

Bolivia

November 2019

Historical commitment to protection. Bolivia is a State Party to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol since 1982. Bolivia acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless People and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness in 1983.

Naturalization. Bolivia implemented a Resolution of the Ministry of Interior (2016) to simplify the procedures for the naturalization of refugees and stateless persons in line with Art. 32 of the 1951 Convention and Art. 34 of the 1954 Convention.

Network of partners. In 2019, UNHCR's operational capacity in Bolivia has been extended through the establishment of agreements with new partners, in order to provide assistance and protection not only in the main cities (La Paz and Santa Cruz de la Sierra), but also at the border in Desaguadero.

HIGHLIGHTS

Venezuela Situation. According to information provided by the Government, as of July 2019 there are **5,851 Venezuelans displaced abroad** in the country.

Bolivia issued an agreement for the **recognition of diplomas** that the refugees obtained outside Bolivia (signed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education).

The **Bolivian Constitution of 2009** enshrines the right to asylum and the protection against refoulement as constitutional rights (Art. 29). The domestic legal framework dealing with refugees is set out in the **2012 Refugee Law Nº 251 "Ley de Protección a Personas Refugiadas"** and the **Supreme Decree No. 1440**, in line with international standards, including the extended refugee definition in line with the 1984 Cartagena Declaration. The refugee legislation also establishes an ad hoc procedure for stateless status determination (SSD).

POPULATION OF CONCERN 5,280*

Refugees	828
Asylum-seekers	232
Venezuelans displaced abroad	4,220

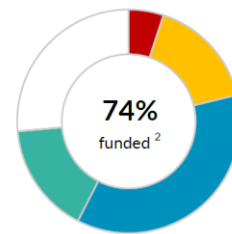
* Official data on population of concern in Bolivia was only provided partially as of June 2017 and June 2018.

FUNDING

USD 11.8 MILLION

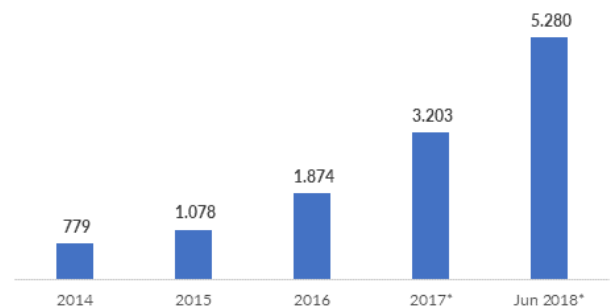
requested for the **Argentina Regional Office including Bolivia**

UNHCR's financial requirements 2019



ARGENTINA REGIONAL OFFICE
as of 6 November 2019

POPULATION OF CONCERN (EVOLUTION)



UNHCR PRESENCE

The UNHCR Regional Office for Southern Latin America based in Buenos Aires covers operations in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Staff and Offices

1 Regional Office in Buenos Aires, Argentina – **9** international staff, **25** national staff, **14** UNOPS, **1** Fellow and **3** Consultants.
 in Mendoza, Argentina **1** UNOPS
 in La Rioja, Argentina **1** UNOPS
 in Salta, Argentina **1** UNOPS
 in Córdoba, Argentina **1** UNOPS
 in Montevideo, Uruguay **3** UNOPS

1 National Office in Santiago, Chile – **1** international staff, **13** staff National staff, **1** ERT and **2** UNOPS.

Presence in Arica, Chile - **3** National staff



Photo: Pakistani children refugees in Bolivia / ©UNHCR/ Edu Weisberg

Working with Partners

- UNHCR works in close coordination with Government counterparts, namely the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the National Directorate of Migration, the National Office of the Ombudsperson, and the **National Refugee Commission (CONARE)**. UNHCR is a member of CONARE.
- A bilateral cooperation agreement was signed between UNHCR and the **National Office of the Ombudsperson**. The agreement's main objective is the strengthening of technical capacities to provide orientation and legal assistance to asylum-seekers and refugees in Bolivia and to conduct border monitoring, among other joint activities that will benefit persons of concern.
- UNHCR has broadened the network of partners to scale up the operational capacity on the ground including activities not only in **La Paz**, but also in **El Alto**, **Santa Cruz de la Sierra** and at the **borders**. The **Pastoral Social Caritas Boliviana (PSCB)** is UNHCR's partner implementing activities that aim at providing counselling and basic humanitarian assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers. In addition, UNHCR partners with **Visión Mundial Bolivia**, who cooperates with **Red Cross Bolivia** and the National Office of the Ombudsperson, to provide, among others, child protection services, primary health care, communication services and legal orientation and assistance. UNHCR has an agreement with **Caritas Switzerland** to provide and improve shelters for migrants and refugees through **Fundación Scalabrini Bolivia**, as well as assisting survivors of SGBV through available services and engaging with local communities through **Fundación Munasim Kullakita**.

Main Activities

Protection & Durable Solutions

- Provide technical support and advice at the request of national authorities involved in the implementation of fair and efficient **refugee status determination procedures (RSD)**.
- Strengthen reception conditions and capacities at the main entry **border** (Desaguadero) through joint **support spaces** acting as "one-stop" where refugees and migrants will have access to information, connectivity and communication services, legal orientation and assistance and primary health care services, among others.
- Support the **Regional Border Protection Network** led by civil society institutions and faith based organizations, together with national human rights institutions working with migrants and refugees at the border areas of Bolivia, Chile and Peru to coordinate activities with a regional perspective in order to better identify persons of concern to UNHCR, prevent their refoulement and support them through legal counselling, shelter and humanitarian assistance.
- Strengthen institutional capacities of the **National Office of the Ombudsperson** to ensure asylum-seekers and refugees have access to legal orientation and assistance
- Promote actions addressed to prevent, identify and respond to situations of **Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV)** affecting refugee women and children in coordination with local partners. Regular protection dialogues and empowerment activities are developed with refugee women.
- Promote activities to meet the specific protection and developmental needs of girls and boys and their families. UNHCR has reinforced shelters by including **child friendly spaces** which will provide a safe space to learn and play. UNHCR and its partners are also piloting a project in La Paz that provides community psycho-social support and engagement through a mobile service which functions as an informal "class-room" for children where also the family, and specially women, benefit from an active listening service by trained staff.
- Advocate for the adoption of a law for the protection of **stateless people** and the establishment of a stateless determination procedure in line with the pledges made by the Government of Bolivia (Brazil Plan of Action).
- Strengthen UNHCR engagement with UN agencies to better coordinate and respond to the situation of asylum-seekers, refugees and other persons of concern.

Humanitarian Assistance, Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- **Humanitarian assistance** is provided to vulnerable persons of concern upon arrival and in the capital to ensure that their basic needs are covered using in-kind and cash-based assistance.
- Through UNHCR's partner agencies, asylum-seekers and other persons of concern receive **information and orientation** regarding access to rights, protection and local integration, and vulnerable cases are referred to migrant shelters and community kitchens. **Durable shelter solutions** and socio-economic inclusion are achieved by using counselling, referrals to specialized services and the provision of multi-purpose cash grants.
- Support infrastructure improvements **of shelters** in order to improve the quality of assistance provided to refugees and migrants.

External Relations

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LINKS

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