Regional epidemiological update as of September 1st: In South America, Brazil leads with 3,862,311 cases, followed by Peru, Colombia, and Chile, with 647,166, 607,938, and 411,726 cases respectively. Compared to the previous week, the sharpest increases in cases were noted in Paraguay (29%), Argentina (19%), and Venezuela (16%). In South America, the number of cases is at 6,235,869, compared to 4,031,202 thirty days ago, an increase of 54%. In terms of mortality, Brazil also leads with 120,828 deaths, followed by Peru, Colombia, and Chile, with 28,788, 19,364, and 11,289 deaths, respectively. In the whole region, the number of deaths is at 201,089, compared to 141,879 thirty days ago, an increase of 42%.

As new COVID-19 cases continue to be reported, mitigation measures and policies imposed by governments and authorities to limit its spread persist. This continues to impact global human mobility and poses various complex challenges for different population groups, including migrants. Efforts by governments and authorities to facilitate returns of their nationals stranded abroad are ongoing. Governments in the region continue to provide assistance to migrants, affected by COVID-19 mitigation measures, and have extended deadlines for foreign nationals to leave their territories (automatic extension of stay permits for tourists, migrant workers, etc).

1. WHO COVID-19 Situation Dashboard: https://covid19.who.int/
2. Ibidem
SNAPSHOT OF IOM RESPONSE IN SOUTH AMERICA

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Ensure a well-coordinated, informed and timely response through mobility tracking systems and strengthening partnership and coordination structures established at the community, national and regional levels.

COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

IOM Argentina participated in the panel "Challenges and responses of the migrant and refugee population to the pandemic", organized by the office of UN’s Resident Coordinator.

IOM Paraguay, government leaders, NGOs and other UN agencies participated in the panel "Challenges and responses of the migrant and refugee population to the pandemic", organized by the office of the UN Resident Coordinator.

IOM Colombia supported the activation of local multi-sector and multi-partner coordination mechanisms, for the preparation and response to COVID-19.

IOM Colombia planned and coordinated actions in response to the emergency with the local secretaries of health (Bogota, Chia, Soacha) such as construction or activation of care routes, implementation of prevention and care protocols, application of screening for respiratory symptoms and sample taking, epidemiological surveillance and case follow-up, psychosocial support and violence prevention, situational and risk analysis, strengthening the knowledge of the human resources of the State Social Enterprises (ESE) at the first and second level of care and participation in different spaces with local health authorities.

IOM Uruguay and other UN agencies, in coordination with the government, supported an assessment survey of homeless people in Montevideo. IOM Uruguay coordinated with Embassies and national authorities to provide humanitarian assistance to stranded migrants in Uruguay.

With the support of IOM’s Regional Office for South America, as the Technical Secretariat, the South American Conference Migration Inserssional Meeting will be held next 17 September. At this meeting, Argentina will assume the Presidency Pro Tempore and present the theme and the Agenda for the XIX CSM Conference: “Migration and Access to Rights: Challenges Facing the Region on behalf of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Experiences, Lessons Learned and an Outlook for the Future.”
RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (RCCE)


IOM Brazil provided information sessions on COVID-19 prevention including personal hygiene and hand washing. The activity reached 300 Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Manaus.

Also, in order to celebrate World Humanitarian Day, IOM Brazil published stories of three migrants who are part of IOM’s health team in the country. The migrants provide medical care to other migrants, refugees, and the host community and are at the forefront of the COVID-19 response.

IOM Colombia developed and disseminated Information, Education and Communication (IEC) messages at the local level, aimed at key stakeholders and community groups at risk, on COVID-19 prevention and preparedness measures.

In addition, virtual and in-person educational activities continue to be implemented in different departments of the Colombia to promote best practices and prevent the risk of COVID-19 infection. A wide dissemination of communication content has been achieved through the web, social networks, digital applications and community radio stations.

On August 24, IOM Peru and the NGO Cooperazione Internazionale launched an information social media campaign on access to rights for the refugee and migrant population. The messages of the campaign are focused on COVID-19 prevention, employment, education, health and GBV prevention. Under the slogan “Lockdown Heroes” (Heroes de la Cuarentena), IOM Peru is participating in a campaign where for each contribution of 60 soles by members of the public, IOM will match the amount to be distributed among vulnerable families in the city of Trujillo.
DISEASE SURVEILLANCE

IOM Brazil provided medical assistance in Boa Vista with the Mobile Health Units, benefiting more than 180 sheltered people and 130 living in spontaneous occupations. IOM Brazil completed 230 medical consultations for refugees, migrants and Brazilians with the Mobile Health Unit in Pacaraima, on the Brazilian border with Venezuela. Beneficiaries received various immunizations, were able to do prenatal exams and health services, among other services that were also useful to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

IOM Colombia hired specialized teams to support the provision of health services, including the detection of respiratory symptoms in vulnerable rural and urban communities with migrant and host populations in the departments of Antioquia, Arauca, Atlántico, Bolívar, Cesar, Cundinamarca, Chocó, La Guajira, Magdalena, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Santander, Valle del Cauca and Vichada.

IOM Colombia is carrying out epidemiological follow-up of suspected cases and/or contacts with positive Covid-19 patients, in Ipiales, department of Nariño (border with Ecuador), to raise awareness and provide guidance on COVID-19 protection and care practices, as well as to collect information on health and mental health conditions of the population and identify respiratory symptoms.

IOM Colombia conducted the identification of persons suspected of COVID-19 and orientation and information and, if necessary, referral to local health secretaries, the available health services provider network or complementary services provided by other agencies or cooperation organizations for sampling, care and follow-up in Riohacha and Maicao, department of La Guajira (border with Venezuela).

IOM Colombia supported the dissemination of information, and training of health personnel at points of entry for detection, notification, isolation, management and referral of travelers. For instance, at entry points of the municipality of Puerto Carreño -department of Vichada (border with Venezuela)- trained on cough management and hand washing. As well, IOM Colombia strengthened the surveillance and investigation of COVID-19 cases, and rapid response teams, among border communities, points of entry (PoE), migrant dense areas and/or rural areas.
INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

IOM Brazil distributed soaps, towels, and alcohol gel, benefiting 155 Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Pacaraima. To reinforce the importance of hygiene conditions and mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in four spontaneous occupations in Boa Vista, IOM delivered slippers and hygiene kits.

In Manaus, IOM distributed soaps for 128 Venezuelan migrants and refugees that live in shelters managed by the NGO Evangelic Mission Association of the Amazon. Also, it organized an information session on COVID-19 prevention at Manaus Bus Station Brazil, and distributed hygiene kits to 124 Venezuelan migrants and refugees. In Belem, IOM delivered 80 hygiene kits to refugees and migrants’ beneficiaries of the relocation strategy and currently temporarily sheltered in the city.

IOM Colombia organized meetings on risk analysis for the prevention and control of infections which took place in public places and community spaces in the departments of Norte de Santander; Cundinamarca, Valle del Cauca, Nariño, Vichada, Cesar, Bolívar, La Guajira, Atlántico and Antioquia. In departments of Antioquia and Santander, officials and health professionals in shelters and/or housing were trained to implement handwashing and basic sanitation protocols.

IOM Colombia delivered biosecurity elements (72,500 masks, 170 gallons of antibacterial gel, 170 goggles, 272 infrared thermometers, 240 disposable protective caps and suits, 50 liters of antiseptic alcohol, 50 boxes of disposable gloves, 50 gallons of liquid hand soap) and 26,194 kits of Personal Protection Elements - PPE (face masks, antibacterial gel, thermometers, gowns, gaiters, disposable caps, goggles, tyvek suits) to 14 prioritized departments: Antioquia, Arauca, Atlántico, Bolívar, Cesar, Cundinamarca, Chocó, La Guajira, Magdalena, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Santander, Valle del Cauca and Vichada, to support the efforts of the community network and strengthen the community response plan within COVID-19 emergency.

Steps were taken to complete the installation of the aquaponics system in the departments of Vichada, Caquetá, Cauca and La Guajira, as a mechanism to guarantee the food security of vulnerable populations. Also, 103 portable handwashing sinks were delivered to entities including Migration Colombia, Colombian Red Cross, Mayors’ offices, hospitals and municipal health secretariats and migration centers in the departments of Antioquia, Atlántico, Barranquilla, and Cundinamarca and Antioquia.

IOM Ecuador, through its implementing partners, delivered PPE to 182 migrants in Tulcan, Huaquillas and Lago Agrio. As well, it provided health supplies to Undersecretary of Migration (disinfection trays, thermometers, quaternary ammonium, and gel).

IOM Paraguay donated 10 hand washing sinks, to the Secretary for Returnees and National Refugees (SEDERREC by its Spanish acronym) which seeks to assist returnees in their reintegration process which will be distributed to the shelters authorized for quarantine. IOM also donated 25 handwashing sinks to the National Police Department, which will be distributed to the shelters authorized for quarantine.

IOM Peru/ADRA distributed 2,603 face masks with the slogan “maintain your distance” in Tacna (beneficiaries included 1,752 adults and 851 children).
COVID-19 DISEASE SOUTH AMERICA REGIONAL RESPONSE

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Ensure access of affected people to basic services and commodities, especially to those in most vulnerable conditions, including health care, and protection and social services.

LOGISTICS, PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

IOM Colombia supported the logistic for delivery of 8,907 school kits, 988 sports, 80 artistic kits, 65 computers and 40 tablets to educational institutions, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute and the Ministry of Education, in the departments of Caquetá, Meta, Antioquia, Cauca, Tolima, La Guajira, Atlántico, Norte de Santander, Vichada, Nariño, Cundinamarca, Chocó, Bolivar, Valle del Cauca and Boyaca.

Alongside with the Red Cross and the National and Provincial Human Rights Secretary, IOM Argentina delivered food and hygiene kits to migrants from Senegal in the Province of Tucuman, and to migrants from different nationalities in the Province of Chaco. IOM jointly with UNHCR and the Secretary of Human Rights delivered 300 food and hygiene items to refugees and migrants under conditions of vulnerability in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, Cordoba, Misiones and Santiago del Estero.

IOM Peru provided 7,237 hot meals to sheltered migrants and refugees from Venezuela located in Tumbes. Peru: In Tacna, IOM/ADRA distributed 1,129 food kits with non-perishable items. The kits were distributed to Venezuelan refugees and migrants covering 874 families/3,265 persons and 254 individuals totaling 3,522.

IOM Uruguay provided assistance to migrants with hygiene kits, food, and accommodation in Rivera, Rocha and Montevideo.

CASE MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUITY OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES

IOM Colombia delivered 881 hot meals in Tame, department of Arauca (border with Venezuela).

CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT (CCCM)

IOM Colombia supported the identification and management of health and biosecurity risks in shelters and accommodation facilities in the departments of
Antioquia, Atlántico, Cesar, Cundinamarca, La Guajira, Magdalena, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Santander, Valle del Cauca and Bogota. For shelters located in Arauca (border with Venezuela), IOM supported with identification of risks, and design of an improvement plan with guidelines for natural ventilation, social isolation and cleaning and disinfection actions.

IOM continues supporting governments and other counterparts in providing protection and assistance to migrant in most vulnerable conditions, including those at risk of abuse, exploitation and trafficking. IOM Argentina assisted the return of 8 Argentineans stranded in Mexico and Nicaragua since the start of the COVID-10 pandemic.

IOM Brazil, specifically in Boa Vista and Manaus, implemented several counter trafficking activities to strengthen response capacities during the pandemic, through informational sessions both to refugees and migrants and to humanitarian workers and employees of the National Social Care System. In addition, a cinema session was held for refugee and migrant children and adolescents in the overnight area at the Boa Vista Bus Station, as a support activity in mental health and entertainment during the pandemic.

IOM Colombia provided psychosocial assistance at the community level, for the promotion of mental health self-care; follow-up of gender-based violence cases, individual personal telephone assistance and psychosocial support lines in the support networks of several departments. IOM Colombia also implemented 4 virtual regional forums on the prevention of GBV in the departments of La Guajira, Caquetá, Putumayo y Cauca.

IOM Chile continues commemorating the International Day Against Human Trafficking, through webinars in key regions of the country, Arica, Iquique and Coquimbo, in coordination with local governments and NGOs.

IOM Ecuador provided telephone psychosocial assistance in Tulcan and Huaquilla as well as shelter support to Venezuelan refugees and migrants.

IOM Peru is currently disseminating the campaign #AlguienTrataDeEngañarte through a radio spot that targeted a youth audience (12-22 years) in La Zona Radio. IOM co-hosted with the Peruvian Health Ministry, Terre Des Hommes Suisse, ILO, OMS and UNICEF, the International Virtual Congress: Taking care of mental health among children and adolescents who have been survivors of Trafficking in Persons. Over 1,600 people participated and 423 were certified. IOM highlighted the importance of providing a comprehensive assistance to victims and survivors of TIP within the pandemic. IOM Peru, jointly with UNICEF and UNCHR, presented the “Regional Children and Adolescents Assistance Protocol in the human mobility context” to the Ministry of Foreign Relations. This protocol is especially important in the COVID-19 context when risks of children being stateless are higher.

In coordination with the Secretary of Diversity of the Montevideo’s City Hall, IOM Uruguay supported in accommodation to the homeless LGBTI population. Also, the IOMs technical team is working closely with the City Hall Assistance team, promoting activities of inclusion, and providing psychological support.
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Support international, national and local partners to respond to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19.

ADRESSING SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT

IOM’s Regional Office for South America organized a webinar in cooperation with the global social entrepreneurship organization Ashoka to link members of the Latin American diaspora with entrepreneurs in the region providing innovative solutions to address the COVID-19 pandemic within the latter’s wider campaign Changemakers Unidos.

IOM Argentina directly assisted migrants through a number of interventions including 151 migrants that received cash-based assistance aimed to supplement the "Family emergency income" provided by the National Government to families that lost their income during the pandemic. The Government assistance in many cases doesn’t reach migrants due to a two year temporary residence requirement, and as such IOM’s support is very much needed. Furthermore, 120 migrants received food vouchers. 10 stranded migrants have received food and hygiene kits.

Together with MediaPila Foundation, IOM Argentina supported the production of 4,000 facemasks that were donated to governmental institutions and organizations that work with migrants. Mediapila promotes the labor inclusion of women in situations of social and economic vulnerability, most of them migrants, through training and job opportunities.

IOM Chile has provided rental subsidy to 17 families (68 people in total, including 28 children and 8 seniors) in different parts of Chile such as Iquique, Coquimbo, Antofagasta and Santiago.

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IOM Colombia delivered food kits to 214 families belonging to the Wayuú indigenous community, in the municipality of Uriba in the department of La Guajira (border with Venezuela). The Mission supported the production process (cutting, packaging, preparation and distribution) of 2,250 face masks in the municipality of San Juan Nepomuceno, department of Bolivar, generating income and employment for 25 women.

IOM Ecuador has provided rental subsidy to 88 migrants in Quito, Huaquillas, Lago Agrio and Tulcan through cash based assistance.

IOM Peru distributed a total of 64,000 USD to 585 vulnerable families (655 persons) located in Lima, Tumbes, La Libertad and Lambayeque though cash based assistance.In Lima, IOM, WFP and OCHA distributed 1,000 food packages for Venezuelan families which were donated by INDECI (Instituto Nacional de Defensa Civil).
OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL UPDATES

Information Sharing and Communication

The IOM Regional Office for South America supported the 2020 campaign on the World Humanitarian Day (WHD), celebrated on August 19. This year the campaign was focused on humanitarian workers, the "real life heroes", who are at the forefront of the pandemic. A total of eight stories were produced, including four in video (one from Argentina, three from Brazil) and four in photography (two from Brazil, one from Peru and one from Uruguay). Part of this work was coordinated with OCHA at global and regional level.

IOM continues the series of Facebook live interviews with the aim of first-hand learning about the IOM COVID-19 planning and response in each South American country. The last live conversation was held with the IOM Ecuador Chief of Mission.

Resources Mobilization/financial updates

The IOM Regional Office for South America launched a Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP) seeking USD 21,255,000 to alleviate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the most vulnerable migrants and their host communities in ten South American countries, namely Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. The IOM Regional SPRP for South America is a comprehensive, coordinated response that addresses immediate and long-term health concerns with regards to COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, IOM has confirmed funding amounting to USD 14,898,825, i.e. 70% of the total appeal funding requirement of USD $21,255,000. The funding received include lines of funding from the US Government, Canada, the European Union, and the World Bank.

For latest information on IOM tools and resources for COVID-19 pandemic response visit www.iom.int/covid19