



“ Half of the world’s **refugee children** were already **out of school**, (...) After everything they have endured, **we cannot rob them of their futures** by denying them an **education today**. Despite the enormous challenges posed by the pandemic, with **greater international support** to refugees and their host communities, we can **expand innovative ways to protect** the critical gains made in **refugee education** over the past years ”

Filippo Grandi

UN High Commissioner for Refugees

You can read this Press Release on the Education Report [HERE](#).



Situational Highlights

Brazil has held onto its tragic title as home to both the world’s second-highest number of coronavirus cases and deaths, after the U.S., with over 3.7 million confirmed positive cases (690,000 of them active) and over 117,000 deaths as of 27 August. **Peru** has the world’s highest per-capita death rate from the virus, with 85.8 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants. As of 26 August, **Venezuela** had reported 41,965 cases, and in **Honduras**, high COVID-19 infection rates have been compounded by spiralling numbers of dengue cases, (with 18,000 cases of the mosquito-borne illness).

As for COVID-19-related restrictions on movement, the **United States** agreed with **Canada** and **Mexico** to extend restriction on non-essential travel until 21 September, 2020, and **Brazil** also extended its restriction on the entry of foreign nationals by one additional month. **Colombia** announced it will begin transitioning from total lockdown to selective isolation starting on 1 September, although the border will remain closed until 1 October. **Panama** is also lifting restrictions, although its airport will remain closed until 21 September. In **Ecuador**, the Constitutional Court ruled against the extension of the state of

emergency. **Paraguay** reinstated quarantine in the capital, Asunción. In **Venezuela**, restrictions are also being eased in the capital, Caracas, whereas strict lockdown measures remain in place in border states.

Severe weather continues to impact **Central America**, buffeting communities already struggling to recover from tropical storm Amanda, the fallout from COVID-19, as well as widespread violence. Tropical storm Laura hit **Haiti, Dominican Republic** and **Cuba**.



Challenges



The socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has hit Nicaraguan refugees and asylum seekers in Costa Rica particularly hard, with more than three-quarters of respondents to a recent humanitarian assessment reporting they are only able to eat only once or twice daily. Ahead of the pandemic only three percent of refugees reported eating once a day or less, thanks to effective local integration initiatives in Costa Rica. However, that number has now more than quadrupled, to 14 per cent, according to the [humanitarian assessment](#), conducted in July and August, as part of efforts to help Costa Rican authorities address the needs of the more than 81,000 Nicaraguans who have sought international protection in the country. Given the stark results, UNHCR is concerned that due to the pandemic hunger could drive especially vulnerable Nicaraguans to return home under adverse conditions. Nicaraguan refugees and asylum seekers elsewhere in the region – in countries including Panama, Guatemala and Mexico - have also reported facing hardships including the loss of livelihoods, eviction and hunger.

Despite the pandemic, **Brazil** in August announced that 7,787 Venezuelans had been [recognized as refugees](#) as part of an accelerated procedure that began last December. The latest announcement comes on the heels of three previous prima facie recognition decisions benefitting Venezuelan asylum seekers. It brings the number of Venezuelans recognized as refugees to around 46,000 – the largest number in Latin America.

UNHCR’s response in the Americas



Despite the pandemic-related restrictions, UNHCR is 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. Urgent action is required to help the most vulnerable refugees and IDPs, particularly those in countries where they are unable to access state-run social protection schemes. With the coronavirus crisis exacerbating already dire humanitarian needs globally, timely and flexible support from governments, the private sector and individuals remains critical. See [HERE](#) an update on UNHCR COVID-19 emergency response in the Americas since March, 2020.



UPDATES FROM COUNTRIES

(Please note that the list is not exhaustive and mostly reflects the reporting period.)



Brazil: UNHCR participated in “Quarentena sem Violência,” or “Quarantine without Violence,” a campaign in the far-northern city of Boa Vista aimed at preventing domestic violence during lockdown. The initiative – organized by the Casa da Mulher Brasileira and supported by UNHCR, UNFPA, and partner organization AVSI – included the donation and distribution of kits containing face masks, condoms and personal hygiene products, as well as information on local support network services for those suffering from domestic abuse. The kits were distributed to women living in some UNHCR-managed shelters, as well as to local women.



Chile: As part of UNHCR’s response to the additional hardships that refugees and migrants face as a result of the Southern Hemisphere winter, 648 families (2,472 individuals) were given multipurpose digital vouchers. The vouchers were distributed in 14 cities, including the metropolitan areas of Santiago, Arica and Antofagasta. UNHCR also took part in a public-private campaign delivering food to vulnerable refugees, migrants and members of host communities. During the month of August, some 238 families received support. Other organizations that participated in the campaign included IOM, JMS, the Archbishopric of Antofagasta, the Catholic University of the North, the Association of Industries of Antofagasta, and the Association of Companies.



Colombia: UNHCR helped authorities beef up the coronavirus health response in reception areas for refugees and migrants in the southwestern department of Putumayo, along the border with Ecuador. Three Refugee Housing Units, or RHUs, were provided to the department’s Health Secretariat and the Red Cross. Additionally, UNHCR distributed hygiene kits to displaced people, refugees and migrants in the eastern department Arauca, along the border with Venezuela. In the eastern border city of Cucuta, 10 portable hand washing units were delivered to departmental health authorities. UNHCR is also working with partners to provide sexual and reproductive health in Arauca and Cucuta.



Mexico: To support Mexican authorities’ COVID-19 response, UNHCR installed 40 RHUs in 21 different locations throughout the country. The agency also delivered medical supplies to hospitals in three municipalities in the eastern coastal state of Veracruz. Additionally, 6,000 families, or more than 11,000 individuals, were provided with cash support to help them weather the socio-economic fallout from the pandemic.



North of Central America: In **El Salvador**, 160 supermarket vouchers and 8,592 bars of soap were delivered in several municipalities hard-hit by tropical storm Amanda and the COVID-19 pandemic. In **Honduras**, UNHCR and partners commemorated International Youth Day with online activities that brought together more than 2,000 young people who are part of the *Jóvenes contra la Violencia* and *Red Presión* networks. In **Guatemala**, UNHCR, the Ministry of Health and community leaders installed a RHu at the El Ceibo border crossing, on the northern border with Mexico. The unit will be used as part of coronavirus prevention measures, to carry out health protocols for people in transit.



Peru: UNHCR has identified over 1,000 medical professionals among the community of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants living in Peru. The health professionals were referred to the Ministry of Health in order to, potentially, take part in the country’s coronavirus response. Additionally, since the start of the health crisis, UNHCR has also provided the Peruvian government with over 75 RHUs that helped healthcare facilities cope with the uptick in patients as a result of the pandemic.



Venezuela: In the northwestern border state of Zulia, UNHCR and partners provided psychosocial support and legal counselling to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. UNHCR also supported quarantine centers in all the border states, delivering hygiene kits and other basics. And to assist those in the quarantine centers living with HIV, UNHCR also provided individual counselling and trained staff on protocols and referral paths for this vulnerable group.

Stories from the field

Star pupil battles to find her feet and shine again as the ‘new kid’ in school

Forced to flee her native Venezuela, Emily initially struggled to adapt to her new school environment. Just when she thought she was back on top, she then had to face the challenges of virtual learning...

At home in Venezuela, Emily had attended the same school since she was 3 years old. Happy and thriving among familiar friends and teachers, she was the best student in her class.

So when her family fled the country and headed for Ecuador, her world fell apart.

“I was scared to be the ‘new kid’ for the first time,” said Emily, recalling her first day at school in a satellite town just outside Quito, Ecuador’s capital, where her family had sought safety. “It felt strange because I had gone to the same school ever since I was little.” To read more about Emily’s story, please read this year’s annual Education Report. Click [HERE](#).



Coordination and Response to date

R4V

In preparation for the **2021 Refugee and Migrant Response Plan, or RMRP**, the regional Sectors held consultations with their national sector counterparts in order to develop objectives and indicators. The second joint needs assessment, produced by the inter-agency group, shows food security (30%), shelter (27%), and livelihoods (21%) are the main concern for refugees and migrants.

MIRPS

To contribute to the implementation of commitments related to protection, and the strengthening of asylum systems, MIRPS countries have identified specific areas in need of bilateral cooperation and presented their requests to the MIRPS Support Platform Presidency, held by Spain. Countries’ requests included the sharing of experiences on the integration of technology for RSD. Such

experiences are particularly relevant amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which has forced offices to provide services via internet and helplines.

A plenary meeting of MIRPS states took place on 28 August. At the invitation of the Pro-tempore Presidency, Spain took part and presented the progress of the MIRPS Support Platform. Consultations also took place

ahead of the preparation of the forthcoming annual report, the recent strategic orientation sessions and the upcoming quantification exercise.





Don't miss...

ACORTEMOS DISTANCIAS, A REGIONAL CAMPAIGN BY R4V.

The Regional Inter-Agency Anti-Xenophobia Campaign "Acortemos Distancias" (**One Step Closer** in English) [was launched](#) on 24 August. The campaign is the result of the joint efforts of more than 200 partners of the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V) and aims to promote messages of empathy, solidarity and tolerance towards refugees and migrants throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. The campaign's main [video](#) is narrated by Omar Zambrano, the founder and executive director of the Latin Vox Machine Orchestra, based in Argentina. Visit the campaign's webpages in SPA, ENG and POR.



"JOURNALISM WITHOUT LABELS" COURSE

More than 1,700 people have signed up for the [Journalism without labels](#) online course, organized by UNHCR, UNESCO and the Knight Center. The course will examine media coverage of forced displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean.



REFUGEE COMMUNITY NETWORKS ARE HELPING IDENTIFY COVID-19 CASES IN ECUADOR

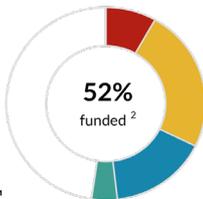
Refugee community networks are helping identify COVID-19 cases in Ecuador as part of a Community Epidemiological Surveillance System, developed by UNHCR. The system is helping ensure that suspected cases of the virus among the country's refugee population are detected early and that those believed to be carrying the virus receive timely treatment. Since the system was launched a month ago, more than 250 suspected cases have been referred to national health authorities. To read the story, click [HERE](#).



Funding the response

Financial Information

UNHCR AMERICAS - Funding Update



THE AMERICAS

as of 01 September 2020

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

\$ 611.8 million

UNHCR's financial requirements 2020¹

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, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America and Venezuela.
2. The percentage funded (52%) and total funding amount (\$320,055,062) are indicative based on the methodology described above. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$291,783,311 representing 48% of the financial requirements.

While seeking funds to carry out COVID-19 preventative 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. It is vital that the

international community keep supporting the millions of refugees and internally displaced people already living a precarious existence, for whom already limited self-reliance opportunities are likely to shrink further as a result of the economic impact of the crisis.

Total contributed or pledged to the COVID-19 appeal:

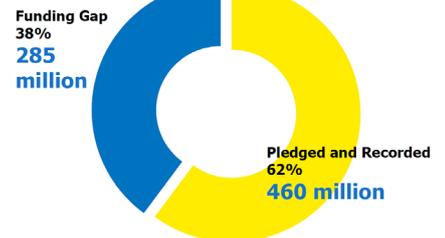
USD 460M

Including:

United States	\$186.3M
Germany	\$62.7M
European Union	\$45.9M
United Kingdom	\$31.5M
Japan	\$23.9M
African Development Bank	\$18.3M
Denmark	\$14.6M
United Nations Foundation	\$10.0M
Private donors	\$9.0M
CERF	\$6.9M
Canada	\$6.4M
Education Cannot Wait	\$3.6M
Qatar Charity	\$3.5M
Spain	\$3.4M
France	\$3.4M
Ireland	\$3.3M
Sweden	\$3.0M
Sony Corporation	\$2.9M
Austria	\$2.5M
Finland	\$2.4M
Unilever	\$2.1M
Latter-day Saints Charities	\$2.0M

FUNDING (AS OF 28 AUGUST)
USD 745 million

requested for UNHCR's COVID-19 response globally until the end of the year



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 2020:



And to our private donors:

Latter-day Saints Charities | España con ACNUR | Major League Baseball Players Trust (MLBPT) | Private donors Australia | Private donor Brazil | Private donors France | Private donors Germany | Private donors Italy | Private donors Mexico | Private donors Japan | Private donors Spain | Private donors Republic of Korea | Private donors United Kingdom | Private donors USA | UNO-Fleuechtlingshilfe | USA for UNHCR