

*This Situation Report is produced by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group. It primarily focuses on the cluster response during September 2019.*

## HIGHLIGHTS

- During the month of September, more than 35,000 students benefited from educational activities in 292 schools; more than 60,000 doses of insulin were distributed in the Capital District and 21 states; more than 21,700 people received specialized protection services and 50,000 people benefited from food security related activities, such as food distribution and production.
- More than 3,2 million children under the age of six were vaccinated against polio during a mass vaccination campaign between July and September.
- Two Civil-Military workshops were held in Caracas for 29 humanitarian actors and 50 representatives of civil protection and the Venezuelan armed forces.
- According to the [Financial Tracking Service \(FTS\)](#), US\$157,9 million was received in 2019 for humanitarian activities (as of 14 November). This includes funds mobilized before and through the Humanitarian



Source: OCHA 3W. The boundaries and the names shown, and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Response Plan and funds received by organizations that do not have projects in the Plan (such as the International Movement for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies).

## Humanitarian Response Plan: Key figures

<b>7M</b> People in need of humanitarian assistance	<b>2.6M</b> Target population of the Humanitarian Response Plan 2019	<b>\$223M</b> Funds required to implement the Humanitarian Response Plan 2019	<b>974,771</b> People received medicines in 109 health centers in 2019	<b>350,000</b> People have accessed safe water in 2019
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## SITUATION OVERVIEW

- The humanitarian situation in the states along the Colombian border, as well as in other states, have been affected by the lack of basic water, electricity, gas and fuel. With regards to fuel, long queues have been reported at gas stations, with some lasting several days. This has affected the provision of basic services, including health activities, and in recent months it has begun to impact humanitarian operations. Several

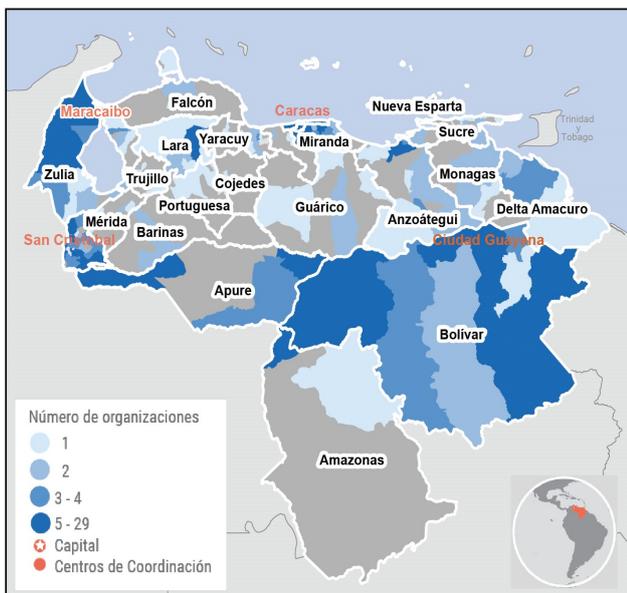
The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to Coordinate the global emergency response to save lives and protect people in humanitarian crises. We advocate for effective and principled humanitarian action by all, for all.

humanitarian actors report difficulties in obtaining fuel and have had to suspend activities or pay additional transportation costs.

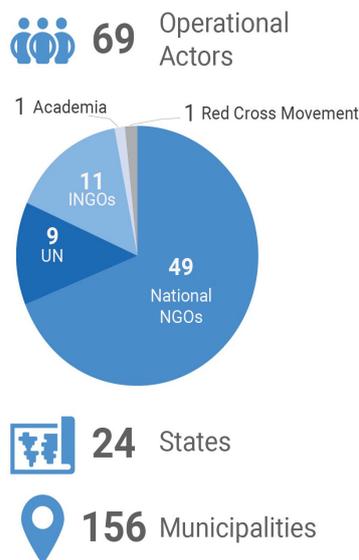
- Some of the most vulnerable populations in the central parts of the country are moving towards the border in search of better living conditions, but at the same time exposing themselves to high protection risks. In Tachira, where a large number of people have arrived, these risks include high levels of insecurity in some areas, the presence of non-state armed groups, incidents of human trafficking, exploitation and abuse, and gender-based violence, which has increased due to the lack of water and energy (gas, electricity) which have forced women and girls to collect wood and water, exposing themselves to these risks.
- The suspension of registration activities for civil associations and foundations is having an impact on the implementation of the Humanitarian Response Plan. This creates administrative challenges, including the inability to manage resources, sign contracts with suppliers, rent offices, hire staff, or purchase supplies, among others. The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) is advocating with the Government to resolve the issue.
- According to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), in 2018 there were 406,924 cases of malaria in Venezuela, more than 50 percent of the total cases reported in the region. In 2019, transmission remained high with 214,021 cases reported until June 2019, an 7 percent increase compared to the same period in 2018. The diphtheria outbreak that began in 2016 is still ongoing, and a total of 2,956 people suspected of having diphtheria were reported, including 287 deaths, until August 2019. Other public health concerns include increases in tuberculosis cases and maternal and infant mortality, as well as problems related to mental health and preventive health. Another concern is limited access to medications and adequate care for people with acute and chronic life-threatening conditions, including HIV patients.

## Operational Humanitarian Presence in Venezuela (September 2019)

### Operational Presence – Current implementation



Source: OCHA, 3W



## FUNDING<sup>1</sup>

- According to the FTS, US\$157.9 million was received in 2019 for humanitarian activities (as of 14 November). This includes funds mobilized before and through the Humanitarian Response Plan and funds received by organizations that do not have projects in the Plan (such as the International Movement for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies).
- According to the FTS (as of 14 November) US\$55.5 million of the US\$223 million required for the implementation of the Humanitarian Response Plan 2019 (25 percent) have been received.
- The agencies and countries contributing to humanitarian activities are as follows: European Union, United States, Central Emergency Relief Funds<sup>2</sup>, United Kingdom, Sweden, Italy, Switzerland, Norway and Canada.

FUNDING 2019 \$157.9M		
European Union	\$58,6M	37.1 %
United States	\$48M	30.4 %
Central Emergency Response Fund	\$18M	11.5 %
United Kingdom	\$8.8M	5.6 %
Sweden	\$6.5M	4.1 %
Italy	\$4.4M	2.8 %
Switzerland	\$2.9M	1.8 %
Norway	\$2.5M	1.5 %
Others	\$8.2M	5.2 %

Source: Financial Tracking Service (FTS)

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

### Health

#### Needs

- Since the beginning of the year until 31 August, 8,638 cases of dengue were reported, including 44 cases of severe dengue and 14 deaths, with a case fatality rate of 0.16 percent. There was a 6.4 percent decrease compared to cases reported during the same period in 2018 (8,121) but a 180 percent increase in the number of deaths reported.
- The outbreak of measles has been progressively controlled, although it remains active in several states. As of 7 September, there were 449 confirmed cases in 12 states and the Capital District. The last confirmed case was from the state of Zulia. No deaths have been reported. As of 7 September 2019, 86 cases of measles had been reported in indigenous communities, all in the state of Zulia.
- The Ministry of Popular Power for Health estimates that 6 out of 10 teenage pregnancies are unplanned in the country. Therefore, it is necessary to disseminate alternatives methods of contraception to prevent unplanned pregnancies.

## 3.2 M

Girls and boys under the age of six were vaccinated against polio from July to September 2019

#### Response

- More than 3,2 million children under the age of six were vaccinated against polio during a mass vaccination campaign between July and September 2019.
- More than 60,000 doses of insulin were distributed in the Capital District and 21 states across the country.
- In the Capital District and other prioritized states, more than 2,000 health workers were trained in advanced life support and airway management, hospital safety indicators, incident command systems, supply management systems, maternal, sexual and reproductive health and diagnosis and training in basic malaria epidemiology. In addition, emergency and disaster preparedness training was provided to

<sup>1</sup> Humanitarian partners can report funds received to FTS on a template that can be downloaded here: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/venezuela/document/plantilla-fts>

<sup>2</sup> The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is a humanitarian fund established by the United Nations General Assembly on 2006 to enable timelier and more reliable humanitarian assistance to those affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts.

indigenous communities in the states of Bolivar, Monagas and Apure.

- In September, 21 hospitals received essential drugs, surgical supplies, antimalarials, medical devices and equipment for use in primary health care, reproductive health and non-communicable diseases (including mental health).

### Gaps

- It is necessary to continue efforts to interrupt the measles outbreak and control diphtheria cases in priority states, maintain vaccination coverage above 95 percent, strengthen epidemiological surveillance systems, and conduct outbreak control and investigation.
- It is necessary to ensure the operational capacity of health facilities, with the continuous supply of drugs and goods and continuous essential services provision (water, electricity and solid waste disposal).
- Efforts should continue to strengthen emergency rooms in Venezuelan hospitals to ensure care for the population, especially the most vulnerable groups.
- There is a need to improve the management of key health information and data to facilitate appropriate assessments and improve the response in health centers across the country.

## Nutrition

### Needs

- Current efforts for the nutritional recovery of lactating women are insufficient for their effective recovery, as micronutrition supplements alone has no impact on weigh gain. It is therefore necessary to ensure they have a varied and balanced diet, but food prices in Venezuela have increased considerably.
- Partners indicate that many children served by anti-malnutrition programmes relapse into malnutrition shortly after leaving the programme. It is necessary to implement joint strategies with the Food Security Cluster aimed at improving vulnerable households' access to food and complementing public policies such as school canteens and community feeding houses.
- Based on the reports by humanitarian actors, there is an increase in the number of pregnant adolescent women who suffer from poor nutrition and lack the essential nutrients to ensure the baby's adequate development. As a result, these babies have a high probability of being born with low weight and of developing malnutrition.

**9.683**

Girls and boys, pregnant and lactating women received deworming treatment in September 2019

### Response

- In September, 9,683 people, including girls and boys, pregnant and lactating women were treated for deworming in health centers and schools. Deworming is an essential activity to prevent malnutrition.
- Nutritional treatment has been provided to 9,921 people (girls and boys under 5 years of age, pregnant and lactating women) in outpatient centres of the Venezuelan public health system, care centres established by humanitarian partners, as well as during health activities carried out by the partners.
- Some 4,099 caregivers in charge of young children in their first 1,000 days of life, have received training emphasizing the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding and adequate and timely complementary feeding.
- Some 483 children under 5 years of age with moderate and severe acute malnutrition, with and without complications, were admitted and treated in the health centers supported by the cluster partners in the States of Miranda, Tachira and Zulia.

### Gaps

- It is necessary to strengthen the response plans concerning elderly people, with actions that allow their nutritional recovery through micronutrients and supplements of polymeric formulas (mixtures of nutrients in macromolecular form that are provided in liquid form).
- The nutrition projects of Clusters partners mainly serve children under 5 years of age. However, it has been

observed that there is a higher number of cases of malnutrition of children over 5 years of age that require attention. In households where cases of malnutrition of children under 5 years of age have been identified, there are also other cases of older children that are more affected, so parents divide the therapeutic inputs to feed all their children regardless of age.

- It is also necessary to include in the response plan nutritional care for other population groups in high vulnerability situations such as adolescents, people with disabilities, chronically ill and people on the move.

## Protection

### Needs

- People with specific protection needs include survivors of gender-based violence, children at risk, people at risk of statelessness, indigenous populations, LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex) people, displaced people and people with HIV. Older adults and people with disabilities need quality specialist protection services whose availability and access remain limited. According to partner reports, the increase in cases of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, particularly in border states with concentrations of indigenous people (Tachira, Bolivar, and Zulia) remains a concern.
- There is a need to expand the coverage of quality services to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV), including livelihood programmes aimed at women and girls to mitigate the risks of GBV, especially by informing them of how to access services. In addition there is a need to train humanitarian actors who provide GBV response services, emphasizing minimum standards for GBV prevention and response in emergency situations.
- It is necessary to prioritize a mapping of protection services for girls and boys and GBV as well as creating and disseminating access routes for different protection authorities, the education system, health services and for humanitarian actors not specialized in the protection of girls and boys and GBV.

**21,708**

Women, men, girls, boys and adolescents received specialized protection services in September 2019

### Response

- During the month of September, some 16,620 people received specialized protection services, including legal and psychological support. Out of the total, 27 per cent were women, 23 per cent men and 50 per cent boys and girls. Miranda, Tachira and Zulia were the states with the highest number of people assisted.
- Some 828 vulnerable girls and boys (39 per cent girls and 61 per cent boys), including survivors of gender-based violence and separated and unaccompanied children, received integrated protective care services. 2,784 girls and boys (48 per cent girls and 52 per cent boys) participated in individual and/or group psychosocial support activities in community centres or friendly spaces. Miranda, Zulia and Lara were the states where most assistance was provided. Some 1,476 people received services to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, including psychological support, legal assistance, cases management services, clinical rape management services, as well as dignity kits for women and girls of reproductive age. Bolivar, Tachira, Zulia, Apure, Capital District and Lara were the states where most assistance was provided. Most people receiving services were women aged 20 to 49 (68 per cent), followed by girls aged 15 to 19 (16 per cent) and girls aged 10 to 14 (6 per cent); while 10 per cent of cases were reported by men aged 18 and older.
- In September, 4,255 people in different communities received information on protection issues, including their human rights and pathways to care and services. Out of the total, 55 per cent were women, 28 per cent men and 17 per cent boys and girls. Bolivar, Amazonas and Miranda were the states with the highest concentration of people sensitized on protection issues.
- Awareness-raising activities were organized for 2,839 people (35 per cent girls, 33 per cent boys, 22 per cent women and 10 per cent men), in order to increase the capacity of communities to respond to protection issues, violence, abuse and the exploitation of girls and boys. The states where most people participated were Bolivar, Tachira and Capital District.
- Some 4,416 people participated in community sensitization days on the prevention of GBV, of which 60 per cent received sensitization on GBV and 22 per cent received sensitization on sexual and reproductive

rights. In addition, 956 women were trained as community promoters in identifying and safely referring GBV cases. 48 per cent of people participating in community activities were women, 46 per cent were girls and boys and 6 per cent were men.

### Gaps

- Many humanitarian actors need to increase their capacities and knowledge about protection mainstreaming in humanitarian action, the legal framework applicable to the various forms of human mobility and protection monitoring; these trainings will be offered by the Protection Cluster during the month of November.
- There is a gap in the availability, accessibility and management of official and quality GBV data. In addition, humanitarian organizations continue to face challenges in receiving funds to strengthen and expand GBV response and mitigation services.
- There is a need to strengthen the capacities of state institutions and civil society in the areas of trafficking and smuggling, sexual abuse and exploitation, and unaccompanied and separated children, and to expand care services for these groups.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

### Needs

- There are fewer electricity and water outages in the Capital District, whilst services in other states remains limited. Water supply depends on pumps, which means when electricity fails, the water supply does as well. Water supply problems are affecting the most vulnerable people in communities and impacting other critical services such as the health and education sector.
- The Venezuelan population is mainly concentrated in urban areas, so these areas are prone to shortages due to the deterioration of the water system network and regular power outages affecting both water treatment plants and pumping stations.
- Access to water appears to be the greatest challenge, with many communities receiving water less than once every eight days, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable populations such as girls and boys, pregnant and lactating women, and the elderly.
- The target population of the Humanitarian Response Plan is 1,713,318 people for access to basic hygiene information products, 3,496,388 people for household water conservation and treatment and 3,719 the target of institutions (schools, health/nutrition structures) with WASH interventions.

**149,893**

Vulnerable people provided with access to safe drinking water between May and September 2019

### Response

- Between May and September, 149,893 vulnerable people were provided with access to safe water (about 8,000 more people than last month). Of this number, some 78,000 people were supplied through water trucking, 11,000 through the rehabilitation of water systems, and more than 62,000 people received supplies that allow them to treat water at home. Furthermore, around 13,000 family hygiene kits were distributed, with families also receiving hygiene promotion sessions.
- During the same period, 140 health and education institutions received WASH services (87 health and 53 educational). The activities focused on water supply through the distribution of water tanks and system rehabilitation. Efforts also focused on hygiene promotion activities. In health structures, it is estimated that over 14,000 people benefited from these activities, and over 12,000 people in educational centres.
- The Cluster is intervening in 19 states, however most of the activities have been concentrated in Bolivar, Capital District, Miranda, Tachira, Zulia and Apure. In total, there are approximately 23 organisations working in the WASH cluster.

### Gaps

- The gaps remain enormous in terms of meeting WASH needs, with the 149,893 people that have received

safe water representing only 8,7 percent of the target population of the Humanitarian Response Plan (1,713,318). The 140 health and educational institutions covered represent only 3,8 percent of the Plan's target of 3,719 units. In terms of people accessing basic hygiene products and information and household water treatment and conservation, only 62,000 have been assisted, out of the 3,496,388 targeted in the Plan.

- The biggest challenge is lack of funds, which prevents the start of activities, recruitment, and the strengthening of logistical capacities.
- Another challenge is related to access limitations to certain areas during the rainy season, especially in the eastern part of the country (Amazonas, Delta Amacuro and Bolivar), because of the characteristics of the area, such as access by unpaved roads. There are also access challenges related to insecurity, especially in border areas, and in the mining areas in the state of Bolivar.
- The lack of gasoline and high inflation similarly impact the cluster's operations.

## Food Security and Livelihoods

### Needs

- Due to a lack of parts and supplies for farming machinery, the current production of 500,000 tons of corn does not cover 30 per cent of the total amount required for 2019.
- Around 200,000 hectares have been sown for the 2019 cycle, reaching 2.5 tons per hectare. In the case of rice, 75,000 hectares have been sown for this 2019 cycle reaching 2.5 tons per hectare.
- Overall, it is important to highlight the decrease in the sowing cycle for 2019, which will only provide for 30 per cent of the country's monthly food requirement.
- There is not enough foreign exchange for food imports, which could affect the cost and access of food staples.
- National production of basic food crops (mainly maize) is at risk for the 2020-2021 sowing period, due to the actual production of seeds possibly not satisfying demand, which stands at 1.4 tons per year.
- Climate conditions could be affected by El Niño, which generally increases the likelihood of droughts. Prolonged droughts are expected to affect Venezuela's areas of Lara, Trujillo and Merida during the end of 2019. This could affect the planting and growth of the final 2019 seasons of maize (main one) and secondary rice crops.
- The National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology indicates in its weekly report that in the last weeks tropical storms have affected Venezuela with heavy rains, creating low risk conditions for the main farming states, especially those producing cereals (Apure, Barinas, Portuguesa, Cojedes, Guarico).

## 50,000

People in 23 communities and 8 states benefited from food security activities such as food distribution and production in July and August 2019.

### Response

- The recovery of the productive capacities and livelihoods of 1,500 small producers affected by flooding was achieved in communities such as Guasqualito, El Amparo, Chorroquero y Matapalar in the Paez Municipality in Apure state. This was done through the distribution and rehabilitation of assets and seeds for field vegetables, cereals and leguminous crops, the consolidation of family and community-based production units and capacity-building activities in food and nutritional security. In addition, through components of agroecological production for small-scale and family-based agriculture, technical assistance and support was provided for the production of fisheries, foods and maize seed-multiplication for affected producers.
- 8,500 small producers benefited from the purchase of seeds (60 per cent for vegetables and short-cycle legumes and 40 per cent for cereals), as well as the purchase of pest controllers and fertilizers. These actions were addressed at 18 prioritized farming-families communities in vulnerable states of Portuguesa, Trujillo and Lara. In Falcon, Miranda and Merida states, short-cycles seeds and a variety of basic food crops were distributed.

- 32 basic schools and Agricultural Technical Schools were identified, where approximately 7,767 boys, girls and teenagers will be benefitting through the National School Feeding Programme.
- Since July, and with a focus on building resilience, agricultural production and nutritional security has risen in vulnerable rural areas in 12 communities in Portuguesa, Trujillo and Merida states. This has been achieved through the creation of family-based production units, which is a mechanism which involves family members with socio-productive projects aimed at covering their own needs and those of their community, as well as through technical assistance.

### Gaps

- The Cluster's capacity needs to be strengthened and more resources need to be mobilized to respond accordingly with the scale of the needs.
- People on the move within the country need to be supported, just like host communities in border areas, which implies improving food and nutritional security and access to clean water, as well as improving income opportunities through local food production.
- Since the beginning of May, there has been fuel shortages in the country, with different intensities in some states, which may also affect the logistics of food and supplies distribution.
- Increasing productivity in the fields is critical, despite the existing problems producers have for importing supplies. Adequate planning of the 2020 sowing cycle is also needed, considering all the needed supplies and technology to optimize what is in place.

## Education

### Needs

- According to different sources from the Education Cluster and the Venezuelan Observatory for the Rights to Education, the 2019-2020 school year started with a higher retention of school teachers in the public sector, compared to an increase in desertion of teachers from the subsidized sector. Nonetheless, teacher absenteeism continues to be a factor impacting the quality of education.
- At the beginning of the school year, there was a 60 per cent rate of daily attendance by boys and girls in schools monitored by the cluster's partners, which on average translates to three days a week. This is a typical pattern at the beginning of the school year. However, monitoring is underway to implement actions that could help improve school attendance, since the last school year finished with an overall low average attendance rate.
- In indigenous communities in Bolivar and Delta Amacuro states, as reported by partners, there is a high rate of absenteeism, in terms of children out of the school system. In Delta Amacuro, specifically in the Tucupita Municipality, the average rate of absenteeism stands at 40 per cent. In Pedernales between 20 and 40 per cent of children in school age are out of the system. This is mainly due to the lack of teaching staff and the inability of families to cover for related costs, such as the purchase of school supplies and transport. There is a similar situation in the Caroni, Heres, Sifontes, El Callao, Padre Pedro Chien and Piar Gran Sabana municipalities in Bolivar state.

**35,408**

Students benefitted from support to 292 education centres across 15 states in September 2019

### Response

- In September 2019, the 12 organizations which take part in the Education Cluster, carried out different school activities in 292 schools, reaching 35,408 boys and girls in 15 states (Amazonas, Anzoategui, Apure, Aragua, Barinas, Bolívar, Cojedes, Capital District, Guarico, Miranda, Monagas, Tachira, Trujillo, Vargas and Zulia).
- Amongst the main activities implemented by cluster partners, in order of the highest number of people reached (a non-exhaustive list) were: 1) delivery of school materials reaching 27,684 children; 2) school feeding programmes, reaching 14,122 children; 3) implementation of reinforcement school activities as a way to promote the good use of leisure time and to strengthen learning, reaching 9,108 children; 4) implementation of recreational spaces outside school hours as a way to promote a culture of peace and coexistence, reaching 2,303 children; 5) non-monetary incentives for 887 school teachers; 6) delivery of

psychosocial support activities as well as emotional learning, benefiting 611 children; and 7) implementation of activities related to improving skills for life, reaching 255 teenagers outside of the school system.

- In the face of absenteeism and desertion of teachers from their posts, some organizations that manage subsidized schools have launched strategies such as training volunteering parents, who could cover for absent teachers, while they formally enroll in a teaching-training programme. In some states, such as Tachira, education authorities are relocating teachers towards their areas of residence so that they work closer to their homes, since one of the factors that is causing irregular attendance is the lack of transport or the impossibility to pay for the service.

### Gaps

- Cluster partners have operational presence in 15 out of 24 states throughout the country; however, in some states such as Delta Amacuro, Amazonas and remote areas of Bolivar, especially in indigenous territories, access is more limited, and partners cover fewer municipalities. This is due to security conditions, lack of operational capacity and logistical costs.
- In relation to vulnerable groups, the identification of special education services, access and attendance to people with special needs, continues to be another gap which needs to be bridged in the framework of the humanitarian response in Venezuela. As part of an initial response, a database of organizations which currently offer these educational and complementary services for this population is in place, while there is still a need to define a strategy to identify this population and strengthen services and coordination.
- The lack of funding for the humanitarian response continues to be a large gap in the face of the many challenges that require attention, including: the trend in teacher absenteeism due to migration or change of career path/economic activity; the drop in school registration, irregular school attendance and the reduction of school hours; limitations in the school feeding programme; and lack of teaching materials and learning support, amongst other relevant aspects for the normal functioning of the country's education system. In order to address these, a great investment in schools, homes and communities is required. Otherwise, current efforts will continue to be superficial measures to minimize problems in the education system rather than ensuring the right to education of boys and girls in the country.

## Shelter, Energy and Non-Food Items

### Needs

- During September, the Shelter, Energy and Non-Food Items (NFIs) cluster visited three states; Apure, Amazonas and Bolivar. The aim of the visit was to identify needs and shelter conditions. This included spaces that could be used as transit centres,<sup>3</sup> individual housings located in informal high-risk settlements prone to landslides, flooding or collapse, and overcrowded<sup>4</sup> improvised housing constructions<sup>5</sup> (*ranchos*) in precarious conditions, due to the type of materials used for its construction. As a result of these visits, there is a need to develop projects that seek the direct rehabilitation of these spaces, including those identified as possible transit centres and individual housings. In the Gran Sabana municipality, a visit took place to the location where a transit centre will be built in Santa Elena de Uairén, which will host at least 50 people on the move.
- During the field visit to Apure (Guarnalito, Las Canoas, La Esperanza and El Amparo) and Bolivar (Guanamo, Turiba and Morichalitos), the Cluster noted that communities mainly use firewood to cook. Whilst they have kitchens with connections for domestic gas cylinders, these are no longer used due to a lack of supply of domestic gas.

**2,888**

People received NFI supplies in September 2019

<sup>3</sup> These spaces are Casa Carina de Turemeno, Mother Theresa de Calcuta center in San Fernando de Apure, rehabilitation of a transit space of the Christ in Santa Elena de Uairen and in El Dorado.

<sup>4</sup> For example, in Los Pijiguaos and in Guanamo.

<sup>5</sup> Wood, fabrics and plastic sheets in poor conditions.

- Access to the electric network is limited by the use of informal connections, which in some communities (especially in Los Pijiguaos and La Esperanza, in Bolívar and Apure, respectively) is the only way to access electricity, also due to the lack capacity of the network of substations to transfer power.

### Response

- Due to the lack of access to the national electric network, 502 solar lamps were distributed in September to educational centres, churches and communities, benefiting 2,712 people, including 448 in Amazonas (Atures), 578 in Apure (Paez, Pedro Camejo and San Fernando) and 1,686 in Tachira (Bolívar, Maldonado, San Cristobal and Uribante).
- A total of 142 people benefited from NFI distributions in Apure (64) and Miranda (78). After the Arauca river flood in Apure, 32 kits of emergency NFIs were distributed to families affected by the flooding.
- During September, a total of 96 people benefited from the improvements and furnishing of shelters and hostels in Bolívar (18) and Miranda (78) states.
- Along with a technical evaluation commission, the Cluster initiated a harmonization and standardization process of basic NFI kits, through the OpenDataKit platform/template, which was shared with cluster partners distributing such kits in the country.

### Gaps

- It is necessary to identify in a disaggregated manner the needs of women, men, boys and girls and people with disabilities and minorities (including indigenous populations). It is also necessary to differentiate the needs in rural and urban areas.
- The lack of operational and technical information on partner projects are a limiting factor to cover the needs of the target population within the cluster.
- Access to fuel restrictions, especially in Tachira, Bolívar and Amazonas states, is challenging the implementation of projects and the exchange of information amongst cluster partners.
- Better coordination is needed among partners to avoid duplication in the delivery of NFIs.
- The cluster could not access the nearby communities to *Isla de Ratón*, located in Amazonas (a prioritized state) to carry out a needs evaluation, since the only way to reach the area is via boat or helicopter.

### Coordination

- On 23-25 September, 50 representatives of the civil protection authority and the Venezuelan armed forces took part in a 3-day workshop on Civil-Military Coordination in Caracas. The workshop touched on the basic principles of Civil-Military Coordination and their importance during humanitarian responses. On 26 and 27 September, the same workshop was delivered for 29 humanitarian actors, with a focus on those based in field locations.
- Joint advocacy efforts continued with donors to increase funding for the 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan. On 6 September, the HCT presented the Response Plan to the Diplomatic Corps accredited in Venezuela. Likewise, on 17 September, the HCT met with donors to present them with the latest achievements and impact of the ongoing humanitarian response in the country and on 23 September, a Member States briefing was organized in New York.
- The Inter-Cluster Coordination Group is working to update the Humanitarian Needs Overview, which will be the basis for planning in 2020. The update will involve various needs assessment workshops during October in the four field coordination hubs.
- The Field Coordination Hubs in San Cristobal, Ciudad Guayana and Maracaibo are now fully functional. The various sub-national clusters and humanitarian partners are attending monthly meetings to strengthen the response at the local level.

### Common operational challenges

- There continues to be primary data information gaps on humanitarian needs in all clusters, with efforts currently underway to collect more data.
- Logistical challenges, related to delays in the importation of some supplies, availability of transport, shortages in fuel and electricity, among others, are impacting the response.
- There is a need for more operational capacity, including the presence and registration of international NGOs.
- A greater understanding of principled humanitarian action is needed among key stakeholders, which is a priority to foster more acceptance and to facilitate access.
- Funding is urgently needed to maintain and further scale up the response, with many partners reporting critical and time-sensitive funding gaps.

### For further information, please contact:

**Gema Cortes**, Public Information Officer, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, (OCHA) at: [cortesg@un.org](mailto:cortesg@un.org), Tel: +58 424 1364 370

For more information, please visit [www.unocha.org/venezuela](http://www.unocha.org/venezuela) or [www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/venezuela](http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/venezuela)