

- Following the decision of the Ecuadorian Constitutional Court to suspend the requirement of an apostilled criminal record certificate and a valid passport or a validated ID card to enter the country, an average of 2,200 daily arrivals of Venezuelan refugees and migrants was registered.
- The III Regional Meeting of the Quito Process took place. Exchange of practices, increasing coordination and communication between the transit and receiving countries and an appeal to the international community to better support countries in the region cope with the influx were the focus of the meeting and ensuing declaration.
- An inter-agency training initiative for humanitarian staff on prevention and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) started during the month.

- **107,661 people attended in total^{1 2}**
- **80,143 people received humanitarian assistance**
- **26,492 people received protection assistance**
- **1,026 people received socio-economic and cultural integration assistance**
- **37% of those who received assistance were women and over 42% were children and adolescents.**
- **1,640 civil servants and health professionals were trained on human rights, gender, child protection, access to asylum and human mobility services.**
- **76 humanitarian staff trained in PSEA in April**

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

During the reporting period, a regular influx of Venezuelan refugees and migrants was observed at the official border crossing points (San Miguel, Rumichaca and Huaquillas). Entries at the Rumichaca border increased to approximately 2,200 entries per day, approaching the average observed during 2018, following the decision of the Constitutional Court to suspend the certified criminal record and valid passport or validated ID card requirement as of 28th March 2019. Since the suspension of these restrictive measures, migration authorities are now allowing the entry of Venezuelan refugees and migrants presenting valid passports, ID cards, and/or birth certificates to Ecuador, in accordance with the provisions of the Human Mobility Law. However, migration and police authorities continue to maintain a checkpoint at the Rumichaca International Bridge, denying the entry of Venezuelans not in possession of valid travel documents.

On 2nd April, the civil court in Tulcan accepted the protection and precautionary measures requested by the Ombudsman's Office regarding the *de facto* deportations of seven Venezuelan nationals on 13th March. In the ruling, the judge stated that the right to migrate and the prohibition of collective expulsions had been violated and instructed de Ministry of Interior to initiate training programmes to avoid similar events in the future.

The III Regional Meeting of the Quito Process (Quito III) was held on 8th and 9th April. A Joint Declaration was issued and signed by various participating governments, emphasizing the importance of increasing coordination and communication between transit and reception countries to guarantee the protection of human rights of Venezuelans in human mobility, particularly the most vulnerable. The Declaration also appealed to the international community to support the efforts of

¹ The quantitative data measures direct assistance and does not include information or advocacy activities. The numbers displayed correspond to people assisted and not to other metrics (e.g. institutions assisted, shelters etc.).

² The numbers of persons assisted reflect direct and individual assistance interventions. These figures may, however, include people who have been assisted several times through different interventions.

the countries in the region. The Joint Special Representative for IOM and UNHCR, Dr. Eduardo Stein, handed a report to the participating delegations, highlighting the coordination efforts of countries in the region and the need to further accompany host communities. Argentina will host the next meeting of the “*Quito Process*”, in Buenos Aires on 4th and 5th July.

RESPONSE OVERVIEW

Area of Intervention 1: Direct emergency assistance

- **80,143 people** received emergency assistance in April 2019, **74%** of the total of people assisted.
- **37%** of the people assisted were **women**, **18% men** and **45%** were **children and adolescents**.
- **6,134** refugees and migrants benefited from access to **communication services** at the borders.³
- **3,561** people were assisted with **multi-purpose cash grants**

Delivery of information and orientation on migration and asylum procedures is a priority. At the border crossing points, brochures and direct information are provided to the population in situation of human mobility on various topics, rights and obligations, visa procedures, routes, and access to services, through a variety of modalities. More than 26,000 beneficiaries were reached by information distribution activities, including informative talks and group sessions (16,644) as well as and distribution of information leaflets (9,891 in total).⁴

Actions are undertaken on a regular basis by GTRM partners to improve living conditions in temporary shelters. In April, internet service was set up in resting areas located in Rumichaca, facilitating the communication of refugees and migrants with their families. Equipment (foetal dopplers, adult and paediatric blood pressure monitors, adult and paediatric stethoscopes, scales, digital oximeters, thermometers) and medication were provided to trained health care professionals (one doctor, two immunization nurses and two primary care technicians for health promotion) to enable the delivery of first aid medical assistance at the permanent health units located in the border care centres in San Lorenzo, Esmeraldas Province. Similarly, 3,185 Venezuelan nationals were provided with information on sexual and reproductive health at hospitals and health units, including the Huaquillas and San Miguel CEBAF, and the Rumichaca CENAF.

Various GTRM partners are providing multipurpose cash-based assistance, which enables targeted population to cover their basic needs quickly and efficiently; while also contributing to minimizing several protection risks.

Area of Intervention 2: Protection

- **26,492** people received protection assistance in April 2019, **25%** of the total of people assisted
- **36%** of the people assisted were **women**, **31% men** and **33%** were **children and adolescents**
- **42** LGBTI individuals **attended**

The overall results of monitoring undertaken at the national level has allowed to identify several vulnerable profiles; especially due to the high rate of pregnant and lactating women.

³ Communication services include: provision of internet/WIFI facilities and ports for charging mobile phones, to facilitate communication of refugees and migrants with their relatives.

⁴ Data collected from the GTRM narrative report.

The protection response for women victims of violence in border locations (Tulcan, San Miguel) and in Quito has been strengthened. The first cantonal GBV roundtable took place in Huaquillas, where humanitarian personnel was trained and a protocol for reporting and referring cases was established, with the support of the Regional Platform for Venezuelan Migrants and Refugees. Moreover, capacity building of the Ministry of Public Health regarding the clinical management of sexual violence was provided.

In the specific case of Imbabura Province, two specialized interinstitutional and multisector working groups were established in the framework of the Human Mobility Round Table: one addressed child protection, and the other regarding the coordination of humanitarian assistance. In this sense, many organizations and civil society institutions were integrated into an Integral Protection Network on Cases of domestic, gender and sexual violence in Imbabura (RED VIF-GXI). In Quito, an inter-institutional letter of commitment was signed to report and coordinate actions when situations of domestic violence are detected. Regarding protection of LGBTI people, since March 2019, protocols have been in force on the response and referral of LGBTI people in a situation of human mobility at the Reference and Information Center "*Mi Casa Fuera de Casa*" in Quito-Ecuador.

Area of Intervention 3: Socio-economic and cultural integration

- **1,026** people assisted in April 2019, representing **1%** of the total of people assisted
- **50%** of the people assisted were **women**, **20% men** and **30%** were **children and adolescents**
- **499 people** were assisted in the field of access to housing, education and livelihoods.

In terms of need assessments, protection monitoring was conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) in several urban areas of the country (Guayaquil, Quito, Cuenca and Santo Domingo) to assess the situation of the many Venezuelans in the streets. This allowed to detect a high rate (some 70% overall) of out-of-school children, especially during the first year of arrival to Ecuador. Due to actions implemented by education partners, progress was made in the review of public policy and the analysis of current regulations for the inclusion of refugees and migrants in the public education system. However, the confirmation of how many children can enrol is pending and the enrolment to the public-school system for this cycle is finalized. Strong advocacy has been conducted with Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) to guarantee the access.⁵ The MIES advocated on the basis of the outcomes of the protection monitoring; as a result, an inter-ministerial agreement is about to be signed (in June) in order for MIES to refer children and for allowing children to attend school, even if as observers, if they arrive late in the year. A joint registration form was created with MIES for the referral of unaccompanied children, to be used by the institutions when submitting a case for admission to the Initial Education Centres (*Centros Educación Inicial*, CIBV); and in collaboration with the Public Defender's Office, cases for enrolment in the education system has referred to this institution.

Concerning access to housing, cash-based assistance for some refugees and migrants wishing to settle in Ecuador continues to be provided. In addition, individual legal support for rent and support with household items has been provided for vulnerable cases.

Several partners implement livelihoods programmes for people on the move which provide services to facilitate both employment and entrepreneurship, starting with an initial evaluation of profiles. So far, workshops have been organized on employment and entrepreneurship⁶ with the attendance of 160 people. Likewise, alliances with public

⁵ In the Sierra Region school year is about to end, so it will be necessary to review the data of access to the public education system when the new school year starts in September 2019.

⁶ Workshop "*Decide emprender*"

and private institutions have been strengthened in order to create employment and entrepreneurship networks and opportunities.

Outreach to public and private institutions has been made to grant Venezuelan refugees and migrants access to professional training programmes and to simplify the formalization of entrepreneurship. In addition, efforts have been made to showcase the work and quality of the products manufactured by Venezuelan entrepreneurs supported by GTRM partners. Promotion of access to financial services has been carried out, including through the search of options credits for refugees and asylum seekers like those implemented in other countries, which has resulted in a boost in the Venezuelan refugees and migrants' access to bank accounts and credits.

Ante todo son Niños and *Abrazos que unen* communicational campaigns were disseminated nationwide through social networks and mass media to sensitize Ecuadorian citizens about xenophobia.

Area of Intervention 4: Support to the host Government

- **8,163** members of civil society **trained**
- **1,472** civil servants **trained**
- **168** health care professionals **trained**

GTRM partners participated in different human mobility round tables, to which different State institutions had participated at the national level, which has allowed a space for inter-institutional coordination and advocacy regarding the Venezuela response as well as to identify and evaluate critical points presented at the local level, gaps and needs for strengthening the State response.

Likewise, coordination with the State entities present at the Huaquillas border continues as does the support for equipping the waiting room managed by the Police, which is functioning as a resting area. Training on human mobility and communication was conducted for the local governments of Tulcan and Ibarra. Additionally, a consultancy about the situation of refugee and migrant women across Ecuador, Colombia and Peru is being led by a GTRM member.

During April, several training processes were carried out for the benefit of civil servants. For example, to provide a better guidance to the population in transit, all the security personnel of the land terminal of Guayaquil were trained in humanitarian principles and orientation to refugees and migrants in transit. MIES officials were also capacitated on the implementation of the response procedures for unaccompanied or separated children. Health care providers, at the first and second level, received a training on subjects included at the Initial Minimum Emergency Package⁷ and sexual and reproductive health.

COORDINATION

- The protection working group has begun the training phase of an inter-agency initiative on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. Workshops were held in different locations, with an attendance of 76 participants for the month of April. The workshops will continue to take place in May in Quito, Guayaquil and Ibarra. The achievements of the protection working group on this topic were presented during the last regional platform meeting, held in Panama.

⁷ Initial Minimum Emergency Package includes priority services oriented to: prevent the occurrence of maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality; prevent and treat the consequences of sexual violence; and reduce the transmission of HIV.

- The CBI (Cash-Based Interventions) working group passed through a consolidation phase during April, with the approval of its terms of reference and the elaboration of a working plan for this year.

PLATFORM PARTNERS

ADRA | CARE | CSMM-PIDHDD Centro de Documentación en Derechos Humanos - Plataforma Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo | Dialogo Diverso | FUDELA Fundacion de las Americas | HIAS Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society | ILO | IOM | Jesuit Refugee Service Ecuador | Misión Scalabriniana | Norwegian Refugee Council | Plan International Ecuador | Red Cross Ecuador | RET International | UNDP | UNESCO | UNFPA | UNHCR | UNICEF | UNOCHA | UNWOMEN | World Vision Ecuador | WFP | WHO

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