



Costa Rica

SEPTEMBER 2022

Costa Rica is host to asylum seekers primarily from Latin America and the Caribbean, and a transit point for others. The last five years the country has experienced an upward trend in the number of asylum applications received because of political unrest and violence in the region. As of June 30, 2022, Costa Rica was hosting 215,933 people of concern: of these, 11,205 are refugees and 204,728 asylum seekers, the majority Nicaraguans (89%).

To address the significant gaps faced by the most vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees in meeting their basic needs, a multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) Basic Needs Program is managed by UNHCR under direct implementation.

Costa Rica has eased its restrictive measures due to the pandemic, therefore, the operation decided to resume on-site deliveries at the office in San Jose and the Field Office in Upala.

ASSISTANCE DELIVERY:

- Beneficiaries are identified during the Registration process through a socioeconomic evaluation.
- Those who qualify for MPCA receive three months of assistance.
- The selection criterion is the same for all the country and the amount is calculated based on the family size.
- The transfer value is different in the Greater Metropolitan Area (GAM) than in the North.

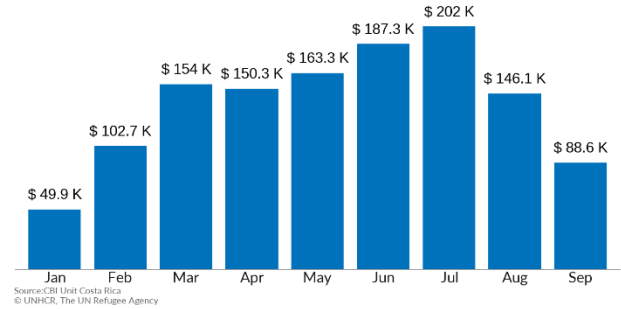
CASH ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES IN 2022

- The Regional Bureau’s Cash Assistance and Data, Identity Management and Analysis Unit (DIMA) teams have united under a four-country pilot to create a regional needs assessment survey and a targeting toolkit that can be customized for country context and type of assistance provided. The objective is to build a regional assessment that looks at multi-sectoral vulnerabilities. The Costa Rica operation was chosen for the first pilot. An eligibility and target workshop were held, gathering expert consultation for conjoint analysis on prioritized indicators.



- In line with the global cash policy for the use of cash assistance as a preferred modality to deliver assistance, the Office is leading a financial service providers market study to look for alternatives of cash transfers and withdrawals, according to UNHCR programmes’ needs, with the purpose of monetizing assistances provided.

More than USD 1.24M distributed through CBI program in 2022
Distribution by month (in thousands)



Source: CBI Unit Costa Rica
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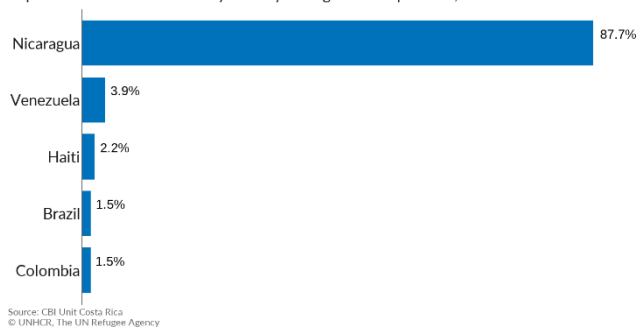
- During the first semester of 2022, the Cash Assistance and Livelihoods units participated in an external evaluation of the basic needs and livelihoods programs. Early findings show that although the scope of the Basic Needs Program is limited, it has impacted families positively. **An average of 65.38% of the persons UNHCR serves surveyed for the post-delivery monitoring of monetary assistance from 2019 to 2021 affirm that the assistance contributed to improvements in their living conditions; 59.77% felt stress reduction and for 61.55% the financial burden was reduced.**

BASIC NEEDS PROGRAM

As of September 30, 1,599 family groups, representing 4,069 individuals, have received assistance for a total of USD 1.254.416,11.

Most beneficiaries are from Nicaragua (**88%**), **75%** are female and **25%** male. Fifty percent of the individuals benefited are minors. Average age of beneficiaries is **21.5**. The average household size of HHs benefited this year is **2.4**. In **71%** of the households, the head of household is a woman.

Where the assisted individuals come from? | 2022
Top 5: % of Individuals assisted by country of origin until September,30st



About 67% of assistances took place in UNHCR offices. The remaining percent was delivered through Correos de Costa Rica for people living in the northern zone, persons with disabilities or families with children without care options.

In coordination with the Livelihoods Unit, the CBI Unit assisted in the delivery of Seed Capital. All the beneficiaries of the Basic Needs program are referred to the Livelihoods program to improve the possibilities for them to achieve economic integration.

The Unit is currently working in the post-delivery monitoring. Beneficiaries were asked about other sources of income, and a large percentage (71.7%) reported having informal work. Even through informal job, 61,9% do not have productive livelihood assets to earn a living. At the time of the interview, 78.4% had already spent the monthly cash. The top three expenditures include food, rent and health costs.

CONTACT

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