



**REGIONAL REFUGEE AND MIGRANT
RESPONSE PLAN**
for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela

January - December 2019



Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela

Cover Picture:

Rumichaca, border of Colombia with Ecuador. Laila Dailia Leon, three years old sitting on the shoulders of her father Jose Ramon Leon. Jose is a fisherman from Venezuela, now travelling with his wife and two daughters to Quito.

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Foreword

It seems a long time since I took my role as UNHCR and IOM Joint Special Representative for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela. However, it was just less than three months ago that I embarked in this challenging but passionate journey. Since then, I have had the opportunity to visit Colombia, Ecuador and Peru and meet their highest public authorities as well as visiting several critical border crossing points. I have also discussed with many Governments, thinkers, decision-makers, humanitarians, Venezuelans. All of them have opened my eyes to the magnitude and complexity of this outflow and the strong need for support.

To date, some three million Venezuelans have left their country, the vast majority arriving to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. This is an unprecedented movement for this region. Venezuelans I met during my visits spoke of hunger, lack of access to medical care, insecurity, threats, fear. They are families, women alone, children, young boys and girls, all in conditions of extreme vulnerability. All of them saw no other option than to leave their country – sometimes walking for days – seeking to live in dignity and to build a future. Beyond the most immediate humanitarian impacts of the largest displacement of people in the history of Latin America, there are other quite complex implications for which we were not prepared as a region.

It is a privilege and an enormous challenge to be able to take this role which was entrusted to me by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and IOM's Director General. I understand clearly the fundamental humanitarian aim of my function; and in my work I expect to promote further harmonization and coherence in the response to the Venezuela Situation, always in support of the Governments of receiving countries and in close coordination with the international community and civil society.

I count myself amongst the many Latin Americans that have been moved and impressed by the remarkable responses, dedication and the solidarity of the Governments, humanitarian organisations and local communities I have visited. Main receiving countries have maintained their hospitality and kept their borders open to Venezuelan refugees and migrants, showing solidarity with the Venezuelan people, who in turn have always been very generous in hosting a large number of refugees and migrants.

But a lot more needs to be done. There are still significant gaps and challenges, in particular regarding documentation, regularisation, capacity of asylum systems, access to basic services such as health and education, shelter and protection that need to be addressed. Testimonies from courageous survivors of trafficking networks, smugglers, sexual and labour exploitation have deeply affected all of us. Worrisome signs of discrimination and xenophobia have begun to sprout, casting a shadow over the tradition of generosity of this region.

Only a regional comprehensive, predictable and harmonized response to the needs of Venezuelan refugees and migrants will enable them to cope with the magnitude of their plight and ensure their safety. The regional inter-agency coordination platform for the humanitarian response to the needs of refugees and migrants from Venezuela strives to strengthen coordination with existing humanitarian and UN architectures,

main receiving authorities – at regional, national, but also at local level – civil society and local initiatives, and foster a comprehensive, predictable and harmonized response to the plight of Venezuelans.

In this vein, Governments in the region are putting in place regional and national plans and responses to meet urgent humanitarian needs while helping the inclusion of Venezuelans in their societies. The approach and Action Plan adopted within the Quito Process stresses the willingness of countries in the region to find a coordinated regional response for a regional problem, putting the protection of refugees and migrants from Venezuela at the forefront of their priorities. But the goodwill and generosity of Governments in the region and the local communities must not be taken for granted. The impact of the enormous quantities of arrivals on the services and economies of these receiving countries is immense and overburdens their institutional and financial capacity. It is time to scale up responses and mobilize international support.

The Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP) shows the way forward. A total of 95 organizations in 16 countries have come together to put in place in a record time a coordinated roadmap for action to respond to the urgent humanitarian needs of the refugees and migrants from Venezuelan but also a plan to secure their social and economic inclusion in the communities that receive them. Finally, this plan is a call to the donor community, including the international financial institutions and development actors which can play a key role in this situation, to increase their support to refugees and migrants in the region and the host communities which have kindly opened their arms to them.

We thank you for your interest in supporting this collective effort to protect and assist millions of Venezuelan migrants and refugees hosted in countries across Latin America and the Caribbean.

Eduardo Stein
Joint Special Representative
for Venezuelan refugees and migrants

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eduardo Stein', is centered below the title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Eduardo' and last name 'Stein' clearly distinguishable.



REGIONAL STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

RMRP Regional Overview

3.6 MILLION

Refugees and
Migrants in Need

2.2 MILLION

Refugees and
Migrants Targeted

USD 738M

Financial
Requirements

95

RMRP
Partners

Regional Population Movements



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