



RMRP 2020

FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS FROM VENEZUELA

REFUGEE AND MIGRANT
RESPONSE PLAN 2020

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2020



RESPONSE FOR
VENEZUELANAS

Coordination Platform for
Refugees and Migrants
from Venezuela

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FOREWORD

By Eduardo Stein

Some 14 months have passed since I took my role as UNHCR and IOM Joint Special Representative for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela. During this time, I have been able to visit Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Panama, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago. There, I witnessed dramatic human situations, including at several critical border points, of this relentless flight from one of the richest countries in natural resources in Latin America. I have been most moved by the immense solidarity shown by the governments of the host countries in Latin America and the Caribbean in their efforts to offer a strong welcome and integration of the refugees and migrants from Venezuela in a coordinated manner, as well as by the dedication of public servants and people from civil society, faith-based organizations, donor organizations, international financial organizations and UN Agencies. The combined efforts of all these different entities have been extraordinary and reflect a common culture of solidarity and generosity, especially among host communities in the receiving countries which have opened their homes and social contacts for those in need.

The Latin American and Caribbean region remains confronted with an unprecedented refugee and migrant situation, the impact of which reaches across much of the hemisphere. For the coming year, it is projected that the total number of Venezuelan refugees and migrants worldwide will increase from 4.5 million in October 2019 to 6.5 million in December 2020, nearly 85% of whom will be found in the region. In addition to this figure there are pendular movements of millions of people who have to cross borders to meet basic needs, persons in transit, as well as returnees from Venezuela to their countries of origin.

There are no clear prospects that this massive population outflow will cease any time soon and, as clearly highlighted by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, of particular concern are the increasing numbers of refugees and migrants in situations of heightened vulnerability. The ongoing issues

include serious risks for exploitation and abuse, particularly gender-based violence, as well as family separation, most notably for unaccompanied and separated children. The situation of the *caminantes* is particularly worrisome given the long distances and range of protection risks for persons crossing large parts of the continent. In the face of increasing levels of xenophobia, the needs of the refugee and migrant population are even more pronounced as prospects for local integration face additional social and cultural hurdles. These elements show the need for access to territory and documentation, regular stay arrangements and the risks associated with irregular movements, including but not limited to human trafficking and smuggling.

The support of the Regional Interagency Coordination Platform to ensure a common humanitarian cooperation framework for assistance to the refugees and migrants from Venezuela and the international solidarity demonstrated throughout 2019 was inspiring and hopefully it will be further strengthened in 2020. Despite all the progress achieved, governments in receiving countries are under immense pressures. The efforts and resources required to address immediate and longer-term needs often take multiple forms and operate in parallel, ranging from stresses on public services and budgets to negative public opinion and attitudes towards the Venezuelan population, including an increase in incidents of xenophobia and discrimination.

As a result, as seen in several parts of the region, new or revised entry requirements for Venezuelan refugees and migrants have been recently introduced in response to these pressures. States have the right – and indeed an obligation to their citizens – to manage access to their territories according to their national frameworks and laws, and in a manner consistent with their international commitments, it is important to note that in practice, national access requirements are difficult for Venezuelans to achieve due to a lack of documentation. This increases the likelihood



that many of them can take irregular routes and be prone to the subsequent vulnerabilities associated with irregular movements and status, as well as increased pressure on other countries in the region, most notably Colombia.

In light of this situation, there is a clear plea to address, together with the impact of the crisis in the region, the humanitarian situation in Venezuela as a matter of priority, since both dimensions are essentially interlinked. A principled humanitarian assistance, free from political goals and consideration remains crucial in order to maintain the provision of assistance to vulnerable populations. To face so many challenges, a concerted push on multiple fronts, both in the context of the Quito Process and the humanitarian response in the regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP), with the cooperation of the Regional Interagency Coordination Platform, remain as important as ever.

Within the framework of the 2019 RMRP, across 16 countries, more than 1 million persons had been reached with assistance and services until October 2019. This represented almost 46% of the total target beneficiaries for the year, a result commensurate with the 48% funding for the same period. The operational response has also been bolstered by the efforts of civil society and other actors to accompany, assist and provide services to more than 100,000 persons per month through the regional networks developed by faith-based organizations, the Red Cross Movement other national and international entities. For the purposes of influencing public opinion among host communities, and to combat xenophobia, regional and national campaigns have been launched, having reached an audience of more than 75 million.

The net effect of these efforts helps to ensure the effective access to basic rights and services, including health, education and employment, in many parts of the region.

But it is essential now that the focus remains on what lies ahead. For 2020, the requirements under this response plan will

be USD 1.35 billion to target 2.47 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela in destination, 378,000 in pendular situation, 264,000 returnees and 877,000 host community members across 17 countries, through some 137 appealing partners.

There is a wide range of immediate and ongoing humanitarian and development needs in key sectors, from health to education or legal counselling which require a continued and scaled-up response. And in the region, there are many good practices already in place, but they require further international support and continued efforts to strengthen strategic and operational coordination. The 2020 RMRP will address those increasing needs through a multi-sector, coordinated, and consultative process, which will provide flexible, practical and protection-sensitive arrangements, in coordination with governments in the region, as required to mitigate risks for refugees and migrants and the secondary impact on neighboring countries.

Throughout the Americas, greater consideration of, and investment in, the communities hosting refugees and migrants, many of which have their own pre-existing needs as well as vulnerable populations, will continue. The response to refugees and migrants from Venezuela represents a clear case of the need for both immediate and longer-term planning, partnerships and response operating in parallel and drawing upon all partners from the humanitarian, development, public and private sectors.

No receiving country can manage the current crisis on its own and the outflows of refugees and migrants are not limited to territorial boundaries or official border points. Only through a coordinated and harmonized approach will it be possible to effectively address the scale of needs, which continue to increase and evolve as the current crisis continues. To this end, the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for 2020 represents a key element around which collective efforts should be mobilized and further consolidated.

Eduardo Stein

Joint Special Representative for
Venezuelan refugees and migrants



REGIONAL



REGIONAL RMRP AT A GLANCE

POPULATION PROJECTION 2020

VENEZ. IN DESTINATION	VENEZ. PENDULAR	RETURNEES
5.54 M	2.09 M	0.68 M

PEOPLE IN NEED

VENEZ. IN DESTINATION	VENEZ. PENDULAR	RETURNEES	HOST COMMUNITY
3.82 M	0.50 M	0.35 M	1.49 M



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