

Paraguay

June 2020

Hosting some **5,298 refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants, most of them from Venezuela**, UNHCR works with the Paraguayan government and partners to **provide information on access to territory, asylum and regularization**, while providing with

its partner **basic goods and services** in cash and in-kind. Moreover, UNHCR with its partners facilitate the socio-economic integration of refugees and migrants, **guiding them to business opportunities in the local market.**

Paraguay is a State Party to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol since 1970 and acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons in 2014, and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness in 2012.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

5,298

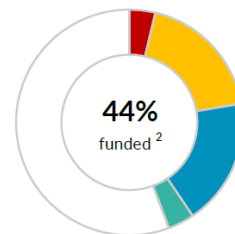
Refugees	1,016
Asylum-seekers	694
Venezuelans displaced abroad	3,588

Source: Official information provided by the Government, as of December 2019

FUNDING

USD 24 MILLION

requested for the **Regional Office including Paraguay**



ARGENTINA MCO

as of 22 July 2020

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

UNHCR PRESENCE

The UNHCR Regional Office for Southern Latin America, based in Buenos Aires, covers operations in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Staff in Argentina, Bolivia and Chile:

- 41** National staff
- 10** International staff



Photo: UNHCR supports refugees and migrants in Paraguay / ©UNHCR

Working with Partners

- UNHCR works in close coordination with Government counterparts, namely with the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the multi-sectorial National Refugee Commission (CONARE)** to provide protection and seek durable solutions for refugees. UNHCR is a member of CONARE.
- “**Semillas para la Democracia**” is UNHCR’s partner implementing projects aimed at providing basic humanitarian assistance and supporting socio-economic inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers and Venezuelan nationals.
- UNHCR works together with other UN agencies, such as UNFPA, IOM and UNAIDS. UNHCR together with IOM leads the **National Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela** established in 2019.

Main Activities

Protection & Durable Solutions

- Support the Government in the institutional **strengthening of the national asylum system**, in particular the CONARE’s Secretariat through the implementation of activities in line with the 2014 Brazil Plan of Action. CONARE, its technical Secretariat and the RSD procedure, are fully funded by the Government.
- Promote the implementation of a **border protection strategy** by CONARE and civil society at the Paraguay-Brazilian border to identify and refer persons of concern to UNHCR, prevent their *refoulement* and support them through counselling, shelter and humanitarian assistance among other services.
- Advocate for the implementation of the national law for the **protection of stateless persons** and the establishment of a statelessness determination procedure in line with the pledges made by the Government of Paraguay including those under the 2014 Brazil Plan of Action.
- Promote a greater engagement of relevant Government institutions in the development of a comprehensive strategy towards the **local integration of refugees**.
- Strengthen the engagement with the UN system to ensure the inclusion of persons of concern in the national development plan and the **UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework**.
- Provide **capacity building and training** to relevant counterparts.

Humanitarian Assistance & Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- UNHCR, through its partner *Semillas para la Democracia*, supports refugees and migrants in their integration process **providing orientation, psychosocial support, generation of integration capacities, and economic support** to access documentation, basic goods and services so they can achieve its progressive insertion into the local economy.
- “Semillas para la Democracia” has engaged four private sector partners, as well as financial service providers, specialized civil society organizations, line ministries and the UN, to **strengthen economic inclusion of persons of concern** through access to employment, self-employment and financial inclusion.
- Through a cooperation with “**Fundación Paraguaya**”, refugees and asylum-seekers with an entrepreneurial profile receive **technical and financial training and guidance** to set up a business. “Semillas para la Democracia” complements this initiative by awarding **seed capital** to entrepreneurs and offering tailored orientations on employment and capacity building opportunities available to them.

COVID-19 Situation (as of June, 2020)

- Due to the emergency situation, UNHCR partner agency provided during June **cash assistance** already to at least some **22 refugees and migrants** in Asunción and Alto Paraná.
- UNHCR and its partner provided **food kits and household/hygiene items to 71 refugees and migrants** (29 Venezuelans) in Asunción and Alto Paraná, as well **as warm clothes 13 refugees and migrants** in Asunción.
- The **National Commission for Refugees (CONARE) exceptionally intervened before the border authorities to facilitate the return of three Venezuelans who were recognized as refugees in Paraguay** in December 2019 and who in February had traveled to Bolivia, being stranded there. Likewise, **a group of eight Venezuelans (including three children)** who had been in Foz de Iguazú, Brazil since 18 March, **were authorized to enter Paraguay as part of a family reunification** process with a refugee resident in Asunción. UNHCR and partners assisted with expenses for accommodation of these groups who had to be isolated for 14 days.
- The National Commission for Refugees (CONARE) reported that so far **in 2020, 775 new asylum applications have been received**, of which 670 correspond to Venezuelans and 105 to Cubans. In the months of April, May and June, more than 200 applications were received. The Executive Secretariat pointed out that almost all the requests from the last three months correspond to people admitted before the entry restrictions to the country. CONARE continues to renew the applicants' asylum requests' proofs remotely. Besides, the documentation process (local IDs) for the persons that were granted with the refugee status in December 2019, is still ongoing and UNHCR has offered support for its completion.
- **Information material regarding the constantly evolving national response and restrictions and quarantine has been made available for refugees**, as well as organizations requesting UNHCR advice and assistance, on UNHCR's website [unhcr.help.org](https://www.unhcr.org/help)

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