



Strategic Response Priorities

- 1 Enhance direct humanitarian assistance through CBI, or in-kind assistance. Multipurpose grants will be delivered to the most vulnerable refugees and migrants from Venezuela, to cover food, non-food/hygiene items, medicines and housing support.
- 2 Strengthen advocacy with authorities to promote inclusion of Venezuelans refugees and migrants in the government's response.
- 3 Develop informational materials and strengthening Communication with Communities to address a range of issues, including prevention of COVID-19, access to health services, access to remote legal and psychosocial counselling, SGBV prevention and response hotlines, access to emergency humanitarian assistance.
- 4 Adapt ongoing programmes and services to remote/online modalities in the COVID-19 context, with a view to ensuring continuity of key activities, such as legal, protection and psycho-social counselling, community mobilization activities, prevention of detentions and refoulement, etc.
- 5 Increase resilience and integration opportunities through interventions in the fields of livelihoods, financial inclusion and social cohesion.
- 6 Strengthen outreach and communication with communities to share COVID-19 prevention messages and provide information on available services.



Situation

People continue to leave Venezuela to escape violence, insecurity and protection threats as well as lack of food, medicine and essential services. Since 2018, the number of Venezuelans entering the Dominican Republic has progressively increased, which has put a strain on the country's reception capacities and public services. In the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic is the country hosting the highest number of refugees and migrants from Venezuela.

In December 2019, the Dominican Government introduced a visa requirement for Venezuelans, who previously were able to obtain a tourist stamp on arrival. With the new visa policy, Venezuelans wishing to enter the Dominican Republic are required to apply for a visa in the Dominican Embassy in Caracas, Venezuela. This visa restriction will likely lead to an increase in irregular arrivals and make refugees and migrants, especially women and children, particularly vulnerable to human trafficking and smuggling. Most refugees and migrants in the Dominican Republic do not have regular migration status due to lack of opportunities to regularize their situation. This leads to barriers in accessing the formal labor market, basic services, financial institutions and higher education. Lack of access to the formal labor market has led some Venezuelans to resort to risky coping mechanisms, including survival sex, in order to meet their basic needs, exposing them to risks of exploitation and abuse.

Dominican Republic has the the largest number of COVID-19 confirmed cases, being the most affected country by the pandemic

in the Caribbean. Lack of regular status in the country, restrictions of movement due to COVID-19 restrictions and closure of businesses since mid-March posed acute challenges for Venezuelans to access livelihoods as well as government support, rendering them vulnerable and in need of humanitarian assistance. Closure of borders and suspension of flights since mid-March 2020 have also impacted Venezuelans' access to territory in DR.

The Government of Dominican Republic implemented labor/social security measures, including a "Stay at Home" program, whereby informal workers and poor and vulnerable families will receive financial support. However, the vast majority of Venezuelan refugees and migrants will not benefit from these programs, as an estimated 87% of them have irregular migratory status, and as such are not registered in governmental social security programmes. Venezuelans have the right to access primary and emergency healthcare, including COVID-19 tests, for free. The main humanitarian needs of Venezuelan in the DR are access to food and non-food items (NFIs); healthcare and psycho-social support; support for rent, legal counselling to avoid evictions; reliable and accessible information; SGBV prevention & response interventions; and livelihoods interventions to bridge gaps in earnings.

SECTOR	PEOPLE IN NEED*	PEOPLE TARGETED*	REQUIREMENTS - USD	PARTNERS
Food Security	39.6 K	1.3 K	\$ 235 K	3
Health	3.3 K	3.5 K	\$ 1.16 M	5
Integration	27.8 K	2.2 K	\$ 1.17 M	5
Shelter/NFI	39.6 K	14 K	\$ 305 K	3
Protection**	39.6 K	16 K	\$ 1.34 M	6
Multipurpose CBI			\$ 64 K	2
Support Services***			\$ 402 K	3

*The figure of People in Need and People Targeted includes host communities |**Includes GBV, Child Protection, Human Trafficking & Smuggling |***Communication, Coordination, and Information Management