Strategic Response Priorities

In close coordination with governments, the partners in the Southern Cone countries will respond to the humanitarian, protection and integration needs of refugees and migrants from Venezuela focusing on:

1. Shelter and food assistance, humanitarian transportation, non-food items and sanitation initiatives.
2. Strengthening of governments’ response capacities, especially in the areas of health and education.
3. Provision of information and guidance on asylum, regularization and documentation mechanisms, as well as on available social services.
4. Strengthening the prevention, mitigation and response to protection risks, especially for those with specific needs and in the areas of GBV and smuggling and human trafficking.
5. Facilitation of the recognition and revalidation of academic and professional degrees.
6. Development of labor inclusion policies/programs together with governments and the private sector, including self-employment and entrepreneurship initiatives.
7. Anti-xenophobia and anti-discrimination initiatives, including social cohesion activities between refugees, migrants and host communities.

Situation

The countries covered under the Southern Cone Chapter (Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay and Paraguay) have maintained an open-door policy for refugees and migrants from Venezuela. According to official figures, more than 163,000 Venezuelans resided in the sub-region by September 2019, which is expected to reach up to 236,000 by end-2020. Southern Cone countries have generally provided universal and free access to public health and education systems, and policies and programs for the integration of migrants and refugees from Venezuela have been developed (including for the recognition and revalidation of academic and professional degrees; training programs for employment; schemes to favor self-employment). Nevertheless, strained capacities and administrative barriers, lack of documentation and unrecognized degrees, at times limit access to services for refugees and migrants. Considering the ongoing rate of arrivals, with growing number of persons with specific needs, governments in the sub-region have enhanced their reception and documentation services, while having identified pressing needs in areas of emergency humanitarian assistance; regularization and asylum processes; medical care; education; child protection, women and LGBTI populations; combatting GBV and trafficking/smuggling; and the generation of opportunities for economic and social inclusion.

The total budget includes activities targeting refugees and migrants from Venezuela in-transit to other countries. In order to avoid duplications, and unless otherwise stated, this population group is not included in the key population projections, PiN and target population figures.