



### HIAS IN VENEZUELA

Founded: 2007

Staff Size: 175

Country Director: Oliver Bush

Office Locations: Barinas, Caracas, Coro, Guasdalito, Machiques, Maracaibo, Puerto Ayacucho, Puerto Ordaz, San Antonio, San Cristobal, Santa Bárbara, Santa Elena

Venezuela hosts some 9,310 recognized refugees and asylum seekers, especially Colombian nationals, who have fled to the country due to a decades-long armed conflict. In response to the increased instability in the lives of already vulnerable refugee populations and host communities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the current country context, HIAS Venezuela has developed innovative solutions to adapt and respond to the needs of refugees and Venezuelans. HIAS Venezuela focuses on single women, female-headed households, survivors of gender-based violence, survivors of torture, the elderly, people with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ community, offering services and tools aimed at strengthening local and individual capacities to foster self-sufficiency and empowerment.



### HIAS PROGRAMS AND FOCUS

#### Legal Protection

Without legal status, refugees are forced to live on the margins of society, sometimes for generations, without access to healthcare, education, dignified work, or safe shelter. HIAS Venezuela provides access to necessary legal information, rights and services, and refers clients to other social and legal assistance, as needed. Staff train community leaders on how to identify, prevent, and respond to specific protection needs, offering workshops on refugee protection, access to rights, voluntary repatriation, mobility, access to birth registration and documentation, and displacement.

#### Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response

Women, girls, and LGBTQ individuals are disproportionately affected by forced displacement. HIAS' GBV services are driven by the needs and the voices of survivors, and our GBV programming helps forcibly displaced women, girls, and LGBTQ individuals access human rights to pursue their potential, free from violence and gender-related oppression. HIAS Venezuela's GBV prevention and response programs provide case management services and life-saving support to survivors. Services include psychosocial assistance, distribution of health and hygiene kits to women, legal protection, and trainings on working with local organizations. HIAS Venezuela also collaborates with survivors of GBV to design and implement cultural and recreational activities, creating safe, welcoming spaces that engage existing support systems in their communities.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

The general weakening of infrastructure has led to insufficient access to clean water and adequate sanitation systems across Venezuela. To mitigate the disruption of access to basic water, sanitation, and hygiene services, HIAS and its partners have designed and implemented WASH activities in eight states in Venezuela. Activities include providing communities with access to clean water through rehabilitation of access sources, education on good hygiene, dignity kits containing specific hygiene products for women and girls, and delivery of sanitation supplies.



## Community-Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (CB-MHPSS)

Refugees and forcibly displaced people face adversity and extreme stressors, including loss of loved ones, violence, and disruptions to daily life. HIAS' mental health programs train community members and officials of local institutions to recognize acute emotional distress as a result of crisis and respond with empathy and respect through the implementation of scalable, low-intensity methodologies. HIAS has psychologists on staff to provide mental health care, administer psychological first aid, and run support groups. Staff also support caregivers to cope with heightened stress and build capacity with local community leaders.

## Economic Inclusion

Access to dignified, sustainable, and safe livelihoods are at the core of HIAS' economic inclusion work. HIAS helps provide opportunities for refugees and host communities to build independent and meaningful futures that allow them to enhance their self-reliance and increase their resilience. We offer cash and voucher assistance, as well as provide hygiene and maternity kits and household and emergency kits, and assist with access to transportation, shelter, and legal services. In addition, HIAS Venezuela provides training by specialists to improve nutrition, budget planning, COVID-19 prevention and health care, and safe use of electronic payment mechanisms.



## HIAS in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

HIAS advocates for the protection of refugees, other forcibly displaced populations, and local host communities throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. As part of a comprehensive regional response to meet the urgent needs of these populations, including the millions of displaced Venezuelans, HIAS participates in several regional coordination platforms and partnerships with a focus on protection, food security, gender-based violence, and cash and voucher assistance, including:

REDLAC (IASC Regional Work Group Risk, Emergencies and Disasters)  
UNHCR/IOM Regional Platform for the Venezuela Situation Response (R4V)  
The Interagency Group on Mixed Migration Flows (GIFMM) in Colombia  
Working Group for Refugees and Migrants (GTRM) in Ecuador and Peru

HIAS currently has programs in nine countries in LAC (Aruba, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guyana, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela) and partners with a wide range of government agencies, UN entities (UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, UNVFVT), the private sector (Airbnb, TATA Consultancy Services, and Manpower), and other NGOs and consortia, including Jesuit Refugee Service, Save the Children, Norwegian Refugee Council, Plan International, and Girls not Brides.

## CONTACT

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