

“By including refugees in their vaccine distribution, countries mitigate the risks associated with exclusion and discrimination.”

Filippo Grandi

UN High Commissioner for Refugees

You can read the press release about World's Health Day [HERE](#).



Situational Highlights

Since 1 January, 2021, more than 19.7 million cases of COVID-19 have been reported in the **Americas**, and over 475,000 people have died from the illness, according to PAHO/WHO. Throughout March, transmission remained intense, with an average of around 1 million new cases reported every seven days. **Brazil, Peru, Chile, and Paraguay** reported the highest death rates in the region. Several countries in the region, including **Uruguay and Cuba**, are experiencing worse outbreaks in 2021 than any they grappled with at any point throughout 2020. Despite COVAX's deliver in March of more than 2.5 million doses to 17 countries throughout the region, vaccination campaigns have shown little progress in Latin America and the Caribbean.

With elections taking place in several countries, social tension and xenophobia have emerged amidst protests against government mismanagement of the pandemic response, including vaccine-related scandals.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC, stated in March that the [coronavirus pandemic is causing an unprecedented rise in poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), with **22 million people entering the ranks of the poor in 2020**.

As infection rates rise, countries are tightening border restrictions. According to UNHCR's monitoring of the pandemic's impact on protection, by the end of March, 10 countries in the region were denying access to asylum seekers, while five other countries have kept in place existing restrictions that make exceptions for asylum seekers. In some 17 countries in the Americas, the asylum system is either fully or partially operational. Learn more in the [COVID-19 Platform - Temporary Measures and Impact on Protection \(unhcr.org\)](#).

In a [press release on 1 April, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, IACHR](#), expressed its concern about the **growing militarization of borders** and

restrictions on access to territory and protection procedures in the Americas. The IACHR noted with particular concern cases in which the armed forces were being increasingly relied upon to ensure compliance with containment measures, including borders closures, in countries such as **Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru**.

The United States' Department of Homeland Security announced that it was extending **Temporary Protection Status** to Venezuelan nationals through **September, 2022**. As a result, an estimated 320,000 Venezuelans who can demonstrate continuous residence in the U.S. as of 8 March, 2021, are now eligible to apply to live and work legally in the country for 18 months.

By 31 March, UNHCR and its partners had provided assistance to 5,346 asylum-seekers attempting to enter the U.S. under the **Migrant Protection Protocol - MPP** scales down.



Operational Context

Despite the efforts of some countries in the region to limit movements by putting border controls into place, crossings continue, increasingly via more dangerous irregular channels. In a recent protection monitoring [survey of Venezuelans on the move in northern Peru](#), UNCHR found that over 65% of respondents reported having suffered incidents such as robbery, threats or gender-based violence. Around 80% reported having slept in the street at some point in their journey, and most said they were having only one meal a day, or even no daily meals.



UNHCR has seen an uptick in the number of people travelling in mixed movements in countries including **Panama and Mexico**. Shelters are filling up with unaccompanied children and family groups, even as refugee and migrant populations are being pushed out of public spaces, with reports of violent incidents in **Ecuador** and other countries. Concerns over push-backs and returns have increased in step with the militarization of borders and the increase in irregular flows in the **Caribbean, Peru, Chile and Brazil**.

In northern **Central America**, violence meted out by criminal groups continues to drive displacement —both internal and external. Assaults against women, disappearances and other forms of gender-based violence remain high, particularly among communities at heightened risk in **El Salvador**.

Some refugees have already been vaccinated in **Brazil and Guyana**, and **22 countries have confirmed the inclusion of refugees in their vaccination plans**, including **Argentina, Colombia, Mexico and Panama**. Nevertheless, effective access to health services remains a challenge for growing numbers of people in irregular situations.

UNHCR's response in the Americas



Since March, 2020, UNHCR has been working to provide emergency assistance, including safe shelter spaces and cash-based assistance, as well as to advocate for the inclusion of refugees in national public health responses, social safety nets and emergency assistance plans. In 2021, UNHCR in the Americas adopted a two-fold strategy aimed at providing immediate assistance for basic need and protection, as well as promoting **mid- to long-term solutions with a focus on regularization and inclusion**. UNHCR's advocacy for the inclusion of people of concern in national plans is key, particularly amid the coronavirus pandemic. The scope and success of such initiatives will depend on the amount of funding the region receives, both in terms of humanitarian grants and financial loans to receiving States.

Response in progress: 1 January - 31 March 2021

 31,653 people supported with health consultations (primary, secondary, tertiary, as well as mental, sexual and reproductive health).	 233,932 individuals receiving Non-Food Items (NFIs).	 44,330 individuals receiving legal assistance.
 38,295 people of concern to UNHCR benefitting from improved access to safe water.	 35,078 people receiving cash grants or vouchers.	 5,700 children and adolescents of concern to UNHCR provided with education support (materials, enrollment support, or other).
 91,239 people benefitting from improved hygiene conditions (including through the distribution of hygiene kits, the construction of latrines and/or other interventions).	 83,906 individuals registered by UNHCR and/or implementing partner(s) - age/gender breakdown.	 989 survivors of sexual and gender-based violence supported by UNHCR and/or implementing partners (with legal assistance, psychosocial counselling, or by being provided a safe space).
 63,084 people of concern to UNHCR supported with shelter, settlement or temporary collective accommodation solutions.	 288,628 people provided with information by UNHCR and/or implementing partners (in-person or remotely, ex. Hotlines/call centres, WhatsApp, etc.).	 5,648 children supported by UNHCR and/or implementing partners (via case management).

In Focus

A **Mobile Classroom in Bolivia** provides educational services to 130 refugee and migrant children.

In **Curacao**, refugees and migrants received 1,240 health consultations.

The **Honduran** IDP-led organization Jovenes Contra la Violencia (**Youth Against Violence**) won the UNHCR NGO Innovation Award in recognition of the group's response to COVID-19 at local and national levels.

In **Mexico**, 7,901 asylum-seekers benefitted from cash assistance aimed at helping them meet their basic needs, as well as contributions toward their housing and utility bills.

In **Panama**, donated mobile clinics extended access and coverage of health services to the population, including refugees, migrants and host communities.

Stories from the field

The solidarity of Hondurans four decades later

In the municipality of San Marcos de Ocotepeque, Honduras, there are only a few vestiges of the refugee camp that once housed more than 25,000 Salvadorans fleeing war in their country in the 1980s. For Jimmy Linares, a teacher from San Marcos, the memories of the camp are still vivid. He remembers that when he was just four years old, he asked for a tour around the camp in one of the cars of the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR.

On several occasions Jimmy sat next to Roberto Meier, a UNHCR officer who at that time began his international career. Nearly four decades later, Meier meets again Jimmy and other members of the San Marcos community in a symbolic encounter for reflection on the past and the solidarity of the community's response to Salvadoran refugees. Read the full story [HERE](#).



Coordination and partnership



R4V

The **R4V Regional Platform** virtually hosted its **15th plenary meeting**, which was open to all stakeholders in the regional, national and sub-regional platforms, as well as those playing a role in the RMRP 2021. Over 230 people participated in the meeting. Topics included major

regional developments – such as Colombia's plan to regularize Venezuelans through a special, temporary decade-long permit – as well as preparations for the June 2021 donor's conference that's being hosted by Canada and planned with the support of the R4V Regional Platform.

MIRPS

MIRPS States held their first virtual meeting in 2021. Representatives from national technical teams approved the annual plan and started joining the thematic working groups. States that are part of the MIRPS Support Platform held the kick-off session for the roundtables on strengthening asylum systems ahead of

the first working session, in April. Guatemala, as the MIRPS pro tempore Presidency, and Spain, as the Support Platform's Presidency, agreed to strengthen efforts to engage with and leverage support from interested states, regional institutions and other stakeholders, calling for a comprehensive international response.



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UNHCR AND THE UN SYSTEM IN CHILE AND MEXICO LAUNCH A JOINT INITIATIVE TO FOSTER THE SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS.



UNHCR AND THE WORLD BANK LAUNCH RESEARCH ON INTEGRATION OF VENEZUELAN REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN BRAZIL, analyzing challenges to integrate in education, social protection programs and find a job.



Funding the response in 2021

UNHCR is grateful for the critical and generous support provided by donors to the Coronavirus Emergency Situation globally, and to the Americas, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked funding.

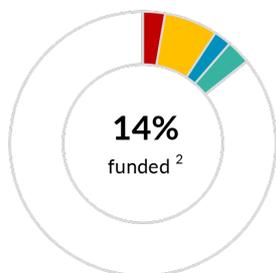
THE AMERICAS

as of 20 April 2021

\$ 712.3 million

UNHCR's financial requirements 2021¹

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



Notes:
1. The financial requirements for The Americas are for the operations in Belize, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America and Venezuela.
2. The percentage funded (14%) and total funding amount (\$101,658,129) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$610,691,491 representing 86% of the financial requirements.

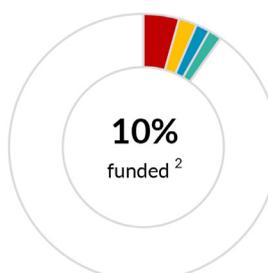
CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTARY NEEDS

as of 20 April 2021

\$ 445.0 million

UNHCR's financial requirements 2021^{1,3}

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



Notes:
1. The financial requirements of the Coronavirus Emergency include requirements in Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina Regional Office, Armenia, Aruba, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic Rep of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Italy, MCO, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, New Or, Additional Mandate Nam, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, MCO, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, The Republic of the Congo, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
2. The percentage funded (10%) and total funding amount (\$44,470,175) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$410,529,825 representing 90% of the financial requirements.
3. For 2021, \$469 million of UNHCR's COVID-19-related needs has been mainstreamed into its Global Appeal and \$455 million are supplementary needs bringing the total COVID-19 related requirements in 2021 to \$924 million.

Do you want more info? Check <https://reporting.unhcr.org/>

UNHCR is grateful for the critical and generous support provided by donors to the Coronavirus Emergency Situation globally, and to the Americas, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked funding.

Thanks to donors in 2021:



And to our private donors:

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