Situation

- On 4 March, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a virtual event to launch the Brazilian chapter of the 2021 RMRP, which consists of a USD 98 million appeal submitted by 34 partner organizations to target 260,000 Venezuelans living in the country, with sectoral interventions in Shelter, Food Security, Education, WASH, Health, Nutrition, Protection and Integration. With remarks from the Humanitarian Logistics Task Force of the Brazilian Army, the Office of the Chief of Staff, the UN Resident Coordinator, Civil Society, US and EU Embassies, as well as R4V representatives, the event attended by 196 participants - was also an opportunity to discuss Operation Welcome’s achievements to date and ongoing efforts to provide assistance, protection, and integration for Venezuelans in Brazil.

- On 23 March, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued Ordinance 19/2021, further easing documentation requirements for Venezuelan nationals who entered Brazil through regular pathways and are seeking legal status. Individuals will now be able to request a temporary residence permit by presenting, amongst others, expired identity documents from their country of origin, and sign a sworn statement declaring their familial ties if they lack a birth or marriage certificate. The new ordinance replaces Ordinance 9/2018, but it does not affect the validity and effectiveness of Ordinance 652/2021, which established temporary entry restrictions by land and sea for foreigners of all nationalities in Brazil.

- On 21 March, a Federal Judge in Roraima issued a temporary injunction order that halted the deportation of refugees and migrants in Roraima and requested the authorities to ensure individuals have access to legal status under the migration or refugee laws. In response, R4V partners supported Operation Welcome to expedite the documentation process for 1,402 refugees and migrants in Pacaraima and Boa Vista. On 30 March, the Regional Federal Court reversed the ruling, citing sanitary concerns and reinstating the previous orders, which prevent Venezuelans who entered the country after border closures were enforced from seeking legal status. In this context, R4V partners will continue to support refugees and migrants authorized by Operation Welcome for exceptional shelter allocation and documentation based on vulnerability assessments.

Response

Education

- As part of its strategy to address the issue of school exclusion and dropouts among children and adolescents, including Venezuelans, the Education Sector invited local governments in Roraima, Amazonas, and Pará States to join the Active School Search initiative. The initiative aims to support local authorities in identifying, registering and monitoring children and adolescents who are out of school or at risk of dropping out. Active School Search ensures that policy makers have access to significant data to develop and implement education policies, which contribute to school inclusion.

- As part of the project Misordo, led by the State University of Roraima, R4V partners offered training courses on Venezuelan Sign Language for family members and educators of deaf or hard of hearing children and adolescents living in shelters. The initiative seeks to address the specific educational needs of children and adolescents with disabilities and foster their integration in the country.

Health

- Considering the health needs and concerns of Venezuelan women in Brazil, R4V partners launched a booklet with information on women’s physical and mental health and access to health services and support networks. Addressing women’s health needs is instrumental in facilitating integration, participation and positive social and economic development, as well as bridging development and public health issues.

Integration/ Interiorization/ Humanitarian Transportation

- R4V partners launched Caminhando Juntos (Walking Together), an online course designed to prepare young refugees and migrants, including Venezuelans (18-24 years old) to enter the labour market. Modules cover labour rights and documentation, professional development, Brazilian workplace culture, and help students prepare for job applications and interviews. The course was developed in collaboration with SENAI, a network of not-for-profit secondary-level professional schools established by the Brazilian Confederation of Industry.
• R4V partners signed a cooperation agreement with Crédito Perola, which aims to provide microcredit to refugees and migrants, including Venezuelans, in Manaus, Boa Vista, and Brasilia. With this financial support, refugees and migrants will be able to develop their businesses and improve their self-reliance.

Nutrition
• R4V partners continued their nutritional surveillance programme and screenings in the shelters of Pacaraima, Boa Vista, Manaus, Belém, and Santarém, as well as in public health facilities in the State of Roraima. In total, 484 children under the age of 5 (including 269 Indigenous Warao children) as well as 251 pregnant and lactating women were screened for malnutrition, out of whom 237 received daily micronutrient tablets. Counselling sessions on appropriate feeding were held for 697 caregivers of infants, girls, and boys ages 0-23 months.

Protection
• The Protection sector and the GBV subsector, together with public institutions, organized a wide range of events to mark International Women’s Day in Roraima State on 8 March. The celebrations addressed gender equality and women’s rights amid the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 620 people participated in activities such as group sessions, yoga, and dance classes. R4V partners produced videos, radio programs, and social media posts to celebrate the date.
• Partners specialized in GBV continued to deliver services in Roraima State, reaching 714 people though case management, psychosocial support, and group discussions on gender, power relations, gender-based violence, positive masculinities, access to local services, women’s and LGBTQI+ rights.
• As part of its strategy to ensure access to social services for families and children, the Child Protection (CP) subsector worked closely with the Municipal Department of Social Assistance in Pacaraima to help register indigenous Taurengan families in the CadÚnico, the Government system which allows people to apply for social benefits, such as Bolsa Família. The CP subsector also prepared and distributed a leaflet in Spanish to guide Venezuelan refugees and migrants through the online registration of the Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (CPF), which is essential to access public services in Brazil, including health, education, and financial services.

Shelter/Food Security
• R4V partners released an updated version of the Shelter dashboard with profiles and needs of refugees and migrants in Operation Welcome’s shelters in Roraima. According to the Dashboard, 6,785 people live in 13 shelters, and 3,962 have at least one protection need, such as people with health conditions, GBV survivors or children at risk, for example.
• In Manaus, R4V partners continued to conduct protection assessments of indigenous families living outside state and municipal shelters and identified people experiencing food insecurity. As a result, partners assisted 57 Indigenous families (284 individuals) with food distribution.
• The restrictive measures designed to halt the spread of COVID-19 in Belém, Pará State, had a significant impact on the livelihoods of indigenous refugees and migrants living in the city. To strengthen food security and nutrition among Indigenous communities, R4V partners distributed 180 food baskets to 95 families living in private accommodations in Belém.

WASH
• The WASH sector continued to provide WASH services in Roraima and Amazonas, including access to safe water, basic sanitation, and hygiene items. Over 506,000 litres of treated water were supplied by truck to refugees and migrants living in spontaneous settlements and those using the sleeping area of Boa Vista’s bus terminal. In addition, 7,800 litres of sodium solution for disinfecting surfaces and rooms were provided to indigenous communities, spontaneous settlements, and Operation Welcome shelters.
• WASH education and hygiene promotion activities reached an estimated 3,180 individuals in shelters, informal housing, and indigenous communities in Amazonas, Roraima, and Pará.

For more information, please contact: Paola Bolognesi - bolognesi@unhcr.org | Mickael Deprez - mideprez@iom.int