

# REGIONAL INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION PLATFORM FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS FROM VENEZUELA

October 2018



## Regional Response: Situational update No. 2

In **Peru**, a surge of an average of 4,000 daily arrivals, before the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> of October for the **Temporary Stay Permit**, has led **Peruvian authorities and partners to scale up the response.**

Intergovernmental discussions continue to take place in order to strengthen regional coordination, in advance of the **Quito II meeting on November 22 and 23.**

In 16 countries, 75 partners participating to the Regional and National Platforms progress with the articulation of a **Refugee and Migrant Response Plan** for 2019.

*This situation report series is produced by the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela, consolidating highlights in the operational response during the reporting period, as shared by Platform participants.*

### SITUATION OVERVIEW

During the last week of October, the number of refugees and migrants from Venezuela transiting through **Ecuador** and **Colombia** – with the intention of travelling to **Peru**, has substantially increased. In the Tumbes northern border of Peru, the average number of arrivals rose from 1,800 to **over 4,000 per day**, with a peak of 6,700 entries on the last day of the month. The surge is related to the 31 October entry deadline as a condition for application for the Temporary Stay Permit (PTP) in Peru. Thousands of refugees and migrants from Venezuela waited for two to three days in order to proceed with mandatory entry requirements, sleeping out in the open, with concerning sanitary conditions and many persons requiring urgent medical assistance and food. Emergency measures were implemented by the national authorities, with support of Platform partners to speed up processing, provide immediate assistance and mitigate protection risks.

Also in **Peru**, a court decision was issued to reinstate the presentation of a valid passport as an **entry requirement** for Venezuelans, whilst entry with the national identification document is granted to persons with disabilities, children and other individuals in vulnerable situations. During the last week of October, the Special Commission for Refugees (CEPR) processed up to 1,000 asylum requests per day, compared to an earlier average of 400.

The risks associated with irregular border crossings was exemplified by reported deaths in October, including two Venezuelans travelling by boat to **Aruba**. During transit and upon arrival, refugees and migrants continue to be exposed to various other **protection risks**, including exploitation, violence, trafficking and recruitment by non-state armed groups. In October, **Colombian** authorities arrested members of a large human trafficking network targeting Venezuelans operating around the border of Cúcuta and in Quindío department.

In this context, governments of the impacted countries continue to be actively engaged at the international, regional and national level. Further discussions on the implementation of a regional temporary protection status for refugees from migrants from Venezuela in the region as well as elaborations on a regional action plan, are expected to take place in a Regional Technical Meeting on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Citizens in the Americas (Quito II) on 22 and 23 November.

In addition, the Governments of Colombia and Peru signed an agreement to exchange information of Venezuelans present in their country. Similarly, the Governments of Aruba and Curaçao signed a letter of intent to exchange migratory



**3 million** Venezuelans living outside their country; 2.4m of them in Latin American and Caribbean countries.



**1 million** residency permits granted since 2015 by Latin-American countries and 350k applications pending decision.

**366k** asylum claims lodged since 2014, 150k of them in Peru

information. Member countries of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) committed through its new annual work plan on joint actions on migration management.

Institutional and policy arrangements at national level continue to rapidly evolve. In October, some key developments included: the launch of an Assistance and Protection Plan for Venezuelans, the extension of the state of emergency in the provinces of Carchi, El Oro, and Pichincha, and the implementation of a Electronic Visa Application system in [Ecuador](#); the implementation of Departmental Coordination Committees and the promotion of the Humanitarian Fund initiative in [Colombia](#); and the creation of a Humanitarian Affairs Office for Venezuelan residents in [Panama](#), combined with further measures to simplify visa requirements and enhance access to basic services for Venezuelans in the country.

## RESPONSE OVERVIEW

*This section does not aim to provide an exhaustive account of all activities, but to inform on general response trends and priorities during the reporting period.*

### Data and analysis | IOM | OCHA | UNHCR | UNICEF

New rounds of flow monitoring exercises were launched in [Argentina](#), [Brazil](#), and [Mexico](#), as well as an assessment of the nutritional status of migrant children under five in [Ecuador](#), a study on children living outside shelters in [Brazil](#), and a study on migrant and refugees in [Panama](#). In October, alongside these activities and documenting individual assistance and referral needs in [Brazil](#), Platform participants have put emphasis on keeping track of children and adolescents who have not been registered through the formal migration process in [Ecuador](#) and communicating the findings of flow monitoring reports to government agencies and their partners in [Brazil](#), [Colombia](#), [Ecuador](#), [Guyana](#), and [Trinidad and Tobago](#).

### Capacity strengthening | IOM | Plan International | UNFPA | UNHCR | UNICEF

In support of Governments' commitments to the response, Platform participants have reached at least **1,600** public officials (including Army and Police personnel) and NGO staff in [Colombia](#), [Costa Rica](#), [Ecuador](#), [Panama](#), and [Trinidad and Tobago](#) through awareness and training activities mainly on standards of protection and assistance of migrant and refugee women, men, girls and boys, trafficking and other forms of exploitation and abuse, SGBV and peer counselling. Also, in [Brazil](#), more than 70 teachers and NGO technical staff - including 54 Venezuelans were trained to operate temporary learning spaces and 12 anthropometric kits were delivered to official shelters.

Advocacy efforts and technical assistance have centred on the development of official protocols to protect children and adolescents in the move in [Ecuador](#), [Panama](#), and [Peru](#), and in promoting the adoption of key related international protection standards and a food distribution

guidance in [Guyana](#). In the case of [Ecuador](#), the 'Protocol for the assistance of children, adolescents and their families in contexts of human mobility in Ecuador' was adopted and Platform participants are supporting its implementation.

### Direct response | ADRA | CARE | HIAS | IOM | Plan International | UNFPA | UNHCR | UNICEF | WFP

During October, Platform participants continued their standing operations and adjusted their direct assistance capacity to the increasing number of Venezuelans traveling through Colombia and Ecuador, to Peru and exhibiting high vulnerability conditions in transit and destination points.

**Shelter and temporary accommodation.** At least **44,800** Venezuelans have been assisted with shelter and temporary accommodation in [Brazil](#), [Colombia](#), [Ecuador](#), [Peru](#), and [Trinidad and Tobago](#). Accommodation subsidies, tents, shelters, and temporary reception sites - including a newly opened site in Roraima (Brazil), are the main modalities applied and are generally accompanied with basic complementary services to enhance protection and cover basic needs.

**Non-Food Items.** In October, at least **16,000** Venezuelans in [Argentina](#), [Brazil](#), [Colombia](#), [Ecuador](#), [Guyana](#), and [Peru](#) received support with Non-Food Items (NFI) from Platform participants. Different types of NFI kits are being distributed - baby and children kits, hygiene kits, household hygiene kits, dignity kits and maternity kits - reflecting a tailored approach to kits design and distribution.

**Access to water and sanitation.** As of 31 October, at least **51,000** Venezuelans and members of host communities had been reached with water, sanitation and hygiene assistance in [Brazil](#), [Colombia](#) and [Ecuador](#), mainly through distribution of water filters and tanks, water purification taps, promotion of hygiene practices,

installation of hydration points, or rehabilitation of sanitary batteries.

**Food and nutrition security.** Food assistance along the [Colombia-Ecuador-Peru](#) route was particularly critical during October when more than **39,300** refugees and migrants from Venezuela were reached with nutrition screening and counselling, nutrition packages, food vouchers or access to food distribution points. In [Trinidad and Tobago](#), a nutritional assessments and infant and young child feeding counselling was conducted, while in [Guyana](#) and [Colombia](#) food was distributed amongst Venezuelans and host communities.

**Cash assistance.** As of 31 October, at least **9,800** refugees and migrants from Venezuela in [Argentina](#), [Aruba](#), [Brazil](#), [Dominican Republic](#), [Colombia](#), [Ecuador](#), [Mexico](#), [Panama](#), [Paraguay](#), and [Peru](#) have received multi-purpose cash grants, including for rent, food, subsistence, and transportation or vouchers. Cash assistance is typically targeted to persons with specific needs, and continuous vulnerability assessments are undertaken to identify persons in need of such assistance.

**Transportation support and internal relocation.** As of 31 October, more than **3,600** refugees and migrants from Venezuela in transit have been assisted with transportation in [Brazil](#), [Colombia](#), [Ecuador](#), and [Peru](#) as a protection measure to continue their journey safely. This figure includes over **2,600** persons who participated in eleven rounds of a voluntary internal relocation programme implemented by the Government of Brazil and supported by Platform participants. In [Brazil](#), a new relocation scheme associated to employment placement was piloted, in collaboration with local partners and the private sector, with 30 beneficiaries so far.

**Access to social services.** Access to primary health care and social services remains a critical need. At least **7,700** Venezuelans and members of host communities participated in psychosocial support activities in [Colombia](#), [Costa Rica](#), [Peru](#), and [Trinidad and Tobago](#). In [Brazil](#), [Colombia](#), [Ecuador](#), [Peru](#), and [Trinidad and Tobago](#), support has been given to the implementation of the Minimum Initial Service Package for Sexual and Reproductive Health in Emergencies (MISP) and the establishment of referral pathways. Basic health services such as vaccinations, maternal health, nutritional surveillance and assessment, as well as emergency assistance have been provided to at least **8,500** Venezuelans including some members of host communities in [Brazil](#), [Colombia](#) and [Peru](#).

As of 31 October, more than **5,400** children have been assisted with psychosocial support. Some **3,600** children have benefited from learning spaces or education activities in [Brazil](#) and [Colombia](#).

**Communicating with communities, information and referrals.** As of 31 October, in [Argentina](#), [Brazil](#), [Colombia](#), [Costa Rica](#), [Ecuador](#), [Guyana](#), [Peru](#), and [Trinidad and Tobago](#) at least **142,400** refugees and migrants from Venezuela have received legal/general information on documentation, regularization, mechanisms, asylum procedures, access to public services, as well as on prevention of trafficking, smuggling and other forms of exploitation and abuse. In [Colombia](#), two new information and orientation points (PAO) were opened in the Atlántico region, bringing the total to 13 PAOs in nine departments in Colombia. In October alone around **11,400** refugees and migrants from Venezuela were referred to government and NGO social service providers in [Guyana](#), [Peru](#), and [Trinidad and Tobago](#).

Furthermore, over 74,000 persons had access to internet through a WiFi hotspot at the Rumichaca border in [Ecuador](#), and some other **98,200** were provided with access to international phone calls in [Brazil](#).

## Integration Support

ADRA | HIAS |  
IOM | UNHCR | UNICEF

As of 31 October, in [Argentina](#), [Brazil](#), [Ecuador](#), [Mexico](#) and [Trinidad and Tobago](#) at least **1,400** refugees and migrants from Venezuela were reached with various activities to promote integration in the labour market and facilitate access to financial services, including language classes, vocational training, job placement support and financial training. This includes 300 Venezuelans who attended two workshops for health and other professionals, held in [Argentina](#) in collaboration with the National Migration Directorate (DNM) and the Association of Venezuelan Doctors in Argentina. In northern [Brazil](#), a new labour insertion initiative for Venezuelans was launched in collaboration with local authorities. The first group of 46 participants were entered in the National Employment Registration System (SINE) and provided with orientation on employment opportunities in the municipality.

In [Costa Rica](#) and [Peru](#), large scale anti-xenophobia campaigns were launched with the aim to strengthen solidarity and promote integration of Venezuelan refugees and migrants.

## Coordination

### Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform

The Platform was established following the confirmation by the UN Secretary General for IOM and UNHCR to lead and coordinate the regional response to refugees and migrants from Venezuela. Currently the Platform consists of 40 participants, including 17 UN agencies, 14 NGOs, 5 donors, 2 international financial institutions, and the Red Cross Movement. Similar coordination platforms are being established at national level. The second Platform meeting took place in Panama in the first week of November.

During October the [UNHCR and IOM Special Joint Representative](#) for refugees and migrants in the region, Eduardo Stein, undertook a series of visits to Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, to discuss the Venezuela situation with

the Governments, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, and other key partners. Stein called the situation unprecedented and commended the solidarity of the host communities.

The Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform has been facilitating the development of the [Refugee and Migrant Response Plan \(RMRP\)](#), by bringing together 75 partners across 16 countries in the region. The needs-based plan intends to complement and strengthen the response of national governments, for existing and estimated needs for 2019. The RMRP will function as a strategy, operational blueprint, coordination template, as well as an appeal document, and is expected to be launched early December.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

*Partners in the response are very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, contributing to their activities with un-earmarked and earmarked funds.*

Brazil | CERF | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Holy See | Italy | Japan | Netherlands | New Zealand | Norway | Private donors | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America

**For more information, please contact:**

**Juliana Quintero**, Media and Communications Officer, **IOM**, [robuepress@iom.int](mailto:robuepress@iom.int), +54 11 5219 2033

**Rose de Jong**, Reporting Officer, **UNHCR**, [dejong@unhcr.org](mailto:dejong@unhcr.org), +507 6338 4408

## Annex: Highlights per agency

### ADRA

- ADRA provided essential water and sanitation services in key border crossing and transit points in Ecuador, including through the provision of drinking water as well as the cleaning, maintenance and upgrading of WASH facilities, benefiting around 29,000 refugees and migrants from Venezuela in October.
- In Argentina, ADRA carried out activities to promote integration in the labour market and facilitate access to financial services, including language classes, vocational training, job placement support and financial training, benefiting over 200 persons up to 31 October.

### CARE

- CARE proceeded with the upgrading of the "Gran Sabana" shelter in Ecuador, including the rehabilitation of toilets, kitchen as well as the distribution of bedroom equipment, benefitting 1,800 persons.
- In Ecuador, CARE facilitated a series of workshops on the prevention and response to SGBV as well as protection, for over 780 refugees and migrants from Venezuela.

### HIAS

- In Ecuador and Costa Rica, HIAS provided legal assistance as well as orientation on documentation, regularisation mechanisms and asylum procedures, benefitting over 6,000 refugees and migrants from Venezuela.
- HIAS assisted over 600 Venezuelan vulnerable asylum seekers in Ecuador with emergency assistance, including with accommodation and food.

## IOM

- On 31 October, IOM completed the implementation of a CERF funded project covering six of the most impacted countries in South America and the Caribbean and comprising critical life-saving activities. Number of beneficiaries per activity area were: a) Tracking and profiling: 24,540; b) NFIs: 9,600; c) temporary accommodation: 6,274; d) transportation assistance: 2,778; information on documentation: 18,676; information on exploitation and abuse: 24,868; referrals: 26,423; emergency assistance: 4,289.
- Forty-two representatives from the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service participated in the Migrant Protection and Assistance Training conducted in Port of Spain, designed to strengthen the response to recent migration into Trinidad and increase the referral of vulnerable refugees and migrants for humanitarian assistance and other services.

## Plan International

- In Colombia Plan facilitated a series of trainings on protection, prevention and response to SGBV for 750 children and 4,000 parents and teachers, including refugees, migrants, and host communities. In Ecuador, Plan have supported 4,500 persons in the transit area 'Gran Sabana in Quito', by providing hydration, hygiene, shelter and children kits; Plan also supported the movement of 450 migrants to the southern border in Huaquillas and the interior of the country.
- In Peru, Plan is reinforcing the capacities of different governmental agencies at Tumbes with logistics and personnel for the Special Protection Unit which deals with the registration and first line reception of unaccompanied children; it also established a Child Friendly Space "Plan of Joy" that has attended over 7,000 Venezuelan children at the border post.

## UNHCR

- UNHCR and its partners scaled up activities at the Tumbes border crossing, including through the setting up of a new medical space, 50 chemical toilets and 10 garbage containers, as well as the provision of mandatory vaccinations, drinking water, hygiene kits, baby kits, food and cash. Through UNHCR's support, Peruvian authorities also significantly increased their processing capacity of registrations and asylum claims.
- In Colombia, over 233,800 Venezuelans who were identified through the mass registration exercise (RAMV) have obtained their Special Stay Permit (PEP) up to 15 October, including almost 21,400 with UNHCR support, enabling access to the labour market and health services.

## UNFPA

- In Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, UNFPA is supporting national authorities with the implementation of the MISP, the establishment of referral pathways to ensure survivors of SGBV can access life-saving services, and the dissemination of information to prevent SGBV and inform affected communities about services available.
- UNFPA deployed a GBV Coordinator to the Regional Platform for an initial period of six months, to support and facilitate joint efforts to address sexual violence and other forms of SGBV.

## UNICEF

- UNICEF and its partners established 11 Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) in Boa Vista and Pacaraima, Brazil. Over 8,300 children have been reached through the CFSs, including with psychosocial support, socialisation, play and recreation, as well as with identification and referral of vulnerabilities.
- The Government of Ecuador signed a new protocol establishing protection mechanisms for refugee and migrant children. In collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility and the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion, UNICEF and partners provided technical assistance in the adoption of the Protocol and organised workshops with the involved authorities and stakeholders in main border areas.

## WFP

- WFP and its partners provided hot meals, food vouchers, food kits and school meals to over 42,600 vulnerable refugees and migrants from Venezuela, as well as host community members in border areas in Colombia.
- In Ecuador, WFP and its partners provided food vouchers to over 22,600 vulnerable refugees and migrants from Venezuela during October.