

ECUADOR

Situation Report – July 2019

- On 26 July 2019, the Executive Decree 826 and subsequent Inter-ministerial Agreement 103/2019 were issued by the Ecuadorian government.
 - These instruments first establish a humanitarian visa¹ requirement for Venezuelan citizens wishing to enter Ecuador, taking effect starting from the 26th August 2019. A regularization process for Venezuelans who reside in Ecuador and comply with the established requirements² was also announced.
 - During the month of July, a daily average of 1,500 entries of Venezuelan refugees and migrants was registered.
- **120,788 people assisted in total**³⁻⁴.
 - **99,884 people received humanitarian assistance.**
 - **19,222 people received protection assistance.**
 - **1,682 people were assisted on economic, social and cultural integration.**
 - **34% of people assisted were women and 40% children and adolescents.**
 - **611 public servers were trained on human rights, human mobility and access to asylum, and child protection.**

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

The migratory flow of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Ecuador has steadied in the course of July, after some peaks in entries and exits were registered as a result of the implementation of new requirements by the Government of Peru, which entered into force on 15 June 2019. Approximately 52,000 Venezuelan nationals entered the country and 27,000 departed during the reporting period, leading to a daily average of 1,500 regular entries.⁵

The Ecuadorian government made several official announcements during July 2019. On June 30th, the Minister of Foreign Affairs signed the Ministerial Agreement 79, which extended the declaration of emergency for Human Mobility until 31 July 2019 in Carchi, El Oro and Pichincha provinces, with a view to promote a human rights-based approach for people on the move. The Government confirmed that it would recognize the validity of passports of Venezuelan citizens up to five years after their expiration date.

¹ The humanitarian visa is processed through the Ecuadorian consulates in Caracas, Bogotá and Lima. The requirements are the same as for the regularization process, except for the migration registry.

² Only those Venezuelan citizens who had entered Ecuador through the migration control points until 25 July 2019 and have a valid or expired passport, and criminal records apostilled. In the case of minors, an apostilled birth certificate must be presented, and no criminal records will be required. All Venezuelan citizens who wish to regularize their status must complete a migration registration before requiring the humanitarian visa.

³ Quantitative data measure direct assistance and do not include outreach information or advocacy activities. The numbers displayed correspond to assisted persons and not to other measurement units (eg, institutions, shelters).

⁴ Numbers of assisted persons reflect direct and individual assistance interventions. However, those figures may include people who have been assisted through different interventions.

⁵ Source: Ministry of Government: <https://www.ministeriodegobierno.gob.ec/migracion/>

On July 25th, the President of Ecuador signed the Executive Decree 826 and the Inter-ministerial agreement 103, which established the requirement of obtaining a visa of exception for humanitarian reasons⁶ (or of any visa granted by Ecuadorian consulates) for Venezuelan nationals wishing to enter Ecuador, to be implemented as of 25 August 2019. The humanitarian visa will only be processed by the Ecuadorian consulates in Caracas, Bogotá and Lima.

A migration regularization process was also announced for Venezuelan citizens who had entered the country through regular crossing points before the Decree 826 was published (26 July 2019) and who comply with several requirements, in particular, presenting requested documentation (passport, certified criminal records, and a certified birth certificate for children) and not having violated Ecuadorian laws. The process will begin within 90 days from the date the Decree was published; that is, as of 26 October 2019. In the wake of Chile and Peru establishing new requirements, the measures taken by Ecuador brings the total of countries requiring this type of visa to grant entry to Venezuelan citizens in the region to seven⁷.

RESPONSE OVERVIEW

Area of Intervention 1: Direct emergency assistance

- **99,884**⁸ people assisted in July 2019, **70%** of the total assistances registered⁹.
- **32%** were **women**, **23% men** and **45%** were **children and adolescents**.
- **31,047** people received **food security** assistance for the first time.
- **1,698** families were benefited through supplies to improve **water quality** and **7 WASH facilities** were established or improved at borders.
- **3,664** people assisted with **multipurpose cash transfers**.

WASH | Emergency shelter | Non-Food Items (NFI)

During July, GTRM members continued to improve emergency shelter services provided to the Venezuelan population, for example through refurbishment or remodeling. In the *Mitad del Mundo* shelter, located in Quito and managed by *Fundación Nuestros Jóvenes*, WIFI networks were installed in order to facilitate the reestablishment of communication between the refugee and migrant population and their families, benefiting a total of 63 people during July 2019. In addition, 4,214 people received assistance in temporary resting areas installed on the Northern and Southern borders, including priority groups such as children and adolescents, women, pregnant women and people with disabilities.

The construction of the wastewater treatment plant in Rumichaca has concluded and will help to reduce the risk of water-borne diseases and pollution of the nearby Carchi river. Additionally, the process to improve water quality through filtration and chlorination at the border points already started. Workshops of hygiene promotion in Rumichaca were prioritized in July, benefiting a total of 1,487 women, 1,359 men and 1,501 children and adolescents¹⁰. During the reporting period, safe spaces for breastfeeding women were put in place, supporting 742 women¹¹. In addition to the

⁶Requirements for the humanitarian visa: valid or expired passport, apostilled criminal records; in the case of minors, an apostilled birth certificate must be presented, and no criminal records will be required.

Source: Ministry of Government <https://www.ministeriodegobierno.gob.ec/migracion/>

⁷ Countries: Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and Peru.

⁸ Total number of humanitarian assistance include new and recurrent people assisted by food security programmes, therefore it reflects people that benefited on previous months.

⁹ The percentage represents the total assistance resulting from the objectives that are managed within the PRRM.

¹⁰ Information reported outside the PRRM monitoring framework.

¹¹ Information reported outside the PRRM monitoring framework.

installation of liquid soap dispensers at the CEBAF (border office) in Huaquillas, a cleaning service was hired (operating 7 days a week, 12 hours a day) for showers, hygienic services, control of sanitary facilities, and provision of hygiene supplies.

Regarding specific assistance for children and adolescents, baby changing stations were installed at the CEBAF offices in Huaquillas and Lago Agrio and 37 baby kits were delivered in Huaquillas.

Food security

About 52,200 people were provided with food assistance, through the delivery of a voucher to be exchanged at selling points, which are strategically located in a total of 10 provinces nationwide: Esmeraldas, Carchi, Imbabura, Sucumbíos, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Pichincha, Guayas, Azuay, Manabí and El Oro. Additionally, food assistance benefited approximately 2,600 people in shelters and community kitchens in the provinces of Esmeraldas, Carchi, Imbabura, Sucumbíos, Pichincha, Guayas and Azuay. Finally, direct food assistance was also delivered at the border points in Carchi, Sucumbíos and El Oro, through delivery of vouchers corresponding to more than 16,300 individual food kits (2,000 KCAL per kit). Each kit covers four food groups: cereals (whole-meal biscuits), dairy (oatmeal with milk), meat products (tuna), fruits (apple and orange) and water.

Access to Information

Free access to WIFI service is being provided at the border crossing points. As of July, 3,493 people benefited from this service in Huaquillas (1,712 women and 1,713 men) and 10,711 in Tulcán (4,499 women and 6,212 men). GTRM members continue to provide information to the Venezuelan population, benefiting 1,272 people in Quito; 1,058 in Santo Domingo; 566 in Lago Agrio; 10,867 in Tulcán; 2,302 in Guayaquil; 277 in Cuenca; 664 in Esmeraldas; 1,933 in Ibarra, and 3,091 in Huaquillas during the reporting period. Venezuelan refugees and migrants were in particular informed on access to asylum and regularization procedures through group discussions, delivery of informative materials and handouts, and the organization of dedicated workshops.

Area of Intervention 2: Protection

- **19,222** people assisted in July 2019, **28%** of the total assistances registered.¹²
- **35.2%** were **women**, **24% men** and **40.8%** were **children and adolescents**.
- **16,068 people** received orientation on **access to asylum** and to **migratory systems**.
- **281 people** assisted on specialized services in **human trafficking prevention**.

In July, protection monitoring activities were carried out in Machala¹³, Manta and Portoviejo¹⁴. International protection services are not available in Machala and Manta, given the absence of a representation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in these cities. Venezuelan refugees and migrants must therefore travel to Guayaquil, Cuenca or Santo Domingo (in the case of Manta) to request international protection or to other related procedures. Support was therefore provided from GTRM partners to support the travel of refugees and migrants to Guayaquil and Cuenca, as a way to enable them to access the procedures. Monitoring conducted in Machala demonstrated that the rate of out of school children was high, in particular for children aged 12-17 years old, with only 30% of adolescents with more than 6 months of residence that

¹² The percentage represents the total assistance resulting from the objectives that are managed within PRRM.

¹³ 317 surveys.

¹⁴ 593 surveys in Manta and Portoviejo.

are attending school. In Manta, like in other locations covered by the protection monitoring¹⁵, the rate of Venezuelan refugees and migrants with an irregular status was also particularly high (46%). The surveyed population expressed being well integrated in the host community and 19.96% indicated that they considered their relationship with the local population as “very good” and 55.38% as “good”.

Gender-Based Violence and Human Trafficking

The GTRM continue to strengthen the prevention and response mechanisms to gender-based violence (GBV). In Cuenca, actions have been coordinated with the *Casa María Amor* to support survivors of gender-based violence in addition to facilitating access to services for their children. In addition, a workshop was held to assist women victims of violence, with public servants of Rafalex, an institution that works alongside with the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) to assist the Venezuelan population.

In El Oro province and together with the Cantonal Councils of Rights Protection of Huaquillas and Machala, the local protection framework and referral pathways are being strengthened. In order to support referrals of GBV prioritizing cases that are identified and referred from the border in Huaquillas, outreach was made to local foundations and networks (“*Creando Juntas*” and Fundación Quimera). Likewise, in Esmeraldas, the integration of Venezuelan women and their families into host communities was promoted, combined with initiatives implemented in collaboration with the Public Defender's Office, for the safe referral of cases of GBV survivors.

Actions have been coordinated with the Ecuadorian Center for the Promotion and Action of Women (CEPAM - Guayaquil) to join efforts to assist GBV survivors. Meanwhile, in Imbabura, efforts to strengthen the local protection pathway are maintained through the Network of Integral Protection in Cases of Domestic and Sexual Violence of Imbabura (RED VIF-GXI). Similarly, the GTRM participated in the working groups “*El acuerdo es ahora – por una vida libre de violencias*” (“*The agreement is now - for a life free of violence*”). In Sucumbíos, members of the GTRM participated in a roundtable for the eradication of gender-based violence.

In July, prevention activities on human trafficking and gender violence were held in Huaquillas and Tulcán, benefiting 247 and 254 people, respectively. In addition, information was provided to Venezuelan refugees and migrants on human trafficking, GBV, child protection, as well as on how to report cases, file complaints and access the emergency numbers in Quito, Ibarra and Huaquillas.

Area of Intervention 3: Socioeconomic and cultural integration

- **1,682** people assisted in July 2019, **2%** of the total assistances registered¹⁶.
- **27%** were **women**, **20% men** and **53%** were **children and adolescents**.
- **316 interventions** to facilitate access to employment and promote social cohesion.
- **901** children and adolescents participated in **informal education** processes.

Education

In July, GTRM partners supported 383 individual cases by providing orientation on access to education. Some 153 public servants of the Ministry of Education (teachers and public servants at the district level) were trained on Human Mobility,

¹⁵ Protection Monitoring: Quito, Guayaquil, Cuenca, Santo Domingo, Machala, Manta, Portoviejo, Ibarra.

¹⁶ The percentage represents the total assistance resulting from the objectives that are managed within the PRRM.

psychosocial impact of displacement situations and inclusive education methodologies. Meanwhile, a total of 678 teachers and professionals of the education sector were trained on psychosocial support.

Support processes are being managed on a case-by-case basis for access to education for the most vulnerable population. During July, GTRM members have for example observed some irregularities in relation to the requirements that are being asked for the registration of Venezuelan children and adolescents in schools. In response to this situation, complaint protocols have been activated in Cuenca, before the Cantonal Board for the Protection of Rights. The Local Coordination of the Ministry of Education has been informed on these complaint mechanisms. In addition, the Venezuelan population expressed difficulties to afford school supplies, uniforms and shoes, which directly affects the attendance of children, who may feel excluded because they lack a school uniform.

GTRM partners are developing a guide on requirements and alternatives to enroll Venezuelan children and adolescents in the Ecuadorian education system. This informative material will be easy to disseminate and will enable Venezuelan parents to learn about the dates, requirements and the registration process nationwide. Regarding early education, the Venezuelan population has been informed on the possibility to enroll their children aged three to four years old until the beginning of the school year. In addition, the referral mechanisms and pathways with MIES have been reinforced within the *“Protocol for the assistance of children, adolescents and their families in contexts of human mobility in Ecuador”*. Besides, information on the *“Guagua Child Centers”* -safe places for children to be looked after while their parents are at work- has been disseminated in Quito.

Livelihoods

GTRM partners have been conducting outreach to academic institutions and private companies. In Guayaquil, in order to keep an inclusive process with the Venezuelan population, the expansion of professional training, both paid and free of charge, has been sought. For example, a Municipal Training Center, where trainings on gastronomy and chemical products are regularly offered, accessible to Venezuelan refugees and migrants who can show a passport was approached. In Lago Agrio, refugees and migrants were trained on how to create organic urban family gardens, an initiative benefiting four Venezuelan women. This workshop included theoretical and practical training one day a week and is provided by experts, combined with livelihood counselors who conduct monitoring to advice on how to set up and take care of the garden. Info-centers in Guayaquil were contacted to implement training programs on computer tools with the Venezuelan population.

In Quito, new channels have been established to work with training centers in accordance to the needs of the Venezuelan population, such as ARTEMIS and MIA SECRET. In addition, outreach to training centers operating in the field of esthetic and gastronomy are ongoing. An agreement was reached with the Shande International Institute to grant scholarships to Venezuelan refugees and migrants, which will facilitate comprehensive training on esthetic. A certificate will be granted by the Secretary of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (SENESCYT).

In Tulcán, contacts were made with the business development center of the Provincial Government of Carchi to carry out workshops for refugees and migrants, as well as with the host communities. The workshops focus on leadership and motivation, teamwork and development of ideas for entrepreneurship. In parallel, the Ministry of Labor was reached to coordinate workshops on labor legislation focused on the Venezuelan population in a situation of human mobility.

In relation to Venezuelan youth, GTRM partners are working on ways to provide technical training, soft skills and technical assistance for both refugees and migrants and host communities. The training focuses on improving the ability to increase income for Venezuelan families. In addition, a group of young people in Borbón has been approached for the first time on issues related to livelihoods. Work is also carried with a group of young people gathered by the Ministry of Public Health in the community of Ricaurte, Azuay Province.

Together with the San Francisco de Quito University (USFQ), the **“A Ganar Sin Límites”** (“To Win With no Limits”) program is being developed in Ibarra, Santo Domingo and Quito. This program includes technical training focused on employment and makes it easier for beneficiaries to be included in the USFQ network, which offers follow-up for inclusion in other programs that are supporting entrepreneurship and self-employment.

Within the framework of the **“Sin Fronteras”** (“Without Borders”) project, the governing board met in order to present progress and the next steps to be taken. The private companies that participated expressed commitment and are willing to provide technical and material resources to support the economic inclusion of refugees and migrants. An online micro financing platform was also presented.

Social Cohesion

In July 2019, awareness-raising initiatives against xenophobia were developed. The **“Abrazos que unen”**¹⁷ campaign has been expanded, reaching 696,520 people through social networks and traditional media. In July, the International **“Mujeres Sin Fronteras”** convention was held, jointly organized by the *Frente de Mujeres de Esmeraldas* and *Grupo Mujeres Unidas del Pacífico*. The event aimed to consolidate strategic alliances with organizations that work to advance rights of women by exchanging experiences and information on the services available in Esmeraldas city. Likewise, in the framework of the **“Juntemos Manos hoy... mañana podrás necesitar una”**¹⁸ campaign, an awareness-raising TV spot was produced and was broadcast approximately 15 times per month, four radio programs were elaborated and 40 publications on Twitter and 15 publications on Facebook; reaching approximately 60,000 people, were registered.

Community action networks (RAC) were generated to involve local, public and private actors through community-based activities such as *mingas*, volunteering initiatives, sports and sociocultural events and community development programs. These activities aim at strengthening participation, leadership and support spaces and networks between the refugee and migrant population with host communities and allowing the active participation of women, girls and boys.

Area of Intervention 4: Support to the host Government

- **520** public servants **trained**
- **91** public health staff **trained**

Capacity-building initiatives

GTRM partners continued to provide regular training to public servants on gender, human rights, access to services, access to asylum and human mobility, a process which benefited several public institutions in July 2019:

- A **“Respiramos Inclusión”** training was carried out in Baños with the participation of 47 teachers from six educational units;
- Several trainings took place in Ibarra and Machala with the participation of public servants from MIES and other civil organizations. The trainings aimed to trained civil servers on the importance of quality data collection and evidence-based processes, as a way to inform the development of local public policies;

¹⁷ Campaign carried out by the United Nations System in Ecuador.

¹⁸ Campaign carried out by the Jesuit Refugee Service in Ecuador.

- In Cuenca, a training was organized for the institutions that are part of the Azuay Human Mobility Bureau. As a result, a tool for an adequate registration of families and evaluating the vulnerabilities of people living in the streets was developed;
- In Tulcán, several sections of the National Police continued to be trained within the human rights program;
- Public servants from different institutions that are part of the GBV roundtable were trained on the “*Articulation of the GBV response in Sucumbíos*” workshop in coordination with several local foundations. In addition, civil servants of health centers, CEBAF office and schools were trained on the same subject.
- Capacity-building activities were conducted on the “*Detection of fraudulent documentation and identity theft*” in Tulcán (2) and Huaquillas (4).

Coordination with the Government

In July, several actions aimed at strengthening the response of public institutions within the Venezuela response have been reported. In Tulcán, a process for strengthening child protection services was carried out. An analysis of the relevant protocol was performed, as well as technical support for the improvement of the procedures for children and adolescent assistance with MIES and the Cantonal Board for the Protection of Rights covering border areas. In addition, in the Province of Imbabura, meetings with the presidents of the Bellavista community and the Parish Board of San Antonio have been held to present various proposals for community-based interventions.

In Lago Agrio, suggestions to modify the local regulation for the use of public spaces for street commerce were shared at the Livelihoods roundtable, in order to share the document with the, local authorities and carry out a dedicated analysis. Likewise, the Provincial board of Human Mobility in Esmeraldas initiated a strategy aiming at better articulating institutional initiatives. Specific activities have been defined to update the Development and Territorial Plan of the Province of Esmeraldas and the mainstreaming of the Human Mobility approach.

Progress has been made in the development of a survey tool in coordination with the Ombudsman's Office, the Cantonal Council for the Protection of Rights, Fundación Quimera and Fundación de Mujeres of El Oro Province, as a way to adequately approach Venezuelan nationals who live with children and adolescents in a situation of beggary in Machala. The aim is to channel assistance and referrals to relevant entities, as appropriate. In Machala, a meeting was held with the Cantonal Council for the Protection of Rights to promote an integral inclusion for Venezuelan refugees and migrants in their community settings. In the same sense, a meeting was held with institutions comprising the local protection network of children and adolescents in Santo Domingo, to discuss cases of beggary and child labor, in order to sensitize the Venezuelan families and provide guidance to facilitate their access to public education and health services. The meeting was attended by the National Police (DINAPEN), the Cantonal Board for the Protection of Rights, the Provincial Government and the MIES. In Quito, the Human Rights and Education roundtable was formed. A human rights-based analysis of the state of education is underway, including the identification of lessons learned and progress made, with a view to present the first findings in August.

GTRM COORDINATION

- The GTRM coordination team carried out a process to **review and clean-up beneficiary numbers** reported by GTRM partners during the first semester, in order to **draft the mid-year report**. Members were enabled to update their implementation information activity for the January-June reporting period, as a way to complement existing information for the first semester of implementation of the Response Plan.
- The **Water and Sanitation/Emergency Shelter/NFI (WEN)** working group initiated a standardization of the content of NFI Kits, for partners to manage minimum standards for the humanitarian response. In addition, the working group has worked on a comprehensive data-collection tool, to assess shelters at national level. This will

enable them to identify areas of improvements and will be jointly implemented by the partners, according to the chronogram of this working group.

- The **Food Security** working group introduced a tool on the content of food kits, to support complementarity of food assistance interventions. The intention is to evaluate the feasibility of standardizing the content of the three different types of food kits that are currently delivered.
- The **Protection** working group carried out a national training process on the protection against sexual abuse and exploitation for different focal points, with the participation of international experts. Still in the framework of PSEA efforts, the working group is working on the consolidation of the inter-agency complaint mechanism, as well as on the elaboration of inter-agency referral and assistance protocols for GBV cases and within the LGBTI population.
- The **Socioeconomic and cultural integration** working group is defining a working methodology in the fields of employability, entrepreneurship and financial education. Actions implemented by each partner will be articulated in a more sustainable fashion and with a long-term vision.
- The **Cash-based Interventions** working group validated its internal structure which is comprised of three thematic sub-groups: 1) targeting criteria and eligibility; 2) transfer values and minimum basket; 3) procurement and financial services. This structure will allow the harmonization of criteria to minimize duplication of actions and promote complementarity between the programs implemented by GTRM partners. Likewise, the focal points that will coordinate each thematic group were identified.

GTRM MEMBERS¹⁹

ADRA | CARE | CSMM-PIDHDD | Dialogo Diverso | FUDELA | Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) | ILO | IOM | Jesuit Refugee Service Ecuador | Misión Scalabriniana | Norwegian Refugee Council | Plan International Ecuador | Red Cross Ecuador | RET International | UNDP | UNESCO | UNFPA | UNHCR | UNICEF | UNOCHA | UNWOMEN | World Vision Ecuador | WFP | WHO

For more information, please contact:

Inter-agency coordination

Capucine Maus de Rolley | Inter-agency Coordinator | mausdero@unhcr.org
Nicolás Vexlir | Inter-agency Coordinator | nvexlir@iom.int
Anabel Estrella | Inter-agency Coordination Associate | estrella@unhcr.org
Daniel Pazmiño | Inter-agency Coordination Associate | pazmiod@unhcr.org
Patricia Proaño | Inter-agency Coordination Associate | pproano@iom.int

¹⁹ The situation reports are based on GTRM members' monitoring activities that are part of the 2019 Refugee and Migrant Response Plan. The list of members participating in the GTRM is broader.