VENEZUELA SITUATION

2023 OPERATIONAL UPDATE #1

Solidarity from hosting counties and communities has facilitated the inclusion of refugees and migrants from Venezuela, including through the granting of asylum and the implementation of legal stay arrangements that facilitate access to documentation and basic socioeconomic rights.

Joselyn, 30, is from Caracas (Venezuela) and has been living in Quito (Ecuador) since September 2022. She has three daughters aged 12, 8 6 years, respectively. She is currently staying with them and her husband in an emergency shelter supported by UNHCR.

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Despite the increase in spontaneous returns to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (hereafter Venezuela), the outflow of Venezuelan nationals in search of protection and assistance to neighbouring countries persists. To date, the number of refugees and migrants from Venezuela worldwide has topped 7.18 million, with the vast majority (6.03 million) hosted in Latin America and the Caribbean[1]. Most have been displaced for many years.

Solidarity from hosting countries and communities has facilitated the inclusion of refugees and migrants from Venezuela, including through the granting of asylum and the implementation of legal stay arrangements that facilitate access to documentation and basic socioeconomic rights. According to the Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V), co-led by UNHCR and IOM, there are 211,944 persons from Venezuela recognized as refugees, while 1.039 million Venezuelan nationals have lodged asylum claims and are awaiting a response from national authorities[2]. In addition, 4.2 million Venezuelans have been granted residence permits and other types of regular stay arrangements[3].

At the same time, the latest **Refugee and Migrant Needs Analysis** carried out by R4V indicates that millions of Venezuelans still cannot afford three meals a day; do not have safe and decent housing; face hurdles in accessing medical care; and are unable to work to support themselves and their families[4].

To assist host governments in addressing the existing and persistent needs of Venezuelan refugees and migrants, the R4V launched the **2023-2024 Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP)**. This new multi-year plan brings together 228 partners that implement humanitarian, protection, and socioeconomic integration activities to assist 3.4 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela, other persons in transit (in addition to Venezuelan nationals) and affected host communities throughout Latin America and the Caribbean (in 2023 alone).

There has been a steady increase in the numbers of Venezuelans returning from host countries, motivated mainly by the lack of integration opportunities and cases of intolerance and xenophobia, as well as the desire for family reunification and the perception of an improving economic outlook in Venezuela. According to Venezuela's Ministry of Foreign Affairs[5], more than 300,000 nationals have returned to the country since September 2020.

Nevertheless, those returning face difficulties in accessing jobs, social services, and housing. While providing solutions for returnees, UNHCR inside Venezuela is actively participating in inter-agency Technical Working Group on Human Mobility and Reintegration and on reintegration pilot projects to improve living conditions and prevent further displacement.

[1]Source: **Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela | R4V**

[2]As of June 30th, 2022, for the figures

[3]As of February 29th, 2023.

[4]Source: **RMNA 2022 - REFUGEE AND MIGRANT NEEDS ANALYSIS | R4V**. The RMNA is based on multistakeholder and sectoral analyses by Platforms and Sectors at all levels of the response (regional, national, and sub-regional) and was launched in October 2022.

[5]Source: **Interview at the Venezuelan Television Corporation** (minute 24'23")

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RESPONSE IN HOSTING COUNTRIES

(JANUARY-DECEMBER 2022)

864,614 individuals
received protection-related assistance and specialized services.

13,938 refugee
and migrant children and adolescents received specialized services.

66,336 people
supported with unrestrictive cash assistance.

10,301 individuals
receiving food assistance.

91,748 people
people assisted with emergency and primary health.

19,067 services
available to prevent and mitigate gender -based violence risks among refugees and migrants.

55,933 refugees
and migrants sheltered and supported with other services.

20,299 children
adolescents or youth are supported with supplies or services for their permanence in educational services.

65,353 individuals
provided with appropriate hygiene supplies and services.

27,251 people
reached with support for employment or self-employment.

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Carlos Acosta, 33, with his wife Melitza and son Carlos Raul, at their home in Quito, Ecuador. The refugee family fled Venezuela in 2018 after Carlos was shot in the spine and lost the use of his legs. He is now a competitive para-karate athlete and has won medals, including a gold medal in a South American championship.

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RESPONSE INSIDE THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

UNHCR operates in 2023 within the inter-agency framework of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) to assist the most vulnerable population groups inside the country. The UN Refugee Agency leads the Protection Cluster and the Shelter, Energy and Non-Food Items (NFI) Cluster. In addition, contributes operationally with activities under the WASH and Education clusters.

In the framework of the HRP and in prioritized communities, particularly in border areas, UNHCR assistance helps address basic needs for vulnerable individuals through the distribution of core relief items, including jerry-cans, solar lamps, kitchen sets and hygiene kits. This assistance runs in parallel with support to waystations and reception capacities for people in mobility, inter-agency returnee reintegration efforts, medical and temporary shelter facilities, as well as core relief items for people affected by natural disasters and kits for emergency response personnel.

Likewise, UNHCR works extensively with key institutions and community-based actors to strengthen access to rights through information, individual counselling, and referrals. Legal assistance and psychosocial support are also made available to people with specific protection risks, including but not limited to survivors of violence and individuals at risk of statelessness. Community engagement remains a core feature of UNHCR activities, mobilizing networks across prioritized communities to strengthen grassroots efforts for access to rights, peaceful coexistence, and disaster risk mitigation.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE INSIDE VENEZUELA

(JANUARY/DECEMBER 2022)

77 communities
prioritized and supported

+ 916,000 people*
provided with assistance by UNHCR & partners

34 Refugee Housing Units
to support people in mobility.

+100,000 people
helped with household items as kitchen sets, mosquito nets or jerry cans.

Specific Needs	+16,000 health, habitat and other kits donated to vulnerable people
Health and Community	42 health, sports or community centres constructed or rehabilitated
Protection	+58,000 people provided with individual attention and legal and psycho-social assistance
Shelter	+331,000 people assisted
WASH	+363,000 people benefitting from improved hygiene conditions

** 10 per cent of beneficiaries are people with disabilities and 12 per cent members of indigenous communities.*

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The importance of funding for UNHCR's response

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.

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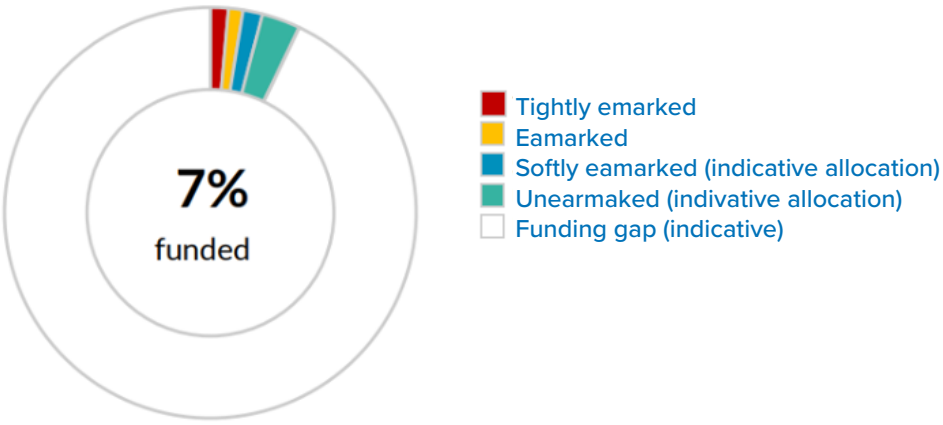
FUNDING/RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

FUNDING (AS OF 14 MARCH 2023)

$ 399.6 million
requested for the Venezuela situation



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