

AMERICAS MONTHLY REPORT

This document provides an overview of key developments affecting the displacement situation in the Americas and some of UNHCR response activities in line with the 2019 strategic objectives for the region.



Costa Rica. Over 60,000 Nicaraguans have applied for asylum in Costa Rica since April 2018. © UNHCR/Daniel Dreifuss

VENEZUELA SITUATION

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

1 Lenin Moreno, president of **Ecuador**, signed a decree on 26 July introducing new requirements for Venezuelans. Venezuelans who wish to enter the country will need a Humanitarian Visa from 25 August. He also announced a migratory amnesty for Venezuelans already in the country (with conditions).

2 The **Colombian** Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the introduction of the supplementary Special Stay Permit (PECP, its acronym in Spanish) for Venezuelans who had their asylum claim rejected. The permit is valid for up to two years and it enables holders to work legally in Colombia.

Hundreds of Venezuelans are currently waiting outside the Chilean Consulate in Tacna, Peru, to request the permit that is now required for Venezuelan nationals to obtain a tourist visa to enter **Chile**.

On 12 July, the **Costa Rican** Government approved measures to help regularize the migration status of Venezuelans and address limitations in accessing documentation.

The Brazilian Committee for Refugees (CONARE) confirmed, in July, 174 asylum applications using the extended Cartagena Definition of refugees as recommended in the [Guidance Note on the Outflow of Venezuelans](#).

4 million

Venezuelans living abroad
(as of July 2019)

3.3 million

in Latin America and the
Caribbean states (as of July 2019)

597,047

registered asylum-seekers
(as of July 2019)

227,325

in Peru

99,858

in Brazil

85,796

in United States
of America

48,690

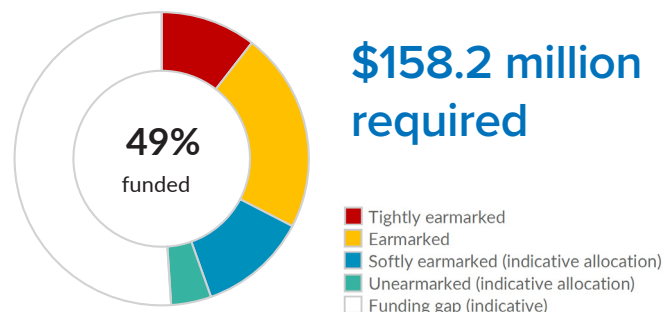
in Spain

13,908 in Mexico (in 2019 as of July 2019)

1.8 Venezuelans with regular status
including resident permit (as of June 2019)

3 The regional meeting on the human mobility of Venezuelan citizens in the Americas (**Quito IV**) took place on 4-5 July in Argentina. It had the broadest participation to date and resulted in the [adoption of a Road Map](#).

FUNDING (as of 6 August 2019) UNHCR's financial requirements 2019 for the Venezuela Situation



UNHCR RESPONSE TO THE VENEZUELA SITUATION

In **Chile**, the introduction of a new consular tourist visa requirement for Venezuelans in June led to an increase in the use of dangerous irregular paths to cross the border. UNHCR coordinated the response for Venezuelans unable to enter Chile from Bolivia, by providing orientation sessions in both countries and through shelter assistance, organising primary health responses and distributing personal hygiene kits.

To provide **direct emergency assistance** for Venezuelans on the move, UNHCR in Boa Vista, Brazil, has replaced tents in all shelters with Regional Housing Units—improving protection from heavy rains. Since March 2018, more than 12,000 refugees and migrants have benefitted from this temporary emergency accommodation. Additionally, UNHCR Brazil and partners have provided legal counselling and pre-documentation support to more than 93,000 Venezuelans since the beginning of 2018.

In Huaquillas, **Ecuador**, eight additional Refugee Housing Units were installed in July, increasing the shelter capacity to 90 people. UNHCR is preparing a contingency plan to respond to the possible influx of Venezuelans during the last days before implementation of new visa requirements to access the country.

In Bogota, **Colombia**, UNHCR scaled up its emergency shelter response offering temporary accommodation for three nights in an inner city shelter. Three meals a day and hygiene kits for 400 people have also been provided. The response is carried out in partnership with the Secretary of Integration and will be implemented for one month to support the municipality.

In Curacao, **Brazil**, a clinic providing basic health care for Venezuelans was inaugurated by a UNHCR partner. Prenatal and maternity care, and treatment for HIV and diabetes are among the services provided. The authorities have agreed that undocumented individuals will not be arrested for receiving services.

In **Brazil**, UNHCR launched a platform for Refugee Status Determination, which compiles the decisions of refugee status recognition in the country. The compilation was presented in parallel with the 4th edition of Refuge in Numbers, a publication of the Brazilian Government with statistical data on asylum seekers and recognized refugees.

PROTECTION MONITORING VENEZUELA SITUATION

A new protection monitoring report issued on 19 July by UNHCR has found that half (50.2 per cent) of the Venezuelan families interviewed faced or continue to face specific protection risks during their journey. The report is based on a survey of nearly 8,000 Venezuelan families who fled their homes and was conducted in eight countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean between January and June 2019.

The [interviews](#) – undertaken in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay – are part of coordinated efforts by the UN Refugee Agency, municipalities, NGO partners and government ministries to gain a comprehensive overview of the protection risks, access to rights and needs of Venezuelans in countries of transit or destination.

Access the report [here](#)



NORTH OF CENTRAL AMERICA SITUATION

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

At the beginning of July, the **Mexican** government deployed the National Guard along Mexico's major migration routes, starting in the central northern part of the country and expanding to the border with Guatemala throughout the month. This has caused the routes for irregular movements to change.

The governments of **Guatemala and the United States** signed an agreement, on July 2, requesting those who cross into Guatemala, to apply for asylum in Guatemala instead of at the US border.

According to a new rule passed by the **United States**, from 16 July onwards, individuals entering the US across the southern border will be ineligible for asylum if they enter through another transit country, and did not attempt to seek asylum, regardless of whether they had access to international protection.

4 **El Salvador** joined the [Comprehensive Regional Response Framework](#), (MIRPS in Spanish) highlighting its commitment to assist and protect forcibly displaced people. A national action plan will set out concrete ways of enhancing the protection of internally displaced people and addressing the protection needs of persons returned to El Salvador.

The **Mexican** National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH) issued a recommendation to the Mexican Commission for Refugees on 2 July condemning the unjustified delay in processing of 112 asylum requests between 2017 and 2018. CNDH requested COMAR to develop a protocol for interviews that includes UNHCR guidelines and ensures that individuals have access to legal aid during the asylum procedure, amongst other measures.

Deportations from Mexico and the United States to the three reception centers in **Honduras** continue to increase at an alarming rate. In July, the number of returnees doubled. This has caused considerable strain on the centers, which now operate six days a week on extended working hours. So far in 2019, there have been 61,453 deportees, (according to the Honduran Consular and Migratory Observatory), representing a 43% increase from the same period in 2018.

The number of people returned under the Migrant Protection Protocols by 24 July amounts to 24,373 in Tijuana, Mexicali and Ciudad, Juarez, at the border of Mexico with the United States. According to the Guatemalan Institute of Migration, more than 2,000 people are being deported to Tecún Umán, a city near the border with Mexico, on a weekly basis since June 17. The number of asylum claims in Guatemala have increased by 75% in 2018, compared to 2017, and UNHCR projects a higher increase in 2019.

367,000 people of concern in Central America by the end of 2018

353,200 refugees and asylum seekers from North of Central America worldwide

245,500 IDPs in Honduras and El Salvador by the end of 2018

36,853 asylum claims in Mexico since January 2019 (205% increase over the same period of 2018, as of 21 July 2019)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS



UNHCR RESPONSE IN LINE WITH 2019 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

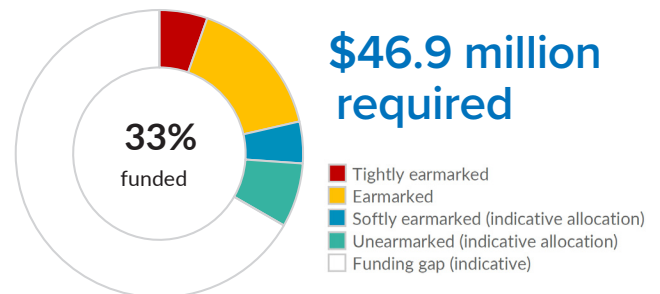
During the first half of July, a total of 1,017 people requested an appointment with UNHCR in Tapachula, in southern Mexico, an increase of 43.3% compared to the first half of June. A change was observed in the routes of irregular movements due to the deployment of the National Guard on the border with Mexico. These routes are controlled by criminal networks, which exposes forcibly displaced people to numerous protection risks.

To provide a timely response to immediate and persistent humanitarian needs, an additional 18,574 people have benefitted from Multipurpose Cash Grants in Mexico, through June 2019 to supply basic needs such as food, household and domestic products, and a contribution towards housing and utility bills.

UNHCR and partners provided shelter and assistance for an average of 470 people every week in Tecún Umán, Guatemala City and Peten during the month of July. Assistance includes food, information on asylum procedures, primary health care and establish contact with family members.

A number of new private sector companies have joined the employability programme developed within the framework of the MIRPS in Guatemala, Turi-Integra, widening the job offers for asylum-seekers and refugees with work permits. With UNHCR's support, refugees and asylum-seekers have access to professional training and internships, allowing them to apply for formal jobs and access the competitive labour market.

FUNDING (as of 6 August 2019) UNHCR's financial requirements 2019 for the North Central America Situation



In Honduras, UNHCR and partners supported a community fair to promote four community-based technical-vocational trainings on air-conditioning and refrigerating systems, sewing and tailoring, basic electricity and IT skills. 90 people will benefit from these trainings, in line with UNHCR's livelihood strategy, which focuses on the (re)integration and inclusion of young deportees, displaced people, and/or people at risk of displacement.

OTHER SITUATIONS

NICARAGUA SITUATION

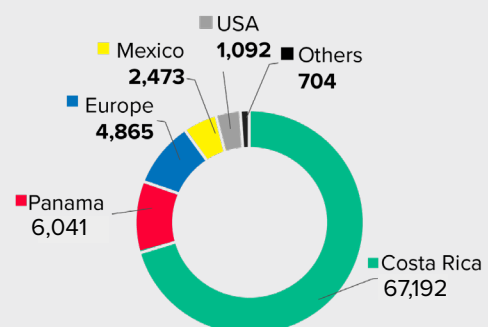
Nicaragua remains gripped by a political crisis since April 2018, which has forced Nicaraguans to flee to neighbouring countries, mostly to Costa Rica, where around asylum-seekers have applied or indicated their intention to apply for recognition of refugee status as of 27 June. According to the Government's Refugee Unit in Costa Rica, 13,983 Nicaraguan asylum-seekers filed their asylum applications before the San Jose-based Refugee Unit, from January to June 2019. Receiving a provisional document allows them access to some rights and services. Access to work remains a protection concern for Nicaraguans.

UNHCR has been implementing cash-based interventions (CBI) in Costa Rica and Mexico to respond to urgent needs. 979 people have benefitted from Multi-Purpose Cash Grants (MPG) in Mexico to cover their basic needs (food, domestic products, housing, utility bills) up to 19 July 2019. In Costa Rica, a six-week long registration and socio-economic evaluation campaign in San Jose concluded with the participation of 5,544 people of which 450 will be selected for the first batch of multi-purpose cash grants. UNHCR's partners provided humanitarian assistance, psychosocial care, cash for shelter and legal counselling to almost 1,000 Nicaraguans in Panama.

83,700 Nicaraguan asylum applications in neighbouring countries since April 2018

67,192 Nicaraguan asylum applications in Costa Rica as of 27 June (30,071 awaiting to submit asylum applications).

Registered Asylum Applications from Nicaraguans since April 2018



COLOMBIA SITUATION

During July, 2,000 people were forcibly displaced in seven large-group displacement events due to confrontations between illegal armed groups in the Norte de Santander Province. Additionally, approximately 150 families and 600 people have been forcibly displaced due to clashes between armed groups in Nariño Province. There have been 32 large group displacements which have affected 10,101 people in 2019.

Thirty two Assistance and Orientation Points have been set up by UNHCR in key reception areas by July 2019.

In Mocoa, Putumayo Province, the Siona indigenous people won a ruling to protect territorial, cultural and spiritual rights. UNHCR provided technical assistance during the process.

8.8 million
victims of armed
conflict

7.8 million
internally displaced people

8,572 displaced people
in large group displacements
in 2019

50,532
Colombian refugees
in Ecuador by the
end of 2018

10,029
Colombian asylum
seekers in Ecuador
by the end of 2018

INSIDE VENEZUELA

On 22 July, Venezuela suffered its fourth major blackout in less than five months, which reportedly hit 16 of the country's 23 states, including Caracas.

UNHCR and partners conducted individual nutritional evaluations on 170 indigenous Yukpa in the community El Tokuko, in the state of Zulia, on the border with Colombia. Of the 2,311 individual nutritional evaluations conducted in the state, 44% have showed nutritional deficits. UNHCR, in joint operations with the Office of the Ombudsperson, delivered 125 food kits to people diagnosed with malnourishment, including 76 to indigenous Yukpa, and medical supplies to the clinic in El Carmen.

Almost 380 people were assisted during a comprehensive health day held in the Bolivar neighbourhood of Petare, a community in Greater Caracas served by the UNHCR-supported community centre. Participants were provided with paediatric, general medicine and nutritional services by specialized partners.

To know more about our response in
Venezuela go to [@acnurvenezuela](#)



JULY FEATURED STORIES



[Costa Rican schools open their doors to displaced Nicaraguan children](#)

Thanks to the generosity of border towns in Costa Rica, thousands of Nicaraguan children fleeing social and political crisis at home have been able to go back to class.



[Pregnant women flee lack of maternal health care in Venezuela](#)

Thousands of pregnant women have left Venezuela to protect the lives of their unborn babies and their own.

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