

Situation Report

May/June 2019

In June, the number of refugees and migrants from Venezuela reached the **4 million worldwide**, with 3.2 million hosted in Latin America and the Caribbean.

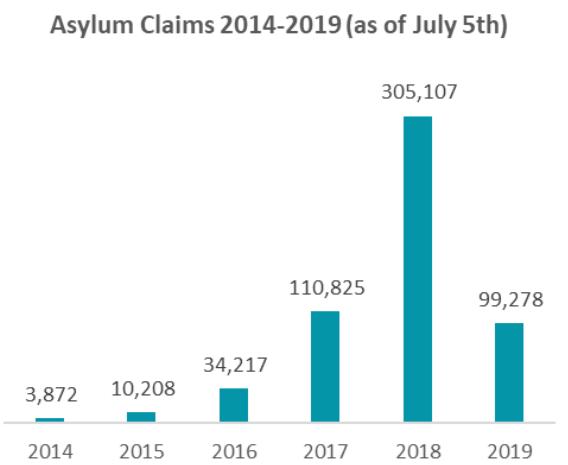
The **financial contributions** towards the RMRP reached a **21%** of the total requirements in June – still a low funding percentage towards the USD 737.6M requested in the Plan.

New entry requirements were introduced by Chile and Peru, while **registration exercises** took place in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.

KEY FIGURES¹

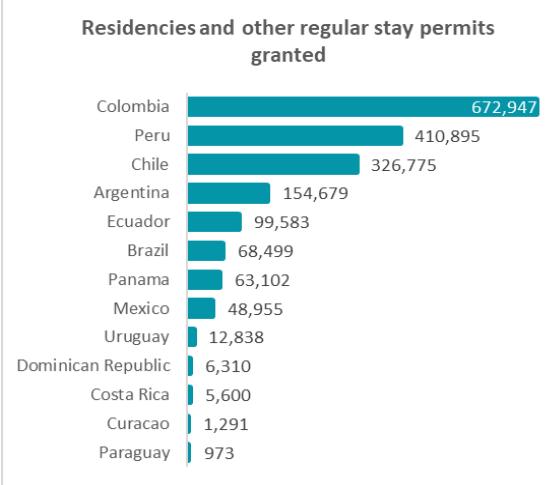
4 Million

Venezuelans worldwide



3.2 Million

Venezuelans living in Latin America and the Caribbean



OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

New entry requirements were introduced in Chile and Peru during the month of June. Peru implemented a **Humanitarian Visa** to enter the country on 15 June. While Chile imposed a **consular tourist visa** on 22 June for every Venezuelan wishing to enter the country.

The humanitarian visa for Peru is free of charge and can be obtained at Peruvian embassies and consulates in Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador. It requires the presentation of a certified criminal record and a passport (valid or expired) which can be difficult to obtain by refugees and migrants from Venezuela. In this context, the Special Commission for Refugees in Peru (CEPR) announced it would process asylum claims presented at the border through an accelerated procedure. There are exceptions to the humanitarian visa for individuals who meet certain vulnerability criteria, such as illness or disability, pregnancy, advanced age, as well as some cases of family reunification.

The consular tourist visa in Chile, on the other hand, adds to the "Democratic Responsibility Visa" which was introduced by the government in April 2018, as another option for Venezuelans to enter the country regularly. Both visas can be obtained in any Chilean consulate in the world.

¹ Total population figures in this document represent the sum of Venezuelan migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers reported by host governments. It does not necessarily imply individual identification, nor registration of each individual, and may include a degree of estimation, as per each government's statistical data processing methodology. As numerous government sources do not account for Venezuelans without a regular status, the total number of Venezuelans is likely to be higher. The figures of people with regular status do not include Venezuelans holding tourist visas, nor recognized refugees, or asylum-seekers. The figure of issued residencies and other form of regular status includes expired and valid residence permits, do not include tourist visas, and, in selected countries, do not necessarily account for the number of individuals but the number of administrative procedures.

Registration processes have also taken place during the reporting period; the government of Trinidad and Tobago conducted a two-week registration exercise for Venezuelans in the country, including those who entered irregularly or had overstayed their previous visa. Those registered are subsequently granted permission to work for up to one year. According to preliminary figures, over 16,500 individuals were registered by the end of the exercise on 14 June. The Government of Guyana is also registering Venezuelans, granting renewable 3-month stay permits upon registration. In June, 8,319 Venezuelans were registered. Meanwhile in Aruba, in May, the Minister of Justice announced that according to newly modified asylum procedures, asylum applications from Venezuelans arriving from a third country will no longer be accepted.

The Panamanian Government approved the issuance of **work permits** for refugees. Meanwhile, the government of Costa Rica adopted new measures to mitigate the difficulties Venezuelans face in obtaining documentation due to high costs and long waiting times, these measures will include the admission of expired passports for regularization procedures.

In terms of **population flows**, the number of refugees and migrants from Venezuela crossing the borders of Colombia and Ecuador continued steady, with an average of 5,000 and 2,500 to 3,000 per day, respectively.

RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

These response highlights do not provide an exhaustive overview of all response activities by partners under the regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP), but rather highlight some key activities implemented during the month. The R4V aims to support and complement national authorities' efforts across Latin America and the Caribbean, consistent with the principles outlined in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

Area of Intervention 1: Direct emergency assistance

Strategic outcome: Refugees and migrants are provided with life-saving goods and services.

Needs Assessments

Monitoring exercises were conducted in **Ecuador** in partnership with the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES). Results indicate that almost 40% of the 1,682 Venezuelan national interviewees report being in an irregular situation, while more than 37% indicated having a tourist visa or a “tarjeta andina”. The proportion of out-of-school children reported was of 41% of children aged between 5 to 11 and 53% of those aged 12 to 17 years.

Basic Needs and Essential Services

Partners have provided assistance to more than 8,000 refugees and migrants from Venezuela in Peru, Guyana, Aruba, Curaçao, Argentina, Uruguay, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Panama and Trinidad and Tobago.

Transportation assistance was provided to over 5,500 refugees and migrants from the Ecuadorian-Peruvian border to CEBAF and Tumbes, where approximately one fifth were referred to shelter support. More than 11,000 food and non-food kits were also provided in **Peru**.

In the area of food and nutrition, partners in the **Caribbean** (Guyana, Aruba, Curacao and Trinidad and Tobago) reached approximately 1,300 refugees and migrants from Venezuela with basic food and/or water. Temporary accommodation was also provided to 96 vulnerable refugees and migrants in Curacao, Dominican Republic, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. In the **Southern Cone** (Argentina and Uruguay), on the other hand, almost 40 refugees and migrants from Venezuela were provided with temporary accommodation and food assistance.

Health Services

The provision of emergency health services and assistance is a pressing need among Venezuelans across the region. In the **Dominican Republic**, 562 Venezuelans benefitted from individual medical consultations. In **Guyana**, 787 Venezuelans were immunized and vaccinated against measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR), Yellow Fever and diphtheria before being granted stay permits. In **Trinidad and Tobago**, partners distributed 14 menstrual hygiene kits to 13 Venezuelan and one Cuban woman, and 97 Venezuelans (75 women, 1 girl and 21 men) accessed sexual reproductive health services. In **Panama**, partners provided medicines (along with food vouchers and housing support) to 16 Venezuelan families, 73 persons received psychosocial assistance.

Orientation and Information

In **Costa Rica**, information was provided regarding the possibility for migrant and refugee children to access to the national education system. Among these, partners selected 20 Venezuelan children - based on vulnerability criteria - and provided them with uniforms and school supplies. Partners also provided tutoring and academic support to primary and secondary students to help them enter the Costa Rican educational system.

In **Mexico**, partners launched an information campaign called “*Connecting Communities*” through social media sites. It included information on how to obtain work permits, carry out family reunification, access to basic education and revalidating academic degrees. The campaign is estimated to have reached an audience of over 90,000 persons.

Area of Intervention 2: Protection

Strategic outcome: *Refugees and migrants enjoy rights and protection.*

Access to Information, Referrals and Legal Support

Partners in **Colombia**, **Ecuador**, **Guyana** and **Dominican Republic** provided information on regularization, asylum, documentation and rights to more than 10,100, 8,500, 680 and 121 refugees and migrants from Venezuela, respectively.

Also, more than 5,900 persons in Ecuador received specific information on protection and rights, particularly on the prevention of human trafficking, smuggling and/or information on rights of LGBTI persons. While in Colombia, 545 returnees received assistance or guidance and 15 Venezuelan asylum seekers were assisted with their applications.

In **Brazil**, partners, together with national and local government entities, created a documentation task force for refugees and migrants from Venezuela, reaching 250 persons. During the exercise, Venezuelans were also able to process asylum claims, temporary resident permits and work permits.

Similarly, in the **Dominican Republic** and **Costa Rica**, 29 and 166 refugees and migrants from Venezuela, respectively, were referred to specialized services and some received psychosocial support. In Costa Rica, 32 refugees and migrants were provided with information on gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and 22 Venezuelan women benefited from specialized medical attention. Partners in the Dominican Republic also facilitated the organisation of a national meeting of Venezuelan associations, bringing together 45 community leaders from over 8 provinces.

Responding to the newly introduced entry requirements, partners in **Peru** and **Ecuador** advocated to provide refugees and migrants from Venezuela with adequate information and supported the Peruvian consulates in Ecuador. In Peru, partners provided orientation to over 9,000 refugees and migrants in Tumbes, identifying cases with special needs and referring them to appropriate service providers. With a view to providing shelter to those stranded at the crossing point, partners also installed 17 Refugee Housing Units, where they have since been hosting between 80-90 mothers with babies (0-2 years old) and unaccompanied minors every night.

GBV and Human Trafficking prevention and response

Regarding the prevention of GBV, partners in **Costa Rica** conducted information sessions on prevention of violence and sexually transmitted diseases, access to health services and mechanisms for peaceful coexistence, among others. Also, 18 GBV survivors were identified during the reporting period and were referred to immediate psychosocial assistance.

In **Ecuador**, Safe Spaces were established or strengthened in border areas, as well as other provinces with high presence of refugees and migrants from Venezuela, for the protection of GBV survivors and case management. Specialized shelter support and services have also been provided.

In **Aruba** and **Trinidad and Tobago**, on the other hand, training has been provided for the outreach and counseling of persons in need of assistance. In Aruba, a mapping of 22 civil society organizations and a referral system for GBV survivors were developed, while in Trinidad and Tobago, partners supported a training session for government and civil society on the Safe Identification and Referral Pathway for addressing Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies.

Area of Intervention 3: Socio-economic and cultural integration

Strategic outcome: *Refugees and migrants are socially, economically and culturally integrated in empowered communities.*

Voluntary relocation programme

In **Brazil**, 2,758 refugees and migrants from Venezuela were voluntarily relocated to other parts of the country. Among these, 559 flew on commercial airlines supported by R4V partners. Roughly 120 persons who were interiorized through the employment scheme were also provided with cash assistance.

Promote access to basic rights and services

Access to education for Venezuelan boys and girls in **Ecuador** remains a challenge, particularly in the first 6 months of stay in the country. Partners have therefore continued their advocacy with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social and Economic Inclusion to increase access to public schools and childcare centers. Case management has been performed in collaboration with the Public Defender's Office to follow-up on individual cases of Venezuelan children that have not been able to access education. Moreover, information is regularly provided to refugees and migrants at border areas about the benefits of accessing education.

In **Trinidad and Tobago**, partners continued to assist 117 Venezuelan children by providing temporary learning spaces, while partners in **Guyana** have assisted 473 Venezuelans through accompanied visits to government service providers.

Integration and self-reliance

In **Mexico**, 60 refugees and migrants from Venezuela received orientation on accessing the Mexican labour market, including job hunting, training for job interviews and preparing a CV. Another 43 Venezuelans were provided with guidance on self-employment.

Anti-xenophobia and anti-discrimination initiatives

Partners in **Trinidad and Tobago** reached 129 individuals from the media with training on how to avoid harmful messaging when reporting and with anti-xenophobia campaigns. Workshops on the prevention of xenophobia were also organized in primary schools, reaching 386 children from the host communities.

In **Ecuador**, several nationwide campaigns have been developed to fight xenophobia. The “*Somos Migrantes*” campaign reached over 2 million people through social media. The “*Juntemos Manos hoy... mañana podrás necesitar una*” campaign has also been widely broadcasted through radio and TV stations, as well as social networks. Moreover, the “*No a la Discriminación*” campaign addressed xenophobia in public schools that host Venezuelan refugees and migrants. Meanwhile, the campaign “*Abrazos que unen*” in Ecuador reached more than 13,000 persons through social media.

In order to foster and strengthen the ties between refugees and migrants from Venezuela and their host communities, partners in **Argentina** organized two concerts featuring Latin Vox Machine, a music group composed of Venezuelan musicians, which had the participation of approximately 3,600 people. Similarly, in **Mexico**, an activity promoting typical Venezuelan gastronomy was conducted in Mexico City.

Area of Intervention 4: Strengthening capacities of the host government

Strategic outcome: *Government institutions' capacity to manage situations of refugees and migrants from Venezuela is strengthened.*

Technical and material support

Coordination between partners and government institutions remains an important aspect of the response. In **Ecuador**, partners have been included in different roundtables with local institutions, which has allowed for the identification of gaps in the response regarding access to health, education, and other public services, as well as protection needs. In Peru, In Lima, partners, together with the Lima Metropolitan Regional Office (DRELM), trained over 150 headmasters and teachers from more than 50 educational institutions, in intercultural issues, integration and psychological first aid.

On the other hand, in **Costa Rica** and **Uruguay**, the migration authorities have been provided with support to strengthen their regularization and documentation capacities through the provision of human resources. As a result, 452 Venezuelan nationals were able to initiate their residency processes in Uruguay and 688 cases were resolved in Costa Rica.

Capacity Building Support

Partners around the region provided training to government officials in Brazil, Costa Rica, Guyana and Panama. Trainings in **Brazil** (161), **Panama** (160) and **Costa Rica** (117) focused on migrant and refugee legislation and human rights, including laws, norms, procedures and/or policies, while in **Guyana**, trainings were provided to medical staff (41) in Malaria case management and treatment.

A workshop on human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change, aimed at identifying gaps and developing policies applicable to the current displacement of Venezuelans, was held in **Trinidad and Tobago** in June, with the participation of 33 Caribbean government officials and 20 representatives of regional and international organizations.

Partners have also been providing support to civil servants and NGOs. In **Ecuador**, 1,841 civil servants were trained on human rights, child protection, access to asylum and regularization. Public health personnel, 281 in May and June, were also trained on the psychological effects of forced displacement. Trainings also took place for members of the civil society. The Protection Working led a capacity-building initiative for humanitarian workers on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, which reached 321 people in May.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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Aktion Deutschland Hilft | Australia | Austria | Bloomberg | Brazil | Canada | Central Emergency Response Fund | Colombia Denmark | Dubai Cares (UAE) | Dutch Relief Alliance | European Commission | ECHO | Ford Foundation | Frantz Hoffman Foundation | Germany | Gilead Sciences Inc | Iceland | International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Republic of Korea | Latter-Day Saint Charities | Luxembourg | Medicor Foundation | Netherlands | New Zealand | Norway | Novo Nordisk | OXFAM International | Ole Kirk's Foundation | Pan American Development Foundation | Private (individuals & organizations) | Spain | Spanish Red Cross | Start Fund | Stichting Vluchtelng | Stichting War Child | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America | World Bank | World Vision International

RMRP PARTNERS

Action against Hunger | ACAPS | Adventist Development and Relief Agency | Alianza Venezuela Costa Rica | Amnesty International | Antonio Vieira Association - Jesuits of Brazil | Argentine Catholic Migrant Commission Foundation | Argentinian Commission for Refugees and Migrants | Asociación Inmigrante Feliz | Ayuda en Acción | Blumont | Brazilian Association for the Defense of Women, Children and Youth | CARE | Caritas Brazil | Caritas Germany | Caritas Peru | Caritas Rio de Janeiro | Caritas Switzerland | Caritas Vicaria Pastoral Social | Center for Documentation in Human Rights, "SMM SJ" Inter-American Platform for Human Rights, Democracy and Development | Centre for Migration and Human Rights | Civil Construyendo Caminos de Esperanza frente a la Injusticia, el Rechazo y el Olvido | Cooperazione Internazionale | Danish Refugee Council | Dialogo Diverso | Diocese of Lurin | Ecumenical Service for Human Dignity | FAO | Franciscan Solidarity Association | Félix Guattari Institute | Foro Salud | Fundación Halu Bienestar Humano | Fundación de las Americas | Fundación Mujer | Fundación Scalabrin | Handicap International | Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society | Idas y Vueltas | iMMP | Institute for Migration and Human Rights | Instituto de Democracia y Derechos Humanos | Illari Amanecer | ILO | IOM | International Rescue Committee | Jesuit Migration Service | Jesuit Refugee Service | Jesuit Service for Migrants | Lutheran World Federation | Malteser International | Manos Veneguayas | Medicor Foundation Spain | Mercy Corps | Migrants, Refugees and Argentine Social Entrepreneurs | Misión Scalabriana | Norwegian Refugee Council | OXFAM | Pan American Development Foundation | Pastoral Service of Migrants | Plan International | Progetto mondo mlat | Programa de Soporte a la Autoayuda de Personas Seropositivas | REACH | Red Cross Argentina | Red Cross Chile | Red Cross Colombia | Red Cross Ecuador | Red Cross Uruguay | RET International | Religiones por la Paz América Latina y el Caribe | Save the Children | Semillas | Social Assistance Foundation of the Christian Churches | SOS Children's Villages of Brazil | TECNO | Terre des Hommes | UNICEF | UNDP | UNESCO | UN Women | UNEP | UNHCR | UN-Habitat | UNOCHA | UNODC | UN OHCHR | UNOPS | UNFPA | UNAIDS | University of Buenos Aires | University of Costa Rica, Faculty of Law | University of Diego Portales, Legal Clinic for Migrants and Refugees | War Child | Without Borders - Private Assistance Institution | WFP | WHO | World Vision

For more information, please contact:

Juliana Quintero, Media and Communications Officer, **IOM**, robuepress@iom.int

Philippe Sacher, Senior Inter-Agency Coordination Officer Regional Platform, **UNHCR**, sacher@unhcr.org