

an update on
CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE





OUR WORLD is facing a pandemic that is unprecedented in most of our lifetimes. More than 25 million cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed. The death tolls stand at over 850,000 people. Governments have scrambled to prevent the virus's spread. These prevention measures have taken their own toll as unemployment has surged and trade has dropped, leading to shortages of food and other critical supplies.

CWS has a strong and longstanding network of local partners in countries worldwide and deep community connections in the United States. Almost immediately, we heard widespread reports of suffering and need. We heard of students who could not access virtual learning, of food shortages, of the risk of eviction for unpaid rent, and of prejudice that kept some community members from accessing healthcare.

Our response started quickly and will continue to unfold for months or years to come. This update gives a glimpse of some of our relief activities to this point. Like all of our work, local communities and voices have been at the core of our response, helping to inform culturally appropriate and prioritized responses.

We have reached tens of thousands of people so far, but the challenges in front of us are great. A new chapter is looming in which the pandemic will compound with other challenges to potentially create cascading disasters. We will continue to walk alongside our neighbors as that happens, and we hope that you will be there with us.

A FOUNDATION FOR PREVENTION

CWS PROGRAMS worldwide focus on good hygiene practices, improved access to health services and economic resilience. That means helping schools and communities access clean water and sharing information about proper techniques for washing hands. It means helping refugee children get medical checkups and improving roads in rural communities so that families can get to health centers. It means supporting farmers as they diversify their crops or helping women start businesses.

When this pandemic began sweeping across the globe, communities worldwide were better prepared to survive it because of the work that we've been doing together for decades.



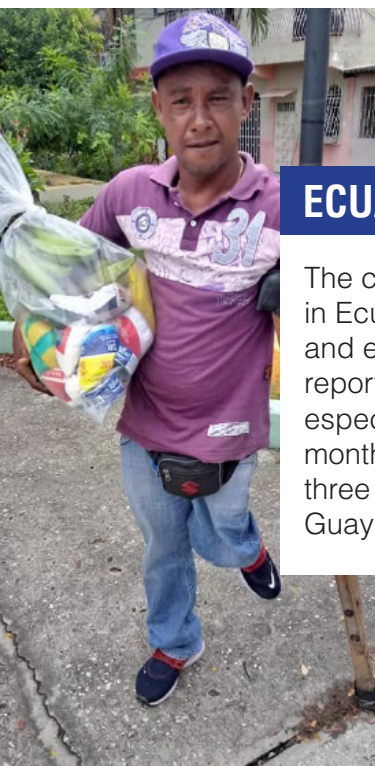
FOOD & SUPPLY DISTRIBUTIONS

AS THE CORONAVIRUS ravaged communities around the world, unemployment skyrocketed. Putting food on the table and purchasing basic hygiene supplies became a significant challenge for many families. CWS teams and our partners worldwide responded with food and hygiene supply packages for vulnerable populations in countries around the world. Here's what some of those distributions meant to the people who received them.

BRAZIL

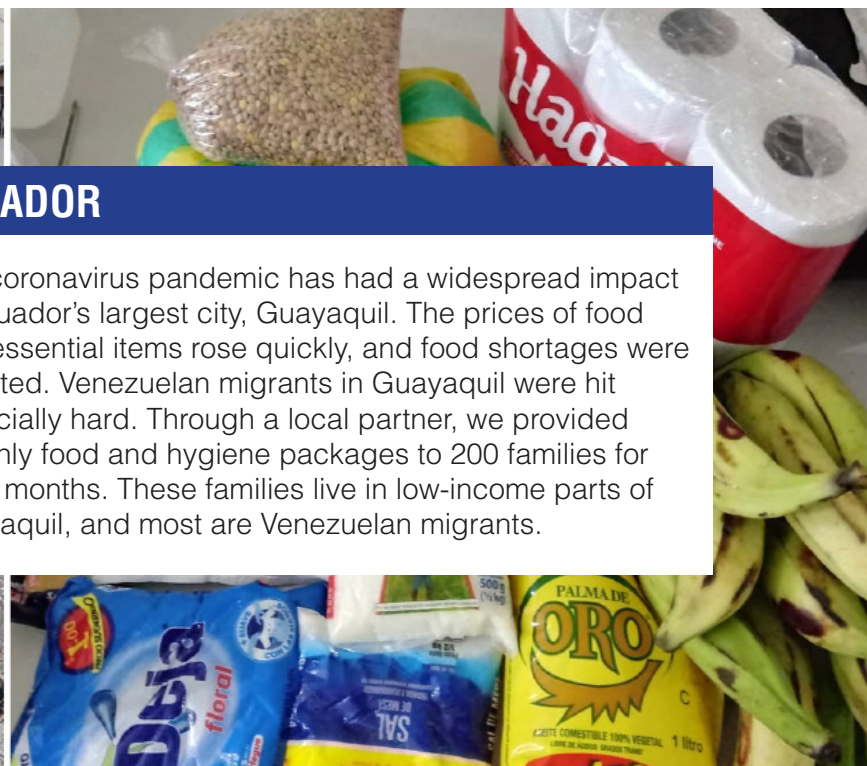
"Thank you very much for your dedication, love, care and effort to put these bags together for each of the families. May God bless all of you and your families," said a mother in Sao Paulo. Through a local partner, CWS provided food and hygiene supply packages to the families of children who are risk of living and working on the street.

“ Thank you very much for your dedication, love, care and effort to put these bags together for each of the families.



ECUADOR

The coronavirus pandemic has had a widespread impact in Ecuador's largest city, Guayaquil. The prices of food and essential items rose quickly, and food shortages were reported. Venezuelan migrants in Guayaquil were hit especially hard. Through a local partner, we provided monthly food and hygiene packages to 200 families for three months. These families live in low-income parts of Guayaquil, and most are Venezuelan migrants.



UNITED STATES

Thousands of CWS Kits and Blankets have been deployed in communities across the United States in response to needs arising from the coronavirus pandemic.



Without paychecks, they struggle just to put food on the table. They can't afford basic hygiene items like soap and a washcloth.

- Cathy Moore, Executive Director of ECHOS in Houston, which gave out CWS Hygiene Kits through their food pantry



EGYPT

"The situation worsens for Egypt's refugees. The loss of work means that there's been a loss of housing, increased homelessness, and we're coming across more and more cases where families can no longer feed children or adults," the director of our partner in Cairo said in May. With support from CWS, their team distributed more than 2,000 food and hygiene boxes to refugees in Cairo. Many recipients were unaccompanied children and others in extremely vulnerable positions.



CAMBODIA

As newly-unemployed workers return from larger cities to rural Cambodian communities, many families have lost their income. Our team distributed food packages to more than 700 families that they will use to put food on the table while they figure out their next steps.



I'd like to give thanks to [CWS] and am so grateful for the support at this hard time.



SUPPORTING REFUGEES IN THE U.S.

MANY REFUGEES, especially new arrivals, are particularly vulnerable in the face of the pandemic.

Many resettled refugees are losing their jobs, or have not yet had a chance to enter the labor market and largely do not qualify for government benefits. Those still employed are often forced to work without appropriate personal protective equipment and frequently have to carpool to get to the place of employment. The vast majority do not have social networks or savings to fall back on in this time of crisis.

Most of our local offices serve as focal points in the community and offer food assistance for families every week.

One of our largest needs continue to be for rent assistance to keep refugee families in their homes.

Our teams still deliver services where and when appropriate in a safest way possible. This includes delivering food and medicine to refugee communities and continuing to file legal documents for those with immediate deadlines, as Service Centers are still functioning. English as a Second Language, legal consultations for new clients and other services are continuing through video calls as staff and volunteers continue to stand for welcome.



LOOKING AHEAD

AS THE PREDICTED GLOBAL RECESSION sets in, our neighbors across the United States and around the world will continue to struggle to meet their basic needs. The pandemic continues to exacerbate and compound existing challenge. For example, we are in the midst of an active hurricane season. Because of COVID-19, however, volunteers and staff of relief agencies are already fatigued. Evacuation centers must take extra steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Our warehouses are low on some types of CWS Kits because the pandemic forced the churches who provide many of the supplies to suspend in-person gatherings.

In communities worldwide impacted by economic shortfalls and growing unemployment, workers need new skills and avenues for earning a living and making up for lost wages. Programs that help families start and expand vegetable gardens and that help people start home businesses will take on a critical level of importance and urgency.

With their lack of savings and networks of friends and family, refugees in the United States will remain vulnerable through the pandemic and expected recession. Our teams will continue to walk with them to access unemployment benefits, pay rent, afford groceries and supplies, and find new jobs.

As we look at the long and weary months and years to come, we know that we are all facing the same storm. But we are in very different boats as we do. Will you help our neighbors in the smallest boats weather the storm?



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