

ARGENTINA – COVID-19

22 May 2020 | Update #10

Key Figures

- **185,711 persons of concern to UNHCR**, including 3,881 refugees, 8,044 asylum-seekers, 443 others of concern, and 176,343 Venezuelans displaced abroad. So far, **no cases of coronavirus have been reported among refugees, asylum-seekers, others of concern and Venezuelans displaced in Argentina.**
- **Funding: US\$23.6 million** are required for the operation in 2020, and it has **only covered 26 per cent** of the funds required for its operational needs. While seeking funds to carry out COVID-19 preventive measures and response activities. UNHCR stresses the need for support to be in addition to the existing critical funding requirements laid out in UNHCR's regular Global Appeal for 2020. **For the revised US\$755 million appealed for UNHCR's operations in affected countries by COVID-19** until the end of the year, as part of UN inter-agency Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP), **31 per cent has been already funded or pledged**, thanks to the generous and timely contributions of donors.

Situational highlights

- **A total of 10,649 confirmed cases of coronavirus as of 22 May have been reported in Argentina and 433 deaths, with local transmission cases already.**
- **All staff in Argentina continue teleworking mode**, complying with the sanitary restrictions imposed in the country. Partners continue providing remote assistance to refugees, asylum-seekers, Venezuelan displaced and others of concern in Buenos Aires, La Quiaca, Puerto Iguazú, Posadas and San Salvador de Jujuy.
- **In Argentina, two months after the start of compulsory isolation, the government remains concerned about sectors that threaten to derail its plan to contain the virus – particularly prisons, nursing homes and vulnerable neighbourhoods, as the population has been partially returning to work over the past days.** President, provincial governor and city mayor agreed that there is "no margin" to further liberalise quarantine measures after 24 May in Greater Buenos Aires, given current situation, and that quarantine will be most likely extended until 8 June. On 19 May, Argentina's second-city, Córdoba, resumed lockdown after virus cases spiked. During the week, President Alberto Fernández announced that Argentine researchers had developed a new fast and efficient kit to test for Covid-19 rapidly, expecting the first 10,000 tests to be produced in the next 10 days, while capacity should be ramped up to 100,000 weekly tests in the short term.
- **On 12 May, UNHCR issued a joint press release with WHO announcing the signature of a new agreement to strengthen and advance public health services for the millions of forcibly displaced people around the world.** The two organizations are working side by side to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure that forcibly displaced people can access the health services they need, to keep safe from COVID-19 and other health challenges.
- **On 21 May, UNHCR also issued new guidelines on the loss and deprivation of nationality.** The guidance is intended to assist governments and policy makers in interpreting relevant international law, and another press release on 14 May urging for the prioritization of mental health support in coronavirus response.

UNHCR's response

- **UNHCR supported a "community kitchen" with food products in the parish of Caacupé in the framework of the pandemic response in Buenos Aires, Argentina.** Moreover, UNHCR along with national authorities delivered some 360 food boxes to refugees and migrants in the greater Buenos Aires area over the last week, as part of the #seamosuno initiative (faith-based organizations alliance with the private sector).
- **During the second week of May, UNHCR partners provided with assistance in cash to some 356 refugees and migrants.** UNHCR continued to provide shelter as well to some 102 vulnerable refugees and migrants, with two new



entries during the same period. UNHCR partners also provided advice to some 198 Venezuelans, 90 of them who got in touch with partners for the first time during last week.

- **Due to the increase on online attention that have exceeded the response capacities of the UNHCR team in Buenos Aires, Argentina, UNHCR will temporarily suspend the reception of new requests through WhatsApp and e-mail that had been set up since the beginning of the emergency.** UNHCR



CONSULTA NACIONAL Argentina

Plan de acción para la recuperación socioeconómica de las personas refugiadas, solicitantes de asilo, y otras personas de interés del ACNUR, en las fases de emergencia y post emergencia de la crisis regional COVID-19

20 MAYO Webex 10.30 a 13hs
Actividad libre y gratuita

Sesión de apertura de 10.30 a 11hs a cargo de:

- Juan Carlos Murillo, Representante Regional del ACNUR para el Sur de América Latina
- Roberto Valent, Coordinador Residente del Sistema de las Naciones Unidas en Argentina
- Alfredo López Rita, Presidente de la CONARE
- Maddalena Pezzotti, Jefa de la Unidad de Soluciones Duraderas de la Oficina Regional del ACNUR

Grupos de discusión en salas virtuales separadas de 11 a 12.30hs con modalidad de diálogo abierto y moderación a cargo del equipo de soluciones duraderas del ACNUR.

Plenario y conclusiones de 12.30 a 13hs a cargo de los relatores de los grupos de discusión.

 UNHCR ACNUR
La Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados

will now focus on the management of a backlog of approximately 200 cases and on the redesign of the care scheme, in general. By 21 May, UNHCR had provided advice to and referred for further assistance some 463 cases in Argentina, representing 1,135 refugees and migrants (97 per cent from Venezuela).

- **UNHCR continues supporting the National Migration Directorate (DNM)** with procurement of four sanitizing booths to be set up at border points and 287 division crystals for attention to public desks at DNM's facilities.
- **UNHCR is following up on a case of three separated Venezuelan children** who entered Argentina in early March, along with the national authorities and partners.
- **UNHCR carried out national e-consultations with key counterparts to discuss on potential projects to implement for the socio-economic recuperation in favour of refugees and migrants after the pandemic.** The virtual consultation involved more than 90 participants from government institutions, international organizations, civil society, private sector, refugees and migrants. Conclusions will be shared shortly.

Special thanks to major donors who have provided funds for the Argentina Regional Office and at the regional and global level in 2020:

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