

# With you

## What's Inside

### **1 % OF HUMANITY IS DISPLACED**

Read the latest Global Trends Report about forced displacement

### **STAY AND DELIVER: Responding to COVID-19**

Amid a global health emergency, your support has brought life-saving aid and essential services to the most vulnerable forcibly displaced families here in the Philippines and around the world

### **WORLD REFUGEE DAY**

Join us in honoring the strength and resilience of refugees past and present. Everyone can make a difference and every action counts.





UNHCR Philippines delivered 13,420 Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and tarpaulins to the Ministry of the Interior and Local Government (MILG) BARMM to support their response to the needs of forcibly displaced families during and beyond #COVID19. BARMM Chief Minister Ahod 'Al Haj Murad' Ebrahim attended the turnover ceremony on June 26. © UNHCR / Venus Lozano

Dear valued donor,

Together we have stood in the frontlines of many emergencies. Your committed support enables us to stay and deliver each and every time. Yet today we find ourselves in uncharted waters – facing challenges that are of an entirely different magnitude.

The latest Global Trends report shows that **one per cent of humanity is displaced**. UNHCR has not seen a higher total. These numbers are staggering, and we do not even have to look very far to see displacement. Within our borders, more than 370,000 are repeatedly displaced in Mindanao due to conflict and natural disasters.

At the same time, we need not look far to see what can be done to respond. The Philippines has a long humanitarian legacy of being a safe haven for the world's most persecuted. **YOU uphold this legacy by choosing to act with empathy, solidarity, and kindness in these difficult times.**

We are sharing with you the impact of your support to those whose lives have been torn apart and who are now at their most vulnerable because of COVID-19.

With you by our side, UNHCR and our partners have been working around the clock to make sure that critical aid and essential services reach the most vulnerable communities in the Philippines, and other places facing crisis on top of crisis, like Bangladesh and Yemen. Refugees themselves are contributing on the frontlines of the pandemic: a reminder of how interconnected we all are and of the importance of leaving no one behind.

*In the face of increasingly complex emergencies, you have shown us how we can all become heroes by stepping up and leaning in to help.*

Thank you for making a difference and being a beacon of hope for the forcibly displaced around the world.

With our sincerest gratitude,

Your UNHCR Philippines family

## 1% OF HUMANITY IS DISPLACED

As of the end of 2019, an unprecedented 79.5 million were forcibly displaced around the globe. 80 percent are in areas affected by acute food insecurity and malnutrition – many of them facing climate and natural disaster risks. Every region of the world is impacted in some way and today a volatile mix of political, environmental, economic, ethnic, and territorial factors often combine to ignite conflicts.

Within all of these numbers is a multitude of individual and very personal crises. As many children (estimated at 30-34 million) are among the displaced than, for example, the entire populations of Australia, Denmark and Mongolia combined.

Behind these figures are people whose lives have been torn apart, leaving their homes, family, jobs and schools behind. These statistics speak to immeasurable heartbreak, desperation, sacrifice of millions who are struggling to survive.

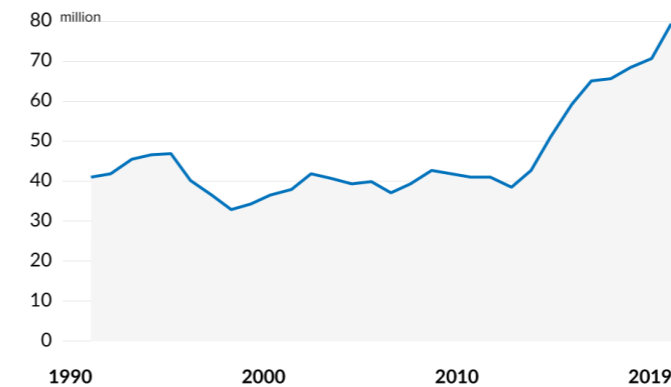
“We are witnessing a changed reality in that forced displacement nowadays is not only vastly more widespread but is simply no longer a short-term and temporary phenomenon.”

We need a fundamentally new and more accepting attitude towards all who flee, coupled with a much more determined drive to unlock conflicts that go on for years and that are at the root of such immense suffering.”

FILIPPO GRANDI  
UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Source: UNHCR / 18 June 2020

## 79.5 MILLION forcibly displaced people worldwide at the end of 2019



**1%** of the world's population is displaced



**80%** of the world's displaced people are in countries or territories affected by acute food insecurity and malnutrition



**73%** Hosted in neighbouring countries\*



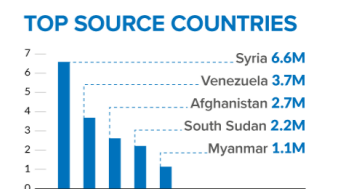
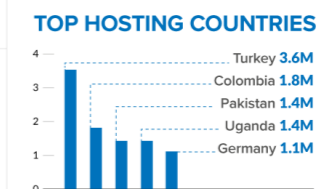
**68%** Came from just 5 countries\*



**40%** of the world's displaced people are children



**85%** Hosted in developing countries\*

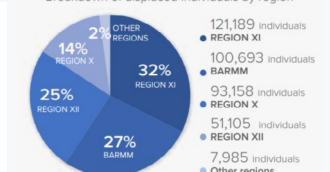


\* Data includes UNHCR refugees and Venezuelans displaced abroad

## 374,130 forcibly displaced individuals in Mindanao at the end of May 2020



Breakdown of displaced individuals by region





# STAY AND DELIVER: RESPONDING TO THE **CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)** PANDEMIC

There are currently more than **370,000** individuals who are forcibly displaced in Mindanao as a result of persecution, conflict, and violence. Amid the **coronavirus pandemic**, fresh displacement is still taking place.

In times of crisis, **UNHCR stays and delivers**. With your support and commitment, we are working closely with the government and other partners to provide essential goods and services to forcibly displaced families – standing side by side in the commitment to stay and deliver, while ensuring that protection remains at the center of humanitarian responses.

Since March, we have been working relentlessly to provide key interventions on ground. We have distributed core relief items, provided equipment to government-run health facilities, localized **COVID-19 key messaging** to support community level health awareness raising, and supported government operations in providing essential services to the forcibly displaced.

**“Our workers are frontliners, delivering relief goods to the poor and vulnerable... The donation is a gesture of support not only for us workers, but also for the mandate that we are duty-bound to uphold. Sukran, UNHCR, for helping us fulfill our tasks as frontliners.”**

MINISTER RAISA HERRADURA JAJURIE  
Ministry of Social Services and Development, BARM

**“We [the BARM alone] cannot address and face the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. We need the support of the donor communities... Their timely actions contributed a lot to our initiatives in containing the virus in the region.”**

BARM CHIEF MINISTER AHOD 'AL HAJ MURAD' EBRAHIM  
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

Much has been done, but the work continues. Concerns on limited access to basic services and livelihood remain as needs and challenges, demanding provision of durable solutions. IDPs are living in overcrowded areas and social distancing is impossible to implement in such conditions. Moreover, the urgency in addressing violence against women and children across Mindanao, including women and children displaced, calls for prompt action and support from humanitarian actors and state agencies.

UNHCR Philippines, with your help, guidance from our government partners, and support from protection actors, relentlessly fulfills its commitment to continuously provide essential services to these forcibly displaced families, during and beyond this global health emergency.



## Increasingly Complex Emergencies

The interplay between the **COVID-19** global health pandemic, climate, conflict, hunger, poverty and persecution creates increasingly complex emergencies across the world. In **Bangladesh**, the first **confirmed cases of coronavirus** among the refugee population and the monsoon season bringing heavy rainfall and flooding creates emergency on top of emergency for Rohingya refugees.

Relentless rain in Cox's Bazar has led to flooding & soil erosion in refugee camps. UNHCR & partners are assessing the damage & assisting affected families to relocate temporarily, while providing support. With heavy rain continuing, UNHCR Emergency Response Teams have been deployed to assess damage, support repairs & distributions for affected families. Refugee volunteers are working hard to stabilize slopes while additional supplies have been pre-positioned.

With your support, UNHCR is **mitigating the spread of COVID-19** while also ensuring that critical activities continue, including health, nutrition, hygiene promotion, construction of health facilities and WASH infrastructures as well as key distributions such as food, LPG and hygiene kits.

UNHCR and partners have constructed isolation and treatment facilities to serve both refugees and host communities in the District. Information-sharing has also been expanded through a network of more than 2,000 community volunteers, religious leaders and humanitarian workers.



In **Yemen**, COVID-19 is exasperating an already tragic situation, with only 50% of the health facilities fully functioning due to the conflict and a fatality rate among the highest worldwide. **With your help, UNHCR is on the ground providing humanitarian relief and protection: delivering cash and emergency supplies like food and medicine, as well as, providing families with shelter and information on disease prevention and control.**



**Legend: Type of Intervention**

- Provision of Equipment to Assist Government-Run Programs
- Distribution of Core Relief Items
- Localizing COVID-19 Key Messaging
- Community Level Health Awareness Raising
- Supporting Government Operations in Providing Essential Services to IDPs



Every year on June 20th, UNHCR commemorates **WORLD REFUGEE DAY** honouring the resilience and courage of millions of people who have been forced to flee war, persecution and violence. In 2020, we marked World Refugee Day against a backdrop of **record displacement figures** and **dramatic social change**. The entire world is grappling with the devastation of the global COVID-19 pandemic, which has exposed raw social inequalities in our societies.

**The challenges we face today have created a connectedness that transcends borders. Refugees around the world are contributing on the frontlines of the pandemic, despite living in extremely vulnerable conditions. Whether it's the fight against COVID-19 or the fight to end racism and discrimination, everyone has a role to play.**

**Everyone can make a difference and every action counts.**



**“IN THE TIME OF COVID, I BROUGHT THE SICK TO SAFETY.”**

**DR CARMEN PARRA**  
A VENEZUELAN LIVING IN PERU

After fleeing **Venezuela**, Dr. Carmen spent more than two years working as a waitress, receptionist and sales attendant. This was until UNHCR and partners helped her validate her medical qualifications in **Peru**, where she now lives.

Today Dr. Carmen is working as part of an **ambulance service team**. She has been on 24-hour shifts to reach people at home who suspect they have the virus or **transport critical COVID-19 cases** to hospital.



**“IN THE TIME OF COVID WE KEPT PEOPLE INFORMED.”**

**NARJIS AL-ZAIDI**  
FORMER IRAQI REFUGEE LIVING IN NEW ZEALAND

Former **Iraqi refugee** Narjis Al-Zaidi is a university student and presenter of a radio programme called “Voice of Aroha”. The show aims to create an inclusive platform for people from refugee and non-refugee backgrounds to share their views and experiences. Once the pandemic hit, Narjis and her co-presenters began talking about **COVID-19** with their listeners. This was vital as they realized that information wasn't immediately available in different languages, or accessible to those who weren't digitally-literate.



**“IN THE TIME OF COVID I CURED THE SICK.”**

**DR HEVAL KELLI**  
FORMER SYRIAN REFUGEE LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

In 2001, 18-year-old Kurd Heval Kelli fled to Clarkston, Georgia, **USA** arriving from Syria two weeks after the 9/11 attacks.

Nearly 20 years later, Kelli is a **cardiology fellow** working at a large Atlanta hospital. He's been working as a **volunteer physician at a COVID-19 drive-through testing site** in Clarkston and virtually educating the Kurdish community about the virus.



**“IN THE TIME OF COVID I HELPED MY COMMUNITY STAY SAFE.”**

**SHADI SHHADEH**  
SYRIAN REFUGEE LIVING IN SWITZERLAND

With fellow **Syrian refugee** volunteers, Shadi shops at a supermarket in **Geneva** and delivers food and supplies to vulnerable people who are shielding from the coronavirus.

“We are a group of Syrian refugees, ready to help you stay at home by doing your shopping,” reads their the colourful poster, which provides an email contact for those who need help. Shadi screens the emails and assigns neighbourhood volunteers, who **head out several times a day to shop on demand**.



**“I MADE THE SOAP MY COMMUNITY NEEDS.”**

**MIDIA SAID SIDO**  
A SYRIAN REFUGEE LIVING IN LEBANON

Midia, a **Syrian refugee** who has found refuge in **Lebanon**, used to watch her parents make the famous Syrian olive oil soap at their home in Aleppo. Now she participates in a virtual soapmaking course to learn how to make the soap in her own home for her family.

The soap is also being distributed for **free to other refugees** by the centre that organized the training!



**“I HELPED EDUCATE MY SIBLINGS AND NEIGHBOURS.”**

**SIDRA MEDIAN AL GHOTHANI**  
SYRIAN REFUGEE LIVING IN JORDAN

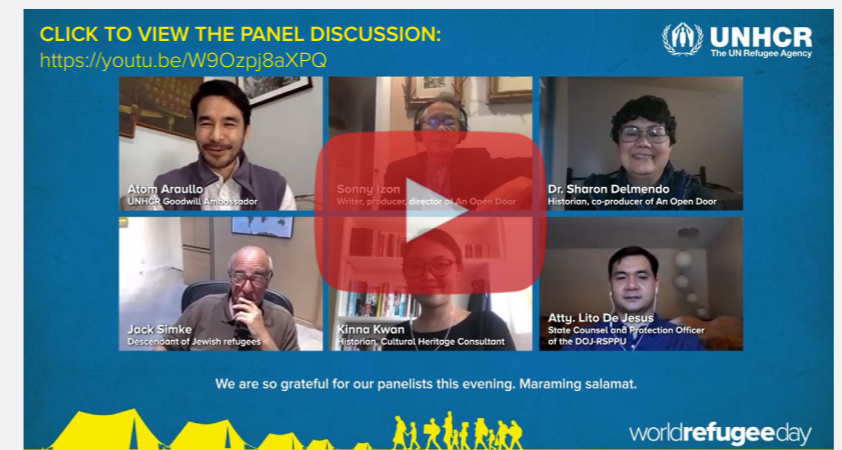
14-year-old Sidra is a **Syrian refugee** who is now living in **Jordan**. She is passionate about education and wants to be a teacher when she grows up.

During the coronavirus lockdown, she has been **helping her brother and her neighbours' children to study**.

# WORLD REFUGEE DAY 2020

In commemoration of World Refugee Day this year, UNHCR held a special online screening of “An Open Door: Holocaust Haven in the Philippines,” which delves into the stories of Jewish refugees who escaped the Holocaust and found refuge in the Philippines through President Manuel Quezon’s then-daring Open-Door Policy. This act of kindness would open even more doors for refugees in search of protection in Philippine shores through the years.

Following the screening, UNHCR Philippines Goodwill Ambassador and broadcast journalist Atom Araullo led an esteemed discussion panel to further expound on our country’s legacy of acceptance and generosity from different perspectives, and weigh in our current efforts to alleviate today’s refugee crisis on a global and local scale.



As we face unprecedented displacement figures, a global health crisis, and the fight for a more just, fair, and inclusive world, this event highlighted the plight of refugees past and present, and what everyday citizens can do to help—reminding every Filipino that even small acts of kindness can extend across countries, past borders, and through generations.

**“** I grew up in the Philippines, born and raised. Life in the Philippines offered me the opportunity to understand life in its true sense. Not the Hollywood style of life, but the true difficult existence that people have...That allowed me to take what I learned and transmit it to my children and to my wife...**to really contribute as much as they can with their lives to people who do have needs.**



**“** Filipinos will show [the world] the way. Because they're the only people that stood out, ever, and has done something for somebody for people whom they had no reason to help.

**JACK SIMKE**  
Descendant of Jewish “Manilaner” refugees

Jack recently visited his **yaya Lolita** in Pangasinan. Lolita raised him after his mother passed away. Jack's parents were Jewish refugees who found refuge in the Philippines.

## Highlights from the Panel

**“** I have met so many of the Manilaners and their descendants, and they have such an affection and a sense of belonging to the Philippines that lasts through the rest of their lives... The Philippines was not reactive, it was proactive. It saw a problem and came up with a solution and didn't have to be asked...a solution that provides both a home, and a heart, for the people that come here.

**SONNY IZON**  
Writer, producer, director of An Open Door

**“** The Manilaners story shows that...a country can still welcome people whom no one, no other place, will welcome and that they can become a vital part of the nation, the people. And that that will reap its own rewards simply by doing the right thing when doing the right thing is urgently, urgently needed. I think it's a good story to model humanitarianism for us now everywhere.

**DR. SHARON DELMENDO**  
Historian and co-producer of 'An Open Door'

**“** it's important to keep telling these kinds of stories not only because we can learn so much from the past, but when we're talking about refugees, awareness fosters understanding, and understanding fights fear. And fear, I think, is one of the things that makes the lives of refugees harder.

**KINNA KWAN**  
Historian and Cultural Heritage Consultant

**“** We are the torchbearer when it comes to fulfilling our obligations under the Refugee Conventions... We will ensure that our policies, our rules, regulations will be geared towards the attainment of providing the necessary support to our refugees. Because **we believe that they can be productive members of society. So we just need to tap them because they are an asset to any country.**

**ATTY. LITO DE JESUS**  
State Counsel & Protection Officer, DOJ-RSPPU









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Thousands of **forcibly displaced families in Mindanao** still live in densely populated transitory sites, making them vulnerable to health and protection risks during the **COVID-19 pandemic**. Your continued support ensures access to **water, sanitation, and health (WASH) facilities** like this water pipeline in Saguiaran, Lanao del Sur.

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