

Paraguay

April 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 facilitates 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 22.7 MILLION

requested for the **Regional Office including Paraguay**



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 of 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.
- From **January to March 2020**, UNHCR through its partner provided **62 vulnerable refugee families with cash assistance** to cover for their basic needs, **some 153 individuals** received **livelihoods training**, **some 192 refugees and migrants** received **psychosocial assistance** and **some other 88 refugee families** were provided with **in-kind kits**.

COVID-19 Situation (as of April, 2020)

- Due to the emergency situation, partner agencies have provided **cash assistance** already to at least some **143 refugees and migrants**.
- UNHCR in coordination with its partner *Semillas para la Democracia*, expanded its **humanitarian assistance** to **Encarnación** and **Ciudad del Este**.
- UNHCR partner is doing the **distribution of food and hygiene kits** provided by the Paraguayan State to assist refugees in an extremely vulnerable situation.
- **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**
- The National Refugee Commission (CONARE) suspended its on-site services and is offering attention via email, while renewing expired documents online.

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

Private donors Argentina | Private donors Australia | Canada | Denmark | European Union | Germany | Ireland | Private donors Japan | Private donors Republic of Korea | Netherlands | Norway | Private donors Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | UN Programme on HIV/AIDS | United Kingdom | United States of America

External Relations

CONTACTS

Analia Kim, Assistant Communications/PI Officer, Regional Office for Southern Latin America, kiman@unhcr.org, Tel: +54 11 4815-7870

José Manuel Cáceres, Regional Reporting Officer, Regional Office for Southern Latin America, caceres@unhcr.org, Tel: +54 11 4815-7870

William Spindler, Senior External Engagement Coordinator, Regional Bureau for the Americas, spindler@unhcr.org, Tel: +507 6382 7815

LINKS

- Website: <https://acnur.org/paraguay>
- Twitter: @ACNURSuramerica
- Facebook: @ACNUR
- Instagram: [acnur_unhcr_americas](https://www.instagram.com/acnur_unhcr_americas)