

AMERICAS

June 2021

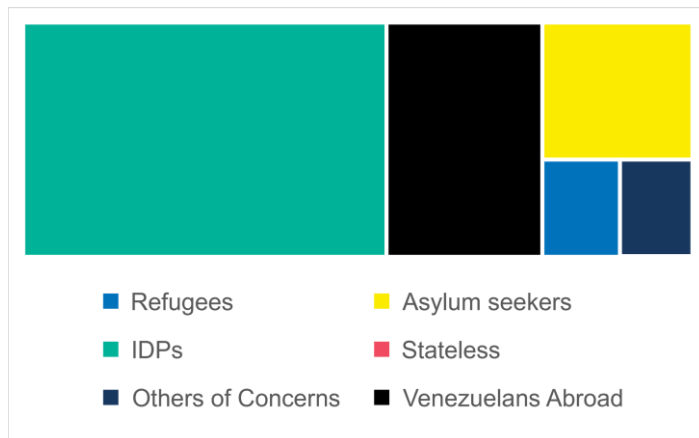
Almost **one in every five persons of concern to UNHCR** live in the Americas, one of the hardest-hit regions by the pandemic and its socio-economic downturn.

UNHCR two-fold strategy in 2021 prioritizes **emergency assistance and protection needs**, as well as **regularization and inclusion** towards long-term solutions.

Lack of funds in 2021 hampers efforts to mitigate the harsh impact of a persistent **pandemic on destitute refugees** and displaced population.

POPULATION OF CONCERN IN 2020

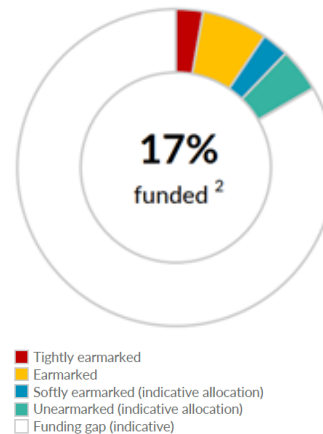
15.38* million people



*Source: Mid Year Trends 2020, UNHCR, 2020.

FUNDING (AS OF 01 JUNE)

USD 712.3 M requested for the AMERICAS in 2021



Operational context

The **Americas** is facing an unprecedented level of displacement. By June 2020, over **18 per cent of the global population of concern to UNHCR**, or around 15.38 million people uprooted, lived the region. Of them, **4.5 million were refugees and migrants from Venezuela**, of which 808,000 were asylum seekers and 136,000 refugees. Over **8.3 million IDPs** lived in **Colombia, El Salvador and Honduras**, in addition to other refugees, including some **80,000 refugees and asylum seekers from Nicaragua** in Costa Rica. Population numbers have grown by 25% since 2019 and are expected to rise again in 2021, particularly when borders re-open temporarily or if the COVID 19 pandemic is brought under control.

The region is one of the worst affected regions by the COVID 19 pandemic. In addition to the public health crisis, millions of people, including many refugees and IDPs, have lost their livelihoods, and poverty and inequality spiked. Governments in the region have been leading and coordinating the response but, with national capacities strained, the well-being and safety of refugees and their host communities is at increasing risk.

REGIONAL PRESENCE in 88 locations and 22 countries

Staff: 1,480 National Staff, 446 International Staff
Women 61%
Men 39%

Offices: 11 Country Offices, 3 Multi-Country Offices, 2 Chiefs of Mission, 4 Sub Office, 24 Field Offices, 39 Field Units, 4 National Offices

Strategy and main activities in 2021



UNHCR in the Americas implements a two-fold strategy in 2021 to provide **immediate assistance for basic and protection needs**; as well as to promote mid to long-term solutions, towards **regularization and inclusion**. In the context of a prolonged pandemic, UNHCR advocates for the inclusion of the population of concern to UNHCR in **national vaccination programs, safety nets and socio-economic recovery activities**.

The success and range of such initiatives depend on the amount of funding the region receives, both in terms of

humanitarian grants and financial loans to receiving States.

Provision of lifesaving assistance

- Across the region, UNHCR responds to the **immediate needs** of increasing numbers of people of concern impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of the prolonged pandemic, raising poverty and inequality triggered unprecedented levels of needs for **basic relief items, emergency shelter, food, safe water, sanitation supplies**.
- **Cash assistance** has proven the preferred option for refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR to meet basic needs such as food, rent or medicines.
- Through the provision of equipment or Refugee Housing Units, UNHCR further **health systems**, and promotes the inclusion of refugees into services and national vaccination campaigns.

Ensuring access to protection

- In a context of reduced access to territory and overwhelmed asylum systems, UNHCR works with States to strengthen **asylum capacities** and to promote protection-sensitive migration management.
- By means of case management, **registration**, and referral mechanisms, UNHCR identifies and assisting the most vulnerable.
- Investing in **protection monitoring**, evidence-based programming and analysis is at the core of regional strategies oriented by age, gender and diversity considerations, ensuring protection from exploitation and abuse.
- Through a strengthened network of **support spaces**, the provision of information and orientation helps to prevent exploitation and abuse as cross border movements remain

largely irregular, due to closed borders and other restrictions imposed to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Pursuing durable solutions













- Through a whole-of-society approach, UNHCR foster **partnerships to mobilize support** for the inclusion of refugees in national systems and the labour market.
- UNHCR actively advocates and enhance national efforts to provide **regular stay** (as temporary or permanent schemes, professional or working related permits, education programmes...) allowing for full enjoyment of rights and integration.
- Also, UNHCR facilitates **longer term solutions** for people lacking prospects for a safe future, especially for women or girls at risk.

Fostering community engagement, participation, and peaceful coexistence

- To prevent displacement, mitigate protection risks and build on the resilience of affected communities, operations will prioritize **community-centred interventions**, including support to community leaders and self-management structures, identification and referral of cases with specific needs, as well as enhanced access to information and complaint mechanisms.
- UNHCR will boost feedback and complaint mechanisms across the region, allowing for constant communication with the affected population to ensure the response adapts to their needs, particularly in environments increasingly risky as borders.

2021 RESPONSE IN PROGRESS FIGURES

Response in progress: **1 January- 30 April 2021**

	40,123	People supported with health consultations (primary, secondary, tertiary, as well as mental, sexual, and reproductive health)
	38,912	People of concern to UNHCR benefitting from improved access to safe water
	198,729	People benefitting from improved hygiene conditions (including through the distribution of hygiene kits, the construction of latrines and/or other interventions)
	68,784	People of concern to UNHCR supported with shelter, settlement, or temporary collective accommodation solutions
	235,674	Individuals receiving Non-Food Items (NFIs)
	73,051	People receiving cash grants or vouchers
	124,625	Individuals registered by UNHCR and/or implementing partner(s) - age/gender breakdown
	455,470	People provided with information by UNHCR and/or implementing partners (in-person or remotely, ex. Hotlines/call centres, WhatsApp, etc.)
	63,014	Individuals receiving legal assistance
	6,692	Children and adolescents of concern to UNHCR provided with educational support (materials, enrolment support, or other)
	1,982	Survivors of sexual and gender-based violence supported by UNHCR and/or implementing partners (with legal assistance, psychosocial counselling, or safe spaces)
	6,270	Children supported by UNHCR and/or implementing partners (via case management)

Working with Partners

- Prioritization of lifesaving assistance go hand in hand with efforts to find long term solutions by fostering cooperation with a wide array of actors, including **local authorities** and the **private sector**, to provide livelihoods opportunities and promote inclusion into national systems. With growing anti-foreigner sentiment in the region, exacerbated by a contracting socio-economic environment, UNHCR uses innovative and cooperative approaches to combat xenophobia.
- UNHCR co-leads with IOM the interagency response to the situation of the Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela to implement the **Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan** across 17 countries, and through technical support to Governmental coordination in the **Quito Process**—an initiative of several **Latin American countries** that seeks to harmonize domestic policies in receiving countries.
- In **Central America and Mexico**, UNHCR boost the implementation of national plans under the **Regional Comprehensive Protection and Solutions Framework for Central America and Mexico (MIRPS)**. Also, work with the Organization of American States (OAS) allows for expansion of the MIRPS Support Platform.
- In **Colombia**, UNHCR co-lead the **Protection Cluster** (with Norwegian Refugee Council) and, within the humanitarian coordination architecture, further actions on IDPs support with authorities and institutions.
- In 2021, UNHCR works within the framework of the **Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)** for people who spontaneously returned to **Venezuela**, IDPs, persons at risk of displacement, refugees, asylum seekers, and persons at risk of statelessness who require humanitarian assistance and protection safeguards.
- At the regional level, UNHCR engage actively in UN system coordination structures, including the new **Regional Collaboration Platforms and the Issue Based Coalitions** – in particular the one on human mobility – as well as with various other regional bodies, including the **OAS, ECLAC** and others. This is particularly relevant to promote inclusion of the population of concern to UNHCR in national vaccination programmes and to address root causes driving forced displacement in and from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

Timely Funding

In **2021**, UNHCR in the Americas requires **\$712.3 million** to respond to the needs of millions of refugees and others seeking safety and dignified lives. **Timely funding** is urgent to **ensure the continuity of lifesaving activities** in the region: unrestricted **cash assistance**; distribution of **core and hygiene items**; provision of **emergency shelter** in border areas and for those facing evictions, and support to States for **regularization** and documentation.

UNHCR's humanitarian response in the Americas is made possible thanks to the **generous support** of major donors who have contributed unrestricted funding to UNHCR's global operations, and to donors who have generously contributed directly to UNHCR operations in the Americas.

Thanks to **all our donors in 2021** (as of 01 June)

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And to our **private donors**:

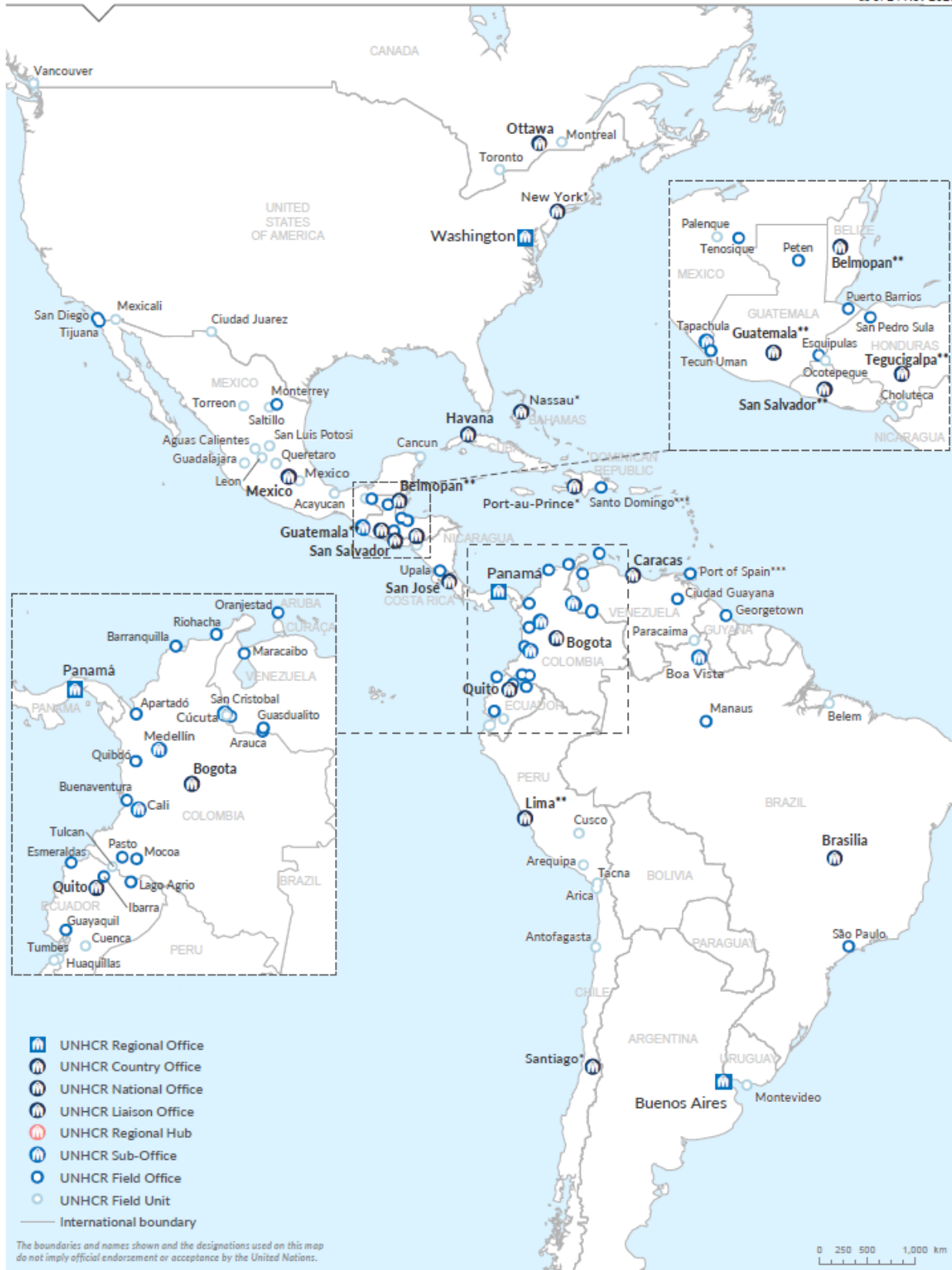
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