



## Protection monitoring and UNHCR response in the Americas

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As a **protection-mandated agency**, monitoring of the protection environment is at the **core of UNHCR responsibilities**. As such, systematic and regular collection, verification, and analysis of information throughout the year allows the **identification of rights violations and protection risks** for populations of concern for the purpose of informing effective protection **responses based on evidence**.

UNHCR protection monitoring regular activities provide key information to understand the **evolution of the protection situation of the displaced population**, to support evidence-based decisions and actions, to engage governments and partners more effectively, to tailor advocacy strategies and messages, and to tell a compelling story about displacement.

To guarantee comprehensive and quality information, protection monitoring combines different **information-gathering methodologies**, such as individual / household surveys, observations, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, profiling, and referrals. These methodologies use an **age, genders, and diversity approach**, to guarantee a differential understanding of the protection risks of the different groups. Thus, information is collected from women, men, youth, elderly population, community leaders, and other **key informants** of various age groups, genders, and profiles, as well as other protection agencies, governments and international protection organizations.

The information resulting from that **comprehensive process** feeds the continuous analysis of the protection trends affecting a defined population in a defined context and period. That helps to determine what is improving or deteriorating in the protection environment and to enable the use of this evidence to **take action towards strengthening positive trends and mitigating negative ones**.

**20%**

of the **global population of concern to UNHCR by end 2020** is in the Americas.

**6M**

refugees and migrants from **Venezuela** globally

**597,600**

people from **El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras** have sought international protection

**121,000**

**Nicaraguans** seek asylum globally

**8.6M**

**IDPs** living throughout the region

Among the multiplicity of tools used, UNHCR designs and implements **high frequency surveys** in different countries. Learning from the experience in different countries and contexts, and also from other humanitarian actors and other institutions, UNHCR designs harmonized surveys with data that can be easily aggregated. At the same time, this framework allows for a degree of customization to adapt to country requirements. During the pandemic, the regional high frequency survey tool was implemented through different means (telephone, on-site, self-administered, integrated into case management), helping to obtain representative samples that allow inferences to the entire population of interest.

### Protection Monitoring in the Americas

**Brazil:** [Brazil Protection Monitoring Q2 2021](#)

**Colombia:** [High Frequency Survey | Ronda 2 - 2021](#)

**Ecuador:** [Ecuador Monitoreo de Protección Q1 2021](#)

**Panama:** [Estudio de ACNUR revela que refugiados en Panamá enfrentan dificultades para acceder a derechos básicos](#)

## VENEZUELA SITUATION

Population outflows from the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** towards Latin America and the Caribbean continued as mobility restrictions and border closures were lifted, only affected by internal mobility restrictions linked to the COVID-19 pandemic inside the country. **Loss of livelihoods, evictions**, increasing **xenophobia** in conjunction with a **grim socio-economic environment** is triggering secondary movements of Venezuelans already settled in host countries.

The remaining **border restrictions** in place resulted in many Venezuelans with no option but to cross through irregular pathways, which exposes them to additional risks like gender-based violence, **exploitation**, and physical risks. Floods, heavy winters, and other **climate factors** affecting the routes also put Venezuelans in danger as they limit their mobility and force them to transit less known and perilous areas where they can easily get lost or become stranded. In **Chile**, so far at least 18 Venezuelans have died in their route across the border in 2021.

These factors, compounded with the **ongoing pandemic**, present serious humanitarian and protection challenges. **Shelters** in some border areas exceeded their capacities, forcing people to sleep on the street despite the weather conditions. Rising **xenophobia** in host communities creates a hostile and sometimes violent environment, limiting Venezuelans from accessing rights and services such as housing, health, and education.

Still, **solidarity prevailed** despite the challenges and socio-economic issues currently affecting the region. Several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have initiated large-scale **regularization programmes**, which will help refugees and migrants overcome the displacement cycle. Registration and issuance of recognized documents allow people on the move to access health systems and job market, among other services.

As of October, more than 1.4 million Venezuelans had registered to receive the Temporary Protection Status (TPS) in **Colombia**, out of which almost 500,000 completed the in-person biometric registration stage. The first TPS was granted to a Venezuelan engineer on 13 October and the government announced that it expects to emit 800,000 TPS permits by the end of 2021.

In **Dominican Republic**, half of the Venezuelans living in the country have begun their path to regularization and the government re-opened registration to reach the remaining Venezuelan population, which consists of a total of 100,000 people. In **Ecuador**, it was announced that the country is working on a plan to regularize 450,000 Venezuelans through a program that would allow them to fully integrate into the country.



4.9M

refugees and migrants from **Venezuela** in Latin America

952,200

registered **asylum claims**



186,800

recognized **refugees**

+2.6M

**permits, and other stay visas** issued to Venezuelans

## UNHCR RESPONSE

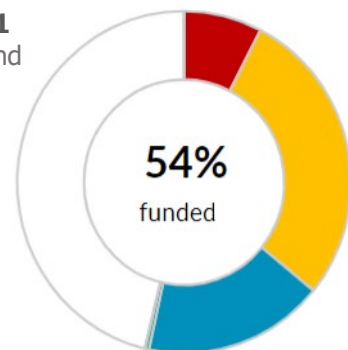
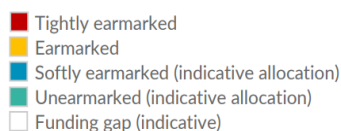
UNHCR supports the Government of **Colombia** to **implement the TPS**, which will grant **temporary protection status** to Venezuelans in the country for a period of 10 years. UNHCR is currently aiding in the **registration process** through mobile units for the biometric registration, which facilitate the access for Venezuelans in urban and hard-to-reach areas, and setting up registration points, among which a call centre with nationwide coverage. In **Peru**, UNHCR remains in constant communication with Venezuelan asylum-seekers via e-mail and WhatsApp to guide them on the procedures for obtaining the Humanitarian Residency.

To promote **integration** and culturally appropriate social services and practices, UNHCR in **Brazil** partnered with the Ministries of Women, Family and Human Rights, and Citizenship to publish the guides "**Reference Guide for Social Work with Indigenous Refugees and Migrants**" and the "**Community Protection Guide for Indigenous Refugees**".

Access to **education** and school allows Venezuelan children in host countries to fully integrate, especially in those host countries where **language** might be a barrier. In **Guyana**, UNHCR ensures that over 150 children and adults can access English classes to foster their inclusion and rebuild their lives. **Sports** are also a way for refugees and migrants to integrate into their host community. In **Trinidad and Tobago**, UNHCR sponsors the Challengers Volleyball Club, where Venezuelans and members of the community play.

In South America, during the **winter** months, UNHCR in **Argentina** provided warm **clothing and blankets** to around 4,000 Venezuelan refugees and migrants as part of the "**Bien Abrigados**" campaign. In **Chile**, Venezuelans in the north and south of the country received **winter kits** with clothing, masks, and blankets. As the flows in the northern borders increase and create complex situations, UNHCR, in coordination with local authorities, is stepping up the provision of shelter, supplies such as hygiene kits and food, and legal and psychosocial assistance.

**UNHCR urgently needs in 2021**  
USD **315.2 million** to save lives and protect the most vulnerable **Venezuelans in the Americas**



Funding Update: 16/11/2021

## INSIDE VENEZUELA

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the situation in **Venezuela** and increased the needs inside the country as **livelihoods** and **access to basic services** continued to deteriorate. The [National Survey of Living Conditions](#) has revealed that in the past year, 500,000 children and adolescents have dropped out of the school system and that 94.5% of Venezuelans live in poverty, with 76.6% living in conditions of extreme poverty.

UNHCR works in **71 prioritised communities** in Venezuela, mainly in **border areas**, and has also been supporting communities affected by **natural disasters**. In the western part of the country, as part of an inter-agency response, UNHCR distributed **core-relief items** to over 2,000 people affected by heavy floods in August.

Within the framework of the **Humanitarian Response Plan**, UNHCR leads the Protection, and the Shelter, Energy and non-food items (NFIs) Clusters, ensuring that protection is mainstreamed in all humanitarian interventions, supporting the rehabilitation of safe spaces, health centres and temporary shelters and delivering material assistance to persons in need.

## COLOMBIA SITUATION

Forced displacements inside **Colombia** increased in areas controlled or disputed by irregular armed groups, with the Pacific Coast and north-western areas remaining disproportionately affected by **displacement and confinement events**. The challenges in the implementation of **Colombia's 2016 Peace Agreement** increased during the prolonged confinement set in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic as armed groups took advantage to exert more control over communities.

**Indigenous communities** and **communities of African descent** continue to be the most affected by the events. According to UNHCR, as of September, 51,700 people have been uprooted since the start of 2021 in 106 large-group displacement events with a continuous deterioration in Cauca. In the municipality of [Argelia](#), where there was a displacement of 453 people in September due to the clash of armed groups, UNHCR supported local authorities to identify **protection risks and needs**.



During a visit to **Colombia**, Assistant High Commissioner for Operations, Raouf Mazou, [visited](#) the Social Cultural and Memory House (CORMEPAZ) where victims rebuild the memory of conflict in the city and contribute to the search for truth.

*Want to know more?*  
Visit UNHCR's data portal:  
[Country - Colombia \(unhcr.org\)](#)



**8.2M**  
**42,345**

**IDPs** since 1985\*  
people **displaced in 2021** (Jan - Jul)



**615,800**  
**68,368**

people affected by forced displacement since 2016  
Colombian refugees in **Ecuador** by March 2021

## DON'T MISS



The collaboration with Pictoline for **#UNHCR70**



**UNHCR** urges support to address worsening **gender-based violence** impact on **displaced women and girls**



## CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO

Growing numbers of people in Central America are being **forced to leave their homes** by a confluence of factors that have led to an escalating situation of chronic violence and insecurity. **Poverty, inequality**, the widespread damage caused by **storms** Eta and Iota, the impact of **climate change, food insecurity** and the **socio-economic impact of the pandemic** are overlapping and intensifying population movements in the region, while posing serious risks for the overall situation of human rights and stability in the sub-region. Political instability has grown in the region due to the climate of distrust towards the electoral process in **Honduras**, the constitutional reforms promoted by the government in **El Salvador**, and the dismissal of the head of the Special Prosecutor's Office Against Impunity in **Guatemala**.

**Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs)** have been launched for **El Salvador, Guatemala** and **Honduras**, including violence and displacement as relevant dimensions of the **ongoing multidimensional crises** affecting these Central American countries. UNHCR requires \$33 million for El Salvador, \$45 million for Guatemala and \$36 million for Honduras to **support protection activities** aimed at benefiting some of the 8.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance across the three countries (**25% of the total population**). In a briefing to donors on the HRPs, Deputy High Commissioner, Kelly Clements, stressed i) the fact that the plans integrate the violence and displacement dimension of the crisis; ii) the importance of linking plans with the MIRPS and the need of broader cooperation to combat underlying factors; iii) and the relevance of ensuring long-term cooperation with a variety of actors, under the leadership of countries and international support.


The international community reaffirmed its solidarity with forcibly displaced people in **Central America** and **Mexico** through the **Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS)**. The **Solidarity Event** organized by the governments of **Spain, Costa Rica** and **Guatemala**, with the support of UNHCR and the **Organization of American States (OAS)** led to new commitments on both the humanitarian and development fronts with substantive contributions totalling US\$110 million. **Canada** has taken the leadership of the MIRPS Support Platform focusing on the empowerment and protection of women and girls on the move.

The MIRPS **Working Groups** finalized their reports which include **recommendations** that will guide both the 2021 Political Declaration and the 2022 workplan. The ministerial-level MIRPS Annual Meeting will be held on November 30th and **Honduras** has confirmed its will to take the **MIRPS Presidency in 2022**. Initial meetings with the Technical Secretariat have started for the elaboration of a workplan.

The number of **individuals seeking asylum** in the region has significantly **increased**. **Mexico** reached a new record with 108,187 asylum claims, as of 30 October. During that month, 12,994 asylum claims were filed, 4,688 in **Chiapas** (72% from Haitian nationals). In August, 13,071 claims were registered setting a record number of asylum application for a single month.

 **597,600**

people from **El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras** displaced worldwide

 **318,500**  
**248,049**

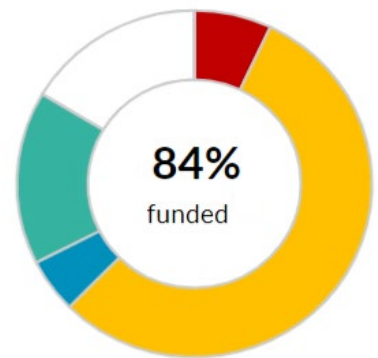
**IDPs in Honduras and El Salvador**

**refugees and asylum-seekers in Central America and Mexico**

In **Panama**, as of 30 September, more than 91,300 people in **mixed movements** have transited through the **Darien Gap**, mostly Haitians from **Chile** and **Brazil**, followed by an increasing presence of Venezuelans, Cubans, and people from Asian and African countries.

### UNHCR urgently needs in 2021

USD **178.1 million** to save lives and protect the most vulnerable **Venezuelans in the Americas**



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

Funding Update: 16/11/2021

### UNHCR RESPONSE

To facilitate information on the right to seek asylum in **Mexico**, a **community centre** was inaugurated in **Tijuana** offering to support refugees and asylum-seekers in online processes regarding proof of identity, pre-registration to initiate an asylum claim, as well as job applications. The centre also provides psychosocial assistance and referrals for asylum-seekers and refugees with special protection needs. Furthermore, in **Baja California** and **Sonora**, UNHCR coordinates an **interagency response** to support authorities and civil society in improving reception arrangements and provide humanitarian assistance and information on asylum to people in **mixed movements**.

**Communication strategies** have been developed in **Costa Rica** through a radio program called "**Integrando Voces**" launched with the **Upala Cultural Community Radio** to disseminate relevant information on access to rights and other issues of relevance.

In **El Salvador**, to strengthen joint efforts in the prevention of forced recruitment and in ensuring access to rights, the **policy for the protection of children** has been developed in the municipality of **San Miguel**, and in **Santa Ana** and **San Salvador** opportunities for the protection of youth and adolescents have been identified in collaboration with local authorities.

In **Izabal (Guatemala)**, the construction of a **specialized mental health clinic for children** started. This clinic will provide protection and enable specialized and high-quality mental health and psychosocial support for children at risk, especially unaccompanied children and children who have been affected by or have witnessed violence. [UNHCR's 2021 Youth with Refugees Art Contest](#) awarded special mentions to Sara from **Mexico** and Alejandro from **Guatemala**, based on their **football designs** in the #dreamball category.

In **Guatemala**, [six mobile units](#) started operating in different parts of the country to promote the **prevention of sexual and gender-based violence**, exploitation, and human trafficking, as well as to provide information, orientation, and referral services.

**Interagency campaigns** have been launched to promote peaceful coexistence in host communities. In **Honduras**, "Respiramos Miskitu" focuses on host communities with high rates of Miskitu population, and in **Panama**, the "Somos Lo Mismo" conducted a social experiment to generate empathy for the forcibly displaced. The campaign [video](#) has reached over 57,300 views so far.



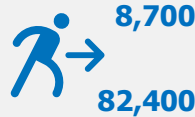
In **El Salvador**, UNHCR set up a **hotline** to provide **information** to those forcibly displaced inside the country. Read [more](#) about this project, which helps the office stay in touch with internally displaced persons while maintaining COVID-19 regulations. © UNHCR/Oscar Ramírez

## NICARAGUA SITUATION

The deterioration of the political social, and economic situation in **Nicaragua** deepened with the November **elections**. Operating permits of several NGOs working on **human rights**, environment, poverty alleviation, health, and education were cancelled. Thirty-nine people, including seven presidential candidates, were arbitrarily arrested in the run-up to elections. The **Secretary-General**, concerned about the situation in the country, [called](#) on the authorities to fully respect Nicaragua's international human rights obligations.

**Contingency plans** have been developed in **Honduras** and **Costa Rica** to respond to the possible increase of displaced people from Nicaragua in the region. The number of Nicaraguans entering **Honduras** through irregular crossing points has increased in October after a temporary slow-down due to high river levels that impeded crossings by foot. In **Costa Rica**, the number of requests for appointments to lodge formal asylum claims increased from an average of 4,343 during the first six months of the year, to 7,084 in July, 12,024 in August, 13,379 in September. **New routes** have been identified in **San Dimas** and **Los Chiles**, Costa Rica, possibly related to security concerns in other border areas.

In **Guatemala**, UNHCR assisted Nicaraguans at the border with **Mexico**, while UNHCR in **Costa Rica** provides support to register and refer asylum-seekers for humanitarian assistance according to identified protection needs and to ensure access to rights.



**Nicaraguans** recognized as refugees worldwide

**Nicaraguans** seek asylum in **Costa Rica**

### Livelihoods and economic inclusion

Integration of asylum-seekers and refugees from Nicaragua in **Costa Rica** includes fostering socioeconomic inclusion through [programmes](#) such as: **Live Integration, Living Integration Seal, Integrate to Employment**

*Want to know more?* Read the regional report on [Livelihoods](#)

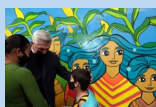
**ALSO READ:** UNHCR - UN agencies call for protection measures and a comprehensive regional approach for **Haitians on the move**

UNHCR is supporting the [response](#) after the devastating earthquake that shocked Haiti last August. The office is following the distribution of core relief items. UNHCR works with other agencies in the protection response, with particular interest in the prevention of gender-based violence.

**STORIES from the field**



**Honduran** social worker and director of *Jóvenes Contra la Violencia* honoured as [Nansen Award 2021](#) regional winner for his courage and dedication in challenging gang violence that blights the lives of many young Hondurans.



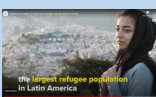
**High Commissioner for Refugees** [reiterates](#) the need to continue strengthening the asylum system and adopt immigration alternatives for people with other protection needs in Mexico



UNHCR welcomes the [protection and solutions recommendations](#) made by the UN Secretary-General's **High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement**.



UNHCR [concerned](#) about difficult conditions of indigenous Venezuelans in **Guyana**.



Afghan teen makes her [mark](#) on **Ecuadorian** city that gave her refuge.

*Did you know that...?* A [regional report](#) by UNHCR and the Latin American Network of People with Disabilities and their families, or [RIADIS](#), reveals how the **COVID-19 pandemic aggravated the challenges faced by refugees and displaced population living with a disability.**



## The importance of flexible funding for UNHCR's response

UNHCR's overall requirements for its **comprehensive response in the Americas** currently totals **\$728.3 million**, of which **57% is already funded**. Funding shortcomings may jeopardize critical activities such as the provision of **lifesaving assistance** and emergency shelter; the provision of **unrestricted cash** to meet essential needs and to support **health responses**. This could have a direct effect on the ability of those who have fled to access host countries, asylum systems and mechanisms aimed at preventing gender-based violence. Also, funding shortcomings could hinder refugees' efforts to integrate into their host communities and earn a dignified living and stymie efforts to tackle xenophobia and discrimination throughout the region.

**UNHCR is grateful for the critical and generous support** provided by donors to operations in the **AMERICAS**, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked funding.

Thanks to all **our donors in 2021** (as of 16 November)

Argentina | Austria | Belgium | Brazil | Canada | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Greece | Guyana | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Latvia | Luxembourg | Mexico | Norway | Netherlands | Portugal | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Slovakia | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Arab Emirates | United Kingdom | United States of America | International Organization for Migration | Migration MPTF | UN CERF | UN Children Fund | UN Covid-19 MPTF | UN Peacebuilding Fund | UN Programme On HIV/AIDS | UN Trust Fund for Human Security | UN Women | Unesco | United Nations Environment Programme |

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