

# UNHCR IN SAO PAULO



## JUNE 20: WORLD REFUGEE DAY

Throughout the month of June, several initiatives promoted by UNHCR and its partners marked the World Refugee Day. One feature was the [launch of the “Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2020” report](#), which confirmed the ninth year of uninterrupted rise in forced displacement worldwide of people who have been forced to leave their homes due to wars, persecution, or violation of human rights. There are more than 82 million people in this situation, of which more than 26 million are refugees.

In addition to the release of this important report, in June the UNHCR office in São Paulo participated in about [30 events](#), including capacity-building workshops for public entities, training for journalists and students on humanitarian coverage, the launch of an audiovisual exhibition, and virtual discussions with NGOs and [Sérgio Vieira de Mello Chair universities](#). Refugees were given a leading role in events, ensuring that World Refugee Day is a time to strengthen the actions to welcome and integrate this population into the different communities of which they contribute with.

## 26.4 million refugees

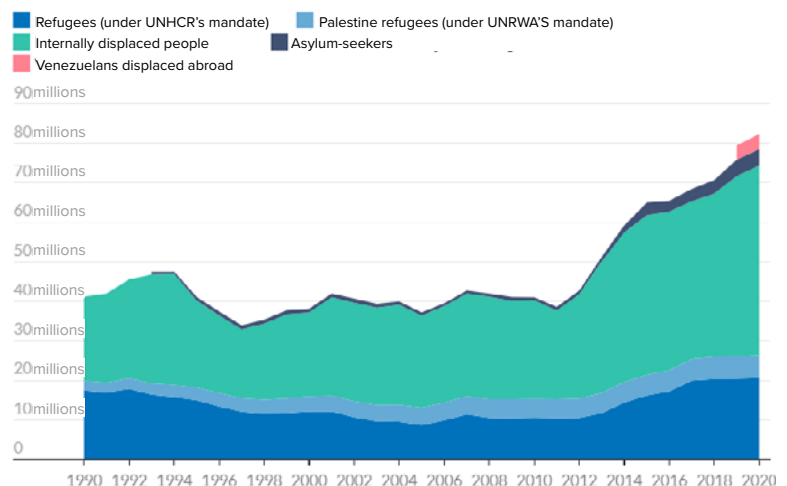
↳ 20.7 million under UNHCR’s mandate

↳ 5.7 million Palestine refugees  
under UNRWA’S mandate

**48 million** internally displaced people

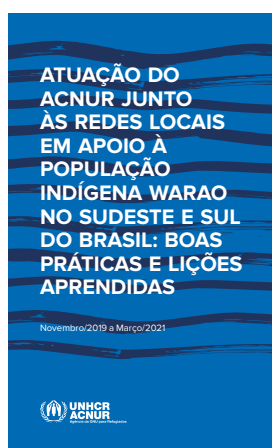
**4.1 million** asylum-seekers

**3.9 million** Venezuelans displaced abroad



## LOCAL PROTECTION AND INTEGRATION

### PUBLICATION OF REPORT ON THE SUPPORT PROVIDED TO THE WARAO INDIGENOUS POPULATION IN THE SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST



On May 31, UNHCR São Paulo launched the report [“UNHCR’s work with local networks in support of the Warao indigenous population in the Southeast and South of Brazil: Good practices and lessons learned”](#) in a [live broadcast](#) that was attended by a Warao person, representatives of the thematic working groups of the municipalities of *Belo Horizonte (MG)*, *Montes Claros (MG)*, *Nova Iguaçu (RJ)*, *Porto Alegre (RS)* and *Uberlândia (MG)*, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The

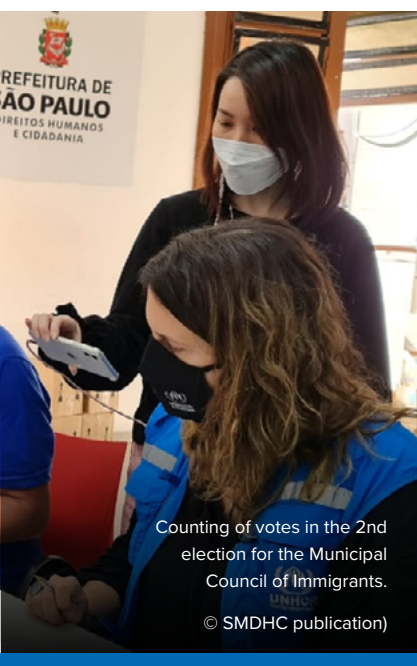
publication presents data from the Warao populations monitored by UNHCR São Paulo between November 2019 and March 2021, and describes the advisory work carried out with the local networks of 10 municipalities to ensure the protection of these Indigenous families in transit, in addition to giving visibility to some of the strategies, best practices, challenges, and lessons learned from local experiences. The presentation of the report on Youtube currently has more than 460 views.

## STRENGTHENING LOCAL PROTECTION AND INTEGRATION NETWORKS

### COORDINATING ACTIONS AND ADVOCATING IN COUNCILS, COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS AND FORUMS

In the third semester of 2021, the UNHCR São Paulo participated in a total of **44 advocacy and coordination meetings** in **18 local instances** (including councils, committees, working groups, and forums) to coordinate policies and initiatives in favor of refugees and migrants present in the South-Southeast regions, and in the state of *Bahia*. Some of the highlights include support for the election of the Municipal Council of Immigrants of São Paulo; the follow-up of stages 1 and 2 of the elaboration of the 1st State Plan of Policies for Refugees, Migrants, Stateless

and Returnees of *Minas Gerais*; participation in meetings of the Support Network for Migrants in *Bahia* (RAMBA) and in a public hearing in Salvador about the impact of the pandemic on migrants and refugees; Warao Working Group meetings in 7 municipalities in the states of *Minas Gerais*, *Rio de Janeiro*, *São Paulo*, *Rio Grande do Sul*, and *Espírito Santo*; a technical cases study meeting about unadmitted persons at Guarulhos International Airport; a meeting with the Department of Justice and Citizenship of the State of *São Paulo* about the reactivation and expansion of the Regional Committee for Refugees, among others.



Counting of votes in the 2nd election for the Municipal Council of Immigrants.  
UNHCR  
© SMDHC publication)

### UNHCR SUPPORTS THE ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS TO THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF IMMIGRANTS OF SÃO PAULO

UNHCR has had observer status in the [Municipal Council of Immigrants \(CMI\) of São Paulo](#) since its activation in 2018 and, for the second time, has been part of the Electoral Commission that conducted the election of the new councilors who will serve in the 2021-2023 term. The 1,292 votes received from refugee and migrant voters of 43 different nationalities were counted on May 25 with the support of UNHCR. Eight representatives of civil society, including immigrants, immigrant organizations, and organizations acting in support of immigrants, were elected and took office on June 25.

Voting for the Municipal Council of Immigrants is restricted to non-Brazilians who have residence in the city of São Paulo, regardless of their migration situation. In addition to the eight civil society vacancies, the council is composed of eight other representatives of municipal secretariats, as well as observer members, such as UNHCR. UNHCR considers the CMI an excellent practice in the context of Cities of Solidarity for refugees and migrants as it enables, in a pioneering way in the world, the political participation of these populations in specialized policymaking.

### CAPACITY-BUILDING OF LOCAL NETWORKS

During the third semester of 2021, the UNHCR São Paulo team participated in **40 training sessions** for local networks in the states in the South-Southeast regions and in *Bahia*, reaching a total of **990 participants** trained in topics related to employability, access to documentation and the refugee procedure, civil-military coordination in humanitarian work, LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants, assistance to refugees and migrants through public networks, political incidence and International Refugee Law.

The training sessions also included 7 specific sessions on **protection and integration of the Warao indigenous people**, which included about **250 participants from 81 municipalities** from the states of *Minas Gerais*, *Espírito Santo*, and *Bahia*. Another highlight was on June 17, when at the invitation of the Secretariat of Labor, Welfare and Social Development of *Espírito Santo* (SETADES) and with the support of the State Public Defender's Office, UNHCR conducted a training session for the Social Assistance Departments of the **78 municipalities of Espírito Santo** with the goal of strengthening their capacities to provide assistance to the Warao indigenous people. The training session was attended by Secretary of State Cyntia Figueira Grillo and UNHCR Representative in Brazil, José Egas.



## “PROTECTION AND INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN PARANÁ - EDUCATION” TRAINING

On June 8 and 9, UNHCR, in partnership with the regional Caritas of Paraná (CAPR), held the training session **Protection and Integration of Refugees and Migrants in Paraná - Education** for Education public servants of Curitiba/PR and municipalities of its metropolitan region. The meetings gathered 96 people and addressed topics such as access to rights by the refugee and migrant population, normative frameworks, protection and local integration, as well as a specific module on access to education and best educational practices. This was the first of a series of training sessions that UNHCR and CAPR will carry out for local public workers in the state of Paraná throughout the year, in different areas of public management.

## SÉRGIO VIEIRA DE MELLO CHAIR (CVSM)

UNHCR São Paulo welcomes University Center Curitiba, which has become part of the CSVM to guarantee to the refugee and asylum seeker population greater access to higher education and the projects developed by the university. The official launch of the partnership took place during the opening of the event sponsored by the CSVM coordination on June 18, and will continue with a course on international refugee law, the launch of a brochure and the dissemination of a warm clothing campaign to support refugees and migrants in winter. In the third quarter of 2021, several CSVM also held events celebrating the World Refugee Day. In the Southeast and South, UNHCR São Paulo participated in the events of *UNISANTOS*, *UFSM* and *PUC Minas*.

## LIVELIHOODS



### FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP: DIOSA - FEMALE LABOR COURSE FOR REFUGEE WOMEN

On June 11, the Jesuit Service for Migrants and Refugees (SJMR) of Porto Alegre, a partner of UNHCR São Paulo, held a course about small renovations and introductory aspects of electricity and hydraulics for refugee and migrant women. The course was taught by Diosa - Female Labor, a network of autonomous women in the area of civil construction.

Upon completion of the course, the 12 participating women will integrate the Diosa platform, which connects professional women in the renovation area with clients who seek these services, and also provides other qualification courses in the area, technical support and follow-up. The participants will receive a toolkit and personal protective equipment provided by UNHCR so they can begin their self-employed ventures well equipped.

During the course, the refugee and Brazilian women shared their longings, the difficulties of being a woman in Brazil, and the challenges faced especially when considering the gender and refugee reality. Entrepreneurship in the area of renovation allows for autonomous work, with flexibility, satisfactory remuneration and independence in an expanding market, thus ensuring that refugee women can obtain sustainable livelihoods in Brazil.

### LAUNCHING OF THE SEBRAE-MG PLATFORM



On June 24, Sebrae Minas, in partnership with UNHCR, IOM and the Government of the State of Minas Gerais, through the Subsecretariat of Human Rights, held a live broadcast called **Migrants and refugees in Minas Gerais - How to empower yourself to be an entrepreneur and generate income**. The broadcast marked the launch of the online page [Migrants and Refugees in Minas](#), which gathers orientation and business training materials from Sebrae and partners, specifically aimed at refugees and migrants.



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## 6TH EDITION OF EMPOWERING WOMEN REFUGEES

On May 25, UNHCR, the UN Global Compact Brazil Network and UN Women launched the sixth edition of the Empowering Refugees project. From June to December, 80 Venezuelan women living in shelters run by UNHCR in *Boa Vista* will participate in professional capacity-building sessions in customer service and sales. Upon completion of the training, companies that are partners of the project will conduct job interviews with the participants. Thus, the project aims to promote the voluntary relocation of participants and their family members through the employment-based modality of interiorization. The new edition intends to expand the results of the project's 5th edition, which facilitated work opportunities for 42 participants, supporting the interiorization of 31 families (107 persons), of which 12 had at least one person with disabilities in their family group. In 2021 the project will continue to prioritize the inclusion of persons with specific needs, such as women with disabilities, chronic diseases and LGBTI+ persons. The 6th edition of Empowering Refugees has already the support of the Lojas Renner Institute, Unidas, Iguatemi, Sodexo, MRV and Facebook.

## UNHCR AT THE II MEETING OF THE INTERIORIZATION NETWORK - OPERATION WELCOME IN RIO DE JANEIRO

On May 19, UNHCR São Paulo participated in the “II Meeting of the Interiorization Network – Operation Welcome” in Rio de Janeiro. Organized by the Institutional Support and Federative Articulation Section of the Ministry of Health in Rio de Janeiro, the meeting brought together civil servants from more than 10 municipalities, civil society organizations working with refugees and migrants, international organizations and representatives of the Humanitarian Logistics Task Force. UNHCR presented its role in the Interiorization Strategy, from humanitarian aid in *Roraima* to the reception of Venezuelans participating in interiorization in the cities of destination. UNHCR implementing partners, *Aldeias Infantis* and *Caritas Rio de Janeiro*, made a first-hand presentation of the videos of the integration and reception centers for Venezuelans, produced by UNHCR.



Click the link to watch the videos <https://bit.ly/3qD2ztS>

## LAUNCH OF A 100% ONLINE AND FREE PORTUGUESE COURSE FOR VENEZUELAN REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

On June 28, *Fluency Academy Ensino de Idiomas* launched the pilot class of a totally online and free Portuguese course for Venezuelan refugees and migrants, with the support of UNHCR São Paulo. Founded five years ago in the city of Curitiba, *Paraná*, more than 39,000 students have already graduated from the *Fluency Academy*.

When developing the Portuguese course for Venezuelans, in addition to the support of UNHCR, *Fluency Academy* also had the support of *Caritas Arquidiocesana do Rio de Janeiro (CARJ)* and *Pia Sociedade dos Missionários de São Carlos (Missão Paz)*. The goal is to provide opportunities to people who do not have the means to participate in the courses currently available, whether for reasons of time, geographical location or other access difficulties. The *Fluency Academy* course can be carried out by mobile phone, at any time, at the pace of each student, and students have continuous support from teachers, including a Venezuelan teacher. Although each student follows their own independent learning course, new classes are planned to start by the end of the year.

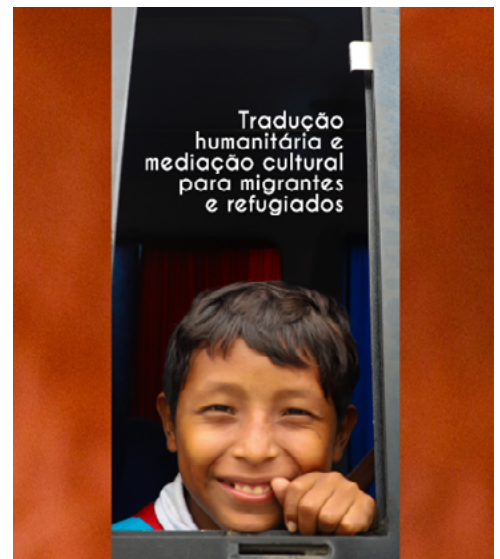
## SPECIFIC CREDIT LINE FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS OF THE BANCO DO POVO CRÉDITO SOLIDÁRIO COMPLETES ONE YEAR OF OPERATION

A year after launching the specific credit line for refugees and migrants, *Banco do Povo Crédito Solidário (BPCS)* reported in June 2021 that it granted microcredit to 89 entrepreneurs in the period. Venezuelans, Syrians, Colombians, Haitians and Nigerians were benefitted by the credit line. Their entrepreneurial activities were mainly concentrated in the sales of food and clothing. In 2021, *BPCS* aims to expand the number of beneficiaries of the program. Through a cooperation agreement signed in October 2020, UNHCR and *BPCS* committed to promote the financial inclusion and expansion of the access to microcredit to refugees and others of concern.

For more information about this project, access: <https://bit.ly/3hmlNyu>

## PUBLIC INFORMATION: FEATURED PARTNERSHIP OF THE MONTH

The partnership signed by UNHCR with the [Latin America Memorial](#), an entity of social, cultural and political integration of Latin-American and Caribbean countries, has generated several products that include the topic of forced displacement into the center of training activities. Between May and June, a workshop was held with communication professional and students about the involvement of the private sector to integrate refugees, the audiovisual exhibition “[Refugee Journalists](#)” was launched and the UNHCR “[Global Trends](#)” trends was published. Additionally, two publications were presented: an educational material about the exhibition “[Refugee Journalists](#)” and the book “[Tradução Humanitária e Mediação Cultural para Migrantes e Refugiados](#)”.



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UNHCR Brazil appreciates the support and partnership with all other UN agencies, Brazilian authorities (at federal, state and municipal levels) and civil society organizations involved in the emergency response and in the regular programs of the Brazilian operation.

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