

COLOMBIA

Situational Report February 2019



In the last report presented by the Colombian Government, there are more than 1.1 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the country. In addition, a large number of people from Venezuela travel through Colombia to other cities or countries using various means of transport (including walking) in difficult and high-risk conditions.

The increase of refugees and migrants in the country, the deterioration of the humanitarian situation and challenges in the State response accentuate the needs of the population such as access to food, general and high-cost medical care, income generation (employability and entrepreneurship), livelihoods and education.

The Interagency Group on Mixed Migration Flows (GIFMM), coordinates the response for Venezuelan refugees and migrants, Colombian returnees and host communities, both at the national level and through local presence in 11 departments, complementing the response of the Colombian State.

KEY FIGURES*

1,174,743

Venezuelans in Colombia

608,002 Venezuelans in a regular situation



479,247 Venezuelans in an irregular situation



+ 87,494 within period established by the law

(includes tourist visas and other types of short term stays)

Data from [Migración Colombia](#): 31 December 2018

Venezuelans in Colombia



3.085 million Venezuelans with Border Mobility Cards (TMF)

74,392 Venezuelans with Temporary Transit Permits (PIP-TT)

82,086 Venezuelans left the country via the Rumichaca International Bridge in 2019 (this represents 63% of the total number of exits from Colombia)

Data from Migración Colombia: 04 March 2019

Total Financial Requirements*



223,000 beneficiaries who received one or more types of assistance through RMRP partners during February

Activities implemented by **39** organizations in **17** departments
**Partial financial information for Colombia for January and February from 18 RMRP organizations, includes paid contributions and commitments but does not include contributions for multiple countries.*

For more information: <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/726/summary>

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

- Uncertainty prior to February 23 led to an increase in the number of Venezuelans crossing to Colombia to stock up on basic products in anticipation of a possible border closure. For the rest of the month, the official border crossings in Norte de Santander, and on some days in Arauca remained closed, resulting in a substantial increase in the use of irregular crossings. The closure presented difficulties for Venezuelans who rely on crossing into Venezuela temporarily to buy food, medicines and other supplies, as well as children attending classes in Colombian educational institutions.
- During February, there was a notable increase in asylum applications from Venezuelans, including people who had formed part of the security forces. Increased use of irregular crossing points resulted in greater insecurity for refugees and migrants, particularly for the sick, elderly, children and women. It is reported that illegal armed groups on both sides of the border have begun asking for bribes of between US\$0.60 and US\$6.00 per person.
- The humanitarian situation in Colombia has deteriorated in the last year, according to a recent OCHA report which compares humanitarian figures between November 2016 - December 2017 and January 2018 - February 2019¹. The analysis of figures shows an increase in armed violence events such as confinement (433% increase, 90,967 people affected), mass displacement (75% increase, 35,452 people affected), landmines and unexploded ordnance accidents (197% increase, 184 people affected), and armed actions (32% increase). Most of these events are in departments with a high Venezuelan population such as Norte de Santander, Valle del Cauca, Nariño, among others, accentuating the triple impact and creating risks for refugees and migrants on the move and hindering humanitarian access in these areas.
- The number of Venezuelans leaving Rumichaca (Nariño) and San Miguel (Putumayo) between January and February 2019 has decreased by 28% compared to January and February 2018 (from 120,431 in 2018 to 85,736 in 2019)². One of the possible reasons for this decrease is the requirement for Venezuelans to show apostilled criminal records for entry into Ecuadorian territory. This situation has led to a substantial increase in irregular crossings and coordination and response teams on both sides of the border are providing guidance to some 150 people per day.



Clowns without Borders bring smiles and happiness to children in Riohacha, Guajira. UNHCR/Murillo, V.

¹ Figures of Humanitarian Context. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Colombia. March 19, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/es/operations/colombia/document/cifras-de-contexto-humanitario>

² Statistics Migration Colombia 2018 - 2019. Calculation comparing the figures of departures of Venezuelans by Rumichaca and San Miguel during the period of January and February in 2018 and 2019. Retrieved from: http://migracioncolombia.gov.co/index.php/es/?option=com_content&view=article&id=1801

RESPONSE OVERVIEW



Measuring a child in Villa del Rosario, February 2019 E.S.E. / Jorge Cristo Sahium.

Area of Intervention 1: Direct Emergency Assistance

A total of 34 GIFMM organizations reported activities within Area of Intervention 1 for February, across 9 sectors, in 16 departments and 53 municipalities. In health, medical assistance was provided to refugees and migrants in the 13 departments with the highest concentration of arrivals of Venezuelans in the country. Health care also included mental health and psychosocial support, prenatal care for pregnant women, family planning, treatment of STIs, HIV / AIDS, and other communicable diseases, and information on health and nutrition was provided in a preventive manner. Throughout February, some 1,788 children and adolescents were vaccinated.

Area of Intervention 1: Actors by department who reported activities in February



During February, members of the GIFMM provided temporary shelter to more than 1,600 refugees and migrants, an important intervention given the high humanitarian need for shelter and the number of people living on the street. Emergency assistance included delivery of 6,681 hygiene kits. In the education sector, 4,736 children benefited from

improvements and expansion of educational structures and 3,650 children were reached through emergency educational services. Finally, 1,324 people benefited from humanitarian transport.

Finally regarding food security and nutrition, food assistance was delivered through hot meals served in community kitchens to 111,098 refugees and migrants and food vouchers to 97,355 refugees and migrants and vulnerable people from host communities in La Guajira, Norte de Santander, Arauca and Nariño. Technical support and delivery of supplies continued, with ongoing delivery of tools and seeds to 1,003 families (30% Venezuelan, 31% Colombian returnee and 39% host) in La Guajira, for the rapid production of food for consumption by families.

Area of Intervention 2: Protection

During the month of February, 11 GIFMM members in 10 departments (see map) delivered protection activities for Colombian returnees and Venezuelan refugees and migrants. In La Guajira and Arauca, more than 4,000 children benefitted in child friendly, protective environments, which prevents exposure to street living, child labor and possible risks of exploitation and abuse. In Riohacha, Paraguachón and Villa del Rosario more than 1,500 children and their families linked to these spaces attended the activities of Clowns Without Borders: "we are very thankful [for this activity] because our children really need to laugh, it does them well, because we are in a really difficult moment," expressed a Wayúu mother to one of the members.

Area of Intervention 2: Actors by department who reported activities in February





Recreational activities and psychosocial support for migrant children in Child Friendly Spaces, Arauca. Save the Children / Erica Pietro

In La Guajira more than 4,700 children received psychosocial attention, including a number of children who have arrived in Colombia with aggressive behaviour and demotivation due to the breakdown of family ties.

Immediate attention was given to groups and individuals, training participants on patterns of upbringing and affective bonds, reconstruction of life projects, adaptation, resilience, attention in crisis and emotional management.

Members of the GIFMM provided guidance to 1,600 Colombians returnees, including the procedural route for returnees under the Colombian 'Returns Law'. Information, legal orientation and assistance sessions were held for Venezuelans in Bogotá, Cauca and Norte de Santander and more than 6,700 cases were supported to access to rights, regularization processes, documentation and asylum in 10 departments.

Area of Intervention 3: Socio-economic and cultural integration

As part of building socio-economic and cultural integration, members implemented actions against discrimination and xenophobia as well as initiatives to promote dialogue and social cohesion with host communities.

The GIFMM is working with the government to support income generation strategies. As part of this strategy, the government has established 4 working groups: 1) documentation, registration and characterization; 2) educational processes; 3) employability; and 4) entrepreneurship. The GIFMM will provide technical support to these working groups: 490 people participated in livelihood training days in Norte de Santander and La Guajira together with SENA, Fenalco, ANDI, Colombia Une and Pro Colombia among others.

Members of the GIFMM supported livelihood activities, including entrepreneurship and employment training, providing guidance to private entities on employability of Venezuelans.

Area of Intervention 4: Strengthening capacity of host government

During the reporting period, GIFMM members held workshops with public officials on international protection mechanisms and access to rights for refugees and migrants in Bogotá. Meetings were held with the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation (APC) in order to define the guidelines for working with national NGOs on the Venezuela situation response. Additionally, approaches were initiated with the Ministry of National Education to explore possible prevention actions against xenophobia.

COORDINATION

There are 47 members participating in the national GIFMM, with 8 chapters (+1 in process of formation*) in Arauca, Atlántico, Antioquia, Bogotá, Cesar *, Norte de Santander, La Guajira, Nariño and Valle de Cauca. The GIFMM works in close coordination with the Humanitarian Country Team using a *back to back* system with the aim of providing a coherent response to the needs of the population and generating population needs analysis.

- GIFMM members have mapped contingency actions to provide technical support to complement the UNGRD Contingency Plan and the deployment of advanced preparedness measures at both the national and local level.
- In **Norte de Santander**, the local GIFMM held an extraordinary meeting to follow up on the implementation of the emergency plan which includes protection mechanisms for the population in need of international protection, food security and nutrition through canteens and bonuses, housing, child care, water, basic sanitation and hygiene, health, non-food items and school kits.
- In **Nariño**, a bilateral meeting between GIFMM Nariño and the Working Group on Refugee and Migration (GTMR-SNU) of Ecuador was held on February 12, to strengthen the exchange of information on the border context and on different activities implemented on both sides.
- On February 22, the **GIFMM in Bogotá** hosted an orientation day on temporary shelters for refugees and migrants, including meeting with representatives of the five shelters that operate in the city, members of GIFMM Bogotá and the Mayor's Office. The current offer of temporary shelters in Bogotá accounts for a capacity of 244 beds per day. Agreements were explored to complement the shelter service with services including legal assistance, non-food items, and health brigades etc., to be delivered in a coordinated way by GIFMM members.

GIFMM MEMBERS *

ACF | ADRA | Americares | Aldeas Infantiles | Ayuda en Acción | BLUMONT | Caritas Germany | Caritas Switzerland | Colombian Red Cross | Diakonie | DRC | FAO | Halü | Humanity & Inclusion | ICRC | IFRC | ILO | iMMAP | IOM | IRC | JRS Colombia | JRS Latin America and the Caribbean | Lutheran World Federation | Malteser International | Mercy Corps | Norwegian Red Cross | NRC | OACNUDH | OCHA | OCR | OXFAM | FUPAD | Pastoral Social | Plan International | RET International | Save the Children | TdH Lausanne | UN Habitat | Un Techo Para Mi País | UN Women | UNDP | UNEP | UNFPA | UNHCR | UNICEF | War Child | WFP | WHO/PAHO | World Vision

**including organizations in the 2019 RMRP*

CONTRIBUTIONS

Austria, Aviation without Borders, Bloomberg, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, DOB Foundation, Dutch Relief Alliance, the European Union, Germany, Gilead Sciences Inc., Medicor Foundation, Museum of Quai Branly, Norway, Ole Kirk Foundation, Pan American Development Foundation, Spain, United States, Stichting Vluchteling, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, United Kingdom.

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