Per the Global Humanitarian Overview 2022, Latin America and the Caribbean has experienced a significant increase in the number of people in need since 2018, climbing from 9.6 million people to 26.4 million in 2021.

This increase owes, in part, to the rising frequency and intensity of sudden-onset disasters and recurrent climate shocks, the devastating impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic (including being the world’s hardest-hit region with 18.5 per cent of all global cases and 30.3 per cent of all deaths despite comprising only 8.4 per cent of the world’s population), and challenging socioeconomic conditions that are leaving 287 million people in poverty or extreme poverty.

By 2022 and as of the date of publication of the Global Humanitarian Overview, there are Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) in place in Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, and Venezuela with a collective US$1.6 billion in requirements to respond to 13.4 million of the 27.9 million people in need for 2022, up from the region’s lone HRP in Haiti in 2016.

North of Central America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>People in Need</th>
<th>People Targeted</th>
<th>Total Requirements for 2021-2022 Plan (US$)</th>
<th>2022 Requirements (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>1.7 million</td>
<td>0.9 million</td>
<td>$156 million</td>
<td>$114.3 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>3.8 million</td>
<td>1.68 million</td>
<td>$210 million</td>
<td>$153.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>2.8 million</td>
<td>1.8 million</td>
<td>$222 million</td>
<td>$143 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pandemic’s effects have had a significant impact on the region’s poverty, displacement, food insecurity and violence. The region is still experiencing the impacts of the higher number of sudden-onset disasters and the record-setting Atlantic hurricane season in 2020. In El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras alone, the population in need increased by 60 percent in 2021. This unprecedented rise prompted the launch of Humanitarian Response Plans in these countries, totalling $588 million in requirements for 2021-2022. However, the plans have collectively received only 11 per cent funding so far.

El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras face serious challenges heading into 2022, especially with food insecurity expected to remain high during the lean season in the coming months and the effects of La Niña on agriculture, food production and livelihoods. Worsening socioeconomic conditions are likely to lead to more violence and displacement within and across borders.
Despite significant development progress in Colombia over the past decade, including the 2016 Final Agreement to End the Conflict, humanitarian needs are rising due to growing socio-economic needs related to COVID-19, the expansion of non-state armed groups (NSAGs) in some parts of the country, the increased impact of disasters, social conflict, and the integration of 1.8 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants. The growing presence of NSAGs in peripheral parts of Colombia, in particular, has given way to a corresponding escalation of violence and its effects on civilian populations, especially ethnic minorities.

More frequent and severe climatic shocks, such as major flooding and rainfall in coastal areas, limited access to health care, a record number of population movements including people from Haiti, Cuba and Venezuela, among other countries, increased food insecurity, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the growing strain on the Government’s response, continue to pose significant humanitarian challenges. These challenges, in turn, have pushed the number of people in need from 6.7 million people in 2020 to 7.7 million people in 2021.

Haiti’s regular exposure to natural hazards, the effects of climate change, and recurring socioeconomic and political challenges converged in 2021 to create a profound deterioration in conditions. The COVID-19 pandemic and a 7.2 magnitude earthquake in August that affected 800,000 people exacerbated existing humanitarian needs, especially in the south. The activities of armed groups in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area increased following the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in July, compromising humanitarian access to earthquake-affected departments and limiting the population’s access to essential services.

Between growing food insecurity, which may affect up to 4.6 million people by March 2022, limited access to clean water and healthcare, and earthquake damage to hundreds of schools, Haitians continue to try to leave the country, with more than 18,300 Haitians repatriated from various countries in the region during the first three quarters of 2021. More than 4.9 million people (43 percent of the population) are in need of humanitarian assistance, up from 4.4 million in 2020.

Prolonged and significant economic challenges, political polarization and localized violence continue to be the main drivers of humanitarian needs in Venezuela. Ongoing economic contraction and the impact of sanctions continue to affect the provision of health services, water and sanitation, education, and domestic gas, fuel and electricity supply. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated needs due to its impact on the provision of essential health services, as well as confinement measures that reduced economic activities, production and trade, and increased domestic violence.

According to the latest edition of The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (FAO, 2021), undernourishment has risen by almost 25 percent from 2010-2012 to 2018-2020, although the Government disputes this figure.

Mixed migration flows, including people intending to leave, returnees and/or people making cross-border pendular movements, remain a concern. The closure of borders with neighbouring countries for most of 2021 forced people to use irregular routes and crossings, thus increasing protection risks, including human trafficking and gender-based violence. Additionally, seasonal rains and its triggering effects on river overflow, landslides and flooding affected thousands of people across the country. The multi-year Humanitarian Response Plan (2022-2023) seeks to promote coordination between humanitarian and development actions. The Plan’s three objectives are to contribute to the survival and wellbeing of the most vulnerable; contribute to the sustainability of essential services, resilience and livelihoods of vulnerable people; and strengthen institutional and community mechanisms to prevent, mitigate and respond to protection risks.