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IMPACT OF VENEZUELA MIGRATION ON CITIZEN SECURITY IN COLOMBIA

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List of Abbreviations

BACRIM	Organized criminal groups (“ <i>bandas criminales</i> ”)
CONPES	National Council for Economic and Social Policy
DANE	National Administrative Department of Statistics
DIAN	National Directorate of Taxes and Customs
ELN	National Liberation Army
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
GEM	Special Migration Group
GIFMM	Interagency Group on Mixed Migratory Flows
GOC	Government of Colombia
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IAG	Illegal Armed Group
ICBF	Colombian Family Welfare Institute
INS	National Health Institute
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PEP	Special Permit of Permanence
RAMV	Administrative Registry of Venezuelan Migrants
SISBEN	Beneficiary Selection System for Social Programs
TMF	Border Mobility Card
UN	United Nations
UNGRD	National Disaster Risk Management Unit
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

Executive Summary

Venezuela's political and economic crisis has displaced over 1.4 million Venezuelans to Colombia. The local governments in the Colombian communities that receive migrants, or receptor communities, have limited resources and capacity to provide basic services to the incoming populations, which include Venezuelans and returning Colombians who were displaced during Colombia's armed conflict. The influx of people has increased public health concerns, such as the spread of infectious diseases, xenophobia towards migrants, involvement in illegal activities, and general unrest in some of the most vulnerable and conflict prone areas of the country.

As Colombia transitions from 50 years of conflict and strives to implement peace accords, it is important to note that any destabilizing factor could negatively influence progress made. While the assessment provides an overview of the migrant situation and offers recommendations to help strengthen the Government of Colombia's response, the team focused on what this crisis means in a post-conflict setting. A migration of this size over the course of the last few years could cause instability. As such the analysis looked at what those destabilizing elements could be as a result of this crisis, and the risk factors associated with the influx of so many people, in such a short amount of time.

The purpose of this assessment is to look at the impact of Venezuelan migration on safety and security in Colombia. The assessment collected data from 11 Colombian cities impacted by Venezuelan migration. It provides a snapshot of the situation from February to June 2019, the assessment's timeframe, though it should be noted that this is a constantly changing situation. The assessment team conducted 97 interviews and 11 focus groups of Colombians and Venezuelans residing in Colombia. Most of the findings in this report are from the qualitative data that the team collected, mainly from interviews and focus groups. Hard data was and continues to be an issue. Therefore, the reliance on quantitative data is not as profound as the qualitative methods utilized for research.

Main Findings

Public Policy Implementation

Public policies to plan for the migration crisis in Colombia need to be created, strengthened and communicated effectively throughout the country. Public policies refer to migration impacts at the national and sub-national governing level, and service delivery. Main factors include: the lack of communication of policies from the national level to the sub-national level; the need for a comprehensive strategy, including budget, health services, and housing; the lack of sustainable systems currently in place; the lack of data; and the impacts of irregular migration of such magnitude.

Socio-Economic Factors

The Colombian population has a general understanding of the crisis and a will to help Venezuelans. This was evident in every site visited, in conversations with Colombians and Venezuelans. There is, however, a lingering concern regarding the long-term needs of the Venezuelan migrants. As well, there is a current of distrust from some receptor communities as to what they view as a competition for scarce resources, high rates of impunity for crimes committed, and the takeover of

the informal economy. Colombian returnees could also experience a re-traumatization of factors they experienced during the conflict, due to the challenges of re-entering into Colombian society, visible reminders of the war, and the undue hardships from being displaced.

Risk Factors

Migration brings risk factors that could jeopardize Colombia's continued stability. Risk factors could lead to de-stabilization or violence and should be mitigated to ease tension, and sustain peace implementation efforts. The risk factors identified are: competition for scarce resources/services; reduced access to services; recruitment and extortion by illegal armed groups; the expansion of illicit economies; and the lack of safety and security of migrants in transit throughout the country. Migration also poses particular risks for vulnerable groups such as women, children, members of the LGBTI community, and indigenous people.

Recommendations

There are several recommendations that emerge from the main findings. These recommendations include short-, medium-, and long-term actions that can be taken by the USG, the Colombian government, and civil society actors, often in collaboration. Each recommended action is listed below.

Short-term

The USG should support efforts to register and track incoming migrants

Official data tracking of regular and irregular migrants has not been able to keep up with the large volumes of Venezuelans entering the country every day. Technical assistance is needed to strengthen existing registration mechanisms, and to help create a more robust system of tracking migrants. A communication plan must also accompany improved registry systems to inform migrants of the registration procedure, migration services, and their rights to these services.

Support a communications campaign to counter xenophobia

The USG should help develop a communications plan to reduce xenophobia. Xenophobia is rising, as evidenced in media rhetoric and interviews with stakeholders. As such, a communication/education plan to combat negative perceptions of migrants would help decrease community tensions, and serve as another imperative for the GOC to collect accurate and reliable data.

Help establish One Stop Centers

Both national-level and local-level provision of services is stretched right now due to the massive increase in population and the immediate need of migrants and receptor communities. Colombia has experience putting in place systems of service provision that reach the most vulnerable of communities and whose impact has been significant over the past few years. The centers could be placed strategically at major border crossings and throughout transit routes, and help alleviate the tremendous demand at the border and in major cities. They would provide basic information about how to access social services and programs, and could offer immediate health-related services, such as vaccinations and food kits; and help connect migrants to online systems for document processing.

Medium-term

Support public policies that plan for long-term migrant and receptor community needs

The GOC should build on previous efforts at setting public policies that plan for the long-term development needs of migrants and receptor communities. Adequate budget allocation to departments and cities most affected would help ensure sustainable and longer-term planning and implementation of service provision. Assistance could support the development of these policies, and also the communication of existing and future policies from the national level to the sub-national level.

Support community building efforts

Assistance should focus on Alternative Dispute Mechanisms in receptor communities so that non-serious crimes can be directly confronted and the peace of communities stabilized. This is particularly relevant as access to formal justice structures is virtually nonexistent for the migrant population. Assistance should also focus on opportunities to bring different communities together through dialogues, sporting events, community centers, or education activities.

Support activities that focus on risk factors for recruitment into illegal armed groups

The risk of recruiting migrants into organized crime and illegal armed groups has been increasing and poses significant security challenges. Assistance should focus on reducing these risk factors (children out of school, low to no employment opportunities, insecurity along informal border crossings and transit, unaccompanied minors, etc.) as well as working with communities to build better community-police relations so communities feel more protected.

Long-term

Support employment and livelihood activities

One of the key challenges in transitioning from the humanitarian aid phase to socio-economic stabilization revolves around stable income generation. Assistance can help strengthen the private sector and allow for greater vocational training and on-the-job training.

Maintain a differential approach

Assistance should recognize the different needs of each segment of the migrant and receptor populations, taking a differential approach to women, youth, LGBTI, and indigenous communities. The situation can affect people differently according to their socioeconomic and demographic conditions.

Methodology, Purpose, and Scope

This assessment looks at the impact of Venezuelan migration on Citizen Security¹ in Colombia. The assessment team used USAID's Conflict Assessment Framework² as its research methodology. This methodology focuses on drivers of conflict, mitigating factors, grievances, and resiliences within communities. The assessment focused on the following topics:

- **Conflict dynamics:** The assessment considered conflict dynamics in the country and how they have been affected by the influx of Venezuelans. Conflict dynamics examined included key actors, sources of tensions, possible triggers to violence, and mitigating factors or groups.
- **Citizen Security:** The right of people to live free of violence is a serious factor in the current state of stabilization/destabilization of the receptor communities.
- **Recommendations for short-, medium-, and long-term implementation efforts:** The assessment includes recommended actions to ensure assistance activities are effectively implemented and do not cause undue harm, or exacerbate tensions where they may exist.

At the request of USAID/Colombia, Olgoonik Technical Services carried out the assessment between February and June 2019. The assessment team collected data in the 11 Colombian cities with the highest number of migrants. These cities include Arauca, Barranquilla, Bogota, Bucaramanga, Cali, Cartagena, Cucuta, Maicao, Medellin, Rioacha, and Valledupar. The assessment was conducted in three phases: a desk study/literature review; three weeks of field work that included 97 key stakeholder interviews (refer to Annex 1) and 22 focus groups with Colombian and Venezuelan participants; and a synthesis workshop to analyze field-collected information and generate the recommendations presented in this report.

Context

Migration to Colombia from Venezuela has increased dramatically since 2015.³ During this time, approximately 4 million⁴ people have left Venezuela and settled in various parts of the world. Colombia has received more Venezuelan migrants than any other country, currently estimated at 1.4 million and counting (UN figure).⁵ The recent socio-economic turmoil in Venezuela has driven people out of the country in search of medical treatment, economic opportunities, and increased livelihood options. Colombia, which remains in the midst of implementing a Peace Accord and re-building after 50 years of conflict, is now confronted with one of the largest humanitarian crises in the region.

¹ <https://democracyinternational.com/media/Crime%20and%20Violence%20Prevention%20Field%20Guide.pdf>

² Conflict Assessment Framework Version 2.0 https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnady739.pdf

³ Venezuela Survival Migration as a Development Opportunity (2019) <https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/news/new-research-brief-on-venezuelan-survival-migration-as-a-development-opportunity>

⁴ UN estimates. <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/press/2019/6/5cfa2a4a4/refugees-migrants-venezuela-top-4-million-unhcr-iom.html>

⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2019), Venezuela Situation, Fact Sheet <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/unhcr-venezuela-situation-fact-sheet-april-2019>

The Colombian-Venezuelan border has historically been porous, with familial and commercial ties among communities on both sides of the border. Its 2,200 km encompasses seven departments and has proved a challenge to the GOC to secure due to limited presence in border zones. The border has seven formal border crossings, and more than 300 informal border crossings, or *trochas*. Border closures, imminent need, and lack of documentation have driven many migrants to cross – illegally – through the informal border crossings.



Infographic showing risks with informal border crossings⁶

Migración Colombia⁷ estimates that 1,260,594 regular and irregular⁸ Venezuelan migrants have settled in Colombia through March 2019. They estimate that in 2018, 89% of migrants were pendular, meaning they crossed and back and forth intermittently, while six of 10 migrants entered the country illegally.⁹ Official migration statistics have been generated from the administrative records of people who have gone through formal processing and have registered at official migration posts in Colombia. It is therefore a challenge for Colombia to overcome the under-reporting of irregular migration. While official figures indicate that most of the migrant

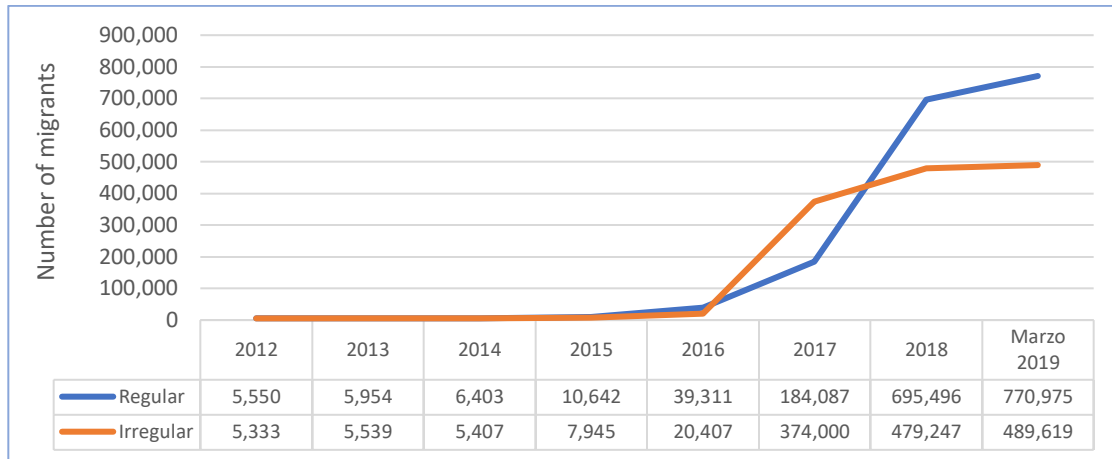
⁶ Fundaredes (2018)

⁷<http://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/index.php/es/prensa/infografias/infografias-2019/11330-radiografia-venezolanos-en-colombia-marzo-2019>

⁸ Regular migration refers to those who enter the country legally through one of the formal border crossings, and are registered in the system. Irregular refers to those who have entered the country illegally and do not have legal status in the country.

⁹ IOM (2019), Monitoring Migratory Flows in the Colombian-Venezuelan Border (August 23 - December 13, 2018) <https://reliefweb.int/report/colombia/colombia-monitoreo-de-los-flujos-migratorios-en-la-frontera-colombo-venezolana>

population was regular in 2018 and 2019 (given the nature of official data capture), IOM estimates that this ratio is actually inverted.¹⁰



Venezuelan migration in Colombia (2012-2019)¹¹

Due to the rapid influx of Venezuelan migration, the GOC launched a special visa program, the Special Permit of Permanence (PEP)¹² for those entering the country legally. The PEP allows a Venezuelan migrant access to social services including, registration in the SISBEN¹³ for medical care, legal employment, and education at vocational trainings centers. Along with the PEP, the GOC also created the Administrative Registry of Venezuelan Migrants (RAMV)¹⁴ as a means to better collect information on the migrant population and to serve as input to public policies. The PEP will expire in 2019, thus the GOC will need to update and strengthen their registration system so regular migrants may continue to access services as well as work and reside in the country legally.

Recognizing the need to strategically focus and plan for this migratory crisis, the GOC developed the “*Estrategia para la Atención de la Migración desde Venezuela*” defined in the public policy document CONPES 3950.¹⁵ The CONPES 3950 outlines strategies for health care, education, early childhood and youth attention routes, labor, housing, and security. It emphasizes the need for coordination among key entities, and plans for increased national level attention to migrant assistance during the next three years (2019-2021).

¹⁰ Ibid. Information also obtained during an interview with IOM on May 6, 2019.

¹¹ Migracion Colombia (graph depicts the synthesized data from multiple migratory reports).

¹² <http://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/viajeros-venezuela/index.php/pep/preguntas-frecuentes-pep>

¹³ SISBEN is a system for identification of potential beneficiaries to social programs. The issue for Venezuelans accessing SISBEN is that the system requires a permanent address.

¹⁴ http://portal.gestiondelriesgo.gov.co/Paginas/Slide_home/Registro-Administrativo-de-Migrantes-Venezolanos-RAMV.aspx

¹⁵ DNP (2018) CONPES 3950. <https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/Conpes/Econ%C3%B3micos/3950.pdf>

Department	Number of regular migrants (March 2019)	Total population of department (2015)	% Increase of population
Bogota D.C.	238.758	7.878.783	3.0%
Norte de Santander	151.803	1.391.239	10.9%
La Guajira	123.756	957.797	12.9%
Atlántico	105.459	2.460.863	4.3%
Antioquia	71.580	6.456.299	1.1%
Santander	49.780	2.090.839	2.4%
Cundinamarca	43.988	2.680.041	1.6%
Magdalena	41.460	1.259.822	3.3%
Valle del Cauca	38.747	4.613.684	0.8%
Cesar	31.471	1.028.890	3.1%

Migrants have steadily moved beyond the border areas and have settled in major cities throughout Colombia. The sudden and dramatic increase in population has strained service delivery and has put increased pressure on receptor communities.

Population data, including Venezuelan migrants¹⁶

There is a mix of national and international agencies tasked with coordinating responses to the migration crisis. To date, there exist two key coordination bodies to confront this crisis. The Special Migration Group (GEM) is comprised of the National Police, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF), the National Directorate of Taxes and Customs (DIAN) and Migración Colombia. The goal of the GEM is to combat smuggling and organized crime, address public space issues, and ensure the rights and protection of minors. In addition, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) established the Interagency Group on Mixed Migration Flows (GIFMM) which includes 38 NGO members. The goal of the GIFMM is to coordinate humanitarian response to migrants, and support receptor communities. Its main objectives are: i) registration and regularization, data management and analysis, information and guidance; ii) humanitarian aid; and iv) socioeconomic inclusion, cultural inclusion, and gender-based violence.

Main Findings

Main findings are grouped into two categories: Public Policies and Socio-Economic Factors. Each section reveals the salient points from stakeholders, and takes into consideration the environment at the national and sub-national level that factor into these findings.

Public Policy Implementation

Public Policy refers to migration impacts at the national and sub-national governing level, and service delivery. Main factors include: the lack of communication of policies from the national

¹⁶ <http://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/venezuela/Todo%20sobre%20Venezuela.pdf> p.5 and <https://geoportal.dane.gov.co/midaneapp/pob.html>

level to the sub-national level; the need for a comprehensive strategy, including budget, health services, and housing; the lack of sustainable systems currently in place; the lack of data; and the impacts of irregular migration.

1. Lack of communication regarding policies from national to sub-national level

Public administration of polices and effective communication of these polices to sub-national entities has not always been implemented consistently, due to the size and speed of this crisis. The leading policy document, the CONPES 3950, will take time to translate to policy directives and subsequent actions on the ground. Public policy takes time to implement and budget for, and this is the reality that local actors are facing. Through multiple discussions and interviews, local level authorities noted that it is unclear what the nationwide policies are regarding services afforded to migrants, and ultimately policies are being implemented at the discretion of the local authorities. There is confusion over what the policies state, as well as unequal implementation. For example, “emergency” services, which are afforded to everyone regardless of legal status, are defined differently from hospital to hospital, city to city, with the end result of migrants being turned away.¹⁷ Equally, the assessment team learned of schools turning potential students away because of their irregular status. All children regardless of legal status can enter the school system and receive an education. This lack of effective communication compounds the fact that social leaders and local authorities feel excluded from public decision making, and do not have the information to weigh in on issues facing their constituents and communities.

2. Need for a comprehensive strategy

As noted, the migrant situation in Colombian is unprecedented and the government is rightly struggling to keep up with the demands of such a crisis. Issues such as budgeting, health services, and housing have all been affected by this long-term situation.

2a. Budget: Due to the high and sudden demand for services the GOC has acknowledged that projections of future spending need to be adjusted, and that meeting immediate needs will take a significant portion of GDP annually. Local authorities noted the increased operating costs and the higher concentration of students per classroom in schools. Concerns about local public finances are more frequent in border municipalities where infrastructure and public budgets have more limitations.

Source	Projection of GDP
CONPES 3950	0.13%
Ministry of Housing	0.4 – 0.6%
Fedesarrollo	0.2 – 0.4%
World Bank	0.3 – 0.4%

Budget estimations due to Venezuelan Migration (% of GDP)¹⁸

¹⁷ This was observed in Maicao, Riohacha, Bucaramanga, Barranquilla, and Arauca.

¹⁸ DNP (2018) CONPES 3950. <https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/Conpes/Econ%C3%B3micos/3950.pdf>; FEDESARROLLO (2018): “Elementos para una política pública frente a la crisis de Venezuela. Bogotá Fedesarrollo,” <https://www.repository.fedesarrollo.org.co/handle/11445/3680>; and World Bank Group (2018):

2b: Health services: Access to health care is a major issue for both the receptor and migrant communities. Health providers do not have the funds, staff or medical supplies to meet the demands of this population increase. Between 2017 and 2018, migrant emergency care increased by 183.4%.¹⁹ In 2018, there were 218 cases of recent migrants (less than 6 months in Colombia) with HIV, an increase of 310% compared to 2017.²⁰ Getting consistent health services for HIV continues to be a challenge due to the high costs of medicine and the length of the treatment. Legal representatives (*personerías* and *defensoría del pueblo*) noted they have offered legal and administrative assistance to migrants to access services, particularly in cases of health care. The most significant cases occurred in Bucaramanga, Maicao, and Medellín. This speaks to the will of local level officials trying to help and protect the rights of migrants, who often times do not know what rights are available to them. Additionally, there have been cases of mayors' offices offering irregular migrants additional services, such as prenatal check-ups and newborn infants' growth and development checks. However, the feasibility of such well-intentioned actions is not sustainable. For example, in Bucaramanga, the mayor's office suspended these types of services due to a lack of resources.

"With the arrival of migrants, we have seen a greater demand for medical attention, which has increased the wait time for emergency health care... If before, "X" number of patients were treated in one hour and people complained, now with more people they are even more dissatisfied... We have fewer supplies and they tell us that we have to continue service provision... What worries us is that we have already seen cases of diseases that have not been present in years, or that require special care like HIV..."

Local public entities: Maicao and Riohacha

2c: Housing²¹: There are few housing options available to migrants, which is leading to homelessness and overcrowding in the limited lodging that exists. Many who find space in a shelter or campsite do so for only a few days or at most a few months. Migrants are also making makeshift shelters, as seen in Maicao and Cartagena, and taking over unoccupied land, thus creating informal settlements.²² These informal housing structures have isolated migrant communities, and placed them further from the reach of police and other safety measures that the local government could provide. Similarly, overcrowding in apartments/houses city centers is causing tension in receptor communities, who view this as an invasion within their communities, as well as a security concern with children living/working in the streets.

3. Existing systems not adequate to meet need: The current systems in place have significant shortfalls which must be taken into account to plan for long-term solutions.

"Migration from Venezuela to Colombia: Short- and Medium-Term Impact and Response Strategy,"

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30651>

¹⁹ SISPRO data from an interview with a representative from Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Colombia (2019).

²⁰ Ministry of Health (2019): "Plan de Respuesta Salud de los Migrantes,"

<https://www.minsalud.gov.co/sites/rid/Lists/BibliotecaDigital/RIDE/DE/COM/plan-respuesta-salud-migrantes.pdf>

²¹ The CONPES 3950 does include medium and long term housing solutions, to be rolled out in future fiscal years. DNP (2018) CONPES Document 3950, p.91

<https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/Conpes/Econ%C3%B3micos/3950.pdf>

²² Bäuer, Gustavo (2019) La Mano de Dios [HTTPS://RUTABAUER.COM/LA-MANO-DE-DIOS/](https://rutabauer.com/la-mano-de-dios/)

1. Documentation: The PEP is not recognized as valid identification to open bank accounts, request credit, or for making purchases over the internet or phone. It is also not being accepted as a legal form of identification by employers, who are turning away Venezuelan migrants who have legal status and are legally able to work in the country.
2. Employment: Migrants and representatives of the private sector agree that there is a lack of knowledge about the regulations that define labor contracting for migrants. Additionally, some migrants who do have the PEP cannot complete the Beneficiary Selection System for Social Programs (SISBEN) form because they do not have a permanent address. The private sector needs to be taken into account when planning for labor market needs and trends. The Chambers of Commerce, for example, indicated that they could be brought in to offer training for migrants and awareness programs for employers.
3. Child Protection: Finally, existing policies in place have not accounted for the large number of Venezuelan children under the protection of ICBF that will exceed the 18-month legal maximum of government provided care. Currently, there do not exist avenues for these children to be placed with Colombian families, or other longer-term protection measures, and they cannot be returned to environments considered unsafe. Nor does there exist a mechanism to return these children to family in Venezuela as there are no known counterparts in Venezuela to receive them.

3. Lack of data²³

The lack of data that exists regarding migrants is a concern not only for public policies, but also for long-term planning. Police interviewed note that they do not know who is residing in their areas; local officials have said that they cannot plan adequately because they do not know how many migrants are present or what services they need. While there was a push to register migrants, the number and scale of irregular migrants is still only estimated. Hard data on recruitment was hard to find, as well as crime data and statistics disaggregated by who is committing the crime and who is the victim.

4. Need to address irregular status of migrants

While the number of irregular migrants is not known, it is widely assumed, by people interviewed, that the actual number of Venezuelans residing in Colombia do not have regular (legal) status. As noted above, without having accurate figures it is difficult to plan for long-term sustainable solutions, and assistance. This status also impedes entry into the formal workforce, which could benefit the country especially in areas in need of labor. Irregular status also affects access to social protections, especially for children who are abandoned in Colombia.

²³ It should be noted that there are some instances where data is being collected, but it is hard to substantiate or pull nation-wide trends from the numbers that do exist. For example, data from national police, during the first four months of 2019, revealed that 104 Venezuelan citizens have been assassinated in Colombia, an increase of 62.5% in comparison with the same period in 2018. A recent study from FIP has shown that there is an increase in the homicides committed against migrants from Venezuela. More concrete numbers like this can only support effective public policies, as well as key messages re migration. FIP (2019) ¿CÓMO ESTÁN LOS HOMICIDIOS EN COLOMBIA? http://ideaspaz.org/media/website/homicidios_11_06_2019.pdf

Socio-Economic Factors

Socio-economic factors refer to migration impacts to community relations at the sub-national level. Main factors include: a great will to help and general understanding, that is being threatened by a lingering negative perception of migrants, as well as a possible re-traumatization of returning Colombians who fled to Venezuela during the conflict.

1. General understanding by Colombian population

Colombia has a long history of internally displaced persons from the conflict, and many have noted that the existence of Venezuelan migrants is a visible reminder of this part of their past. There is a general understanding of this hardship, and a will to help, as evidenced in the many interviews and focus groups. There is also a general acknowledgement that Venezuela welcomed Colombians fleeing the conflict and that Colombians were able to work, and create livelihoods there. This is to say that there exists an understanding of the hardships the migrants, and returning Colombians are facing, and not a direct or outward animosity. This is key in terms of community building and long-term sustainable development solutions.

"You know that Colombians are hospitable by nature. We want to help out people and lend them a hand ... we feel that Venezuelans are like our brothers and sisters and we share a culture ... They received us thirty years ago and now it is our turn to help them out. Many of the people who come here have family here on these lands... It's heartbreaking to see all those families enduring hunger and living on the street."

Social leaders and local authorities: Maicao, Cucuta, Riohacha, Valledupar, Barranquilla, Cartagena

2. Negative Perceptions/Distrust

There is also a growing tension between the communities, and a lingering negative perception. A recent Gallup poll noted 55% of the population does not agree with the help offered by the GOC to migrants from Venezuela while 67% of the population has a negative perception of migrants from Venezuela who are seeking permanent residence in Colombia.²⁴ Negative rhetoric could also influence local election campaigns. It is important to note how perceptions can lead to actions and this could potentially negatively affect stability in communities. While the assessment did uncover instances of discrimination, xenophobia, and negative stereotypes, the team did not find any instances of targeted violence toward the migrant community, during the timeframe of the assessment. The negative perceptions and distrust are grouped into main themes that the assessment team heard from the stakeholder interviews and focus groups. These are perceptions of crime; perception of high rates of impunity of Venezuelan perpetrators of crimes; perception that aid is only for Venezuelans; and the perception of migrants taking jobs.

2a: Perceptions of crime: There are wide perceptions among Colombians that migrants are committing crimes. Police are collecting data on crime rates, and while rates are increasing it is commensurate to the increase in population, and it was not possible to disaggregate data based on nationality. Thus, who is committing these crimes, and against whom remains unclear. Social

²⁴ <https://www.asuntoslegales.com.co/actualidad/la-popularidad-no-acompana-a-duque-ramirez-y-trujillo-en-el-gallup-poll-2878839>

leaders and local authorities agreed receptor communities are being affected by the increase in crime. They gave examples of people being fearful to move around as freely, or spend time in parks. A robbery in Bogota committed by a group of migrants brought national attention to the need for new strategies to prevent and prosecute crimes in urban areas.²⁵

"We do not even want to go out to the terrace at night. They always ask for money and you do not know if they are going to try to steal it... Since last year or so, if we leave the house we have to lock the door .. The mayor spent a little money fixing the area of mangroves, supposedly to turn it into a tourist attraction, they opened the bars and now even the police are afraid to go in... there are a lot of drugs in there"

Social local leaders and authorities: Maicao, Riohacha, Cúcuta

Perception of impunity: Along with crime rates, there is a perception that irregular status leads to de facto impunity.²⁶ Police often do not have the means to correctly charge or hold an irregular migrant. Thus, crimes can be committed with little to no corrective measures. This was a concern highlighted by Colombian authorities. The absence of communication channels with Venezuelan authorities and the shortage of personnel in Migración Colombia perpetuates the inability to effectively deal with perpetrators of crimes who reside in the country illegally.

Perception that aid is only for Venezuelans: A common theme throughout each focus group with receptor communities was the perception that assistance was only being provided to Venezuelan migrants. It was unclear to this group how to access aid. USG assistance is provided to receptor communities, returning Colombians, and Venezuelan migrants and there is no distinction made among the communities. In practice, however, this may be overlooked and donors should pay particular attention to implementation and distribution of aid.

Perception of migrants taking jobs: Another common theme was the perception that the informal market is being taken over by migrants. Colombians feel threatened by migrants entering into the informal economic sphere.²⁷ Additionally, receptor communities perceive that migration has had negative economic effects due to migrants working mostly in the informal economy; that this has altered existing market conditions; created more competition; and forced a decrease in prices.²⁸ It should be noted that the informal employment rate of the migrant

²⁵ El Tiempo (2018) Venezuelan gang mugged ten Transmilenio bus passengers.

[HTTPS://WWW.RCNRADIO.COM/BOGOTA/BANDA-DE-VENEZOLANOS-ATRACO-DIEZ-PASAJEROS-EN-BUS-DE-TRANSMILENIO](https://www.rcnradio.com/bogota/banda-de-venezolanos-atraco-diez-pasajeros-en-bus-de-transmilenio)

²⁶ By February 2019, 56% of captured migrants from Venezuela were repeat offenders of crimes.

<https://conexioncapital.co/venezolanos-reincidentes-bogota/>

²⁷ According to social leaders and local authorities, this is increasingly prevalent in border cities such as Maicao, Riohacha and Cucuta. It is also starting to appear in cities such as Cali, Medellin, and Bogota, where mass transit systems and commercial areas have seen an increase in the migrant population engaging in such informal commercial activities.

²⁸ The perception that migrants are a threat to receptor communities is reflected in the survey, "*¿Qué opinan los colombianos sobre la migración venezolana?*" Invamer, 2019: <https://migravenezuela.com/web/articulo/encuesta-colombia-opina-migracion-venezolana/935>). Similar results were obtained by the University of Medellin through a survey conducted in 2017 in the capital of Antioquia; El Tiempo, 2017, "Why do Paisas think Venezuelans bring insecurity?" <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/medellin/migracion-de-venezolanos-estudio-revela-la-percepcion-de-inseguridad-143392>).

population varies between 77% and 93%, which is well above the national average at around 47%.²⁹ According to a recent poll, 55% of the migrant population has an income below \$400,000 pesos per month, close to the monetary poverty threshold.³⁰

3. Re-traumatization

Returning Colombians could experience a re-traumatization upon their return to Colombia. There is no data on this, and it is hardly a discussion topic but is something that was witnessed in the focus groups. Visible reminders of the war, the presence of large groups of displaced people, and the confrontation of demobilization could be triggers to experience the trauma victims went through during the conflict. In addition, those who fled due to the conflict or are victims of the conflict are confronted with challenging socio-economic re-entry to Colombian society, could face additional hardships regarding livelihoods, and will have to adjust to the post-conflict realities in their communities. This is an issue to consider and warrants closer coordination and engagement with the Victims Unit to ensure Colombia continues to assist those affected by the conflict.

“Many of us traveled to Venezuela during the 70s and 80s, and also to flee from the violence in the 2000s, and in search of a better life... even though we have family in Colombia, the return has been hard... If returnees like me are going through this, imagine the migrants who do not have anyone here. They have it rough and we are helping them... They have to rent houses in groups to live and those who do not have enough, off to the streets because what else is there?”

Colombian and Venezuelan focus groups: Barranquilla, Valledupar, Cartagena, Bucaramanga

Risk Factors³¹

The assessment identified several risks in receptor communities associated with the influx of migrants. These risks include competition of scarce resources/services; risk of recruitment and extortion by illegal armed groups; increase in illicit economies, and the inability to provide secure routes of transit.

1. Competition for scarce resources/services

The dramatic increase in population has created a greater demand and subsequent competition for scarce resources. The limited services that do exist are not adequate to meet the needs, and this is causing increased tension and discontent in communities. Services could be hospital care, teacher to student ratios in classrooms, water, public space, and the informal market. In the border cities of Maicao, Riohacha, and Cucuta, there was a perception that migrant community needs were straining already tight budgets. The assessment team were told of people fighting in

²⁹ World Bank, 2018. Short- and medium-term response impacts and strategies.

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30651>

³⁰ Semana (2019) Los migrantes tienen la palabra. <https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/la-primer-encuesta-para-conocer-que-piensen-y-como-viven-los-venezolanos-q/604701>

³¹ The risk factors identified correlate with Citizen Security issues, and reveal elements that could have potential destabilizing effects in communities, and to peace implementation.

lines to get medical attention and food handouts. Local authorities do not have the means, nor support, to remedy this situation in the short and long term.

“The Director of the hospital had to choose between paying the payroll and paying for medical providers. The workers of the hospital are owed more than six month salary, and are starting to blame the migrant community for causing this financial situation.”

Local authorities: Maicao

2. Risk of recruitment and extortion by illegal armed groups (IAGs)³²

Recruitment by illegal armed groups is a worrying trend the assessment team heard in every site visited. Accurate data on recruitment was hard to find, although the Colombian military is tracking this. Lack of income and employment as well as further instability caused by population increase and competition for resources increases the likelihood of accepting offers, favors, missions, or positions from criminal organizations. Migrants and other vulnerable populations are brought into illegal groups to sell drugs, serve as intermediaries between national and transnational organized crime networks, and run errands. Examples of recruitment and influence of IAGs are:

- Interviews with receptor communities in Bogota, Medellin, and Baranquilla noted cases where migrants have risen to leadership positions in organized armed groups, in a relatively short amount of time.
- In Medellin, social leaders expressed concern that the migrant population has been engaging in activities relating to micro-trafficking, theft, and hired killings.³³
- Social representatives and local authorities in Cucuta, Riohacha, and Maicao noted that deserters from the Venezuelan military that arrived in Colombia after February 23, 2019 could be exploited or recruited by IAGs, given their unique knowledge and training.
- Venezuelan community representatives have reported extortion payments to IAGs operating in the municipalities of Bello and Niquia (Antioquia).

"These neighborhoods have always suffered from a lot of neglect and violence. We pay 2,000 pesos a week to those men. They come and tell us that it is a collection for the security of the neighborhood. We know that the illegal armed groups that commit crimes here are abusing migrants that break the "rules"... it is hard for us to do anything because there are few complaints filed by the Venezuela population because they are afraid of deportations."

Social leaders and local authorities: Cali, Medellin, Arauca

³² Illegal Armed Groups are defined as illicit structures that use violence to protect their own political interests and illegal economic activities. They are linked to personnel who once belonged or continue to belong to the security apparatus and organized criminal networks. See: organized crime and armed spoilers in times of transition <http://cdn.ideaspaz.org/media/website/document/59e907478dc39.pdf>

³³ FIP (2017): "Organized crime at the local level: an underrated issue in Colombia," <http://www.ideaspaz.org/publications/posts/1449>

3. Increase in illicit economies

The border between Colombia and Venezuela has always been a porous border with a lot of cross traffic of goods and services. Lack of state and security presence has laid way for illegal armed groups to take over some of this space and control the traffic of illegal goods. Existing criminal networks in Colombia are connected to urban areas, and they regulate businesses such as prostitution, illegal gambling, and local drug trafficking markets.³⁴ These factors significantly contribute to the rise of the informal market, and further competition for business. Interviews in Cúcuta, Riohacha and Maicao note that the increase in the illicit economy is negatively impacting the local economies of border municipalities since the money is not being re-invested into these communities. The Chambers of Commerce agreed that with the arrival of the migrant population competition between street vendors and formal business owners has increased. In Cúcuta and Riohacha these officials noted that there have been businesses that have had to close as a result of the lower prices of goods due to increased number of vendors.



Map of illegal economies along borders³⁵

5. Inability to provide secure routes of transit

Migrants crossing the border through the informal *trochas* face extortion, violence, rape, and recruitment even before they make it to the Colombian side. While this analysis focuses on the effects of migration to security in Colombia, it should be noted that the challenges and risks to migrants begin before they reach the border. However, even once in Colombia migrants continue to experience increasing threats to their safety. There are approximately 300 *trochas*, some located in extremely rural and sparsely populated areas - for this reason it has been close to impossible for police to provide adequate security along these routes. Discussions with focus groups revealed that IAGs are present on the border, and are demanding payment to pass or preventing families from continuing on transit routes. Women, in particular, are extremely vulnerable. Examples cited through interviews were: women having to sell their hair, expose themselves, and taken by trafficking rings for sex or domestic work. Migrants transiting through Colombia also face risks to their security. Humanitarian aid agencies, local authorities, and

³⁴ Alvarez, 2017: "El crimen organizado en lo local: ¿un problema subvalorado en Colombia?" <http://www.ideaspaz.org/publications/posts/1449>

³⁵ <https://www.insightcrime.org/investigations/colombia-venezuela-criminal-siamese-twins/>

migrants all highlighted these risks, which included hypothermia, sexual exploitation, theft, and homicide.

"Humanitarian agencies and support organizations have really helped migrants on transit routes... We know there are maps with safe routes to avoid hazards on the road... They try to help those families from getting stuck in the paramos where people have died from the cold... The police have tried to accompany them, but it is a long journey and there are many people walking out there... You feel for those people with bad shoes and no jackets with children and we have even seen pregnant women go by."

Humanitarian agencies, social leaders, and local authorities: Cucuta, Bucaramanga

Risk Factors for Special Groups

Certain population groups within the general population are at increased risk due to their vulnerabilities. The groups identified in this assessment include: women, children and youth, LGBTI, and indigenous. Women have been victims of gender based violence, physical violence, and trafficking. Children and youth are particularly vulnerable to a number of risks including recruitment, family abandonment, education and health factors, and statelessness. Members of the LGBTI community face repeated discrimination and are sometimes forced into prostitution. Finally, indigenous communities, more specifically the Yukpa and Wayuu, face recruitment and exploitation by IAGs.

Women

Migrant women are at extreme risk for gender-based violence. Credible allegations of violence targeted towards women and girls were brought up in many interviews and focus groups. The threat of trafficking and being co-opted into prostitution remains, not only in border areas but throughout major cities.³⁶ According to the Bogota District Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, 30% of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation were Venezuelan women and girls in 2018.³⁷ Between April and December 2018, 16 cases of femicide against Venezuelan migrant women were recorded in the press in eight departments, mostly in two border departments (Norte de Santander and La Guajira).³⁸ The Observatory of Women and Gender Equity estimates that 74% of Venezuelans practicing prostitution do so for the first time in Colombia. Prostitution exposes women to disease, abuse, discrimination, illegal detainment, and rape.³⁹

Children and Youth

Recruitment Risk: Although hard data on recruitment of minors is scarce, the risk of children to be co-opted and used by IAGs was a point that was brought up in each city visited. Unstable

³⁶ <http://omeg.sdmujer.gov.co/OMEG/asp/files/resultados.pdf>

³⁷ https://tratadepersonas.mininterior.gov.co/sites/default/files/migracion_venezolana_y_la_trata_de_personas.pdf

³⁸ Red Feminista de Medellín, Colombia (2018).

<http://observatoriofemicidioscolombia.org/attachments/article/374/Femicidios%20de%20Migrantes%20Venezolanas.pdf>

³⁹ <https://noticialdia.com/2019/04/informe-revela-que-el-998-de-las-trabajadoras-sexuales-extranjeras-en-bogota-son-venezolanas/>

family environments, truancy, and the ease of groups to seek out children are increased risks factors for children.⁴⁰ Children 12 to 13 years old are often recruited to collect “intelligence” and transport fuel to Colombia, where it brings a much higher price than in Venezuela. Children are even given bicycles by the ELN to help aid in the transport of illicit goods.⁴¹ The Colombian NGO *Fundaredes* estimates that more than 15,000 Venezuelans do illegal tasks for these organizations, participating in illicit activities such as drug trafficking, extortion and terrorism in general.⁴²

Family abandonment and unsafe environments: Children are crossing into Colombia without families, and some are being abandoned once in country. According to the Colombian National Health Institute (INS), cases of physical, psychological, sexual violence and neglect or abandonment of children by recent migrants (less than 6 months in Colombia) increased 125.7%, between 2017 and 2018.⁴³ When children are abandoned by their families and enter the state protection system through ICBF, they cannot be returned to Venezuela because there are no assurances of protection, nor can they be adopted by Colombian families because administrative and legal procedures are not in place between Colombia and Venezuela. Colombian children in ICBF system may spend up to 18 months in the protection of ICBF, and after can be returned to a family member or be placed in the adoption cue. These options are not currently available to Venezuelan children. ICBF cited the need for an immediate policy and guidance to better protect these migrant children.

Health Risks: The number of registered cases of infant mortality among Venezuelan migrants increased from 10 in 2017 to 47 in 2018.⁴⁴ This increase is particularly seen in the border departments of Guajira and Norte de Santander. As well, there has been a sharp increase in congenital and gestational syphilis, according to statistics from the National Health Institute.⁴⁵ According to INS, teen pregnancy rates for migrants is double that of Colombians.⁴⁶ Teen migrants are also exposed to gender-based violence throughout the migration journey.⁴⁷

⁴⁰ International Organization for Migration (2017). The recruitment, utilization, and use of children and adolescents in Colombia: Infographics: <http://www.oim.org.co/news/reclutamiento-utilizaci%C3%B3n-y-uso-de-ni%C3%B1os-y-adolescentes-en-colombia-infograf%C3%ADas>

⁴¹ The New Humanitarian (2019): “As Colombia tightens its border, more Venezuelan migrants brave clandestine routes” <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/feature/2018/03/13/colombia-tightens-its-border-more-venezuelan-migrants-brave-clandestine-routes>

⁴² <https://www.fundaredes.org/2018/12/17/boletin-010-migrantes-venezolanos-son-reclutados-por-grupos-armados-en-la-frontera-colombo-venezolana/>

⁴³ <http://www.defensoria.gov.co/es/nube/comunicados/7835/Defensor%C3%ADa-radic%C3%B3-proyecto-de-ley-que-busca-nacionalizar-a-ni%C3%B1os-venezolanos-migrantes-migrantes-Venezuela-ni%C3%B1os-Defensor%C3%ADa.htm>

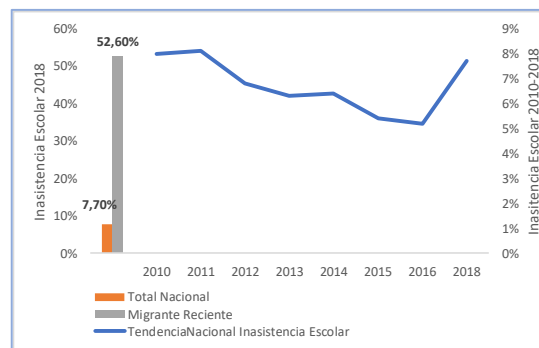
⁴⁴ Ministry of Health 2019: “Plan de Respuesta Salud de los Migrantes,” <https://www.minsalud.gov.co/sites/rid/Lists/BibliotecaDigital/RIDE/DE/COM/plan-respuesta-salud-migrantes.pdf>

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Assessment interview with ICBF National Headquarters, March 2019.

⁴⁷ Profamilia (2018): “Evaluating unmet needs in the sexual and reproductive health of the Venezuelan migrant population in four cities of the Colombia-Venezuela border,” <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/LIBRO%20Evaluacio%CC%81n%20de%20las%20necesidades%20insatisfechas%20SSR%20y%20Migrantes%20Venezolanos%20-%20Digital.pdf>

Lack of education: Even when regular and irregular migrants have access to basic and secondary education, the levels of truancy and dropouts are higher than those recorded for the Colombian population. According to the DANE Quality of Life Survey,⁴⁸ 52.6% of school-age migrants did not attend school in 2018 (because they never enrolled or because they dropped out), a stark difference with the national average for the same year (7.7%). Not attending school is one of the greatest risks leading migrants to recruitment by organized crime or insurgent groups.



Truancy rates⁴⁹

Risk of Statelessness: Under Colombian law, those born in Colombia without a legal status do not automatically gain Colombian citizenship. Thus, many children are at risk of being essentially stateless, unable to obtain Colombian citizenship because of their illegal status, and unable to receive Venezuelan citizenship because of the enormous bureaucratic hurdles inherent in doing so. According to the Office of the Ombudsman, from 2016 to date, 8,000 children born in Colombia of Venezuelan parents are in a legal limbo and as a result highly vulnerable.⁵⁰

LGBTI

Migrants who identify as LGBTI face increased challenges in Colombia.⁵¹ The assessment team did not see any specific outreach to these communities, nor a differential approach to their health and other needs. Most cross the border alone, and are either directed to sex work or end up as sex workers because of a lack of other employment opportunities. The NGO Caribe Afirmativo noted five cases of LGBTI Venezuelans dying from HIV and 29 migrants who have filed lawsuits to obtain medicine and non-emergency medical care.⁵² There is a perception that members of this community are HIV+ and only engage in prostitution. This raises the level of distrust and negativity that could affect their eventual inclusion in society. Members of this community have received death threats due to nationality, sexual diversity, and gender.

⁴⁸ https://www.dane.gov.co/files/investigaciones/condiciones_vida/calidad_vida/Presentacion_ECV_2018.pdf

⁴⁹ DANE, 2018: “Quality of Life Survey,” <https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/estadisticas-por-tema/salud/calidad-de-vida-ecv/encuesta-nacional-de-calidad-de-vida-ecv-2018>

⁵⁰ Garavito, 2019. Ombudsman submits bill to nationalize children of Venezuelan parents. El Espectador - Taken from <https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/defensoria-radica-proyecto-de-ley-para-nacionalizar-ninos-de-padres-venezolanos-articulo-849432>

⁵¹ For a good summary of the challenges facing LGBTI migrants, please visit <http://caribeafirmativo.lgbt/?p=6483>

⁵² Caribe Afirmativo (2018) Crisis Humanitaria de venezolanos LGBTI en el Caribe <http://caribeafirmativo.lgbt/?p=6260>

Indigenous

The Yukpa and Wayuu communities share ties that cross territories along the border, and are protected under the Constitution of Colombia which includes a special status for indigenous communities.⁵³ Indigenous groups have received threats crossing the border, transporting food and fuel to their reservation. In Norte de Santander attention has been drawn to Yukpa⁵⁴ community members being recruited into community surveillance organizations for urban organized crime groups operating in peripheral neighborhoods controlled by illegal groups such as the ELN and BACRIM.

Recommendations

This section contains the main conclusions of the assessment and a set of programming recommendations for USAID/Colombia. The recommendations are aimed at preventing or mitigating the impacts of migration on the safety and security of communities. They are divided into short-, medium, and long-term recommendations.

Short-term

Support Registration Efforts

Official registration of regular and tracking of irregular migrants has not been able to keep up with the large volumes of Venezuelans entering the country every day. Officials do not know with certainty the magnitude of migration and in particular the number of irregular migrants. Mismatched figures between various sources show the need to build true and accurate information. Technical assistance is needed for the National Disaster Risk Management Unit (UNGRD) and the National Department of Statistics (DANE), among other GOC entities, to strengthen existing registration mechanisms, and to help create a more robust system of registering regular migrants and tracking irregular migrants. Any registry system must be rolled out with a communication plan at the national level so registered migrants may know the procedure, their rights, and the entities involved.⁵⁵

Support a communications campaign to counter xenophobia.

While there is a general sense of understanding among the Colombian population, negative perceptions of the Venezuelan migrants exist. Competition for resources, perceived crime rates and impunity, along with constant visible reminders of migrants (sleeping in public parks, begging at traffic lights) can create a general feeling of distrust and insecurity. Perceptions could easily turn to actions if mobilized by the rights actors. To this end, support for a nationwide communications campaign to combat negative perceptions of migrants would help decrease community tensions, and serve as another imperative for the GOC to collect accurate and reliable data. A communication campaign would also be essential leading up to the November 2019 local

⁵³ Constitution, art. 171, 176 and 246

⁵⁴ Semana (2019) Indigenous at the Border. <http://especiales.sostenibilidad.semana.com/indigenas-colombianos-en-frontera/los-yukpa-un-pueblo-invisible-para-los-colombianos.html>

⁵⁵ Between April and June 2018, the first RAMV information gathering event was held. This first event revealed that the migrant population lacks information about their rights and perceived that the PEP was not effective, as it does not provide access to the SISBEN directly.

elections, to communicate real facts to the population and refute any negative election rhetoric about migration.

Help establish One Stop Centers

Both national-level and local-level provision of services is stretched right now due to the massive increase in population and the immediate need of migrants and receptor communities. Colombia has experience putting in place systems of service provision that reach the most vulnerable of communities and whose impact has been significant over the past few years. One Stop Centers would be roaming comprehensive care centers for in-coming migrants and could follow the precedent of the Mobile Victim Attention and Orientation Units.⁵⁶ The centers could be placed strategically at major border crossings and throughout transit routes, and help alleviate the tremendous demand at the border and in major cities. They would provide basic information about how to access social services and programs, for example psychosocial assistance for returning victims of the conflict, information on pre-natal care of expecting mothers, and legalization routes for irregular migrants. Staffed with key GOC entities, and supported by civil society, the one-stop shops could offer immediate health-related services, such as vaccinations and food kits; and help connect migrants to online systems for document processing.

Medium-term

Support public policies that plan for long-term migrant and receptor community needs

The GOC should build on previous efforts at setting public policies that plan for long-term development needs of migrants and receptor communities. Along with public policy, a sound budget strategy is needed to implement the CONPES 3950 and any future policies. Adequate budget allocation to departments and cities most affected would help ensure sustainable and longer-term planning and implementation of service provision. Assistance could support the development of these policies, and also the communication of existing and future policies from the national level to the sub-national level. The key will be to adapt existing institutional structures to meet needs. Municipal Development Plans, for example, must plan for and budget for these changes. To date, no municipal and departmental development plans have been formulated to take into account the increased migration. This explains why local governments do not have the resources needed to finance the needs of the migrant population, which has caused shortfalls in the provision of health services, education, housing, and employment. Civil society should be included in these efforts, and empowered to advocate on behalf of their communities. Similarly, actions that help support the offices of the *personerías* and *defensoría del pueblo* would be key as these entities are already engaged in protection services and advocate for migrant rights. Social leaders from receptor and migrant communities, as well as local authorities, have highlighted the importance of being part of the solutions.

Another key component of this assistance would be to help fund further analysis and studies on the migrant crisis, with particular attention paid to service delivery, local government response, policing, and recruitment. As noted, hard data was difficult to secure. Additional information would be useful and necessary for any sound public policies, as well as any long-term implementation strategies from the donor community or GOC.

⁵⁶ These Units serve as one-stop shops for justice services for victims. They reach populations in rural communities and are made up of various GOC entities to provide services, and hold information sessions on rights for victims.

Support Community Building Efforts

Legal authorities have stated the need for new legal procedures to document and subsequently prosecute offenders from the migrant population. The Colombian penal system is challenged by the legal and jurisprudential uncertainty about the treatment of migrants committing crimes in Colombia. Assistance should focus on Alternative Dispute Mechanisms in receptor communities so that non-serious crimes can be directly confronted and the peace of communities stabilized. This is particularly relevant as access to formal justice structures is virtually nonexistent for the migrant population. Activities should focus on educating the police force on what to do when a migrant commits a crime, and encourage fair and just treatment of felons. Having the police be a part of the GEM is a great start, and increasing coordination opportunities with other entities at the local level will also help ensure that reactions to crime and violence are understood across the board. Assistance should also focus on opportunities to bring different communities together through dialogues, sporting events, community centers, or education activities.

Support Activities that Focus on Risk Factors for Recruitment into Illegal Armed Groups

The risk of recruiting migrants into organized crime and illegal armed groups has been increasing and poses significant security challenges. Lack of employment opportunities, youth not able to gain entry to schools, and the sheer desperation of migrant needs are strong factors to consider in order to decrease recruitment. Assistance should focus on reducing these risk factors, as well as working with communities to build better community-police relations so communities feel more protected. Assistance should build off past success in prevention of recruitment in its outreach and long-term development strategies for the migrant population.

Long-term

Support Employment and Livelihood Activities

One of the key challenges in transitioning from the humanitarian aid phase to socio-economic stabilization revolves around stable income generation. As long as the financial conditions of migrants do not stabilize, a dependency on humanitarian aid programs may be created, along with a negative impact on poverty indicators in already vulnerable regions. As a first step, formalizing the route to employment is needed. Irregular migrants are not legally able to work in Colombia; thus, allowing them to contribute to the formal economy and obtain gainful employment is key. Assistance can help strengthen the private sector and allow for greater vocational training and on-the-job training. Additionally, job fairs can connect supply and demand. Initiatives such as Banco Amable,⁵⁷ implemented by the United Nations Development Program in municipalities such as Rioacha and Maicao, can help improve income and employment opportunities for the vulnerable population in receptor areas.

Maintain a Differential Approach

Assistance should recognize the different needs of each segment of the migrant and receptor populations, taking a differential approach to women youth, LGBTI, and indigenous communities. The situation can affect people differently according to their socioeconomic and demographic conditions. It is clear that women and children are more vulnerable to violence in

⁵⁷ <http://www.co.undp.org/content/colombia/es/home/presscenter/articles/2019/05/20/banco-amable-una-referencia-estrategica-para-otros-proyectos-en-.html>

any form. They have limited capacity to work or any income generation opportunities, and are at greater risk for illegal trafficking or recruitment. The LGTBI population is more vulnerable to be pushed into in prostitution, or face discrimination because of their sexual orientation. Recognizing the different needs of different communities should be a constant in any public policies, in communications plans, and of course budget scenarios.

Annex 1: List of Stakeholder Interviews

No	Type of Institution/Organization	Institution/Organization Name	City
1	Public Sector	Gerencia de la Frontera Colombo Venezolana	Bogotá
2	Public Sector	Ministerio de Salud	Bogotá
3	Public Sector	Ministerio del Trabajo	Bogotá
4	Public Sector	Policía Nacional de Colombia	Bogotá
5	Public Sector	Policía Distrital	Bogotá
6	Public Sector	Policía Departamental Cesar	Valledupar
7	Public Sector	Policía Departamental Santander	Bucaramanga
8	Public Sector	Policía Departamental Atlántico	Barranquilla
9	Public Sector	Policía Departamental La Guajira	Riohacha
10	Public Sector	Policía Departamental Bolivar	Cartagena
11	Public Sector	Policía Departamental Arauca	Arauca
12	Public Sector	Policía Departamental Antioquia	Medellín
13	Public Sector	Policía Metropolitana de Cali	Cali
14	Public Sector	Defensoría del Pueblo (Nivel Central)	Bogotá
15	Public Sector	Defensoría del Pueblo Regional Bogotá	Bogotá
16	Public Sector	Defensoría del Pueblo del Cesar	Valledupar
17	Public Sector	Defensoría del Pueblo Santander	Bucaramanga
18	Public Sector	Defensoría del Pueblo Norte de Santander	Cúcuta
19	Public Sector	Defensoría del Pueblo Atlántico	Barranquilla
20	Public Sector	Defensoría Regional de La Guajira	Riohacha
21	Public Sector	Defensoría Regional de Bolivar	Cartagena
22	Public Sector	Defensoría del Pueblo Arauca	Arauca
23	Public Sector	Defensoría del Pueblo Antioquia	Medellín
24	Public Sector	Defensoría del Pueblo Valle del Cauca	Cali
25	Public Sector	ICBF (Nivel Central)	Bogotá
26	Public Sector	ICBF Regional Cesar	Valledupar
27	Public Sector	ICBF Regional Santander	Bucaramanga

28	Public Sector	ICBF Regional Norte de Santander	Cúcuta
29	Public Sector	ICBF Regional Atlántico	Barranquilla
30	Public Sector	ICBF Regional La Guajira	Riohacha
31	Public Sector	ICBF Regional Bolivar	Cartagena
32	Public Sector	ICBF Centro Zonal Maicao	Maicao
33	Public Sector	ICBF Regional Arauca	Arauca
34	Public Sector	ICBF Regional Antioquia	Medellín
35	Public Sector	Migración Colombia - Cesar	Valledupar
36	Public Sector	Migración Colombia Regional Oriente - Santander y Norte de Santander	Bucaramanga
37	Public Sector	Migración Colombia Caribe	Cartagena
38	Public Sector	Migración Colombia La Guajira	Maicao
39	Public Sector	Migración Colombia Regional Antioquia y Chocó	Medellín
40	Public Sector	Gobernación Norte de Santander	Cúcuta
41	Public Sector	Gobernación de Arauca	Arauca
42	Public Sector	Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá	Bogotá
43	Public Sector	Alcaldía Municipal de Valledupar	Valledupar
44	Public Sector	Alcaldía Municipal de Bucaramanga	Bucaramanga
45	Public Sector	Alcaldía Municipal de Cúcuta	Cúcuta
46	Public Sector	Alcaldía Municipal de Barranquilla	Barranquilla
47	Public Sector	Alcaldía Municipal de Riohacha	Riohacha
48	Public Sector	Alcaldía Municipal de Cartagena	Cartagena
49	Public Sector	Alcaldía Municipal de Maicao	Maicao
50	Public Sector	Alcaldía Municipal de Arauca	Arauca
51	Public Sector	Alcaldía Municipal de Medellín	Medellín
52	Public Sector	Veeduría Distrital	Bogotá
53	Public Sector	Personería de Bogotá	Bogotá
54	Public Sector	Personería de Valledupar	Valledupar
55	Public Sector	Personería Municipal Bucaramanga	Bucaramanga
56	Public Sector	Personeria de Maicao	Maicao
57	Public Sector	Puesto de Mando Maicao	Maicao
58	Public Sector	Jaime Arteaga & Asociados	Bogotá

59	Public Sector	FENALCO	Valledupar
60	Public Sector	DRUMMOND	Valledupar
61	Public Sector	Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá	Bogotá
62	Public Sector	Cámara de Comercio de Bucaramanga	Bucaramanga
63	Public Sector	Cámara de Comercio de Cúcuta	Cúcuta
64	Public Sector	Cámara de Comercio de Barranquilla	Barranquilla
65	Public Sector	Cámara de Comercio de La Guajira	Riohacha
66	Public Sector	Cámara de Comercio de Cartagena	Cartagena
67	International Community	Programa de Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo PNUD	Bogotá
68	International Community	Servicio Jesuita de Refugiados	Bogotá
69	International Community	ACNUR	Bogotá
70	International Community	OIM Cesar	Valledupar
71	International Community	Programa OTI Norte de Santander	Cúcuta
72	International Community	MAPP OEA - Norte de Santander	Cúcuta
73	International Community	GIFMM Norte de Santander	Cúcuta
74	International Community	GIFMM Atlántico y Bolívar	Barranquilla
75	International Community	GIFMM La Guajira	Riohacha
76	International Community	GIFMM Arauca	Arauca
77	International Community	GIFMM Antioquia	Medellín
78	International Community	GIFMM Valle del Cauca	Cali
79	Civil Society Organization	Fundación Paz y Reconciliación PARES	Bogotá
80	Civil Society Organization	Fundación Progresar Cúcuta	Cúcuta
81	Civil Society Organization	ProPacífico	Cali
82	Civil Society Organization	Corporación Caribe Afirmativo	Valledupar
83	Civil Society Organization	Pastoral Social Bogotá	Bogotá
84	Civil Society Organization	Pastoral Social Valledupar	Valledupar
85	Civil Society Organization	Pastoral Social Bucaramanga	Bucaramanga
86	Civil Society Organization	Pastoral Social Cúcuta	Cúcuta
87	Civil Society Organization	Pastoral Social Barranquilla	Barranquilla
88	Civil Society Organization	Pastoral Social Riohacha	Riohacha
89	Civil Society Organization	Pastoral Social Cartagena	Cartagena
90	Civil Society Organization	Pastoral Social Arauca	Arauca

91	Civil Society Organization	Pastoral Social Medellín	Medellín
92	Civil Society Organization	Pastoral Social Cali	Cali
93	Ethnic Community	Pueblo Yukpa	Valledupar
94	Ethnic Community	Pueblo Arhuaco	Valledupar
95	Academia	Universidad del Rosario	Bogotá
96	Academia	Universidad ICESI	Cali
97	Media	El Pílon	Valledupar

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