

# Venezuela Regional Crisis – Complex Emergency

DECEMBER 19, 2023

## SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- President Joseph R. Biden announced nearly \$485 million in additional FY 2023 humanitarian assistance for the Western Hemisphere, comprising \$174 million in USAID/BHA support and more than \$310 million in State/PRM support, including \$451 million in response to the Venezuela regional crisis.
- R4V released the 2024 RMRP update on December 6, requesting \$1.6 billion to support the needs of nearly 3 million Venezuelan migrants and refugees.
- Despite some seasonal improvements to income and food price stability in Venezuela in late 2023, FEWS NET anticipates 2.5 million people remain in need of emergency food assistance.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING For the Venezuela Regional Crisis in FYs 2017–2023	USAID/BHA <sup>1</sup>	\$1,561,656,236
		State/PRM <sup>2</sup>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,903,336,578</b>

<sup>1</sup> USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### **USG Announces Nearly \$451 Million in FY 2023 Humanitarian Funding for the Response to the Venezuela Regional Crisis**

During the Inaugural Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity Leaders' Summit on November 6, President Joseph R. Biden announced nearly \$485 million in additional FY 2023 funding—comprising approximately \$174 million from USAID/BHA and more than \$310 million through State/PRM—in response to humanitarian needs in the Western Hemisphere, of which nearly \$451 million is to support the ongoing humanitarian response to the Venezuela regional crisis. This humanitarian assistance will support the provision of food, health, nutrition, protection, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services to vulnerable Venezuelans who remain in the country. Furthermore, the State/PRM funding will support Venezuelan migrants and refugees, and host communities across the region with health care, shelter, and WASH services while bolstering livelihood and protection services for at-risk individuals, including indigenous people, people living with disabilities, and women and girls. Across Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, USAID/BHA continues to support partners to provide direct cash transfers, food vouchers, and hot meals to Venezuelan migrants and refugees, and host communities to enable their purchase of food and necessities from local markets, as well as the provision of food kits for populations in transit.

### **Updated 2024 RMRP Aims to Reach More than 2.9 Million People Across Latin America and the Caribbean With Humanitarian Assistance**

The Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V)—co-led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)—released its 2024 Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP) update on December 6, requiring approximately \$1.6 billion to support nearly 250 partners to deliver critical food, health, nutrition, protection, shelter, and WASH assistance, as well as education, integration, and transportation services. The 2024 RMRP update amends the previous estimated humanitarian needs outlined in the 2023–2024 RMRP, due in part to expectations that outflows of migrants and refugees from Venezuela in 2024 will be approximately 10 percent greater than in 2023. At the same time, the economic and sociopolitical environment in destination countries will likely continue to challenge access to basic services and livelihoods for new arrivals. To address the increasing number of migrants and refugees in the region, the RMRP aims to improve access to essential goods and services—including education, food, health care, humanitarian transport, legal assistance, and other protection services.

Overall, the 2024 RMRP targets more than 2.9 million of the most vulnerable migrants and refugees, of an estimated 8.9 million people in need, across 17 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). The 2024 RMRP aims to reach more than 1.2 million people with emergency food assistance, an estimated 1.6 million people with health care services, and more than 2 million people with protection support across the region during 2024. The update increases the RMRP's target for people in transit to 625,400 people, an increase from 415,000 people in transit targeted for assistance in the initial 2023–2024 RMRP. The updated RMRP also increases its focus on working with local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) for activities in 2024.

### **Elevated Staple Food Prices Continue to Drive Food Insecurity in Venezuela**

Seasonal improvements to income and the stability of food prices positively affected access to food for households in Venezuela as of November 2023, according to recent analysis by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET). However, elevated costs of staple foods and constraints on household purchasing power continue to result in food insecurity. FEWS NET projected Stressed—IPC 2—levels of

acute food insecurity were likely to persist between November 2023 and January 2024 for households in Venezuela's Capital District and most states due to purchasing power constraints, while fewer households were projected to experience Crisis—IPC 3—levels of acute food insecurity during this period.<sup>3</sup> Food prices in Venezuela increased by 318 percent from September 2022 to September 2023, according to the World Bank. Furthermore, vulnerable households in semi-urban and rural areas—particularly in Apure, Guárico, Táchira, and Zulia states—where households are primarily paid in local currency are expected to be most affected by market disruptions, increasing food insecurity. However, households with income that is paid in U.S. dollars, primarily households in urban areas, are expected to have increased purchasing power and improved access to food. Overall, FEWS NET projects at least 2.5 million people in Venezuela would require emergency food assistance between October 2023 and January 2024.

The UN World Food Program (WFP) continues to provide emergency food assistance, including school-based programming and livelihood interventions to food-insecure populations in Venezuela. The UN agency delivered more than 220 metric tons of food assistance to an estimated 15,400 students and school personnel during October. WFP also provided emergency food assistance and livelihood support for 9,000 people in Venezuela's Amazonas, Apure, and Sucre states during this month.

### **Venezuelan Women and Girls Remain at High Risk of Experiencing Gender-Based Violence**

Women and girls affected by the Venezuela regional crisis, including women and girls living in host countries, continue to be at high risk of experiencing gender-based violence (GBV), according to an analysis by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) based on its support for GBV prevention and response programs across Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela. Of the 2,923 GBV survivors supported by IRC in Venezuela, psychological violence accounted for approximately 65 percent of reported cases, while physical violence accounted for 19 percent of reported cases. Moreover, 7 percent of survivors faced reported challenges accessing GBV support services or resources due to their gender.

Displaced women and girls traveling along migration routes and resettling in other countries are at particular risk of experiencing GBV, the NGO reports. Venezuelan women and girls in host countries—including Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru—continue to be disproportionately affected by GBV. Approximately 1.4 million women in Colombia—including Venezuelans in transit or resettling, and Colombians who returned from Venezuela—had been affected by GBV, according to a 2023 needs assessment by the R4V. In Peru, out of nearly 800 GBV cases analyzed by the IRC, reports found that more than 60 percent of the women were Venezuelan, while 60 percent of human trafficking cases in the country in early 2023 affected Venezuelan women.

<sup>3</sup> The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-partner initiative that developed a standardized scale to classify the severity and magnitude of food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries and time, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Famine—IPC 5—for acute food insecurity. IPC Phase 5 is referred to as “Catastrophe” when classifying a household and “Famine” when classifying an area. Famine conditions occur when at least 20 percent of the population in a given area face an extreme lack of food; the Global Acute Malnutrition prevalence, measured by weight-for-height z-score, exceeds 30 percent; and the mortality rate exceeds two people per 10,000 individuals per day.

## KEY FIGURES



**\$169.5  
Million**

In FY 2023 USAID/BHA food assistance in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela



**\$30 Million**

In dedicated FY 2023 USG support for life-saving health care programming



**\$30.7 Million**

In FY 2023 USG WASH support in Venezuela and neighboring countries

## U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

### FOOD SECURITY

USAID/BHA assistance aims to address acute food insecurity among vulnerable Venezuelans inside Venezuela, as well as migrants, refugees, and host community members in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. In Venezuela, USAID/BHA is funding NGO and UN partners to provide cooked meals, in-kind food assistance, and school meals. In countries hosting migrants and refugees, USAID/BHA-funded emergency food assistance includes cash transfers, food kits, food vouchers, hot cooked meals, and complementary nutrition support. In total, these programs aimed to reach approximately 1.5 million people in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru and more than 750,000 people in Venezuela during FY 2023. USAID/BHA also contributes to capacity-building and coordination activities for food security actors to improve humanitarian programming for the Venezuela regional crisis.

### HEALTH

State/PRM has provided approximately \$10 million to UN partners to support essential health interventions for Venezuelan migrants and refugees throughout the region in FY 2023. State/PRM partners are supporting access to essential health care services and supplies for vulnerable populations, including providing vaccines to children, and working with host governments to include Venezuelan migrants and refugees in national health systems. USAID/BHA is also supporting UN partners and NGOs to provide life-saving health care services in Venezuela. With USAID/BHA support, partners are providing essential primary and mental health care, training community health workers to address urgent health needs, and building the capacity of primary-level health systems in Venezuela.

### WASH

USAID/BHA and State/PRM continue to support WASH programming to address the needs of Venezuelans and prevent the spread of communicable diseases. With support from State/PRM, R4V partners aim to reach more than 507,000 people with WASH assistance across the region in 2024. In FY 2023, USAID/BHA provided nearly \$26.6 million and State/PRM provided more than \$4.1 million in funding to support critical WASH activities. Supported activities include ensuring sufficient access to safe drinking water for consumption and household hygiene needs, distributing personal protective equipment and training local health care workers to prevent the spread of disease, conducting hygiene awareness sessions, distributing hygiene kits, rehabilitating WASH infrastructure in schools and health facilities, providing sustainable flood-resilient WASH systems, and installing handwashing stations at community kitchens.



**\$8.8 Million**

USAID/BHA  
funding to support ERMS  
in Colombia in FY 2023

## ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND MARKET SYSTEMS

USAID/BHA humanitarian partners in Colombia are providing household financial instruction and training for Venezuelan migrants and refugees, with an emphasis on improving food security outcomes. Partners are also offering assistance with financial services, market analysis and small-scale business management training, job search support, saving groups, and skill-building activities. USAID/BHA provided approximately \$33.5 million in FY 2023 funding to the VenEsperanza Emergency Response Consortium and the Cash for Urban Assistance Consortium to cover the basic needs of Venezuelan migrant households in Colombia. Of the \$33.5 million in USAID/BHA support to these two consortia, \$8.8 million is dedicated to economy recovery and market systems (ERMS) assistance. The VenEsperanza consortium had reached more than 22,100 people with financial skills building and nearly 4,900 people with livelihoods development activities in Colombia's Antioquia, Arauca, Bolívar, Cundinamarca, La Guajira, Norte de Santander departments and Bogotá Capital District in 2023.

State/PRM partners support ERMS by strengthening livelihood opportunities and socioeconomic integration among vulnerable Venezuelans in the region, providing training and resources to enable the adoption of sustainable entrepreneurship and employment strategies. State/PRM partners provide Venezuelans across the region with business development training; employment and vocational training; language training; registration and technical assistance for work permits; technical skills certifications; and the provision of seed capital and cash assistance via bank transfers, prepaid cards, and mobile money platforms.



**30**

Number of USG  
partners  
that have implemented  
protection  
services

## PROTECTION

In FY 2022 and FY 2023, State/PRM and USAID/BHA supported 30 partners providing protection services to more than 10 million Venezuelans in need of assistance in Venezuela, and across the region, particularly along the border areas and in the Caribbean, where protection services are especially limited. USAID/BHA and State/PRM-supported protection activities aim to increase access to protection services child-friendly spaces, community-based mental health and psychosocial support, GBV prevention and case management, and legal assistance. State/PRM partners also worked with the broader humanitarian community across the region to support advocacy efforts with local and national authorities and promote the delivery of protection services in areas with significant humanitarian access constraints.

## CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- Deteriorating economic and political conditions in Venezuela have decreased households' access to food, health care, and livelihoods; contributed to increasing humanitarian needs; and triggered an outflow of

Venezuelans into countries across LAC, primarily to Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. As of November 2023, more than 7.7 million Venezuelans were living outside of Venezuela, according to R4V.

- The influx of Venezuelans continues to strain social services, especially in border areas of Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. Assessments indicate that food, education, health, protection, shelter, and WASH support continue to be among the most urgent humanitarian needs for at-risk populations, including Venezuelans, Colombian returnees from Venezuela, and host communities.
- In addition to providing support for ongoing response activities, USAID/BHA and State/PRM staff throughout the region and in Washington, D.C., continue to monitor the humanitarian situation in close coordination with relevant donor governments, host governments, NGOs, and UN counterparts.

#### USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE VENEZUELA REGIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE FYs IN 2017–2023<sup>1</sup>

TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR VENEZUELA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN FYs 2017–2023	\$1,561,656,236
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING FOR VENEZUELA REGIONAL RESPONSE IN FYs 2017–2023	\$1,341,680,342
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE VENEZUELA RESPONSE FYs 2017–2023</b>	<b>\$2,903,336,578</b>

<sup>1</sup> Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of September 30, 2023.

## PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed, often in the affected region; reduce the burden on scarce resources, such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space; can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
  - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://cidi.org)
  - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)