

AMERICAS

December 2022

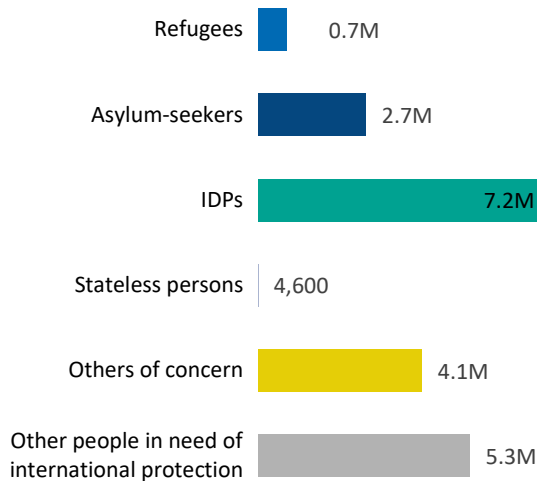
One in six people UNHCR serves lives in the Americas. The complexity of **mixed movements** has increased. Refugees and migrants face life-threatening and protection risks along displacement routes.

According to the **mid-year trends report, 2 in 5 new asylum applications (42%)** in the world were made by **nationals of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.**

UNHCR prioritizes **protection interventions, humanitarian aid** as well as **long-term solutions**, including integration.

POPULATION UNHCR SERVES IN 2022

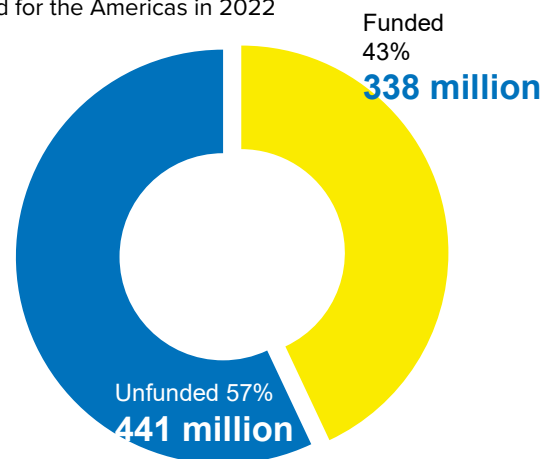
19.9 million people UNHCR serves | 16% of global total



FUNDING (AS OF 24 NOVEMBER 2022)

USD 779.6 million

requested for the Americas in 2022



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

- 1,942 National Staff
- 509 International Staff
- 60,47% Women and 39,53% Men

Offices:

- 1 Regional Bureau in Panama
- 3 Multi-Country Offices in Argentina, Panama and US
- 11 Country Offices
- 1 Country Mission in Dominican Republic
- 5 National Offices
- 22 Field Offices
- 10 Sub Offices
- 46 Field Units



Panama. Unprecedented number of refugees and migrants crossing the Darien Gap in search for safety and protection. © UNHCR/ Viola E. Bruttomesso

Operational context

The **Americas** region is facing a forced displacement crisis that is unprecedented both in its complexity and scale. By the end of November 2022, [16 per cent of the population that UNHCR serves worldwide](#), or almost 20 million people, are displaced in the region.

The exodus from the Bolivarian Republic of **Venezuela** remains one of the largest displacement crises globally with over [7.1 million refugees and migrants](#), out of which over 84 per cent are hosted in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The volume and complexity of [mixed population movements](#) across Latin America and the Caribbean have increased, involving people of various nationalities, many of whom had previously achieved a certain level of stability in countries in South America.

By the end of 2021, over 100,000 Haitians, who had been previously residing mainly in Chile and Brazil, and some 66,588 Cubans, had crossed the **Darien Gap** between Colombia and Panama and moved across Central America, undertaking perilous journeys with the objective of reaching the United States. From January to October 2022, over 211,000 people, mostly Venezuelans (70%), have taken the same dangerous route, while the number of Haitians and Cubans was reduced in 2022 compared to the previous year (12,326 Haitians and 4,995 Cubans).

Other people UNHCR serves include over [7 million IDPs](#) in **Colombia, El Salvador, and Honduras**, and some [206,600 refugees and asylum seekers from Nicaragua](#) in Central America. In addition, UNHCR also assists [over 636,000 refugees and asylum-seekers](#) in **El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala**.

The [COVID-19](#) pandemic intensified deep-rooted inequalities in the region, dealing a disproportionate blow to refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced populations.

Coordination and Partnerships

- Prioritisation of life-saving assistance goes hand in hand with efforts to find long-term solutions by fostering cooperation with a wide array of actors, such as [local authorities](#) and the [private sector](#), including to provide livelihood opportunities and promote inclusion into national systems.
- UNHCR also partners with [the people it serves, the public sector, NGOs and civil society organizations](#) in their operations across the Americas, contributing to the whole-of-society approach in the refugee response, and in line with the [UN Global Compact on Refugees](#).
- UNHCR co-leads with IOM the regional [Inter-Agency Coordination Platform](#) for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V), implementing the [Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan \(RMRP\)](#) across 17 countries. Both agencies also provide technical support to intergovernmental coordination in the [Quito Process](#)—an initiative including several **Latin American countries** that seeks to harmonize domestic policies in receiving countries.
- UNHCR has close strategic partnerships with the [Inter-American Development Bank \(IDB\) and the World Bank \(WB\)](#) in the region. In 2022, UNHCR held a deep dive event with the WB to identify areas of joint engagement in nine key countries in the region. With the IDB, UNHCR agreed upon a joint action plan developing research, operational and policy initiatives across the region. In 2023, UNHCR will advance its partnership with the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, [CABEI](#), and others to deepen the inclusion of refugees, IDPs and stateless people in development programmes and to strengthen efforts to address the root causes of displacement.

- In **Central America and Mexico**, UNHCR jointly with the [Organization of American States \(OAS\)](#) supports the implementation of national action plans under the [Regional Comprehensive Protection and Solutions Framework for Central America and Mexico \(MIRPS\)](#). In addition, with the support of UNHCR, the [MIRPS Support Platform](#) led by the United States as current Chair, has increased its support through technical, material and financial assistance.
- Since 2019, UNHCR works within the framework of the [Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\)](#) for people who spontaneously returned to **Venezuela**, IDPs, persons at risk of displacement, refugees, asylum-seekers, and persons at risk of statelessness who require humanitarian assistance and protection safeguards. Since 2021, UNHCR works with other UN agencies, actors and stakeholders within the framework of the HRP for people with protection needs in [El Salvador](#), [Guatemala](#) and [Honduras](#). The UN estimates that **8.3 million people** across the three countries require humanitarian assistance, compared to the 5.2 million in early 2020. UNHCR also contributes to inter-agency structures and UN Bodies and Regional Fora for joint responses, monitoring and advocacy, and investment in national and regional protection networks.
- UNHCR in the Americas works in Spanish, Portuguese, French and English with over 306 partnership agreements, including local and international NGOs, governments and other partners. 72% of partner agreements in the Americas are with local and refugee or IDP-led NGOs.

Strategy

Protect

Assert the centrality of protection in response to displacement

- UNHCR works with States to strengthen **asylum capacities and digitalize its systems** and promote protection-sensitive regular stay arrangements and documentation through training and capacity-building of government officials.
- UNHCR supports States in terms of assistance to persons with specific needs, **registration**, and links with the national protection services, which also help UNHCR identify and assist the most vulnerable.
- Investing in **protection monitoring**, evidence-based programming and analysis is at the core of regional strategies oriented by age, gender, and diversity considerations, ensuring protection from exploitation and abuse.
- Through a strengthened network of **support spaces**, the provision of information and orientation, identification and secure reference, helps to prevent displacement.

Assist

Ensure operational response capacities and life-saving aid for the most vulnerable during emergencies

- Across the region, UNHCR responds to the **immediate needs** of increasing numbers of persons that UNHCR serves. Because of the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic, rising poverty and inequality triggered unprecedented levels of need for **basic relief items, emergency shelter, food, safe water, and sanitation supplies**.
- **Cash assistance** has proven the preferred option for refugees and other people forced to flee to meet basic needs such as food, rent or medicines.
- As severe **climate events** further aggravate the situation of displaced populations and communities at risk of displacement, UNHCR responds with **emergency relief items** to support authorities' response to these situations.

Empower

Empower communities and achieve gender equality

- To prevent displacement, mitigate protection risks and build on the resilience of affected communities, operations will prioritise **community-centred interventions**, including supporting volunteer networks in prioritised communities. UNHCR promotes communication and integration, identification, and referral of cases with specific needs, as well as enhanced access to information and complaint mechanisms.

Solve

- UNHCR boosts feedback and complaint mechanisms across the region, allowing for **constant communication with the affected population and** strengthening two-way communication, to ensure the response adapts to their needs, particularly in increasingly risky environments such as borders.

Include persons we serve in national/local services with development support

- Through a whole-of-society approach, UNHCR fosters **partnerships** mainly with governments and private sector **to mobilise support** for the inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in national systems and the labour market.
- UNHCR actively advocates for enhanced national efforts to provide **regular stay** (such as temporary or permanent schemes, professional or work-related permits, education programmes...) allowing for full enjoyment of rights and integration.

Climate-induced risks

One of the greatest threats of our time is climate change. Hurricanes, storms, floods and droughts continue to disproportionately affect the region and lead to further displacement. The impacts exacerbate existing inequalities between men and women and affect access to resources in areas vulnerable to droughts and floods. For this reason, UNHCR will move forward with the formulation and implementation of its regional climate action plan in collaboration with operational departments and in line with [UNHCR's Strategic Framework for Climate Action](#).

Priority areas in this regard include providing legal and policy guidance and support, conducting evidence-based advocacy in the context of climate change and disaster-induced displacement. Increased resilience and protection of the most vulnerable and their hosts to climate change impacts will be promoted. To this end, mitigation of climate risks and adaptation of mechanisms for operational response to displacement in the context of climate change will be undertaken. In addition, UNHCR's efforts to reduce its own environmental footprint will be increased.

To support an evidence-based operational engagement and response to forced displacement associated with climate change and natural hazards, as well as to advance on the implementation of UNHCR Strategic Framework for Climate Action, the Regional Bureau for the Americas is currently working with the University of Peace and the Latin American Observatory on Human Mobility, Climate Change and Disaster to conduct a research to assess the impact of climate change on displacement within and across El Salvador and Honduras.

Innovation

During 2022, UNHCR's Innovation Service launched a series of thematic funds to provide a space for experimentation and testing new approaches in the [Digital Inclusion](#), [Data Innovation](#), and [Environment and Resilience](#) spaces and enhance UNHCR's service delivery. Nine operations in the Americas (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) are implementing a total of 15 projects across these three thematic areas, covering from digital livelihoods of Warao indigenous populations, community strengthening through intergenerational exchange of knowledge in the development of hydroponic vegetable gardens, to designing and building an evidence and community-based prioritization tool for community-based protection interventions.

Timely funding

As of 24 November, UNHCR in the Americas is only 43% funded, having required in 2022 **\$779.6 million** to respond to the needs of millions of refugees and others seeking safety and dignified lives. **Timely funding** is urgent to **ensure the continuity of life-saving activities** in the region: unrestricted **cash assistance**; distribution of **core and hygiene items**; provision of **emergency shelter** in border areas and for those facing evictions, and support to States for **regularisation** and documentation.

UNHCR's humanitarian and longer-term response in the Americas is made possible thanks to the **generous support** of major donors who have contributed unrestricted funding to UNHCR's global operations, and to donors who have generously contributed directly to UNHCR operations in the Americas.

Thanks to **all our donors in 2022** (as of 24 November)

Argentina | Belgium | Brazil | Canada | CERF | Colombia | Cyprus | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Guyana | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Luxembourg | Mexico | Norway | Netherlands | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | International Organization for Migration | Migration MPTF | Qatar | United Kingdom | UN Children Fund | UN Joint Programmes | UN Peacebuilding Fund | UN Programme On HIV/AIDS | United States of America | UNESCO | UN Women

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