



# VENEZUELA SITUATION FACT SHEET

**MAY 2024**

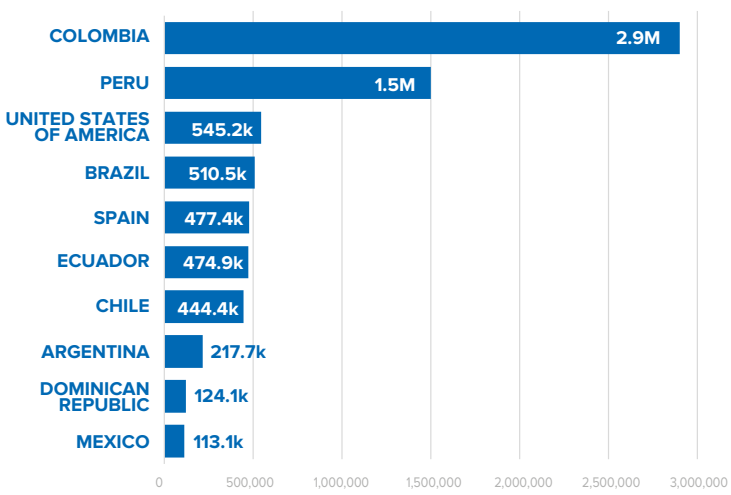
*Ecuador. Victoria Salerno (14) attends classes at his new school in Quito. She is Venezuelan and arrived in Ecuador with her family in 2019. Victoria is one of the best students in her class. When she graduates school, she hopes to become a videogame developer to create educative videogames for children. © UNHCR/Jeoffrey Guillemard*

The most recent Refugee and Migrant Needs Analysis (RMNA) conducted by R4V noted that more than **85% of refugees and migrants in-transit**, and almost 70% of those in-destination have protection, food, water, hygiene, shelter, and safe transportation needs.

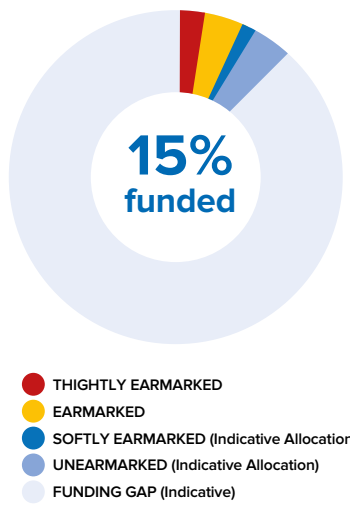
**Only in the first half of 2023, 71,100 Venezuelans were recognized as refugees worldwide**, 57% in the Americas. In the same period, 163,700 Venezuelans filled new asylum applications worldwide, 76 % in the Americas.

UNHCR supports host governments in preventing and responding to forced displacement and implementing **protection and solution responses**, including access to territory, dignified reception, fair and efficient asylum procedures, other legal-stay arrangements, socio-economic inclusion and third country solutions.

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS FROM VENEZUELA



## FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS IN 2024 (AS OF 30 APRIL 2024)



**US\$ 400 M**

**Requested for the Venezuela situation\*\***

*\*\*The UNHCR financial requirements for the Venezuela Situation include the following countries: Argentina, Aruba, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guyana, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.*

\* Source: Regional Inter-agency Coordination Platform (R4V), November 2023

# OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Cross-border displacement and mixed movements from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela continue to significantly outnumber return movements. According to the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V), co-led by UNHCR and IOM, as of November 2023, there were over 7.7 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants worldwide, of whom 84% (6.5 million) are in Latin America and the Caribbean. By mid-2023, there were over 300,000 recognized refugees from Venezuela, and almost 1.2 million asylum-seekers. UNHCR is planning to support some 6.5 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the region in 2024, both by providing direct assistance and coordination of the inter-agency response through its role in the R4V Regional Platform.

Pendular movements along border areas are expected to continue as Venezuelans seek to address basic needs temporarily in neighbouring countries. A lack of viable options in an increasing number of host countries drive many to move onward in search of a more stable future.

Onward movements of refugees and migrants between host countries, including northbound ones, significantly increased in 2023 and are expected to continue in 2024 as Venezuelans and other nationalities (increasingly Ecuadorians, but also Haitians and Colombians) with heightened vulnerabilities seek sustainable protection and integration solutions. In 2023, Venezuelans represented 63% of those crossing the Darien jungle; nearly half of them travelled directly from Venezuela according to [Protection Monitoring](#) reports. As of 30 April 2024, over 139,267 people entered Panama through the Darien irregularly in 2024, a 26% increase compared to the same period in 2023. Venezuelans remained the primary group crossing (88,660) followed by Ecuadorians (10,640 people) and Haitians (8,997 people).

According to the [Refugee and Migrant Response Plan \(RMRP\)](#) for 2024, it is projected that there will be more than 4.71 million Venezuelans in-destination in need of food, shelter, healthcare, education and formal employment, despite efforts by host countries to regularize and integrate them. With more than one in three refugees and migrants in an irregular situation across the region, the need for regular

status in their host countries – including through access to asylum and/or migratory regularization procedures – is an overarching protection need. It provides security for refugees and migrants to rebuild their lives and integrate locally, without being exposed to the many risks linked to irregular status, including detention and deportation. In addition, almost 1 in 5 refugees and migrant children are out of school; and unemployment rates of economically active refugees and migrants ranged from 38% in Panama to 2% in Peru.

In the context of dynamic population movements (outflows, returns, deportations, cross-border, pendular, transit and onward movements), UNHCR works across the region to support refugees and migrants, focusing on protection, socioeconomic integration, and multisectoral assistance, including education, health, shelter, water, sanitation, and hygiene. UNHCR provides overall operational coordination, planning, communication, and information management services for the entire response. Inside Venezuela, UNHCR supports all population groups with humanitarian needs – refugees, asylum-seekers, people at risk of displacement, returnees and deportees with protection needs – as well as communities in prioritized locations to build resilience.

Solidarity from hosting countries and communities has facilitated the inclusion of refugees and migrants from Venezuela, including through the granting of asylum and other legal stay arrangements – such as residence or temporary protection permits – that facilitate access to services and basic socio-economic rights. At the same time, nearly 70% of Venezuelan refugees and migrants struggle to access basic needs and rights across Latin America and the Caribbean. Amidst a global cost-of-living crisis, they are at greater risk of being victims of human trafficking, forced recruitment, and gender-based violence.

Amidst a chronically underfunded R4V response (as of 6 May 2024, only 1.1% or USD 18 million are funded, out of USD 1.59 billion that are required in 2024), more investments from the international community, the private sector, and international development and financial institutions in longer-term solutions – also to benefit host communities – are key for refugees and migrants to achieve self-reliance and inclusion, and to mitigate risks of onward movements.

## Argentina: Venezuelan engineer discovers passion for urban agriculture in Argentina

*Abelis Carrillo has found hope and a purpose working for an innovative start-up in Córdoba that uses cutting-edge technology to grow food in urban settings. Mauro Barberis, co-founder of Argentinian start-up Loopfarms, likes to joke about how he met Abelis Carrillo: “We met through speed dating... but for companies and applicants!” Mauro and Abelis met at a “Cities of Solidarity” event in 2022, an initiative led by UNHCR that unites different municipalities in the Americas to work together for the protection and inclusion of refugees and migrants. The activity allowed various companies to meet refugees with professional profiles relevant to their businesses. Read more [here](#)*



# WORKING WITH PARTNERS

- UNHCR co-leads with IOM the regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V), coordinating with 248 organizations who are implementing the [2023-2024 Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan \(RMRP\)](#) across 17 countries. The RMRP response priorities are based on findings of the [Regional Refugee and Migrant Needs Analysis \(RMNA\)](#), which, for 2023, highlighted ongoing humanitarian and integration needs of about 4.4 million (70 per cent) of 6.5 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela in the region, in addition to the humanitarian needs of some 85 per cent of Venezuelans engaging in transit movements, 86 per cent of other nationals in transit, and 53 per cent of affected host community members. Across the region, integration, protection and food security were identified as top priority needs.

- Synergies between the RMRP and Venezuela Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) will be reinforced in 2024, focusing on activities implemented in border areas, reception and reintegration of returnees, the issuance of personal documentation, access to health and education, support to national and regional campaigns against discrimination and xenophobia and joint resource mobilization initiatives.

- UNHCR and IOM also provide technical support to the regional inter-governmental coordination forum, the [Quito Process](#), a state-led initiative that includes 13 Latin American and Caribbean countries that seeks to harmonize domestic policies and responses to displacement in receiving countries.

- To promote comprehensive, coherent, and coordinated regional responses, UNHCR also engages with governments at national and local level and other stakeholders, including

civil society, the private sector, and financial institutions, in the implementation of the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection. The Declaration aims to bolster pledges that enhance protection-sensitive entry systems; ensure access to asylum and other protection-oriented legal stay arrangements; stabilize populations in communities of origin, transit, destination, and return; and expand legal pathways for regular migration and access to international protection, including strengthening national asylum systems and resettlement.

- Inside Venezuela, UNHCR operates within the inter-agency framework of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) to assist the most vulnerable population groups in the country. In addition to activities under the WASH and Education clusters, UNHCR also contributes operationally, and as the lead of the Protection Cluster and the Shelter, Energy, and non-food items (NFI) Cluster. In prioritized communities, particularly in border areas, UNHCR assistance helps address basic needs for vulnerable individuals through core relief items. This assistance runs in parallel with support to waystations and reception capacities for people in mobility, inter-agency returnee reintegration efforts, and medical and temporary shelter facilities.

- UNHCR is also focusing on providing solutions for returnees and has taken a lead role in the creation of an inter-agency Technical Working Group on Human Mobility and Reintegration and in the implementation of reintegration pilot projects in Greater Caracas and in the western border state of Tachira, in the context of a wider operational effort that aims to provide vulnerable Venezuelans with an array of reasons and options to stay in their country.

## STRATEGY

### STRENGTHENING ASYLUM SYSTEMS AND PROTECTION ALTERNATIVES

*Countries hosting refugees and migrants made commendable efforts in 2023 to strengthen asylum and expand legal stay arrangements for people in need of international protection. However, increasing numbers and limited regular migration alternatives are overwhelming the asylum systems.*

- UNHCR stepped-up its presence in border areas across the region to contribute to expanding reception conditions, responding to the basic needs of refugees and migrants from Venezuela, while ensuring access to territories and upholding non-refoulement and refugee laws and practices. UNHCR field presence along border areas is also aimed at providing legal aid and counselling on access to asylum and other legal stay arrangements; assisting in effective coordination and preparing local responses, and contingency plans; and providing support for the internal relocation of those who would like to be reunited with their families or may access job opportunities elsewhere.

- UNHCR works in close partnership with governments across the region to strengthen registration and national asylum systems. An analysis of the data collected from all countries hosting Venezuelans allows for enhanced protection monitoring, as well as effective advocacy for

solutions promoting socio-economic inclusion and enabling local integration. UNHCR supports countries hosting Venezuelan refugees and migrants, including Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Peru, with the planning and implementation of temporary protection and other legal stay arrangements, including regularization schemes, by providing technical and material support and sharing information with Venezuelan refugees and migrants.

- The [Regional Safe Spaces Network](#) provides specialized services to gender-based violence survivors and children at risk inside Venezuela and in host countries. UNHCR, as co-lead of the R4V Platform, implements the regional [Support Spaces Network](#), providing information, orientation and basic services to refugees and migrants from Venezuela through a coordinated network of 211 spaces in 9 countries in the region.

- The [Regional Protection Sector](#) of the R4V Platform, co-led by UNHCR and NRC, focuses on access to territory;



legal protection, including asylum, temporary protection and other legal stay arrangements for Venezuelans; access to rights and national protection systems; and prevention, mitigation and improved protection responses, particularly to disproportionately affected population groups, from an age, gender and diversity perspective.

- As part of its community-based protection strategy, UNHCR works with community-based organizations and other key actors, including refugee persons to improve the protection environment and ensure two-way communication and accountability. Information materials on the prevention and mitigation of gender-based violence, sexual exploitation

and abuse (SEA), among others, have been developed and disseminated through different communication channels.

- Across the region, many of the refugee-and migrant-led organizations are represented by an umbrella organization called “Coalición por Venezuela,” which is an important stakeholder for R4V. Through this coalition, these actors (now amounting to a quarter of all appealing partners in the Platform) are part of the RMRP’s programme cycle, both at regional and national levels, providing valued contributions in the development of the planning assumptions and strategy, as well as operational inputs.

## INVESTING IN INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION

*Legal stay arrangements, documentation, access to services, and livelihoods help ensure that people in need of protection and others on the move can thrive in host communities. Through an area-based approach, projects and activities implemented also benefit hosting communities. Some countries have made great strides in creating welcoming policies and conditions that facilitate integration and inclusion, yet many challenges remain. National services and labour markets in many host communities have become overstretched and further investment is needed.*

- To support Venezuelans facing challenges related to low employment, livelihoods, and income, UNHCR strengthened ties with the private sector through initiatives like the [Local Integration Programme](#) (PIL) in Mexico that since 2016 has relocated more than 36,000 refugees and asylum seekers from cities in southern Mexico to 11 municipalities in the central and northern regions offering better integration opportunities, including employment and education. In Ecuador (Empresas con los Refugiados) and in Brazil (Empresas com Refugiados and [Refugee Entrepreneurs](#)), UNHCR in conjunction with the UN Global Compact developed online platforms to promote the integration of forcibly displaced in the labour market. Initiatives in Costa Rica (Living the Integration), Peru ([Integrating Companies](#)), and Ecuador ([Inclusive Companies](#)) are awarding seals recognising companies’ good practices in promoting socioeconomic inclusion of forcibly displaced, i.e. equitable hiring, inclusion of their products and services in value chains and supply processes, developing technical and soft skills, promoting financial inclusion.

- **Together for Inclusion and Territories of Inclusion** in Colombia; [Talent without Borders](#) in Panama, and Inclusive Market in Chile are enhancing employability, facilitating labour insertion, and strengthening the entrepreneurial skills of Venezuelans. In cooperation with Peru’s Ministry of Health, UNHCR is facilitating the inclusion of Venezuelan doctors in

clinics operating in under-served areas.

- Working with UNHCR, the **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** targeted projects to advance labour market integration of displaced populations across Latin America and the Caribbean. UNHCR also strengthened ties with the **International Financial Corporation (CAF)** to expand financial inclusion and job opportunities for the people with and for whom UNHCR works.

- On 25 and 26 April 2024, 16 local governments and representatives of international organizations gathered under the “Cities of Solidarity” initiative to exchange good practices and presented their recommendations to be incorporated into Chile’s Declaration and Plan of Action within the framework of Cartagena+40 process. The meeting was jointly organized by UNHCR, with the support of the Montevideo Municipality, and with the sponsorship of the Government of Chile. The meeting concluded with the adoption of the [Montevideo Declaration](#) on Contributions of Cities of Solidarity to Chile’s Declaration and Plan of Action (2024-2034). This Declaration is a firm commitment from local authorities in Latin America and the Caribbean to address the humanitarian and social challenges posed by the reception and integration of refugees and migrants in the region’s transit and destination cities and communities.

## ADDRESSING ROOT CAUSES

*The unprecedented mixed movements of refugees and migrants in the Americas is linked to complex and often overlapping drivers of displacement and population movements that have persisted and intensified, forcing, or leaving people with few options but to leave home.*

- **UNHCR works with States and other stakeholders in developing and implementing legal frameworks and public policies** that respond to the needs of displaced populations. UNHCR also promotes the community empowerment of displaced populations.

- **UNHCR supports States in increasing their climate preparedness** through strengthening: 1) legal protections for those forced to flee because of climate change and disasters, and 2) the inclusion of displaced people in the climate response of host countries in the region.

- **UNHCR and partners are implementing a ‘Whole of Venezuela’ approach**, ensuring alignment and complementarity between regional Refugees and Migrants Response Plan (RMRP) and the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) inside Venezuela, focusing on coordinated returns/reception and reintegration, thematic collaboration such as access to education, health and livelihoods, service mapping in border areas, combating discrimination and xenophobia, and joint resource mobilization.

## EXPANDING RESETTLEMENT AND SAFE PATHWAYS

*A responsive third-country solutions framework includes refugee resettlement, complementary pathways to protection and solutions for refugees, as well as regular pathways for migrants. Such pathways have the potential to reduce onward movements and dangerous journeys of refugees and migrant and can also provide mechanisms for responsibility-sharing between States.*

● As part of a wider comprehensive strategy to address human mobility in the region, UNHCR, together with IOM, supported the Movilidad Segura (Safe Mobility), an initiative led by the United States of America. Safe Mobility Offices

(SMO) are operational in Guatemala, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Ecuador and open to Venezuelan nationals in all those countries except Guatemala.

## ENHANCING HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND EFFORTS TO COUNTERACT MISINFORMATION

*Unprecedented complex mixed movements throughout the Americas have led to growing humanitarian crises, with refugees and migrants on the move facing grave risks along their journey. States as well as international and humanitarian organizations are providing life-saving humanitarian assistance, legal advice, psychosocial support, reliable information, and dedicated multi-stakeholder coordination platforms.*

● UNHCR country operations support access to temporary collective shelters through infrastructure works and the development of shelter management capacities, with a focus on consolidating a regional response emergency accommodation network. Access to individual shelters through rental programmes has been strengthened, while settlement and community infrastructure interventions have been prioritized in hosting territories.

● UNHCR has seen an increase in the number of Venezuelans unable to meet basic needs, as well as an increasing number of requests for assistance. UNHCR uses unconditional cash transfers to help them temporarily meet their needs, providing assistance for rent, food, and utilities. UNHCR provides cash assistance so that Venezuelans become contributing members of the local economy, by purchasing their goods in neighbourhood markets and paying rent to local landlords. Since 2019 until March 2024, UNHCR delivered cash assistance to some 720,000 Venezuelans across Latin America and the Caribbean.

● In prioritized communities in Venezuela, particularly in border areas, UNHCR helps addressing basic needs for vulnerable individuals by supplying core relief items, ranging from solar-powered lamps, blankets, mattresses, kitchen utensils to hygiene kits, walking aids and wheelchairs. This assistance runs in parallel with support to waystations and reception capacities for people in mobility, as well as medical and temporary shelter facilities.

● In an effort to curb growing discrimination and xenophobia against Venezuelans and promote respect and solidarity in the host communities, the Regional R4V Platform launched a digital campaign “[Acortemos Distancias](#)” in August 2020. The campaign reached over 18 million internet users across the region, using social media to generate positive dialogue. Campaigns such as “[Somos Panas](#)” in Colombia reached more than 113,000 followers on social media and more than 190,000 people have participated in the campaign’s face-to-face events. As part of the campaign, more than one thousand journalists have been trained. In Chile, “[La Camiseta por Chile](#)” was launched, a campaign on the sidelines of the 2023 Pan American Games. In Peru, in 2022 the campaign “[Tu Causa Es Mi Causa](#)” reached over 3 million people through digital channels. Also, as part of the campaign “[Solidaridad Azul](#)” in partnership with local football team Club Alianza Lima, during World Refugee Day messages of solidarity and inclusion of refugees and migrants from Venezuela were communicated at a football match, reaching more than 30,000 fans at the stadium and other thousands on the national TV. The campaign “[Gracias Dominicana](#)” reached more than 2 million people on digital media since it was launched.

● In April 2024, R4V published the documentary “[The Journey that Never Ends](#)”, a firsthand insight into the challenges, fears, dreams, and contributions of refugees and migrants from Venezuela.

## PROTECTION-SENSITIVE RETURN, REINTEGRATION AND READMISSION

*While ensuring respect for the principle of non-refoulement by States not to return, expel, push back or informally transfer asylum seekers where they would face persecution, protection-sensitive return, and specific types of transfer arrangements (such as readmission) can, however, play a key role in a strengthened comprehensive response.*

● UNHCR works to **enhance the support to reception and reintegration** programmes in countries of origin to ensure the rights and dignity of returnees, including the monitoring of the situation of forced returns for people not in need of international protection.

● As return movements to Venezuela increased in 2023 and 2024, support to communities receiving returnees was required. In this context, UNHCR works in close coordination with national and local institutions and existing networks to implement community-based interventions in States prioritized by the HRP.

## CLIMATE ACTION

Countries in the Americas are prone to the increasingly severe effects of climate change and disasters, aggravating the situation of displaced populations and communities at risk of displacement, exacerbating their vulnerability, and augmenting the risk for further displacements.

In this context, UNHCR is scaling up its effort on climate action. Led by the recently launched strategic framework for climate action and its related guidance, UNHCR is in process of increasing its effort to promote access to international protection and mitigate the impact of climate change on forcibly displaced and stateless people. To contribute to the fulfilment of UNHCR's commitments and strategy, the Innovation Service's Environment and Climate Action Innovation Programme was designed to provide the space and support for testing early-stage innovations in this field. In its first year, the Americas region not only demonstrated a strong interest in addressing a variety of climate and environment-related challenges but also showcased significant creativity and determination in testing solutions.

In 2023, 5 out of the total 10 endorsed projects through the dedicated Fund were implemented in the region. These projects encompass a wide range of areas, including sustainable shelter solutions in Brazil, environmental health, and sustainable supply chains in Chile, sustainable agriculture and social cohesion in Colombia, fog nets for improved water security in Peru, and community-based environmental management in Ecuador.

On 24 April, [UNHCR launched the UNHCR Climate Resilience Fund](#), seeking to boost the protection of refugees and displaced communities who are most threatened by climate change. For the first time, the Fund will exclusively target financing efforts to protect the most threatened displaced communities, equipping them to prepare for, withstand and recover from climate-related shocks. **Ecuador** and **Honduras** are among 22 identified countries by UNHCR worldwide where data demonstrates the impact of the climate crisis will only get worse by 2030.

## TIMELY FUNDING

UNHCR's humanitarian response in the Americas is made possible thanks to the generous support of major donors who have contributed with unrestricted funding to UNHCR's global operations, and to donors who have generously contributed to operations responding to the Venezuela situation.

### SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OUR DONORS IN 2024 (AS OF 30 APRIL 2024)

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## CONTACTS

**CARLA CALVO**, Senior Donor Relations Officer, [calvoc@unhcr.org](mailto:calvoc@unhcr.org)

**SALVADOR SANTIESTEBAN**, Reporting Officer, [santiest@unhcr.org](mailto:santiest@unhcr.org)