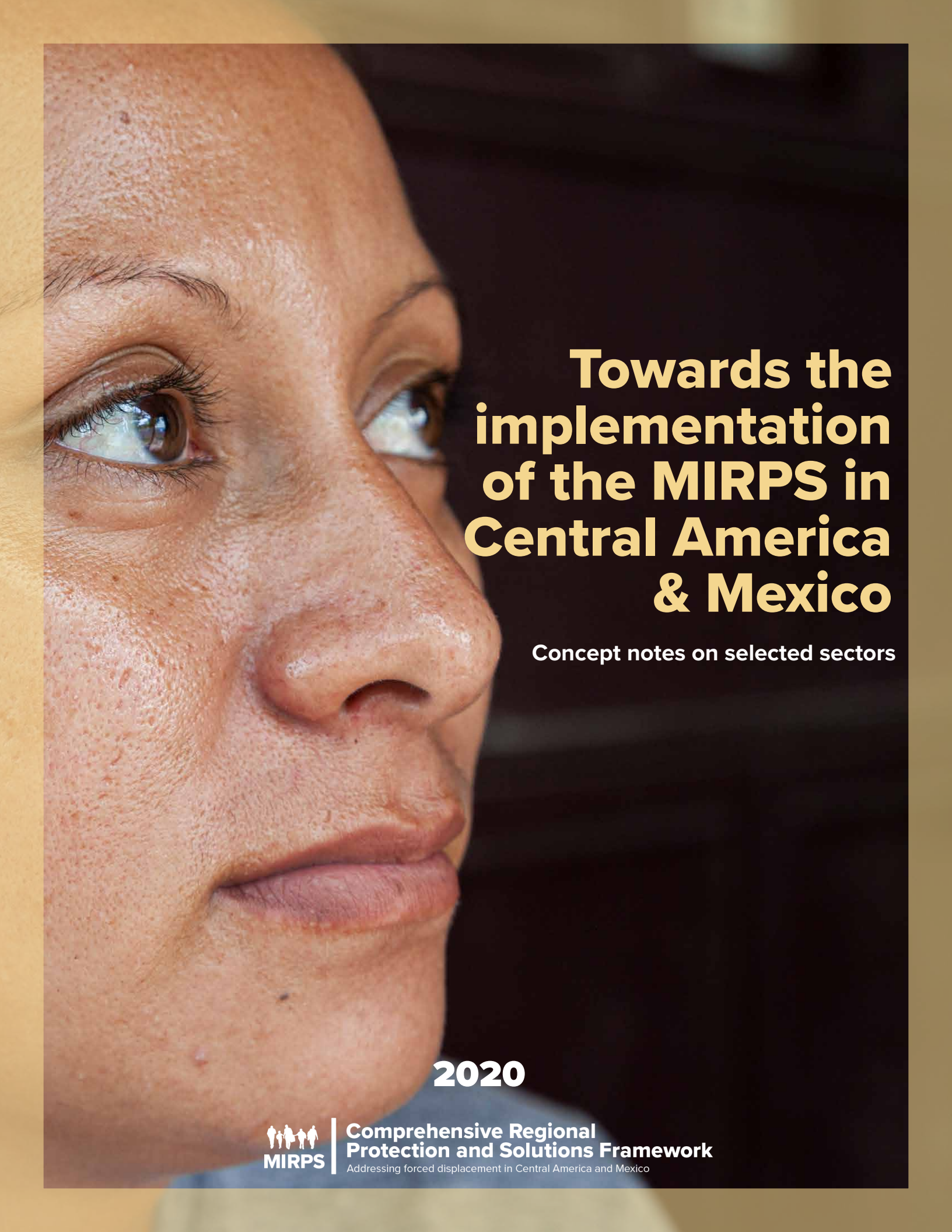




Towards the implementation of the MIRPS in Central America & Mexico

Concept notes on selected sectors

2020



**Comprehensive Regional
Protection and Solutions Framework**

Addressing forced displacement in Central America and Mexico

Context

Impacted by increasingly complex forced displacement situations, Central America hosts hundreds of thousands of people who have fled their homes, either within or across their country's borders, in search of safety. This includes IDPs in El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico; together with refugees and asylum-seekers from the northern Central American countries who have fled chronic gang violence, persecution and insecurity. The vast majority of refugees and asylum-seekers from these countries are hosted in Mexico and the USA, with several thousands more having sought asylum in Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Panama. In addition, tens of thousands of people have fled the social and political crisis in Nicaragua, the vast majority arriving in neighbouring Costa Rica where asylum claims have increased exponentially.

In 2019, the Americas was the largest recipient of asylum applications worldwide. An additional several hundred thousand persons are returning to their countries of origin as deportees, including those with protection needs. With an increasing trend of people forcibly displaced in the region exerting pressure on national protection and asylum systems, the MIRPS seeks to expand the operational capacity of States in Central America and Mexico to respond to forced displacement. This includes making the necessary arrangements to ensure safe reception and admission of people forced to flee, facilitating access to safe spaces and shelters, engaging community and municipal leadership, promoting durable solutions and livelihoods, as well as fostering an environment of peaceful coexistence.

In 2017, Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama adopted the San Pedro Sula Declaration, to address forced displacement by strengthening the protection and assistance to affected persons, as well as promoting durable solutions. Through the Declaration, countries agreed to participate in the MIRPS as a regional contribution to the Global Compact on Refugees, where all states committed to adopt and implement national action plans, aligned to country specific commitments and priorities. In 2019, El Salvador joined this regional effort and held the Pro-tempore Presidency for 2020. Nationally, MIRPS Technical Teams (NTTs) are comprised of relevant government institutions who plan and coordinate the implementation of work plans with support from UNHCR and OAS as the technical secretariat.

Identification of resources required

Through the State-led quantification process, NTTs have assessed the financial resource requirements and steps required to implement select national commitments, defining specific costed activities in the areas of protection, social protection, health, education and livelihoods. The related Concept Notes presented within this document have informed the elaboration of detailed Concept Notes, that were informed by consultations and working sessions of the NTTs which brought together national counterparts in the areas of planning, financing and international cooperation with the technical support from the UNHCR-OAS MIRPS Secretariat and the Pro-Tempore Presidency.

This process has served to strengthen the national planning process to implement MIRPS national action plans, and is a basis for partnership engagement and resource mobilization. Key consideration was given to identifying commitments that aligned closest to the humanitarian context and prevailing protection needs, and were dependent on establishing new partnerships and forms of financing to implement. In a number of instances, focus areas also align to Pledges that were also made at the Global Refugee Forum.

The scale of the forced displacement crisis in the region - compounded by the pandemic - and the projections of a possible increase in the numbers of people fleeing once the opening of borders is regularized, requires the **strengthening of partnerships** to be a priority for 2021. In this sense, MIRPS countries have diverse national, regional and international partners, as well as the backing of the **Support Platform, international financial institutions, development actors, the civil society and the private sector** as a true example of responsibility-sharing.



Find out more about
the Annual Report
in the new [MIRPS
webpage](#)

Prioritized focus areas

Total requirement \$63,152,181
Total gap \$54,479,442

MEXICO **Total requirement \$8,289,178**

 Strengthening schools in the public education system in host communities in southern Mexico

Total Required Financing

\$7,042,800

 Strengthening first level health care in the state of Chiapas, Mexico

Total Required Financing

\$1,246,358

HONDURAS

Total requirement \$3,999,725



Guaranteeing a harmonized approach to provide long term solutions such as access to work and social protection

Total Financing Required

\$3,999,725

GUATEMALA **Total requirement \$346,170**
Total gap \$333,442



Creation of specialized, differentiated, safe, and decent reception conditions

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$4,546 \$39,935



Strengthening institutions that govern the protection of children and adolescents in border areas

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$4,286 \$232,208



Public-private sectors alliances for the inclusion of refugees and refuge applicants in Guatemala into the workforce

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$3,896 \$61,299

BELIZE

Total requirement \$2,596,861



Establish demand-driven technical and vocational training in key economic sectors associated with climate change, benefiting refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and Belizean youth

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$0 \$2,596,861

EL SALVADOR **Total requirement \$11,993,682**
Total gap \$10,336,910



Improve the technical, inclusive, and operational capacity of the Salvadoran educational system to support the rights of the forcefully displaced population

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$1,513,561 \$6,854,890



Expand opportunities of access to work and sources of livelihood to encourage self-reliance of people who have been forcibly displaced in El Salvador

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$0 \$3,266,520



Strengthen the capacity of the National Health System to provide better health and psychosocial services to forcibly displaced people in El Salvador

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$143,211 \$215,500

COSTA RICA **Total requirement \$7,966,225**
Total gap \$4,980,215



Voluntary temporary insurance for asylum seekers and refugees in Costa Rica

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$0 \$3,033,333



Social protection of the populations with international protection needs through services provided by the Social Welfare Institute (IMAS)

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$836,397 \$641,655



Institutional strengthening to support the refugee and migrant population in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$2,149,613 \$1,305,227

PANAMA

Total requirement \$27,960,340



Expanding social coverage to meet the basic needs of vulnerable refugees and applicants for refugee status

National Financing

Financing Gap

\$4,017,229 \$23,943,111

 **Education**

Total requirement \$18,008,112
Total gap \$16,494,551

 **Social protection**

Total requirement \$33,438,117
Total gap \$28,584,491

 **Protection**

Total requirement \$3,813,551
Total gap \$1,345,162

 **Child protection**

Total requirement \$236,494
Total gap \$232,208

 **Health**

Total requirement \$4,638,422
Total gap \$4,495,211

 **Jobs and livelihoods**

Total requirement \$3,331,715
Total gap \$3,327,819

Panama.

People of concern in Panama

Asylum seekers
in Panama*

13,563

Refugees in
Panama*

2,588

*Official data provided to UNHCR to October 2020

SECTOR	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTING ENTITIES	FINANCING NEEDS
 Social protection	Guarantee the extension of social protection as part of a transition towards the consolidation of social protection programs according to the needs of refugees and applicants for refugee status in the Republic of Panama.	Ministry of Government through the National Office for Refugee Care (ONPAR) Ministry of Presidency Ministry of Social Development (MIDES) The Panamanian Chamber of Social Development (CAPADESO) would accompany the process.	National Financing Financing Gap \$4,017,229 \$ 23,943,111

Context

Panama recorded a 3% economic increase at the end of 2019, showing an economic downturn of the country. Even though it is lowest figured recorded since 2010, Panama is still among the fastest growing countries in Latin America. The effects of the pandemic on economy are significant, and the views of the government point to a GDP decrease of 9% in 2020. With a population of 4.2 million inhabitants and an economy essentially dependent on services, Panama recorded a 7.1% unemployment rate and 45% informal employment rate before the pandemic. Ministry of Labour official figures estimate an unemployment rate that already surpasses 25%, which represents more than 500,000 unemployed people, reaching rates 55% in informal employment. This affects over 800,000 workers that do not have safe employment contracts, employment benefits or social protections. The most recent report of the Panamanian Ministry of Economy and Finances (MEF, by its Spanish acronym) points out that at the end of September 2020, the public debt increased to USD 36,107 million, a figure that increased by USD 6,275 million in only seven months of the pandemic. MEF projections for this year coincide with the those of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). A slow recovery is expected from 2021 onward, but this process is estimated to take 3 years.

The impact of the pandemic is aggravating poverty and inequality levels, mainly in vulnerable populations. According to the multidimensional poverty approach adopted by Panama

in the Sustainable Development Objectives framework, in 2018, 19% of the population, and 32.8% of minors nationally, experienced multidimensional poverty. In turn, the Gini index (an indicator used to measure inequality) showed that Panama is the third most unequal country in Latin America as of 2019 because of strong territorial inequality, among others factors.

This high level of inequality can be explained by social spending, which Panama has kept around 9% of its GDP, three points below the Latin American average, according to data published by the Inter-American Development Bank. At the start of the pandemic, Panama adopted measures to alleviate economic and social consequences, paying special attention to the most vulnerable population. These measures include postponing, temporarily reducing or cancelling tax payments and mortgages; forgiving interest, late fees and fines; and fixing prices of essential products in order to avoid shortage. As part of the measures to assist the most vulnerable population, the Government has implemented a relief social assistance plan (Panamá Solidario Plan) for people affected by measures imposed by the government to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Displacement trends

Panama is the home of nearly 17,000 refugees and applicants for refugee status. The refugee population is mainly made up by persons from Colombia, El Salvador, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. Especially in the last two years, refugee status applications from Venezuela, and particularly from Nicaragua, have increased exponentially, which has intensified the needs of this target population. In 2020, 622 new applications were received by October, a decrease of more than 90% when compared to the same period in 2019. This is the result of multiple factors, such as border closures due to the health crisis and the fact that the majority of refugees and applicants for refugee status enter through airports.

At the same time, based on National Migration Service statistics, mixed groups entering through Darién (the border with Colombia) increased in 2019 (more than 23,000 people), with small numbers applying for international protection in Panama, and the majority traveling to the north of Panama. So far this year, a total of 2,531 people is stranded in Panama due to COVID-19 and border closures; of this group, 24 have applied for recognition of refugee status in Panama, and the majority is in transit.

While many people are experiencing more vulnerability and need due to COVID-19, the pandemic has brought about socioeconomic consequences that have greatly impacted refugees and applicants for refugee status in Panama, as they have lost their means to earn income (on both the formal and informal labor market). Additionally, there is higher risk of eviction and increased public services cuts, despite legal mechanisms that attempt to prevent them, which increases levels of anxiety, stress and depression. As a consequence, civil society, through assistance programs supported by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), has confirmed a sharp increase in requests for assistance of approximately 80%, including in populations that had achieved financial independence and stability prior to the pandemic. Likewise, ONPAR estimated an approximately 30% population coverage through the program Panamá Solidario, which delivers food bags and cash allowances.

National response

According to Articles 2 and 4 of Executive Decree No. 400 of March 27th, 2020, put forth by the Ministry of Presidency, the Panamá Solidario Plan is intended for people within the national territory who fall into in any of the following groups: people in multidimensional poverty, vulnerable families, people living in difficult-to-reach areas, and people who work for hire or reward. In this way, refugees, applicants for refugee status or migrants in need of protection can benefit from measures developed in this Plan.

Despite the fact that the Executive Decree makes no distinction when it comes to nationality or migrant condition in Panama, which it is reflected by its inclusive scope that covers basic needs based on vulnerability levels, with its application in the field some of the foreign population has not benefited in the same way as the national population, sometimes due to lack of information or discretion of the people that deliver food bags or financial support (known in Panama as bonos solidarios). Additionally, most of the foreign population has not been able to benefit from electronic transfers because

they are not permanent residents with a card issued by the Electoral Tribunal.

The social challenge in times of COVID-19 and the slow economic recovery for Panama, which is estimated to take 3 to 4 years by the MEF, IMF and the Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (CEPAL, by its Spanish acronym), make it necessary to expand social protection and humanitarian assistance by incorporating vulnerable refugees and applicants for refugee status, and enact a transition program focused on including areas in social protection programs according to the needs of the population.

The MIRPS in Panama

Panama confirmed its intention to be part of MIRPS in June 2017, developing a work plan focused on the following main points: (i) protection and legal affairs; (ii) access to basic needs; (iii) supporting host communities; and (iv) local integration and livelihood. The Panama chapter, developed by the National Technical Team (ETN, by its Spanish acronym) and with the support of UNHCR, highlights important commitments related to protection and assistance with ongoing basic needs due to the pandemic.

In June 2019, a new government was established in Panama. The new authorities, led by the Ministry of Government, accepted and validated the Work Plan developed within MIRPS, reaffirming the commitment to implement it and continuously improve it. Along the same lines, a 2020 revision is being done to address challenges posed by the pandemic. In this way, even though ONPAR was forced to temporarily suspend public assistance and some services, new special channels were implemented so that ONPAR could keep in contact with the people of concern and with partners, in order for it to ensure humanitarian assistance, legal support and psycho-social care. Moreover, ONPAR extended the validity

of identity cards of refugees and applicants for refugee status that are recognized and admitted. In addition, it suspended deadlines for presenting items for consideration and rescheduled planned interviews during quarantine.

Since the beginning of the emergency, ONPAR, in collaboration with the Protection Committee (led by UNHCR and made up by civil society organizations), wrote up an initial list of vulnerable refugees and applicants for refugee status recognized by the Panamanian State in order to promote and facilitate their inclusion in programs put forth by the National Government. Nevertheless, this population's vulnerabilities have increased as the pandemic has progressed and the duration of restrictive measures has been extended.

**COUNTRY: Panama****SECTOR: Social Protection**

Expanding Social Coverage to Meet the Basic Needs of Vulnerable Refugees and Applicants for Refugee Status



Executive Summary

The COVID pandemic has resulted in an increase in vulnerabilities and needs among the population, including refugees and asylum seekers in Panama. As part of measures to support the most vulnerable segments of the national population, the Government of Panama has launched an emergency relief social assistance plan for people affected by the pandemic called Plan Panama Solidario. The Plan has an inclusive approach that does not discriminate against beneficiaries based on their country of origin or nationality.

At the same time, the Plan faces significant challenges in ensuring that the refugee and asylum seeker population is effectively supported. The loss of opportunities to generate income due to the reduction in economic activity in the country has led to an increase of between 55% and 80% for requests for assistance, including people who previously had financial independence and economic stability in the country. The proposed initiative seeks to expand social coverage to respond to the basic needs of the refugee population and refugee applicants in vulnerable conditions, as part of the planned integration of the State within the Panama Solidario Plan.

DURATION

3 years (2021-2023)

IMPLEMENTING ENTITIES

Ministry of Government through the National Office for Refugee Care (ONPAR, by its Spanish acronym)

Ministry of Presidency, Ministry of Social Development (MIDES, by its Spanish acronym)

The Panamanian Chamber of Social Development (CAPADESO, by its Spanish acronym) would accompany the process.

LOCATION

National

BENEFICIARIES

13,719 refugees and asylum seekers- average per year

ESTIMATED BUDGET

Total Required Financing:	\$27,960,340
National Financing:	\$4,017,229
Financing Gap:	\$23,835,111

1. Social protection sector context

In the Republic of Panama, the Ministry of Social Development is the governing body of social politics and leads social investing in strengthening skills and abilities of human capital in order to achieve sustainable national development. In order to face social challenges, a series of programs to overcome poverty and extreme poverty were implemented in the Social Protection System framework through the Opportunities Network, the Nutritional Benefit, and other initiatives related to severe disability, older adults without pension and in extreme poverty, health and education services, and skills development.

Through the Panamá Solidario Plan, the Ministry of Presidency implemented an emergency social assistance plan for those affected by the pandemic, through which benefits have been given to more than 1,700,000 socioeconomically vulnerable people in the 679 townships of the country. Through the plan, which is developed via 3 methods, monetary resources are delivered so people can meet their critical needs by purchasing food and medicine, either by cash allowances or either by transfers through identity cards. Moreover, through food bags, the government delivers essential, basic food basket items to the most vulnerable families. Because of this

effort, many national and local organizations and authorities, through provincial technical boards, have committed to make efforts to deliver these products. With the technical support of the Authority for Government Innovation, the platform used to Panamá Solidario Plan is managed, virtual assistance is being provided for, and additional initiatives are being implemented to reduce the digital gap and contribute to social inclusion in the country.

Among the lessons learned is the value of volunteers, most of whom are young people between 18 and 35, but also include foreigners who have helped in the distribution of assistance during the pandemic. In addition, society and the private sector have contributed to the Panamá Solidario Plan through cash donations, essential food, cleaning and disinfection products, and transport or lodging for those affected by the pandemic. The logistical challenges of delivering aid to vulnerable people has been one of the greatest program challenges, especially in regards to vulnerable refugee, applicants for refugee status and undocumented migrant populations, due to their fears of revealing their place of residency.

Complementary initiatives

In order to tackle the challenges presented during the pandemic, MIDES has focused on territories with a larger vulnerable populations through the Plan Colmena (Hive Plan) in 63 districts and 300 townships nationally. Among other results, this plan delivered COVID-19 humanitarian assistance to 83 older adults during the pandemic; USD 5.7 million in state subsidies to non-profit organization boards and orphanages, which benefited more than 15,165 people (9,979 women and 5,185 men); consolidated 111 networks; implemented 84 self-management projects; and focused on to 33 districts and 77 settlements, benefiting 4,867 families nationally.

In addition, the national government has implemented supplementary support and inclusive measures for the population, such as the creation of a tariff-stabilization fund which provides electricity bill discounts of up to 40% (the discount percentage decreases according to consumption), the creation of agreements with the bank sector to implement financial relief plans in mortgage and credit card interest payments, the prohibition of loss of rights and evictions for those who cannot afford rent, as well as price freezes of certain basic food basket products.

Finally, there has been noteworthy civil support through the Panamanian Chamber of Social Development, as they distributed food bags to people in extreme poverty, including refugees and applicants for refugee status, who were benefited thanks to contacts provided by UNHCR social organizations. In this regard, UNHCR and its local partners have increased support for humanitarian assistance in order to meet the growing demand for support, especially in areas such as food, medicine, lease payments, psychosocial support and tracking of vulnerable cases. To this effect, some measures have been adopted in relation to the delivery of support in cash and also via electronic means (bank transfers to savings accounts or pre-paid cards and electronic food vouchers) with the purpose of adapting to the restrictions on mobility and exposure to COVID-19.

2. Detailed approach

General objective:

Expand social security coverage to meet the basic needs of vulnerable refugees and applicants for refugee status as part of the state-planned inclusion in the Panamá Solidario plan.

Social vulnerability of the refugee and applicants for refugee status populations is the result of repercussions and fears caused by their forced displacement, but it also shows the poor capabilities of these vulnerable groups to become part of society if they do not receive support and protection on the behalf of the state sheltering them. In this context, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated such vulnerabilities since groups of this population have not been able to join social protection programs and social networks in Panama.

The current public policy on social protection, via the Panamá Solidario Program, makes it possible to compensate for shortages of individuals and families with monthly financial support and/or digital transfers for food and medicine and/or a family food bag, thus ensuring their inclusion in a temporary program as long as the health emergency and its economic impact last in the country, which is estimated to be 3 years. At the same time, this intervention is part of an effort to transition to an inclusive social policy in Panama, with the implementation of compensating social protection policies focused on poverty and social vulnerability that many families and refugees or applicants for refugee status face.

Specific objective 1

Meet essential needs that guarantee the survival of vulnerable refugees and applicants for refugee status

Expected result 1

Improve the information system of ONPAR and the related mechanisms to identify vulnerable populations who are beneficiaries of the intervention while guaranteeing the confidentiality of information that could put their integrity or safety at risk

Activities

- Activity 1.1. Prepare a protocol that establishes delivery methods and vulnerability conditions, which guarantees the confidentiality of the target population and allows for certification by MIDES and/or the Presidency for access to the program.

Prepare a protocol that defines the identifying criteria of the target population in accordance with the delivery methods and vulnerability conditions set by ONPAR, which will be supported by UNHCR. The Authority for Government Innovation (AIG, by its Spanish acronym), by request of MIDES, will develop the application of the program on integrated information systems in order to facilitate target population access through a card provided by ONPAR, or any other document identified by ONPAR in the protocol that allows for access to program benefits just as the national population. The AIG will ensure to protect the confidentiality of the target population by providing an encryption system that guarantees the privacy of personal information that could compromise the safety of the refugees and applicants for refugee status in Panama.

- Activity 1.2. Mapping needs and georeferencing areas where the target population is located.

Through this activity, ONPAR, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the Panamanian Red Cross, the Refugee Education Trust (RET), the Human Mobility Pastoral (PMH, by its Spanish acronym) and HIAS, the global Jewish nonprofit that protects refugees, with the technical support of MIDES, identify the scale of protection needs based on family and individual profiles of the refugee and asylum seeker population, thus promoting disaggregation by gender and age in order to improve the efficiency of deliveries and facilitate their tracking. After collecting information about the communities with a target population, ONPAR will coordinate with AIG to prepare a system for georeferencing areas with the largest populations according to need. The target data of such actions will be incorporated to the general context of social protection nationwide both within the framework of Panamá Solidario and other MIDES programs that guarantee refugees and applicants for refugee status transition into inclusion into state social protection programs, depending on their specific situation.

- Activity 1.3: Develop an information system for tracking, monitoring and collecting a quantitative and qualitative sampling which guarantees the verification of the intervention results

With the support of AIG, ONPAR will support the development of an information system, developed from the beginning of the implementation to guarantee the inclusion of the target population into the program according to the various established methods; as well as the design of the quantitative-qualitative sampling for evaluations of the intervention and / or any other monitoring mechanism that may be established, especially in view of the transition with MIDES to guarantee sustainability.

Specific objective 2

Improve the responsiveness of social protection services provided to refugees and applicants for refugee status.

Expected result 2

Incorporate refugees and applicants for refugee status into the plan Panamá Solidario and identify complementary initiatives social protection programs of the Ministry of Social Development for the population of concern.

Activities

- Activity 2.1: Deliver food bags according to the inclusion, equity and non-discrimination standards set by the plan Panamá Solidario.

According to the criteria and standards set by the plan Panamá Solidario and the protocol prepared within the framework of Activity 1.1, ONPAR, as part of the implementation team of the Ministry of Government in the technical coordination committee, will identify the target population of concern that will benefit from the delivery of the food bags.

- Activity 2.2: Deliver financial support and digital vouchers to the target population according to the standards set by the Panamá Solidario plan

According to the criteria and standards set by the plan Panamá Solidario and the Protocol formulated within the framework of Activity 1.1, ONPAR/MIDES will coordinate with AIG to include the target population in the implementation of the information system to facilitate the delivery of financial support and digital vouchers according to the residency and identification document status

- Activity 2.3: Conduct awareness workshops with MIDES officials and local governments in charge of Social Protection Programs linked to the protection of the population in vulnerable situations

Awareness workshops for staff of MIDES Departments and local governments will be conducted through 10 sessions of 20 people per session on what international protection and the issue of human rights represent in the support framework for the vulnerable refugee applicants for refugee status populations. In these sessions, UNHCR and ONPAR specialists will present the most relevant factors of the legislation in this regard: Executive Decree No. 5 of January 2018, Convention on the Status of Refugees of 1951 and its respective Protocol of 1967, as well as other relevant instruments in order to facilitate the understanding of the situations identified in Panama, taking into account the situation in Venezuela, Nicaragua and other countries in the region where many people are forced to flee to safeguard their lives and that of their family . This awareness building is part of identifying complementary actions for the incorporation and attention in social protection programs according to special situations that warrant it. The sessions will take place at the main headquarters in Plaza Edison and / or in the regional offices of the areas where refugees and applicants for refugee status are located according to the activities indicated above. Expected participants include 60 to 120 individuals from Senadis, SENNIAF, the Network of Opportunities, universal scholarship beneficiaries and others who manage programs that facilitate social integration.

• Activity 2.4. Coordination of the reporting, monitoring and evaluation mechanism

ONPAR will collaborate with non-profit organizations for coordination visits for monitoring of the intervention, through the information system designed to guarantee the inclusion of the target population. In addition, with the support of UNHCR and MIDES, complementary programs or measures will be identified that will ensure different social protection needs for the refugee population and applicants for refugee status are included in the transition temporary program.

3. Beneficiary population

Refugees and applicants for refugee status are considered beneficiaries of the program depending on their vulnerability according to the estimates for the years of program implementation (2021-2023) ¹.

Table No. 1 Estimated refugees and applicants for refugee status in Panama 2021-2023

Refugee and asylum seeker population	Annual average (2021-2023)
Recognized refugees	2,760
Refugee status applications to be processed	10,959
Total refugees and applicants for refugee status	13,719

Within the framework of the Panamá Solidario Program, the beneficiaries will be people and families belonging to the following groups (i) people in multidimensional poverty, (ii) vulnerable families, (iii) populations living in difficult-to-reach areas and (iv) independent workers who have been affected by the pandemic.

Likewise, on the basis of the methods used to address multidimensional poverty in households of refugees and applicants for refugee status, it can be observed that 15% of households are deprived of education due to non-attendance to education centres, 48% of households display overcrowding conditions in relation to their home and basic services, and 36% lack improved sanitation due to a reported sharing of sanitary services with other families. Regarding employment, deprivation is especially evident in three areas: the 24% who unemployed, the 64% who report job insecurity and the 10% who work in domestic services. Regarding health, 8% report to have some sort of disability and 27% is critically ill. In regard to the home, 65% report renting a house and 41% report lack of access to housing purchases due to insufficient resources and rejection of foreigners. 55% of the households indicate that they only have access to 1 or 2 daily meals; this situation has been exacerbated during the pandemic.

If we take into account the situation of such populations in 2019 and the great impact on the vulnerabilities shown by ONPAR and UNHCR in 2020 among refugees and applicants for refugee status as a consequence of the pandemic, we can conclude that 80% of the family units will be in vulnerable conditions and need to be part of the program's beneficiary population.

Another aspect to consider when calculating the target beneficiary population is the support methods of the program, and the target population for each method. Through the plan Panamá Solidario, out of the three resource delivery methods meant to meet critical needs, two of them will apply to refugee and asylum seeker populations. The first will be through the delivery of bags of foods from the basic food basket to families in the most vulnerable situations, the second through cash allowances for individuals depending on their socioeconomic level and the how they have been impacted by employment loss and insecurity. Taking into account the results obtained in Panama from the protection monitoring carried out by UNHCR and the NRC between June and December 2019³, it can be observed that family units of refugees or applicants for refugee status larger than one account for nearly 60% and family units equal to one account for 40%.

¹ For more details, see Annex I. Statistic data and possible population scenarios for applicants and refugees within the framework of the quantification process MIRPS 2020.

² Panama's multidimensional poverty index (2018), available at www.gabinetesocial.gob.pa/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/MED-DAES-Informe-del-%C3%8Dndice-de-Pobreza-Multidimensional-de-Panam%C3%A1-2018.pdf

³ Available at https://www.acnur.org/es-es/op/op_prot/5e45adb44/panama-monitoreo-de-proteccion-junio-a-diciembre-de-2019.html

Table No. 2: Target beneficiary population by delivery method and vulnerability

Delivery method	Percentage of target population	Annual average (2021-2023)
Modality: Food Bags		
Family units of refugees and applicants for refugee status larger than one	60%	8,231
Family units of vulnerable refugees and applicants for refugee status larger than one who experience employment and nutritional insecurity	80%	6,585
Modality: Voucher		
Family units equal to one	40%	5,487
Estimated family units equal to one that experience employment and nutritional insecurity	80%	4,390
TOTAL family units of refugees and applicants who experience employment and nutritional insecurity due to COVID-19		10,975

4. Estimated budget

**Table No. 3: Quantification of the social protection program
Panamá Solidario 2021-2023**

OBJECTIVE	REQUIRED FINANCING*	NATIONAL FINANCING	FINANCING GAP
SO 1: Meet essential needs that guarantee the survival of vulnerable refugees and applicants for refugee status	\$ 221, 140	\$196, 140	\$25,000
SO 2: Improve the responsiveness of social protection services provided to refugees and applicants for refugee status	\$27, 739,200	\$3,821,089	\$23,918,111
TOTAL	\$ 27,960,340	\$4,017,229	\$23,943,111

*Amounts in USD

The quantification process developed to estimate the financial needs of social protection which includes people and family units of refugees and applicants for refugee status is outlined within the analysis of components, actual costs, access requirements and implementation mechanisms of the plan Panamá Solidario established under Executive Decree No. 400 of March 27th, 2020 whose inclusive focus does not discriminate against beneficiaries because of their origin or nationality.

This temporary program will last as long as health and economic crisis conditions remain in the country and will allow a systematic transition focused on meeting the specific social protection needs required by refugees and applicants for refugee status in the country.

In this context, we anticipate conversations with the Ministry of Government and the Ministry of Social Development in order to recognize the pandemic as an opportunity to improve the focus of social protection programs and implement new certification processes in areas where the certification process of families of refugees and applicants for refugee status can be studied by MIDES, in order to include these populations in inclusive social policies of the country so that no one is left behind.

In this quantification exercise, Panama has calculated a requirement of USD 26,471,100 for the period of 2021-2023, of which USD 3,438,455 is estimated to be paid with the national budget. The remaining required funding corresponds to the existing financial deficit, equivalent to USD 23,270,538 for the 3 years established by the quantification.

The Panamá Solidario Program has invested USD 765,892,688 in the first 9 months of pandemic, and it is estimated that, by the end of the year, it will have invested approximately USD 1,060,466,798.

Based on this reference point, including refugees and applicants for refugee status in this social protection program is estimated to represent an increase in investment resources of no more than 3% in the 3 years of program implementation, equal to an annual increase of current costs of 1% to assist, on average, 10,900 vulnerable family groups during the 2021-2023 implementation period.

Additional details on the quantification results can be found in the annexes.

5. Stakeholders

INSTITUTION	MISSION	ROLE IN IMPLEMENTATION
The National Office for Refugee Care (ONPAR) attached to the Ministry of Government	In charge coordinating and implementing refugee assistance and protection programs.	Participates in the implementation team as part of the Ministry of Government and coordinates actions within the framework of the program between governmental institutions and participating civil society entities.
Ministry of Presidency	Puts forth the Panamá Solidario plan and promotes the approval of resources in order to strengthen support that benefits the population affected by the pandemic.	Monitors the program's progress and incorporates the results into the achievements of the inclusive approach of the Panamá Solidario plan.
Ministry of Social Development (MIDES, by its Spanish acronym)	In charge of fostering human development through participation, strengthening families and communities, social integration and poverty reduction.	Certifies program beneficiaries in accordance with multidimensional poverty index (MPI) criteria and other vulnerability indicators according to ONPAR's information protocols and system. Defines transition criteria following the Panamá Solidario plan in order to expand inclusion in social protection programs.
Authority for Government Innovation (AIG)	Provides technical support for the management of platforms associated with the Panamá Solidario plan and implements initiatives in order to bridge the digital gap, thus contributing to the social inclusion in the country.	Advises ONPAR on how to improve the identification of applicants for refugee status and refugees within the selection and registration framework of the program in order to improve supply distribution efficiency.
Panamanian Red Cross	Humanitarian organization that provides assistance for people in situations that could threaten their lives or their capacity to live with a reasonable level of socioeconomic security and human dignity.	Helps to identify and locate program beneficiaries and identifies complementary skill and entrepreneurship-strengthening programs that adjust to beneficiary profiles.

INSTITUTION	MISSION	ROLE IN IMPLEMENTATION
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	Non-governmental organization with international reach that helps vulnerable people obtain refugees status and other forms of international protection.	Assists with the identification and location of program beneficiaries and provides information and legal assistance to refugees, applicants for refugee status and those in need of international protection
Cámara Panameña de Desarrollo Social (Panamanian Chamber of Social Development, CAPADESO)	Network of non-governmental, non-profit organizations which promote social development in Panama	Assists with the identification of the beneficiary population together with humanitarian organizations as well as, occasionally, with the distribution of food bags, financial support, and digital vouchers to program beneficiaries, and works with entities within its network to enhance the capabilities of refugees and applicants for refugee status.
UNHCR	UNHCR, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, is a worldwide organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights, and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities, and stateless persons.	Works with the state to protect refugees and applicants for refugee status. Also works with the government and civil society to enable these people to exercise all their rights

6. Cross-cutting themes

Disaggregate data from a gender and age perspective. The program will aid in identifying the needs of the beneficiary population based on their characteristics and according to sex and age, with the objective of more effectively meeting their basic social protection needs. Once the interested parties identify challenges to producing information, a capacity-building plan will be established. Said plan aims to both improve the production of disaggregated records and data, which will be used during the implementation of the program, and promote the inclusion of other variables such as ethnic groups, health problems, diseases, disabilities, etc., with the objective of facilitating their inclusion into relevant social state programs.

Building monitoring and tracking capabilities. Development of quantitative and qualitative analytic tools and methods that allow the interested parties to measure and compare the efficiency and relevance of the program indicators and results in a common tracking framework that guides the design of interventions based on resources supplied by the program. During the implementation process, the exchange of best practices and lessons learned will be encouraged. These will then be systematized to allow other entities to repeat, adapt, and improve them with the objective of incorporating an inclusive perspective in their politics and programs.

Creating and consolidating local support networks. The public sector and civil society organization collaborate to promote the creation of local support networks to help with the implementation of inclusive public policies at a local level that guarantee the incorporation of refugees and asylum-seekers. Initiatives are started to bring in micro, small, and medium local businesses, and the academic sector in areas with a target population, to collaborate with the efforts of the program.

7. Risks and assumptions

RISK	PROBABILITY OF OCCURRENCE 1: LOW 5: HIGH	INTENSITY OF IMPACT 1: LOW 5: HIGH	MITIGATION MEASURES
Poor coordination between interested parties when implementing the program	3	3	Meetings and mediation with the program team to establish coordination procedures from the beginning of the program
Staff changes in the technical teams in charge of implementation	1	3	Collect information on progress to facilitate transitions
Delay in program implementation	4	4	Update data on the target population and analyse the need for revised social protections according to the impact of the pandemic
Logistic challenges to accessing areas where the target population is located	5	2	Previous experiences of the NGOs associated with monitoring in areas where the target population resides, and knowledge access that guarantees the confidentiality of their location

8. Monitoring and evaluation

The program will have a coordinator in charge of creating regular reports on results that show the completion and progress of indicators within the logical framework in order to:

- Guarantee the supply of the information system as well as the instructions and tools developed to identify the coverage of the intervention, clearly establishing the responsibilities for providing such information;
- Support the adjustment of the logical framework, annual plans and completion of the objectives as well as guarantee information is available that allows taking actions to mitigate the risks indicated, carry out monitoring visits, workshops and follow-up meetings, communication activities and visibility of the intervention of the program in agreement with MIDES, ONPAR, PRESIDENCY and non-profit organizations;
- Prepare as a final product a report of lessons learned (of successful experiences or challenges, actions, changes and solutions with the respective analysis and gender review (gender mainstreaming strategy / actions / products).

A program coordination committee with a representative from each participating entity is created to address annual planning and acquisition responsibilities, as well as create operation protocols and regulations to be approved by the majority of committee members. It will meet at least once every six months to review progress, obstructions, challenges and opportunities to maximize the resources of the program and achieve the goals set within the established time frame.

An intermediate evaluation will be conducted after 18 months after initial implementation, and another will take place one month after the execution period has finished. The evaluations will consider:

- The progress of the program according to goals and results achieved, and its relationship with the timeline;
- The preparation and delivery of regular reports within established deadlines, and the quality of these reports;
- The efficiency, accessibility, and transparency of the administration of the resources, in agreement with the parameters set by internal and external audits performed on the matter.

Coordination of monitoring and evaluation activities must include the Coordination Committee in the preparation of the terms of reference for the intermediate and final evaluations and provide relevant information to facilitate their performance, in accordance with the established sampling design.

Annex 1. Logical framework and Estimated Budget

Result / Activities	Indicator	Unit of Measure	Baseline (Dec 2020)	Goal (Dec 2023)	Source and verification method	Term	Required Financing	National Financing	Financing Gap
General objective: Expand social security coverage to meet the basic needs of vulnerable refugees and applicants for refugee status as part of the state-planned inclusion in the Panamá Solidario plan.									
Specific objective 1: Meet essential needs that guarantee the survival of vulnerable refugees and status applicants									
R1. Improve the information system of ONPAR and the related mechanisms to identify vulnerable populations who are beneficiaries of the intervention while guaranteeing the confidentiality of information that could put their integrity or safety at risk	Number of refugees and applicants' households identified as program beneficiaries	Number of households	0	10.975	Reports prepared by ONPAR, databases of refugees and applicants, AIG reports, partners' monitoring	2021-2023			
A1.1. Prepare a protocol that establishes delivery methods and vulnerability conditions, which guarantees the confidentiality of the target population and allows for certification by MIDES and/or the Presidency for access to the program	Number of work sessions conducted for the protocol preparation	Number of work sessions	0	4 sessions	Detailed minutes of meetings, attendance lists, prepared and validated protocol document	2021	\$18.540	\$18.540 ⁸	0
A1.2. Mapping needs and georeferencing areas where the target population is located.	Number of mapped areas (townships, provinces, shires)	Number of townships	0	10.975 30	Georeferenced and mapped information, software-integrated system	2021	\$190.600	\$175.600 ⁹	\$15.000
A1.3. Develop an information system for tracking, monitoring and collecting a quantitative and qualitative sampling which guarantees the verification of the intervention results	Monitoring and evaluation system designed # households participating in the sample	Monitoring and evaluation system # of households according to the sample size	0	200		2021 - 2023	\$12.000	\$2.000	\$10.000
Total, OE 1							\$221.140	\$196.140	\$ 25.000
Specific objective 2: Improve the responsiveness of social protection services provided to refugees and applicants for refugee status..									
R2. Incorporate refugees and applicants for refugee status into the plan Panamá Solidario and identify complementary initiatives social protection programs of the Ministry of Social Development for the population of concern	Number of refugees and applicants' households identified as program beneficiaries	Number of households	0	10.975	Reports prepared by ONPAR, databases of refugees and applicants, AIG reports, partners' monitoring	2021-2023			

⁸ The quantification is carried out by identifying within the budget sheet the 2019 costs of the ONPAR technical group that participates in the analysis of files and design of the protocol for a maximum period of 4 weeks.

⁹ The calculations also correspond to the unit cost of reviewing the files of refugees and asylum seekers by the ONPAR team according to the 2019 schedule and budget, divided by the number of records for the year under review, in order to improve the ONPAR information system and according to the criteria defined in the protocol. It is planned to use the GIS licenses available at the AIG for georeferencing.

Result / Activities	Indicator	Unit of Measure	Baseline (Dec 2020)	Goal (Dec 2023)	Source and verification method	Term	Required Financing	National Financing	Financing Gap
A2.1. Deliver food bags according to the inclusion, equity and non-discrimination standards set by the plan Panamá Solidario	Number of refugees and applicants' households receiving food bags	Number of households	0	6585	Reports prepared by ONPAR, databases of refugees and applicants, AIG reports, partners' monitoring	2021 - 2023	\$11,852,640	\$3,820,089	\$8,032,551
A2.2. Deliver financial support and digital vouchers to the target population according to the standards set by the Panamá Solidario plan	Number of refugees and applicants' households receiving Bono Solidario	Number of households	0	4390	Reports prepared by ONPAR, databases of refugees and applicants, AIG reports, partners' monitoring	2021 - 2023	\$15,802,560	\$0	\$15,802,560
	Number of refugees and applicants' households receiving digital vouchers	Number of households	0		Reports prepared by ONPAR, databases of refugees and applicants, AIG reports, partners' monitoring	2021 - 2023			
A2.3. Conduct awareness workshops with MIDES officials and local governments in charge of Social Protection Programs linked to the protection of the population in vulnerable situations	Number of officials trained in international protection	# of officials (disaggregated by sex)	0	200 (50%)	Minutes and/or reports of lectures completed, photographs, attendance lists	2021-2022	\$8,000 ¹⁰	\$1,000	\$7,000
A.2.4 Coordination of the reporting, monitoring and evaluation mechanism.	#trimester visits	# of monitoring visits # meeting with the Monitoring Committee	0	12	Monitoring and progress reports Reports on innovations and challenges Intermediate evaluation reports Evaluation report	2021-2023	\$76,000 ¹¹	0	\$76,000
	#meetings every six months			6					
	# reports			12					
Total, OE 2							\$27,739,200	\$3,821,089	\$23,918,111
TOTAL							\$27,960,340	\$4,017,229	\$23,943,111

Amounts in USD.

Annexes available electronically:

Annex 2: Quantification methodology

Annex 3: Statistical Data and Projected Population Scenarios for Quantification

Annex 4: Information and Identification of Target Population Profile for the Social Protection Program *Panama Solidario*

Annex 5: Detailed Information and Costs of Protection Program *Panama Solidario*

Annex 6: Funding for Social Protection Program *Panama Solidario* 2021-2023

¹⁰ Training days on international protection are quantified for officials at the national and local level involved with social protection programs. A unit value of US \$ 25 is estimated for coffee or snacks and activities carried out in facilities of public entities; You measure or others. The government contribution for these spaces is calculated at US \$ 1000, likewise, fees for a UNHCR specialist or other entity are estimated, for which a value of US \$ 2000 is expected for the total awareness days.

¹¹ The fees of a Coordinator for monitoring, follow-up and evaluation are quantified at US \$ 2000 per month. This activity is important because it must allow the precision of the beneficiaries who require extended social protection measures between the transition from temporary programs to stable programs defined by the Panamanian Government according to very specific and targeted vulnerabilities.