BRAZIL FIGURES AT GLANCE

Source: UNHCR mid-year statistics based on government official data

- +593K refugees and other people in need of international protection
- +102K recognized refugees from 121 countries
- +89K asylum-seekers
- +402K other people in need of international protection

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

- +450K Venezuela
- +86K Haiti
- +4,7K Afghanistan
- +52K Other countries

UNHCR RESPONSE

As of June 2023

- +94,800 people assisted by UNHCR
- +7,700 recognized refugees
- +44,100 asylum-seekers
- +42,900 other people in need of international protection

- 50.4% male
- 49.6% female
- 467 people with disabilities
- 3,016 indigenous peoples

- 45,000 people assisted with access to documentation
- 27,000 people accommodated in emergency shelters
- Out of which 8,500 were voluntary relocated to other cities of Brazil
- 1,120 were directly supported to integrate in other cities (shelter, financial assistance, etc.)

- 2,500 people reached with gender-based violence prevention activities
- 2,900 people supported with cash-assistance for basic needs
- 1,400 people supported with vocational training
- 6,000 people assisted for access to employment and entrepreneurship

Source: UNHCR mid-year statistics based on government official data

As of June 2023
SPECIAL FOCUS

Support to Haitian nationals

Brazil has historically showed solidarity to Haitian nationals: over 161,000 people settled or transited through Brazil over the past years, especially since the 2010 earthquake, out of which some 83,000 Haitians are now estimated to be in the country holding some type of legal documentation and are recognized as in need of international protection. Additionally, there is a significant presence of Brazilian children and adolescents born to Haitian parents.

Reception and Integration of Haitians

This year, Brazil has reaffirmed this support for Haitians by extending the granting of visas and temporary residence for humanitarian purposes until 31 December 2024 and broadening its scope to include those affected by the situation of institutional instability in Haiti, besides those affected by a major calamity or environmental disaster, which were already covered by previous regulations.

However, cultural and language differences, as well as the experiences of displacement, including the impact of family separation, racism, and xenophobia, continue to significantly affect this population’s access to education, employment, housing, healthcare, and social assistance. By 2022, over 55,000 Haitians in vulnerable situations, including in street-like situations, were registered in the Brazilian social assistance system. It is also worth noting that, in recent years, thousands of Haitian and Brazilian children of Haitian descent have embarked on risky journeys leaving Brazil in search of better opportunities in other countries of the continent.

Action Plan

On 20 June, the Government of Brazil, with the support of UNHCR, launched the “Action Plan for Strengthening the Protection and Local Integration of the Haitian Population in Brazil”. The Plan intends to benefit both Haitians already residing in Brazil, to support their stabilization and try to address and prevent risky, secondary movements, as well as those arriving more recently, who need timely access to information, protection, and integration opportunities. In practice, the Plan will work through 4 axes of implementation:

1. Conduction mapping on access to rights and opportunities for Haitians in Brazil
   - Expected outcome: Information gaps regarding this population are addressed to adjust interventions accordingly

2. Promotion of access to humanitarian responses, reception mechanisms, and documentation
   - Expected outcome: Haitians have access to humanitarian reception, documentation and international protection

3. Strengthening socio-economic integration strategies
   - Expected outcome: Haitians have effective access to jobs, entrepreneurship, and education opportunities

4. Strengthening and supporting community structures
   - Expected outcome: Haitians have expanded access to decision-making fora, and community action plans are developed

Currently, UNHCR is assisting the government for this implementation, starting with consultations with the Haitian population to review and detail the Action Plan, as well as carrying out a throughout analysis on their access to rights and opportunities.
Cross-border movements of Venezuelans at heightened risk continue at the Pacaraima border, in the state of Roraima - 71,100 people in the first 6 months of 2023. This has prompted the Humanitarian-Logistics Taskforce of Operation Welcome to activate the Contingency Plan - a multi-phased approach designed to address various scenarios of refugee influx in Roraima and ensure adequate reception conditions. On 17 May, the Plan’s phase 1 was activated, with the expansion of shelter capacity by 370 additional slots. The activation of phase 2, which entailed the adaptation of the former Rondon 2 shelter in a temporary transit center with a capacity of 500 people, occurred in the end of June.

Along the first six months of 2023, UNHCR has provided technical support for refugee-led organizations to enhance their organizational capacities and assist them in developing projects that could secure funding opportunities. The Agency has also sponsored the participation of refugee leaders in events and regional consultations with civil society organizations, as well as in decision-making forums. Overall, 22 refugee-led organizations received technical support, mainly in the states of Manaus, Pará and the Federal District.

Moreover, UNHCR has been financially supporting these organizations through small-grant funds. A total of 26 organizations were selected in the 2023 Call for Expression of Interest and have until the end of the year to implement their projects - many of them related to culture, music, sports and advocacy.

A total of 6,600 Afghan refugees have entered Brazil in the first half of 2023, which already represents the 65% of all entries registered last year.

UNHCR in coordination with authorities and civil society organizations have been working to expand the reception network in the state of São Paulo to 12 shelters with 1,000 slots. With UNHCR’s technical support, the local government was able to open a temporary facility for up to 160 people in the city of Praia Grande. UNHCR also funded a new space, the Poá II shelter, offering 30 vacancies, in addition to the 87 places already directly supported by UNHCR, from which some 500 Afghan refugees already benefitted. Despite this, the demand for shelter still surpasses current capacities, leaving many refugees to overnight at the airport waiting for accommodation.

UNHCR is also focused on identifying long-term solutions for Afghan refugees. Through a partnership with the NGO Education Without Borders, the sheltered population have access to Portuguese classes, which is key for their local integration. Also, UNHCR has conducted a mapping of professional profiles of Afghan refugees to engage with private companies and increase hiring opportunities.
UNHCR is committed to improve indigenous people’s socio-economic inclusion by empowering refugee leadership and promoting self-organization so they can have access to decision-making spaces and articulate their demands for local integration opportunities.

In April, UNHCR enabled the participation of 10 indigenous refugees and migrants living in the states of Pará, Amazonas, and Roraima in the “Acampamento Terra Livre” (ATL), an annual meeting gathering over 6 thousand Brazilian Indigenous peoples from different ethnicities to advocate for indigenous rights and discuss public policies. This was an opportunity for them to voice their specific needs in ministerial forums, including access to health and decent housing for indigenous communities, and exchange knowledge and experiences with Brazilian indigenous communities.

Other initiatives entailed the support to a group of 11 indigenous refugees to start the process for formalizing their own representative organization in Manaus, and the constant support to the Warao Ojiduna Council, an organization in Belém that gathers 25 Warao indigenous leaders created to represent their interests and promote their socio-political participation and access to rights.

Livelihoods opportunities for young refugees

For young refugees, a formal job can be not only a form of complementing the family’s income and accessing basic needs, but also a way not to incur in forced recruitment and exploitation. UNHCR has been partnering up with the Business-School Integration Center (CIEE) - a social assistance entity that promotes access to the labour market for adolescents and young people by offering internship and apprenticeship programs.

In Manaus, Amazonas, as part of the third edition of the “Jóvenes en Acción” project, over 30 young refugees received Portuguese classes and training on computer skills, administration, and interpersonal skills, and were later referred to CIEE to look for professional apprenticeship jobs. The fourth edition has already started and, altogether, over 100 young refugees will be supported.

In Ananindeua, Pará, UNHCR and CIEE conducted information sessions for young indigenous Warao on internship and apprentices’ jobs to provide them with insights on existing labour opportunities.

In Boa Vista, Roraima, in a joint effort of UNHCR with CIEE and National Employment System (SINE), 24 young people living in emergency shelters are enrolled in courses on basic computer skills, as well as workshops on issuance of Work and Social Security Card (CTPS), young apprentice program and Brazilian labour market.

To also provide the private sector with accurate information and mitigate possible misconceptions, UNHCR has developed a booklet with guidance on how to hire young refugees through the Young Apprentice modality.
State and municipal councils and committees are valuable spaces to promote the social participation of people in need of international protection, ensuring their needs and challenges are taken into account in the development of local plans of actions covering health, social assistance, education, work, housing, among others. UNHCR continues to be committed to assist the creation and implementation of these forums of decision, especially by providing technical guidance.

In 2023, UNHCR has assisted in the creation of 3 state council and committees (Roraima, Paraíba and the Federal District), as well as 3 municipal ones (Niterói-RJ, Belém-PA and Manaus-AM).

With that, Brazil now counts with 15 state councils and committees (out of which 10 are part of the National Forum of Councils and State Committees for Refugees, Stateless Persons, and Migrants - FONACERAM) and 23 municipal councils and committees. Moreover, there are 7 state and municipal plans under implementation and 6 currently being elaborated.

In May, the National Committee for Refugees (CONARE) adopted simplified procedures, with exemption of eligibility interview, for LGBTQI+ people who flee discrimination and persecution in their countries and submit their asylum claims on sexual-orientation and/or gender identity grounds. Until June 2023, about 41 LGBTQI+ individuals were recognized as refugees through this facilitated procedure.

UNHCR, together with students of Aalto University from Finland, developed a series of activities focused on sustainability in the indigenous community Warao A Janoko, located in the municipality of Cantá, Roraima. Aiming to respond to the needs identified by the community, the team worked on the development of eco-friendly housing solutions, which resulted in setting up a pilot system for rainwater collection and storage.

In May, the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner (DHC) for Refugees, Kelly T. Clements, conducted a five-day mission to Brazil, accompanied by the Director of UNHCR Regional Office for the Americas, José Samaniego.

The DHC saw first-hand how UNHCR, together with partners, is supporting the Government of Brazil’s response to receive, protect, and integrate refugees and other people in need of international protection in the country.
UNHCR Brazil is also thankful for the important support of and partnerships with other UN agencies, Brazilian authorities (at federal, state and municipal levels) and civil society organizations working together to deliver the emergency response and in the regular programmes of the Brazilian operation.