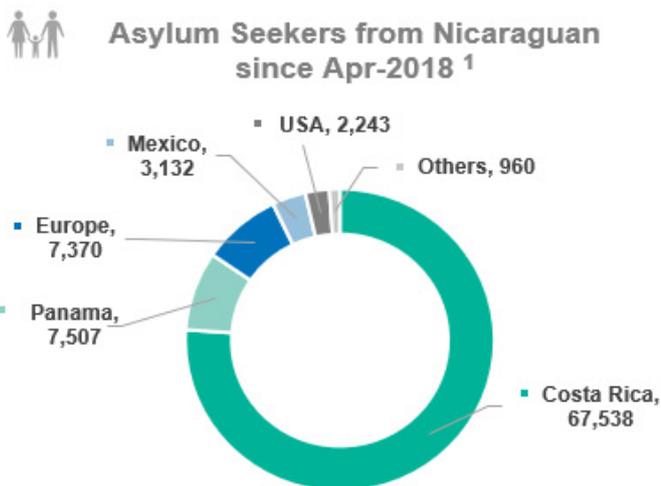


NICARAGUA SITUATION

Nicaragua has been in social and political crisis since April 2018. Human rights violations had forced nearly 90,000 Nicaraguans to flee by mid-2019. The majority have fled to neighbouring Costa Rica, where there are more than 46,000 registered asylum-seekers and 17,700 are waiting to formalize their claims. Among those seeking asylum are students, former public officials, opposition figures, journalists, doctors, human rights defenders and farmers. A significant number arrive in need of health care, psychological support, shelter and food assistance.



 **88,750 ASYLUM-SEEKERS FROM NICARAGUA (OCT 2019)**

(¹includes registered asylum-seekers and those waiting to formalize their claim)

UNHCR's 2020 response will strengthen reception capacities in Costa Rica, as well as in El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Panama. In Costa Rica in particular, UNHCR will enhance community-based protection, support refugee status determination procedures and other alternative protection pathways, and strengthen its cash-based interventions to support vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers.

According to the commitments assumed by governments through the Global Compact on Refugees and its regional application - the MIRPS - timely and predictable support by the international community is of the essence. Supported by UNHCR and the Organization of American States (OAS), the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (MIRPS for its acronym in Spanish) is led by seven states - Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras Mexico and Panama - and it aims at fostering regional cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination for greater responsibility sharing on prevention, protection and solutions.

UNHCR RESPONSE

Enhance protection

During 2019, presence and access to information and assistance were reinforced at the borders of Nicaragua and Costa Rica. UNHCR opened an office in Upala, on the northern border with Nicaragua, to increase reception capacity at the borders and provide information to new arrivals, ensure the early identification of persons with special protection needs and their referral to the appropriate public institutions. UNHCR provided 40 additional case adjudicators, as well as premises, training and equipment, to increase the capacity of the Government's Refugee Unit, both in the capital, San José, and at our office in Upala.

UNHCR has also supported the deployment of partner staff to the border and in San José to facilitate a comprehensive response in coordination with State authorities.

Through an agreement with Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social, the [Costa Rican Social Security Fund](#), Nicaraguan asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons are to be provided with health insurance, reducing their vulnerability and morbidity and lightening the burden on the Costa Rican state.

IMPLICATIONS OF UNDERFUNDING

As Nicaraguans fleeing are in need of international protection, there is a need to increase capacities to handle the potential asylum requests, granting access to territory and social rights as well as accelerating asylum processes.

Funds are urgently needed to strengthen UNHCR's humanitarian response to allow asylum-seekers in dire need of assistance to access aid, instead of having to resort to informal jobs to pay for rents and food at rates beyond their reach.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FLEXIBLE FUNDING FOR UNHCR'S SITUATIONS

Flexible financial support allows UNHCR to place resources anywhere within a given situation, in line with the Office's priorities, from where people in need are forced to flee, to where they find safety and protection. Importantly, it needs to come as early as possible for UNHCR to plan in the most efficient manner, allocating to priorities first.

For more information contact:

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Strengthen Multipurpose Cash-Based Intervention

UNHCR Costa Rica implements multipurpose cash-based interventions (CBI) to provide immediate assistance to the most vulnerable asylum-seekers.

These non-conditional, unrestricted cash grants provide a timely response, allowing prioritized individuals and families to address their most critical needs and support integration into their host communities. Between June and August, socio economic evaluations were conducted throughout San Jose's metropolitan region as well as in the northern cantons of Upala and Los Chiles. Through this exercise, 1,961 households received a cash grant; 1,277 in San Jose and 684 in Upala and Los Chiles cantons.

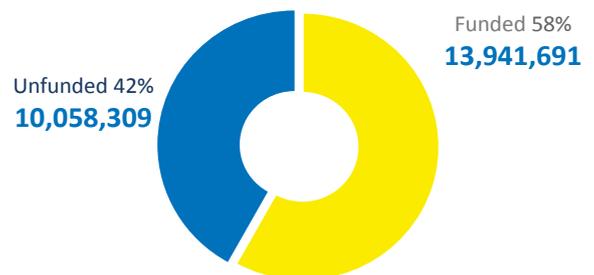
Durable solutions

To provide durable solutions, UNHCR works to enhance local integration, expanding its collaboration with the private sector and government institutions, to include additional employers in local integration programmes, and provide access to education, financial services, housing, health and employment support programs at all three levels of government. In Costa Rica thousands of asylum seekers will be provided access to public services and facilitated access to work, thanks to UNHCR's support.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS 2020 FOR COSTA RICA

as of December 2019

USD 22,39



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