

22 MAY 2020



REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS FROM VENEZUELA IN:

THE WORLD LATIN AMERICA &amp; CARIBBEAN

5.1 M 4.3 M



FUNDING SITUATION\*

6%

FUNDED: USD 89.7 M

REQUIREMENTS: USD 1.41 BN

## Situation

Following the launch of the revised RMRP 2020 in the context of COVID-19 the **International Donors Conference** is scheduled for **26 May 2020** in solidarity with Venezuelan refugees and migrants. The European Union and the Government of Spain, with the support of UNHCR and IOM, will convene the Conference in [virtual format](#). R4V partners have been actively preparing for the conference. This has included first and foremost the revision of the regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP), but also the development of a range of materials for dissemination to raise the profile of the event. Importantly, a dedicated **planning session of civil society organizations (CSO) was convened by the *Coalición LAC RMD*** this week within the framework of the R4V Platform to inform a strong CSO R4V partner contribution to the conference.

**R4V Partners across the region are looking forward to following the proceedings of the Conference virtually**, in anticipation of contributions that international donors will announce to support governments of the host countries as well as R4V partners, to provide the much-needed assistance, protection and integration support to the most vulnerable refugees and migrants in the region and their host communities, who are now more than ever facing dire needs amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. To inform a broad audience on the Conference, a dedicated [Information Note](#) has been disseminated, while additional information can be found on the corresponding websites of the [Spanish Government](#) and of the [European Union](#).

**Cases of sexual exploitation, including incidents in exchange for accommodation are being reported across the region.** According to reports of R4V partners, increasingly women and girls and their families who cannot pay for their rents risk eviction if they do not respond to demands for sexual favors. Return movements to Venezuela and evictions continue to be linked to significant protection risks for refugees and migrants in the region. The impacts of COVID-19 have also led to complex challenges regarding the identification of and response to human trafficking cases due to reduced capacity in shelters and even more limited availability of socio-economic support.

## Platforms' Response\*\*

**In Brazil**, R4V partners continue to support the **Area of Protection and Care (APC) in Boa Vista** as a priority. Last week, the first batch of critical drugs was donated to the facility to treat severe cases and guarantee the best possible care for the patients. Partners have elaborated educational radio broadcasts available in Portuguese, Spanish, Warao to mitigate the impact of the closure of schools. Child protection messages were developed and distributed in Warao and Panare languages to prevent and mitigate child abuse and mistreatment especially among indigenous populations during the quarantine.

**Chile** has seen increasing contagion of COVID-19, and food insecurity is rising for refugees and migrants as well as host communities. R4V partners and civil society organizations are assisting large groups of homeless Venezuelans with temporary shelter, food and hygiene items for the most vulnerable. The National Platform is defining local sector strategies and is also supporting technical meetings in preparation of the upcoming Quito Process meeting.

**In Colombia**, the **Grupo Interagencial para Flujos Migratorios Mixtos (GIFMM)** is reviewing the guidelines for services during COVID-19, as an operational tool to support the response. The local GIFMMs continue to support the national government in the delivery of food assistance for refugees, migrants and host communities. Also, key WASH infrastructure has been enhanced through the provision of hygiene kits, as well as the delivery of protective equipment and disinfection items in public health spots.

The **Grupo de Trabajo para Refugiados y Migrantes (GTRM)** in **Ecuador** has succeeded in increasing considerably its assistance in food, multipurpose cash transfers and the delivery of non-food items, according to recent R4V platform monitoring. The results of a Rapid Needs Assessment were presented to various national sectors. In addition, the U-Report tool has been launched by the Communications Working Group providing up-to-date information on rights and on COVID-19 for young and adolescent refugees and migrants.

**In Peru**, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has informed that some **3,400 Venezuelan health professionals are expected to join the public health system**. Thanks to private donations, the GTRM, in coordination with the Presidency of the Council of

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\* Source: <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/944/summary>

\*\*These are examples of activities carried out by National/Sub-Regional Platforms and/or Regional Sectors. For further details, please see [R4V.info](#).

Ministries and the National Institute of Civil Defense (INDECI by its Spanish acronym), is organizing and providing logistical support for a second distribution of food kits for vulnerable refugees and migrants in Lima.

**The Sub-Regional Platform and its partners in the Caribbean are coordinating upcoming distributions of food in Aruba and Curacao** to address increasing food insecurity, while in the other countries R4V partners are supporting with emergency accommodation and rent subsidies for the most vulnerable Venezuelans.

**In Central America and Mexico, partners of the Sub-Regional Platform provided workshops on psychosocial support and emotional wellbeing for refugee and migrant parents from Venezuela**, and to inform about new national immigration procedures. In Panama, information regarding access to health services, education, regularization, psychosocial support, and referrals to the public health system and other specialized services were provided to Venezuelans.

**In the Southern Cone, a series of tools directed to the protection of refugees and migrants from Venezuela, specifically against trafficking and GBV, are being developed by partners in the sub-region.** In Uruguay, R4V partners began the implementation of a referral mechanism to partners, the National Refugee Commission and the Ministry of Social Development to facilitate coordination in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and to avoid duplication. Partners continue with the provision of shelter solutions, NFIs, food assistance and cash-based interventions to the most vulnerable.

## Regional Sectors\*\*

**The Regional Health Sector continues to call upon local authorities for the provision of hygiene items** and personal protective equipment to refugees and migrants at their places of residence to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to encourage physical distancing.

**The Regional Protection Sector is designing a regional survey on evictions to identify protection risks and impacts** and to guarantee in-depth analysis and more accurate advocacy through strategic regional networks. The **Human trafficking & smuggling** Sub-sector is prioritizing the standardization of protocols and SOPs concerning incidents of trafficking in persons, and is emphasizing sensitization and communication of the risks. Additionally, the mapping of services and actors is advancing in order to complete referral pathways. The **GBV** Sub-sector has identified an increase in sexual exploitation incidents in exchange for accommodation, both within informal settlements and private housing. The Sub-sector is working in coordination with the Regional Shelter sector and the CBI working group to promote strategies to mitigate this risk.

**Food Security continues to be a top priority in the regional response and partners are advocating for more funds** to be able to reach more people in need with food assistance, especially in urban areas where most refugees and migrants reside. The sector is working on the adaptation of their modalities to CBI where appropriate.

**The ILO and UNDP have presented to the Regional Integration Sector their “Regional socio-economic integration strategy for refugees and migrants from Venezuela and their host communities”** which is based on recommendations of the Ministries of Labour under the framework of the Quito Process. All organizations of the Sector have actively contributed to this strategy.

**The Regional Shelter, NFI and Humanitarian Transportation Sectors have begun a collaboration with the regional Support Spaces working group for the mapping** of Shelter, NFI and Humanitarian Transportation services in the region. The sector group also held a regional meeting including thematic presentations on the collaboration between Health and Shelter sectors, as well as CBI and accommodation solutions, including hotels, to address the need for shelter among refugees and migrants.

**The Regional WASH Sector is organizing a WASH Humanitarian Operational Coordination Training.** Over 180 individuals have registered and all Spanish speaking R4V countries will be represented. The sector has also updated the monitoring of WASH public policies in response to COVID-19 in 26 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

**The Regional Multipurpose CBI Working Group is sharing targeting methodologies and approaches related to the refugee and migrant response through CBI during COVID-19.** The working group is also holding a Webinar on the mainstreaming of gender considerations in CBI throughout the program cycle and has produced [guidance on cash and voucher assistance](#) during the COVID-19 response.

**The Regional Education Sector is supporting Ministries of Education in the region to prepare for the process of reopening schools under a multi-sectoral scheme** (education, health protection and WASH) and based on attention to additional aspects such as safe operations, inclusion of the most vulnerable and protection. The educational needs of refugee and migrant children are practically invisible; therefore, a process has been initiated at the regional level to advocate at the national levels for concrete actions for the benefit of this vulnerable group.