

## UNHCR COVID-19 Response

### Highlights

- Over **92,000** cases of COVID-19 have been reported among forcibly displaced people across **115** countries as of 01 July.
- UNHCR is monitoring the inclusion of refugees, internally displaced and other persons of concern<sup>1</sup> in COVID-19 vaccination and roll-out plans and has confirmed that **123** countries have either explicitly included refugees in their vaccination plans or provided assurances that they will do so.
- Barriers to vaccination persist, some related to identity documents, online systems, language, perceived costs, and the lack of information.
- In the [report](#) on 'The Impact of Covid-19 on Stateless Populations', UNHCR notes that the majority of national immunisation plans do not provide clarity on their coverage of stateless people who often face difficulties in accessing health care and social services.
- Frontline humanitarian workers are also affected: **1,889** UNHCR colleagues have contracted the virus of which **13** have died.



UNHCR has confirmed that **123** out of 162 countries are including persons of concern in vaccination plans



In **94** out of 123 countries, persons of concern are already receiving vaccinations

### UNHCR Response



Greece. Elderly Syrian is among the first refugees in Greece to receive COVID-19 vaccine. © UNHCR/Socrates Baltagiannis

UNHCR's key focus is to advocate for the inclusion of refugees in COVID-19 national response plans. The agency is working to support national health systems by procuring personal protective equipment, other equipment like oxygen concentrators, COVID-19 tests and medicines, and by increasing intensive care capacity in countries such as Lebanon and Bangladesh. UNHCR continues to call upon States to expedite the roll-out of vaccination campaigns and remove barriers that limit access to vaccines for the world's 82.4 million forcibly displaced people and stands ready to work with all States to ensure that at least the most vulnerable of refugees are vaccinated by the end of 2021 as per the target set by COVAX (estimated at 20 per cent).

<sup>1</sup> UNHCR persons of concern include refugees, asylum-seekers, persons internally displaced and stateless.

### COVID-19 update



**115** countries have reported that persons of concern have been infected



Over **92,000** cases of COVID-19 and **1,299** deaths have been reported among forcibly displaced people



Over **49,000** persons of concern have been vaccinated in **94** countries

*(numbers as of 01 July)*

### Middle East and North Africa

Barriers to vaccination among persons of concern persist in some of the countries in the region, as well as misinformation around vaccines. However, as of June 2021, all countries in the MENA region where UNHCR is present have confirmed the inclusion of refugees in their national vaccination programmes. In **Algeria**, UNHCR continued its awareness raising campaign distributing information on vaccinations among persons of concern across the five camps in Tindouf.

In **Iraq**, UNHCR and WHO worked with health authorities to include refugees and IDPs in the country's National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19. In **Jordan**, thanks to UNHCR and partners' advocacy efforts, the government announced that UNHCR-issued Asylum-Seeker and Refugee Certificates that expired during the COVID-19 pandemic would be valid until 31 December 2021 to enable the access to services, including vaccines. In **Lebanon**, in mid-June, the Government approved the use of mobile vaccination units in informal refugee settlements to overcome barriers to vaccination.

### Asia and the Pacific

The region continued to face challenges related to COVID-19 transmission. In **Iran**, the COVID-19 delta variant is spreading fast threatening a new wave of infections. Shortages of COVID-19 vaccines are becoming more acute, with inoculation being halted in many provinces. UNHCR is supporting the Government to apply for the COVAX Humanitarian Buffer.

Refugees and stateless persons have been included in the national vaccination plan in **Uzbekistan**. As of 31 May, 26 stateless

persons and persons with undetermined nationality received vaccines. In **Tajikistan**, UNHCR is following up on the situation of mandate refugees whose status does not allow them to benefit from state schemes. In **Iran** and **Indonesia**, UNHCR provided multi-purpose cash assistance to combat negative socioeconomic effects of COVID-19. In **India**, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issued a Standard Operating Procedure for the vaccination of individuals without requisite government documents as a result of sustained advocacy by UNHCR.

### West and Central Africa

The region is facing a third wave of COVID-19 infections and the limited testing capacity makes it difficult to assess the full extent of the rise in COVID-19 cases. The supply in COVID-19 vaccines remains limited and heavily reliant on international support, including the COVAX initiative and bilateral donations.

UNHCR continues to mainstream COVID-19 into humanitarian response and operations engaged with governments and partners to ensure persons of concern are included in national vaccination programs. As of 25 June 2021, all 21 countries in the region have started implementing their vaccination plans which include persons of concern - so far, 3,000 refugees have been vaccinated.

In **Mali**, refugee inclusion in the vaccination programme has been confirmed notwithstanding the change of government. In **Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger**, UNHCR partnered with the African Development Bank and the G5 Sahel to support training and procurement of ambulances and medical equipment. UNHCR also focused on communication with communities to address

concerns and misinformation related to COVID-19 vaccines.

### East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes

New COVID-19 positive cases have been reported in the region with an 8 per cent increase in the week between 15 to 22 June. Eight countries have received COVAX vaccines, but most are unable to proceed with the second doses. In **Kenya**, COVID-19 testing is being done in Kakuma refugee camp using the GeneXpert machine donated by UNHCR which has boosted testing capacity and reduced turnaround time for results.

A UNHCR/World Bank survey revealed the devastating toll of COVID-19 on the living conditions of refugees in the region. UNHCR supported the manufacturing of facemasks as an income-generating activity for refugees in **Burundi**. In **Rwanda**, UNHCR and partners mobilised refugees to adhere to COVID-19 prevention and response measures, as well as enhanced community-based groups' capacity to identify and report protection cases and gender based violence (GBV).

### Southern Africa

The third wave has continued to hit many countries in the region. Rumours and misinformation along with fatigue of COVID-19 preventions measures are reported. UNHCR and partners maintained protection services and other life-saving assistance, and continued to focus on risk communication and awareness-raising on COVID-19. UNHCR is working closely with governments, the WHO, UN agencies and NGOs to secure the inclusion of persons of concern into preparedness and response measures.

In **DRC**, UNHCR and partners contributed medical equipment to protect health workers and patients in 61 health facilities, and undertook GBV awareness-raising activities related to COVID-19. In **Mozambique**, UNHCR and partners distributed surgical masks to health centres near IDP-hosting areas. In **Malawi**, UNHCR and partners worked to

ensure the education environment met all COVID-19 prevention guidelines.

### Europe

Vaccination roll-out has picked up and persons of concern are generally being included on par with citizens. Noting some vaccine hesitancy amongst persons of concern, UNHCR made additional efforts to clarify any questions and carried out COVID-19 vaccine campaigns through the channels most relied upon by communities of concern. In **Armenia** and **Cyprus**, UNHCR prepared information material on vaccines in multiple languages, and in **Austria** UNHCR produced short testimonial videos on vaccination. In **Serbia**, volunteers engaged by UNHCR and UNDP informed Roma settlements about vaccinations.

In **Italy** UNHCR followed up on disembarkations and transfers to quarantine ferries of those rescued at sea, in particular to ensure the identification and timely referral of unaccompanied children and persons with special needs.

### Americas

Displacement across the Americas increased, while contagion of the disease remained at critically high levels. UNHCR provided emergency assistance, including cash assistance, safe shelter spaces, and advocated for the inclusion of refugees in national public health responses, social safety nets and emergency assistance plans.

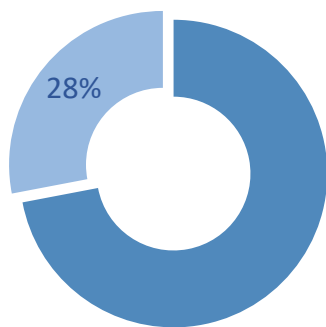
In **Argentina**, UNHCR with seven Venezuelan community organizations delivered seasonal support as part of the [2021 Bien Abrigados campaign](#) to Venezuelans and host communities. In **Costa Rica**, to support efforts against COVID-19 and prevent the spread of malaria, UNHCR donated mosquito nets and worked with the population in the border community of Isla Chica. In **Honduras**, World Vision, the Directorate for Children Youth and Family (DINAF) and UNHCR launched a campaign to raise awareness on additional child protection needs. In **Peru**, UNHCR and its partner "Encuentros" distributed home school kits for kindergartens and elementary schools.

**Financial Information**

As of 02 July 2021

**USD 924M**

UNHCR's total financial requirements for 2021 Coronavirus Emergency



■ Financial requirements ■ Total funded

**Total contributions:**

**USD 261M**

Including:

USA	\$210.3M
African Development Bank Group	\$11.9M
Canada	\$7.9M
European Union	\$5.1M
Unilever (UK)	\$4.4M
Austria	\$3.6M
Private donors	\$2.3M
China	\$2.0M
Education Cannot Wait	\$1.3M
France	\$1.2M
UN Covid-19 MPTF	\$0.7M

**Unearmarked contributions to UNHCR's 2021 programme:**

Norway 80M | Sweden 66.9M | Private donors Spain 42.6M | Netherlands 36.1M | Denmark 34.6M | Germany 26M | France 20M | Private donors Republic of Korea 17.9M | Switzerland 16.4M | Private donors Japan 14M | Ireland 12.5M | Belgium 11.9M

*Contributed without restrictions on its use, unearmarked funding allows UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees, the internally displaced, stateless persons and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk.*

**More information:**



[UNHCR COVID-19 Supplementary Appeal 2021](#)  
(launched 18 December 2020)



[Global Focus COVID-19 Situation page](#)  
(including UNHCR's COVID emergency appeal and sitreps)

**Contact:** Eva Montserrat Serrato Avila ([serratoa@unhcr.org](mailto:serratoa@unhcr.org))