



SOCIAL JUSTICE
DECENT WORK



Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean

ILO RESPONSE

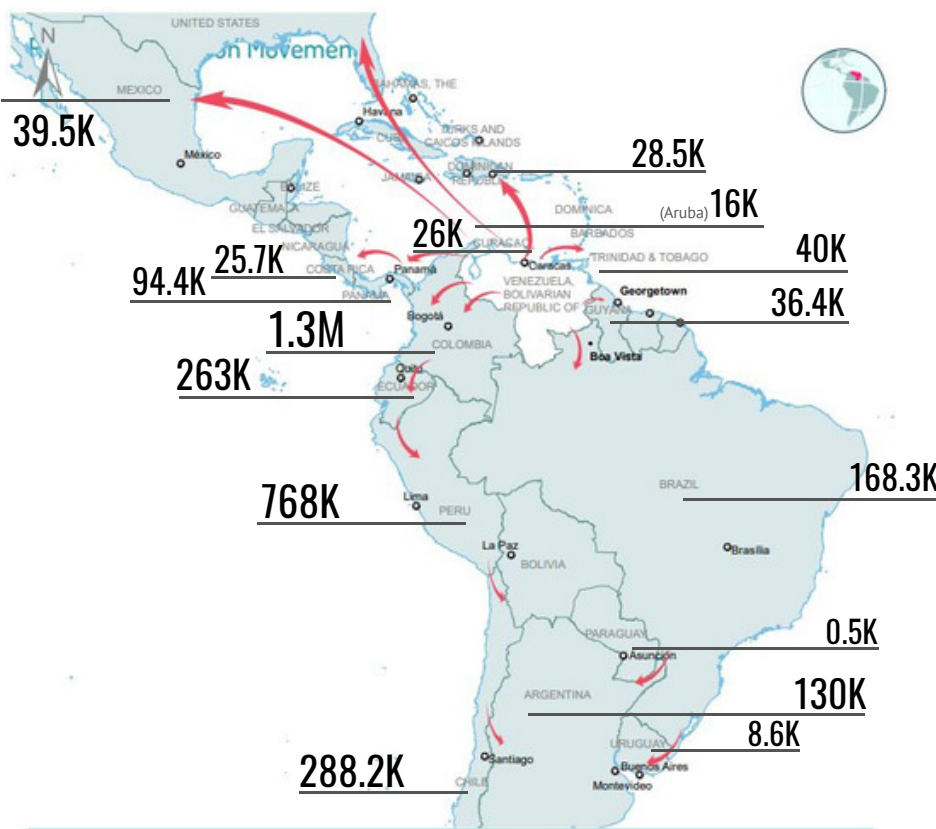
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CURRENT SITUATION

The worsening social, economic, human rights and political situation in Venezuela has generated a humanitarian emergency, resulting in an unprecedented outflow of refugees and migrants from the country into neighbouring states and beyond. With 4 million of people who left their homes to date, this represents the largest displacement of population in the modern history of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Neighbouring countries have so far shown great solidarity, providing over 1.3 million incoming Venezuelans with temporary residence permits and access to the labour market. However, their capacity to respond to such an inflow of people is limited, and both institutions and local communities are now under enormous strains. Governance structures of migratory and refugee flows have reached their limits, with critical challenges to the provision of effective protection of basic labour rights (for both displaced Venezuelans and the local population), to social protection institutions and to labour market institutions, among others. As a result, many Venezuelan women, men and children find themselves in an irregular situation, which makes them vulnerable to various forms of exploitation, abuse, violence, and discrimination.

Venezuelan Refugees & Migrants in the region



4,001,917
Venezuelan migrants,
refugees, asylum-seekers

Source: R4V Operational Portal, June 2019

1,828,250
People with regular status
including resident permits

Source: R4V Operational Portal, June 2019

Source: R4V Maps and Geodata, June 2019

THE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

At the request of the UN Secretary General, the [Inter-Agency Regional Coordination Platform \(R4V\)](#) was established in April 2018, under the coordination of UNHCR and IOM. The ILO, through its Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Lima, Peru, has taken on a coordination role in the area of intervention on **Socio Economic and Cultural Integration** within the R4V. Working together with key national and international actors, it is developing an intervention model to address the socio-economic needs of both host communities and Venezuelans.

Understanding the importance of ensuring a region-wide response, as well as to work jointly among governments in the region and international community, the [regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan \(RMRP\) 2019](#) was developed by 95 organizations to support national authorities in the region.

Developed in line with governments' priorities, the plan addresses the protection, assistance and integration needs of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the affected States of Latin America and the Caribbean, by complementing and strengthening national and regional governments' responses, in line with national strategies and with the principles of the [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#).

In addition, the affected governments in the region have held several technical coordination meetings, which resulted in the '[Declaration of Quito on human mobility of Venezuelan citizens in the region](#)' and its related [action plan](#), signed in September 2018 by Argentina, Colombia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. The Declaration recognizes the importance of ensuring Venezuelans access to employment opportunities and recognizes the importance of technical and financial cooperation of specialized international organizations to overcome this crisis. The ILO is participating as observer to the meetings of the Quito Process.



ILO'S COORDINATED RESPONSE STRATEGY

Across the region, the ILO is building capacity to support its constituents in the receiving countries to improve the governance and capacity of public policies to respond to the needs of both Venezuelans and host communities. By building on its comparative advantages, as well as its experience in delivering market- and institutional-based solutions to large-scale displacement, the ILO intends to assist host countries to address the labour market-related challenges engendered by the migration crisis in the region. This would be achieved through a combination of short, medium and long-term rights-based interventions.

In collaboration with IOM, FAO and the OAS, a detailed strategy of support to the socio-economic integration of Venezuelan migrants and refugees has been developed, for Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, which also includes host communities. **The strategy is articulated along the following key elements:**

CURRENT SITUATION	INTERVENTION
<p>The rapid pace of the migratory flows does not allow to fully capture the work profiles of migrants and refugees from Venezuela.</p> <p>As of May 2018, among those who are over 25 years old, 41% have higher education (technical or university) and 90% have complete secondary education*, and their job prospects are uncertain. Despite the efforts to capture the nature of qualifications, there are still important gaps in information that need to be addressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and systematise data on existing skills to create work profiles of displaced Venezuelans to facilitate labour market inclusion. • Produce evidence-based policy recommendations to ensure decent and productive employment strategies. • Raise awareness to promote the fair participation of Venezuelan refugees in the labour market and ensure that other groups of workers are not disadvantaged. • Activities will incorporate the views of social partners and elicit the participation of local communities.
<p>Many Venezuelans of working age in unemployment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2% were unemployed in Venezuela at the time of migration; • 42% were unemployed when answering the survey; • Among those who were working at the time of responding to the survey, 20% had received amounts less than initially agreed or had not received any payment.** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design an employability route through business development (SDE) and financial services for the creation and consolidation of enterprises led by migrants and refugees who have the skills, abilities and motivations to be entrepreneurs, in both urban and rural areas. • Conduct value chain analyses to determine job generation potential in specific sectors and initiate pilot interventions.
<p>Most Venezuelans (in Brazil, Colombia and Peru about 80 percent***) work in the informal economy, without access to basic labour rights, minimum wage regulations, social protection schemes, health and safety safeguards, social dialogue and collective representation mechanisms. The risk of incidence of child and forced labour is also considerably increased.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to formalization of displaced Venezuelan workers through value chains analysis in different sectors to guarantee inclusion and job creation and matching opportunities. • Support the institutional response of national institutions to reduce the risk of child labour among Venezuelans, building on the long-standing ILO's ongoing regional initiative.
<p>There is a general lack of information regarding existing employment opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support public employment agencies and the business sector in the designing e-platforms that simplify and foster labour recruitment and access to existing jobs.
<p>There are significant administrative hurdles in processing access to social security in host countries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical assistance to governments for the harmonization and improvement of information contained in databases and data systems of government services related to labour migration and refugees, in order to ensure relevant, reliable and continuous information on Venezuelan migrants and refugees in the destination countries.

* Data according to IOM's survey as of May 2018. See: https://robuensaires.iom.int/sites/default/files/Informes/FMS_VEN_jun15_sp.pdf

** Ibid.

*** Ibid, p. 7.

A MULTI-PHASED APPROACH

Anticipating that the crisis may become protracted, the strategy for intervention foresees a multi-phased approach. The ILO's mandate, positioned at the core of the humanitarian-development nexus, is consistent with the provision of both immediate livelihood solutions to the affected population and longer-term institutional solutions to ensure sustainable and rights-based public policies.



In the **short term**, it is vital to get a clearer picture of the work and skills profiles of migrants and refugees in destination countries. Therefore, data on existing skills will be collected to create work profiles of displaced Venezuelans to facilitate labour market inclusion, and delineate employment generation strategies in both urban and rural areas.



In the **medium term**, it is necessary to strengthen institutional mechanisms, practices and services offered by labour market actors (public and private) to migrants and refugees, both in urban and rural areas without displacing local workers. This includes technical assistance to National Employment Systems to update their services, make them more inclusive, with new procedures and guidelines.



In the **long term**, the intervention strategies should enhance the national and regional normative frameworks and governance mechanisms on labour migration and forced displacement, while developing institutional capacities of central and local municipal governments.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

In order to ensure a response in the shortest time possible, the ILO has committed **US\$ 2 million** from its un-earmarked voluntary funds (Regular Budget Supplementary Account) to kick-start seed interventions in Ecuador (Quito and Guayaquil), Colombia (Barranquilla and Cali) and Peru (North of Lima).

Beyond this, the ILO included in the inter-agency appeal **a funding gap of US\$ 8.7 million of voluntary funding** to cover the implementation of its component under the joint ILO-IOM-FAO-OAS strategy on socio-economic integration, which is expected to directly address the needs of over 12,000 people affected by the crisis and to indirectly benefit up to 2.5 million Venezuelans, in addition to the host communities.