

Press Release

Launch Colombia Humanitarian Response Plan 2021

Bogota, April 26, 2021. The humanitarian community officially launched today the [Colombia Humanitarian Response Plan for 2021](#). The plan requests US\$174 million to reach 1.4 million people with multisectoral humanitarian assistance. Based on three strategic objectives, this plan aims to save lives, strengthen the protection of affected people and to preserve human dignity while enabling access to basic goods and services. The plan was developed by the humanitarian community in Colombia in consultation and collaboration with national and territorial authorities according to a common analysis of needs and priorities. This document and the summary are available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3aHIQSZ>

Despite a period of relative stability since the signing of the Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace in 2016, humanitarian needs remain significant and increased last year as a result of the pandemic. Some 6.7 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance including 5.6 million in severe need. Some 3.5 million people are facing severe food insecurity, mostly as a result of COVID-19 and its socio-economic impact. Women and children continue to be the most affected as well as ethnic minorities, such as indigenous communities in peripheral areas of the country. Jozef Merkx, Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. in Colombia, reflects: *“humanitarian actors complement state efforts to alleviate the needs of those most affected as the country pursues its efforts at peace consolidation and recovery.”*

The United Nations and hundreds of nongovernmental humanitarian organizations in Colombia are committed to complement and support the humanitarian efforts of the authorities and affected communities to re-build lives and livelihoods. Humanitarian organizations will also align their efforts with development partners to meet the most urgent needs while reducing vulnerability and needs in the longer-term.

“Reaching and protecting vulnerable people, especially in hard-to-reach communities, is central to the 2021 response,” said Mr. Merkx. *“We want to mitigate hunger, see a decrease in the number of infant and maternal deaths, give people access to the basic services they need to survive, and build resilience in communities so they can cope with continued shocks, like the recent floods”* (which are a consequence of the La Niña phenomenon and the passage of Hurricane Iota in the end of 2020).

The humanitarian coordinator also emphasized the dedication, courage, and determination of humanitarian actors in their mission to give hope to affected children, women, and men. In 2020, 1.6 million people were reached with assistance through the Humanitarian Response Plan and the intersectoral complementary COVID-19 Response Plan, thanks to the dedication of thousands of humanitarian workers, most of whom are Colombian, and the generosity of donors who have contributed more than US\$121 million toward the 2020 response. *“We hope we can count on their continued support to continue assisting those in most urgent need and consolidate the gains of all our past efforts”*, concluded Mr. Merkx.

The Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) is available at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3dLIVqH>