



# EVALUATION BRIEF

20 April 2020

## INTERIM EVALUATION OF IOM'S REGIONAL RESPONSE TO THE FLOWS OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS FROM VENEZUELA

This evaluation brief presents a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as identified by the evaluators for use by key stakeholders, including internally by IOM staff, host governments, operational partners and the refugees and migrants from Venezuela. More details can be found in the full evaluation report.

<b>Evaluation type:</b>	External independent interim evaluation
<b>Evaluators:</b>	Christian Bugnion, Team Leader Julia Durand, Team Member
<b>Field visit dates:</b>	8-14 December 2019; 14-23 January 2020; 20-27 January 2020
<b>Final report date:</b>	31 March 2020

**Commissioned by:** Office of the D.G. Special Envoy for the Venezuela Situation

**Managed by:** Elisa Roth

**Evaluation purpose:** The purpose of the evaluation is to gather reliable information to improve ongoing and future IOM activities within the response to Venezuelan flows. Externally, it will promote accountability and transparency, which, in turn, will assist governments and other donors in their decision making about future project funding.

**Evaluation criteria:** Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, connectedness, and coverage.

**Evaluation methodology:** Document review, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and direct observations.

### Project information: (6 projects)

Geographical coverage:	Countries covered by the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan
Project types:	DP
Project codes:	DP.1930, DP.1959, DP.1969, DP.2003, DP.2040 and DP.2071
Gender markers:	0; 2a; 2a; 1; 2a; 1
Period:	April 2018 to December 2019
Donors:	Canada, CERF, ECHO, PRM, The Netherlands, Switzerland
Budget:	Aprox. USD 54,088,733

### PROJECT SUMMARY

IOM's regional response, driven initially by the Regional Office in Buenos Aires for South America, shifted in late 2019 to the Office of the D.G. Special Envoy for the Venezuelan Situation in Panama. It is implemented through the various COs in the region, and with the support of several partners, in collaboration with the government institutions and the UNCTs. The six Regional Projects that form the backbone of IOM's Regional Response, funded by five different donors, have been developed with specific attention to ensuring regional coherence, while preserving the necessary flexibility for each country to adjust to the operational context and the governmental decisions regarding the response to the crisis. The expected results are that *Venezuelan women, men, girls and boys in vulnerable conditions receive timely and principled humanitarian assistance, referral services and integration support in line with their differentiated protection needs* with the overall objective to *contribute to a regionally coordinated response to the large migration of Venezuelan nationals, in line with humanitarian principles and sustainable development objectives*.

All six regional projects, and thus the evaluation, have been structured according to the four intervention areas (Direct Emergency Assistance [DEA], Protection [P], Socio-Economic and Cultural Integration [SECI], and Institutional Capacity Strengthening [ICS]) identified in the RAP 2018 and RMRP 2019 driving the regional response until the RMRP 2020 which used a sector approach.

The evaluation used a mix of methods. For the evaluation of the global level (e.g. the sixteen countries covered by the six regional projects), the evaluation used the projects' M&E results framework and the updated indicators and data sets provided by the IOM evaluation manager.

At the country level, the evaluation used a case study approach in three countries: Brazil, Colombia and Peru. As of 31st December 2019, a total of USD 10,286,434 was used from five of the six regional projects in the response for these three countries that host a migrant and refugee population of 2,520,483.

The evaluation is both summative and formative, bringing accountability to the performance of the regional response to date, highlighting both the good practices but also those areas that require improvement.

With the COVID-19 pandemic an addendum was submitted as operating conditions have drastically changed in host countries requiring an adjustment of priorities.

## KEY FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

IOM has correctly positioned itself in the Response to ensure effective interventions, and that the Regional Response is articulated in a coherent and coordinated manner across the various countries of the region.

The size, complexity and scope of the crisis is such that a regional response is warranted, first and foremost to address the immediate humanitarian needs of the vulnerable population in line with the projects' expected results.

At the regional level, IOM was able to design a coherent response strategy that allowed it to determine a common objective, albeit leaving the flexibility for the operational details to each country, in line with the operational context and the governments' decisions regarding the migrants. The regional projects proved essential to enable a timely response from the IOM, and the key success areas are found in the DEA and SECI objectives, with more difficulties in demonstrating success in the area of protection beyond the number of people receiving protection services, and support to ICS varying across the countries.

The Response is aligned to the national response led in each country by the host government, and the three case study countries demonstrated that government institutions showed a high to very high level of satisfaction with the effectiveness of IOM's response as well as praising its staff commitment (in Brazil and Peru) and responsiveness. Efforts must be increased to ensure coverage to all vulnerable groups in need, as resources and funds received are insufficient to cover all the needs.

In the case studies, DTM is seen as a valuable tool for information management as well as advocacy. IOM works to develop a coherent communication strategy to minimize xenophobia. Overall, SGBV and mental health issue needs are not fully met or need greater attention in the response.

In Brazil, IOM has been seen as both highly effective and responsive in the four intervention areas, particularly in DEA. The strong and close collaboration with the government is seen as a model of collaboration. However, there's limited involvement with indigenous communities. The priority is given to transportation and SECI activities for migrants in host localities away from the border area..

In Colombia, considering the context, the activities undertaken by the IOM have been very flexible, responsive and supportive of the government's priorities. IOM

has an inclusive approach to assistance (migrants, host communities and returnees) to minimise xenophobia. It host the largest and most complex beneficiary caseload. Despite strong efforts undertaken, a more person-centred approach could be devoted to assist vulnerable migrants in need of assistance. The development of an integrated referral mechanism to inform all migrants about their options for support from state and non-institutional actors is needed.

IOM Peru has been both highly effective and responsive under the different activities. There is a good effort by IOM to establish a coherent communication strategy. IOM's ICS activities are highly valued and requested by government officials. However, coordination remains a weakness. Integration activities remain isolated. Stronger technical and management capacities and community participation and feedback mechanisms are warranted.

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS - (summary)

1. Need to intensify support to migrants due to the ongoing and continued crisis and coverage gaps.
2. Increase the capacity development at country level on M&E, especially at outcome-level.
3. IOM needs to encourage and support countries to develop a country strategy based on a ToC which supports the regional response.
4. Internal learning exercise needs to reflect on the activation of corporate emergency mechanisms.
5. Greater communication and advocacy for the respect of humanitarian principles (Sphere, Do No Harm).
6. Need to develop an integrated referral system for refugees and migrants from Venezuela.
7. Need for a country-specific strategic plan.
8. Extend coverage of SECI activities to temporary resident migrants to respond to the needs for a stable source of income.
9. More DTM outreach at informal border crossings, being mindful of ethical data protection and security.
10. Define a clear strategy to define IOM's protection and results framework.
11. Develop a regional communication strategy to support the coherence, visibility of IOM offices.
12. Develop strong regional partnerships to increase coordination and coherence of the response across countries.
13. Integrate more aspects related to mental health and SGBV in the intervention strategy.