

Situation Report September/October 2019

In October, the number of refugees and migrants from Venezuela reached the **4.5 million worldwide**, with 3.7 million hosted in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The **financial contributions** towards the RMRP reached a **52%** of the total requirements in October, with nearly 45% of the coverage being towards direct protection assistance (AoI 2).

In October, the European Union, supported by UNHCR and IOM, hosted the **International Solidarity Conference** on the Venezuelan refugee and migrant crisis.

KEY FIGURES¹

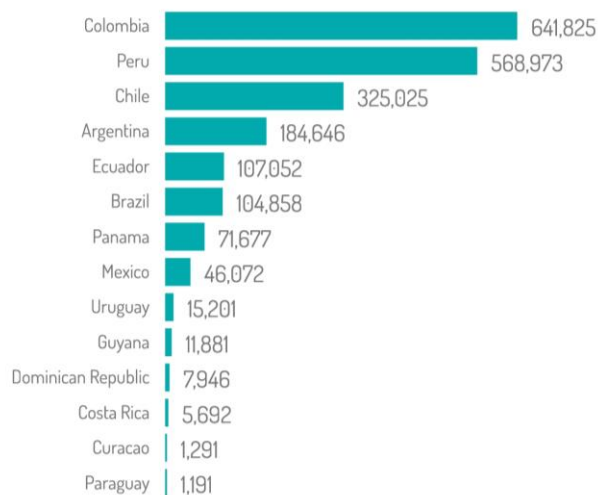
4.5 Million

Venezuelans worldwide

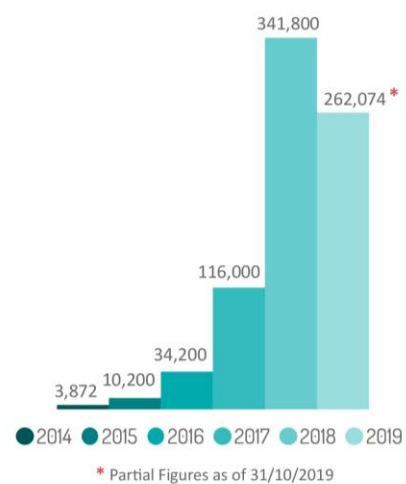
3.7 Million

Venezuelans living in Latin America and the Caribbean

Residence and regular stay permits granted to Venezuelans since 2014



Asylum claims per year



OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

On 28 and 29 October, the European Union, together with UNHCR and IOM, co-hosted the International Solidarity Conference on the Venezuelan refugee and migrant crisis. The Conference was co-chaired by Federica Mogherini, High Representative/Vice-President of the European Commission, UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, and IOM Director General António Vitorino. The event aimed to raise global awareness about the Venezuelan refugee and migrant crisis and the efforts of hosting countries and communities.

On 15 October, eleven countries in South, Central, and North America, as well as the Caribbean implemented the Unified Vaccination Card, which was proposed and promoted in the framework of the Quito Process. The card is intended for the Venezuelan population as a comprehensive registry of vaccines to protect the health of card holders and provide them

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.

with more efficient services, as well as support public health efforts in the regions where Venezuelan refugees and migrants transit or settle.

On 2 October, **Brazil**, launched the Second Phase of the "Operation Welcome" (*Operação Acolhida*) with the objective to increase the number of municipalities that will receive Venezuelans through the voluntary internal relocation program.

In **Peru**, Police and Migration authorities have deployed more staff to detect and detain Venezuelan nationals without documentation. This is a result of a growing concern and discontent over heightened criminality, which is being widely attributed to the Venezuelan population through some media reports. Instances of discrimination and xenophobia continued in Peru following new reports on crimes and publications of videos where Venezuelan citizens were detained. Consequently, on 29 September, the Government of Peru issued a statement welcoming and confirming its solidarity towards Venezuelan refugees and migrants and rejecting all acts of xenophobia.

In **Argentina and Uruguay**, presidential elections took place at the end of October, resulting in a change of administrations in both countries. In Argentina, the elected president, Alberto Fernandez, will take office in December 2019; while in Uruguay, Luis Alberto Lacalle Pou will take office in March 2020. No changes in policies towards refugees and migrants from Venezuela is expected from either of the new administrations.

In October, violent protests broke out in **Chile** contesting the high cost of living, low pensions and high prices in medicine and health treatments. Some partners had to suspend or reduce activities due to the volatile environment.

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

In the Southern Cone, partners interviewed more than 2,400 Venezuelans to assess their needs. In **Argentina**, a total of 1,546 refugees and migrants from Venezuela were reached with monitoring and assessment in Buenos Aires and some other 112 persons in Arica and Iquique in **Chile**. In **Uruguay** (Montevideo and Colonia) some 133 refugees and migrants were reached with the same purposes, while in **Paraguay**, a total of 321 refugees and migrants were surveyed in key locations. These exercises included, among other aspects, questions regarding their needs in health, housing, protection, access to information, access to labour, well-being and coping mechanisms as well as their experiences while on the route to other countries. In **Argentina** partners reached over 490 refugees and migrants living with HIV to assess their needs and overall access to health care.

Basic Needs and Essential Services

An approximate 7,000 Venezuelans were **sheltered** in Pacaraima and Boa Vista in Brazil. Due to limited shelter space, two assessments were carried out with the Brazilian army this month identified 4,325 Venezuelans sleeping in the streets or occupying private and public buildings in Boa Vista, including 1,399 minors. This represents an increase of 400 per cent when compared to data collected in Pacaraima since the beginning of the year. Temporary accommodation, especially for families, has been provided to over 200 persons in Argentina, 117 in Chile, 70 in Uruguay and 75 in Paraguay, where partners have also provided support to already-established shelter with beds, mattresses and building improvements. In Chile, partners opened two new shelters in Santiago for 130 persons.

In Peru, partners continued providing **orientation and emergency assistance** throughout the province and at the Binational Assistance Border Centre (CEBAF) as follows: 1,600 persons accessed the hygiene and health promotion space to receive information on hygiene practices and solid waste management while 4,000 children accessed the child friendly space. More than 800 people were assisted with legal counselling. Furthermore, mobile units were sent to strategic locations with significant presence of Venezuelan nationals to provide legal orientation, identify vulnerable cases and give information on services available

In addition, partners continued to provide direct emergency assistance in **Aruba, Curaçao, the Dominican Republic, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago** to Venezuelans already present in these countries and to new arrivals, reaching 10,739 individuals since the beginning of the year. The type of direct emergency assistance provided to those in vulnerable conditions included shelter, food and non-food items (NFIs), water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), emergency medical assistance and cash-based assistance.

Food assistance was provided by partners in Brazil with the objective of implementing a pilot agricultural project in the Tarau Paru community. In addition, a new food security project started. The project will support 21,445 Venezuelans in Boa Vista and six other cities of Roraima for six months through the delivery of 6,600 vouchers for food as well orientation sessions on nutritional and health feeding habits.

In **Colombia**, in response to food-related needs and as part of the fight against malnutrition among the Venezuelan population, around 178,800 individuals received food in community kitchens, and an additional 123,500 received food assistance through vouchers and another 1,500 received other in-kind assistance. Also, nearly 2,000 people attended nutritional prevention and management programs to increase production for self-consumption. In addition, some 15,600 rations of food were provided in areas known to host a very vulnerable population in Peru.

Emergency services were also provided in Peru where **non-food items (NFIs)** were distributed to 300 individuals in Lima while various NFIs including mattresses, hygiene kits for adults and newborns and maternity kits, were provided to 269 individuals in Argentina, 778 in Uruguay, 239 in Chile and 202 persons in Paraguay.

Health and WASH

In Colombia, partners ensured that the target population had access to adequate **water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)** facilities, and provided trainings on the subject. Nearly 1,500 people in Norte de Santander benefited from access to a source of potable water. Health and hygiene promotion programmes were conducted in Brazil, Peru y Argentina. In Brazil, over 2,450 individuals were assisted through health and hygiene programmes.

Area of Intervention 2: Protection

Strategic outcome: Refugees and migrants enjoy rights and protection.

Community Based Activities

Partners conducted a Community Based Protection training in **Brazil**, aimed to increase protection knowledge for staff supporting shelter management in Manaus. In addition to case management, partners will begin implementing community-based approaches to address protection risks in shelters. In addition, in Peru, partners in coordination with authorities opened three outreach centres in Lima.

Access to Information, Referrals and Legal Support

In **Colombia**, 12,000 individuals received legal guidance, and more than 18,000 people learned about their rights, regularization processes, documentation, and asylum processes. Nearly 600 of these individuals applied for refugee status. In **Peru**, partners carried out group sessions and forums on psychosocial support, sexual and reproductive health, counselling and education with a turnout of over 3,600 refugees and migrants from Venezuela. In addition, partners are supporting the regularization of Venezuelans' status by improving access to the documentation required by Peruvian Laws.

Partners across the region provide refugees and migrants from Venezuela with information on protection and service pathways on a regular basis. **Access to information** was provided by partners in the Brazil with more than 15,000 Venezuelans that received support in processing documentation, either through asylum (5,442 individuals) or residency applications (10,643 individuals) in various areas in Brazil. Documentation will facilitate their access to rights and services. Partners in the Southern Cone have been providing information on **referral pathways and protection services**. Some 80 persons were supported with orientation and information on access to social services in Chile and 143 persons in Paraguay. In Argentina, some 119 persons were provided with information, out which 70 were in the border areas.

GBV and Human Trafficking prevention and response

Partners in **Brazil** shared information about access to health, social protection services including sexual and reproductive health and the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV) were offered in the screening centres in Roraima, reaching 7,849 people in October. Psychosocial support has been provided to persons with specific needs to 731 Venezuelans. In **Peru**, partners conducted a protection monitoring exercise in October with the support of local volunteers. Over 180 persons were interviewed. Specific sessions on international protection, GBV, prevention and human trafficking were provided.

Child Protection

In **Brazil**, the number of unaccompanied or separated children (UASC) arriving via the Pacaraima border continues to increase significantly each month and remains a challenge. In September and October, 743 UASC were registered by the Public Defender of the Union (DPU). Another, 429 children and adolescents arrived without any documentation. An inter-agency contingency plan was developed to strengthen the State authority's response and ensure coordinated care and support for UASC. The document includes new protection referral pathways and specialized psychosocial support in the State shelters. The plan was developed with authorities, partners and stakeholders. Over 3,090 children attended 23 Integrated Spaces for Education and Child Protection located across Roraima and Amazonas States.

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 2,249 Venezuelans were voluntarily relocated from Roraima State to other parts of Brazil through family and social reunification programmes. Among this group 189 Venezuelans were matched with employment or were received in shelters managed by civil society or municipalities (227 individuals).

Integration and self-reliance

Partners in Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Argentina provided regular **information and/or trainings** to refugees and migrants from Venezuela to improve their **income generation opportunities** and their integration in host communities. These included, courses on business models/plans, advice on compliance with labour laws, how to access social services and the job market, online courses in accounting, finances and entrepreneurship, among others. During the reporting period, 550 individuals were assisted in Brazil; another 550 persons were reached in Colombia; 500 refugees and migrants in Peru; and, approximately 75 in Argentina. Partners have been working also with the private sector to support the socio-economic integration of refugees and migrants from Venezuela.

Anti-xenophobia and anti-discrimination initiatives

Partners in Peru have developed different activities or campaigns to combat discrimination and xenophobia towards refugees and migrants from Venezuela. To strengthen **peaceful coexistence** partners conducted sport activities with 200 refugees and migrants from Venezuela and the host community. Likewise, recreational activities are carried out among children, focused on anti-xenophobia campaigns to promote equality and peaceful coexistence in Panama.

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

Partners continue to support national authorities across the region with human resources, infrastructure and technical assistance. In Panama, Costa Rica and Uruguay, partners regularly support authorities in various forms including with human resources and technical support. In Uruguay human resources provided by partners facilitated the **regularization process** to nearly 500 Venezuelans. Constant support is also provided to improve their inter-institutional coordination.

Capacity Building Support

Partners in **Brazil** continue to help build the capacity of institutions in different areas including in protection, child protection, and health and hygiene. The activities were carried out through different initiatives and workshops.

In **Colombia**, partners supported Colombian institutions related to care provided to Venezuelans and host communities. With this purpose in mind, 282 officials in eight departments were trained in international protection mechanisms and access to refugee and migrant rights. Recommendations were shared with authorities which ultimately promotes a better response in protection of the population.

In **Argentina**, partners presented a guide on entrepreneurship policies, which counted with the attendance of 73 persons. Also, four governmental institutions participated in the sixth seminar on **informal economy**.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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