,071 awaiting to submit asylum applications).

Retornos a Nicaragua de solicitantes de refugio en Costa Rica deben ser voluntarios, seguros e informados



UNHCR issued a [press release on 7 August](#).



Costa Rica. Persecuted Nicaraguans flee in search of international protection © UNHCR/Daniel Dreifuss

With  from
Central America

With love from Central America is a series of letters written by refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced people who are rebuilding their lives in the region, often in homes away from home, where they must continue to live in the shadows to stay alive and safe.

COLOMBIA SITUATION

From January until August 2019, 15,100 people have been forcibly displaced in 43 events throughout the country, due to ongoing violence. Clashes between illegal armed groups have resulted in forced confinement of 5,636 families in five departments throughout Colombia, including Norte de Santander, Chocó, Valle de Cauca, Nariño, and Putumayo.

As conditions in the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement remain challenging, on 29 August, senior leaders of FARC guerrilla group announced the rearmament of a group of former combatants, denouncing the failure of the Colombian Government to fulfil promises under it.

After three years of support by UNHCR and its partner Opción Legal, Colombian authorities legally recognised informal Internally Displaced People settlements in Arauca and Putumayo. This

8.8 million victims of armed conflict

7.8 million internally displaced people

15,100 displaced people in large groups in 2019

50,532 Colombian refugees in Ecuador by the end of 2018

10,029 Colombian asylum seekers in Ecuador by the end of 2018

directly benefits nearly 2,700 individuals (604 families) who will be able to access basic services which were previously unavailable to them.

JULY FEATURED STORIES



[Statement from Santiago, Chile, by UN High Commissioner for Refugees](#)

My visit to Chile comes amidst the largest population movements in Latin America's recent history.



[UN Refugee Chief calls for more engagement in Brazil](#)

UN High Commissioner for Refugees concluded a four-day visit to Brazil with an urgent appeal for increased international engagement.



[Indigenous people from Venezuela seek safety across the border](#)

Hundreds of members of the Pemon indigenous group fled to a village across the border in Brazil.



[Colombia acts to ensure children born to Venezuelan parents are not left stateless](#)

Thousands of pregnant women have left Venezuela to protect the lives of their unborn babies and their own.



['Situation of Venezuelan refugees and migrants needs greater global attention'](#)

The number of refugees and migrants from Venezuela has now reached 4.3 million.

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¿Si tuvieras que huir de tu país, qué te llevarías?
Ropa, zapatos, tu mascota, fotos. 🐕👤📷
Venezolanos que se fueron de su país nos comparten lo que les hubiera gustado llevarse con ellos en su larga travesía.



En realidad yo no la iba a dejar a ella por ahí botada.

640 mil reproducciones 0:31 / 1:18

[Watch the video](#)

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