

VENEZUELA

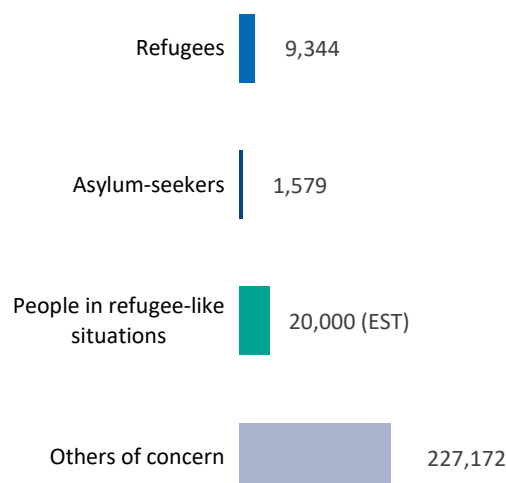
April 2025

As the country continues to be mired in a political-constitutional crisis following the July 2024 presidential elections and the January 2025 presidential inauguration, **one in four Venezuelans, over 7 million people, remain in need of humanitarian assistance.**

As leader of the Protection and the Shelter, Energy and NFIs Clusters, UNHCR **is targeting 2.7 million vulnerable Venezuelans** affected by the crisis. UNHCR is also leading the response to growing **returns** to Venezuela and **displacement** within the country, as well as to the

protection needs of **refugees, asylum-seekers and people at risk of statelessness.** While refugees and migrants continue to face protection risks along displacement routes, **new protection profiles** have emerged as a result of the political crisis.

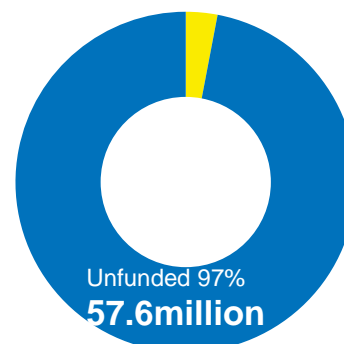
CORE MANDATE POPULATION: PEOPLE PROTECTED AND/OR ASSISTED BY UNHCR



FUNDING (AS OF FEBRUARY 2025)

USD 59.5 million requested for the Venezuela in 2025

Funded 6%
1.9 million



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff: 99 Personnel

67 national staff

11 international staff

20 affiliate workforce (19 UNOPS, 1 NUNV)

Offices:

1 Representation in Caracas

2 Field Offices in San Cristóbal (Táchira), and Maracaibo (Zulia).

3 Field Units in Caracas, Santa Elena de Uairén (Bolívar) and Carupano (Sucre).



72-year-old senior weaver, Freyla González, in Paraguipoa, Zulia state, Venezuela. © 2024 UNHCR.

Operational Context

Despite the ongoing political-constitutional crisis and growing economic challenges, exacerbated by the prospect of sanctions, mixed movements continued along the border with Colombia, with trends identified across UNHCR-supported waystations for people on the move pointing to a **rise in returns**, which in the first quarter of the year accounted for **half of detected population movements**. The majority of both returnees and people leaving the country manifest the intention of making their move permanent. The ongoing political crisis has led to the emergence of new “political” protection profiles, while many of those crossing the border remained engaged in **circular movements** between the two countries, seeking medical and other services and goods for consumption or commerce. In addition to voluntary returns, the country has been witnessing an increase in repatriations through the government-sponsored *Plan Vuelta a la Patria* and returns via deportations from the US and other countries in the region. According to unverified Government statements, over one million Venezuelans have returned home over the past few years.

On the other hand, the border with Brazil continues to register a strong prevalence of exits over entries, as many Venezuelans, including members of indigenous communities, continue to leave hoping to gain access to employment opportunities and basic services offered in the southern neighbour. Many seek medical attention that is unavailable at home.

On the economic front, despite a continued macroeconomic recovery estimated by UNDP at around 6.5 percent of GDP in 2024, growing inflation and the depreciation of the national currency has been affecting the purchasing power and food security of a large part of the population, leading to growing social discontent, especially among public sector workers and pensioners who have no access to foreign currency, and feeding into displacement inside and out of the country by people seeking sustainable economic outcomes.

In this increasingly unpredictable scenario, compounded by growing funding challenges, UNHCR has been focussing its protection strategy on finding effective ways to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities that are exposed to risks of displacement and natural disasters, and on spearheading and supporting multi-actor efforts aimed at promoting the sustainability of returns to Venezuela.

Coordination and Partnerships

- UNHCR is implementing activities in scores of prioritised communities spread over 11 states, primarily in the border areas with Colombia, Brazil, the ABC Islands and Trinidad and Tobago, but also in Greater Caracas and the neighbouring states of Carabobo, La Guaira and Miranda. UNHCR is working with 8 implementing partners - Caritas Venezuela, Comitato Internazionale per Lo Sviluppo Dei Popoli (CISP), Cruz Roja Zuliana, Danish Refugee Council, Fundación Luz y Vida, Fundación Vivienda Popular, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), and ODISEF- as well as other local actors, including government institutions NGOs, academia and the private sector.
- UNHCR leads the Protection and the Shelter, Energy and NFI Clusters within the framework of the Venezuela Humanitarian Response Plan.
- UNHCR's main institutional counterparts are the National Commission for Refugees (CONARE) and the Office of the Ombudsperson (DdP).
- Under its "Bringing the Private Sector and Communities Closer" strategy, UNHCR Venezuela has developed partnerships with the private sector to enable people living in remote communities to access services and solutions provided by businesses in coordination with UNHCR.

- UNHCR promotes and strengthens the protection and dignity of the most vulnerable populations affected by the crisis in Venezuela, including indigenous communities, supporting their access to goods and services, mitigating the risks to which they are exposed and helping ensure their survival and well-being.
- UNHCR is working with community structures, including outreach volunteers, women's networks and youth networks, to engage communities in the implementation of projects identified by the communities themselves, seeking to improve community response and ensuring the sustainability of projects and community processes. UNHCR and its partners have also been supporting the implementation of community projects related to nutrition, health, water and sanitation and education.
- UNHCR and sister agencies FAO and UNDP are implementing a Portfolio of dozens of humanitarian-development-peace nexus projects to support community resilience and sustainable returns to tackle the cycle of displacement in the country, with the involvement of a growing network of private sector allies.
- In coordination with IOM and OCHA, UNHCR has set up a Working Group on Human Mobility and Reintegration tasked with providing assistance to Venezuelan returnees.
- UNHCR promotes international refugee law and refugee status determination procedures, encouraging State institutions to identify and refer persons in need of international protection to the asylum procedure. UNHCR and partners conduct capacity building activities with government institutions.
- In close coordination with UNHCR in Colombia, UNHCR Venezuela facilitates and supports the voluntary repatriation of Colombian refugees, ensuring that they are enabled to take well-informed and voluntary decisions and are repatriated in conditions of safety and dignity.
- Within the framework of the Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, UNHCR leads the UN interagency response to natural emergencies in Venezuela by ensuring an effective use of the available resources complementing the State response.

Strategy

Protect

Assert the centrality of protection in response to displacement

- UNHCR works with relevant institutions to strengthen **asylum capacities and digitalize their systems** and promote protection-sensitive alternative arrangements through training and capacity-building of government officials.
- UNHCR supports States in terms of assistance to persons with specific needs, **registration**, and links with the national protection services, which also help UNHCR to identify and assist the most vulnerable.
- Investing in **protection monitoring**, evidence-based programming and analysis is at the core of regional strategies ensuring protection from exploitation and abuse.
- Through a strengthened network of **support spaces**, the provision of information and orientation, identification and secure reference, helps to prevent displacement.

Assist

Ensure operational response capacities and life-saving aid for the most vulnerable during emergencies

- Across the region, UNHCR responds to the **immediate needs** of increasing numbers of persons that UNHCR serves. Because of the prolonged crisis, rising poverty and inequality triggered unprecedented levels of need for **basic relief items, emergency shelter, food, safe water, and sanitation supplies**.

As **extreme-weather events** further aggravate the situation of displaced populations and communities at risk of displacement, UNHCR responds with **emergency relief items** to support institutions and communities in their response to these situations.

Empower

Empower communities to achieve greater resilience

- To prevent displacement, mitigate protection risks and build on the resilience of affected communities, the operation prioritizes **community-centred interventions**, including supporting volunteer networks in prioritised communities. UNHCR promotes communication and integration, identification, and referral of cases with specific needs, as well as enhanced access to information and complaint mechanisms.
- UNHCR has been boosting feedback and complaint mechanisms, allowing for **constant communication with the affected population and** strengthening two-way communication, to ensure the response adapts to their needs, particularly in increasingly risky environments such as borders.

Solve

Include persons we serve in national/local services with development support

- Through a whole-of-society approach, UNHCR fosters **partnerships to mobilise support** for the integration of Venezuelans, especially those returning to the country, in the labour market, promoting **sustainable solutions**.
- UNHCR actively advocates for enhanced national efforts to provide **regular stay for refugees and asylum-seekers** (such as temporary or permanent schemes, professional or work-related permits, education programmes, etc.) allowing for full enjoyment of rights and integration.

Returnee Reintegration

Jointly with other UN agencies and partners, UNHCR is implementing area-based community resilience and returnee reintegration projects in the central state of Miranda, near the capital Caracas, in the western border states of Tachira and Zulia, and in the southern state of Bolivar. These projects aim to support returnees in making their return to Venezuela sustainable through the provision of protection, education, shelter and health services, material and psycho-social support, as well as vocational and livelihoods training, and to strengthen the resilience of communities that are at risk of displacement.



Agroecological gardens for livelihood support of returnees in Venezuela, Táchira state, Venezuela. © 2024 UNHCR.

Emergency Response

Extreme-weather events, compounded with poor hydrogeological management, have contributed to making the rainy season in Venezuela a time of disasters for vulnerable communities, with increased needs for collective temporary shelters to house and protect the affected population in conditions of dignity and safety, and avoid displacement. Public institutions are often unable to respond effectively to the protection needs of affected populations because of logistical and budgetary limitations. To address these extreme-weather related disasters challenges, UNHCR is focusing on enhancing community resilience and implementing sustainable solutions, such as promoting clean energy, improving waste management, ensuring access to potable water, and strengthening disaster preparedness and risk management systems. UNHCR also supports community-led initiatives for plastic waste management and improved access to potable water.



Water access provided to Yukpa families in Sierra de Perijá, Zulia state, Venezuela. © 2024 UNHCR

Timely funding

In **2025**, UNHCR in Venezuela requires **\$59.5 million** to respond to the needs of hundreds of refugees and millions of Venezuelans seeking safety and dignified lives. **Timely funding** is urgent to ensure the continuity of **protection-oriented activities** in the country: distribution of **core and hygiene items**; provision of **emergency and temporary shelter** in border areas and for people in mobility; support **sustainable returns and community resilience**; renovations of **Public Health Centres, regularisation** and documentation.

UNHCR's humanitarian and longer-term response in the Americas is made possible thanks to the **generous support** of major donors who have contributed unrestricted funding to UNHCR's global operations, and to donors who have contributed directly to UNHCR operations in Venezuela.

We wish to express our heartfelt thank you to **our donors in 2025:**

EUROPEAN UNION | SWITZERLAND | UNDP | SPAIN |

And, also to the main contributors of unearmarked funding to UNHCR: [Australia](#), [Belgium](#), [Denmark](#), [Germany](#), [Ireland](#), [Netherlands \(Kingdom of\)](#), [Norway](#), [Republic of Korea](#), [Sweden](#), [Switzerland](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#).

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