



Country Sheet

Venezuela





HI Team and intervention areas

HI Venezuela program has 33 staff members and is part of the Regional Latin America Program.





General data of the country

a) General data

DATA	Venezuela	Colombia	Belgium
Population	28.8	52.1	11.8
IHDI	0.6	0.568	0.878
SIGI Score	16.5	23.5	7.4
Maternal mortality	259	75	5
GINI Index	44.7	54.8	26.6
Population within UNHCR mandate	258.083	7.007.564	222.589
INFORM Index	5.6	5.6	2.1
Fragile State Index	89	75.6	30.3
Population covered by at least one social protection benefit (%)	54.2	49.7	100
Net official development assistance received	272.3	1883.3	0

b) Humanitarian law instruments ratified by the country

Humanitarian law instruments	Status
Mine Ban Treaty	Signed on 03/12/1998 and ratified on 14/04/1999 – Entering into force on the 01/10/1999
Convention on Cluster Munitions	Not signed
UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Signed on 24/09/2013
Convention on the rights of children and adolescents	Signed on the 16/01/1990 and ratified on the 13/09/1990
Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Signed on the 2011
Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)	Signed on 11/05/2022

c) Geopolitical analysis

Recent history of Venezuela

Venezuela, officially known as the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, is situated on the northern coast of South America. This diverse nation consists of a continental landmass and



numerous islands in the Caribbean Sea. As a federal presidential republic, Venezuela is divided into 24 states and a Capital District which encompasses Caracas, its capital city. The country is among the most urbanized in Latin America, with the vast majority of citizens living in the north, especially in Caracas. Venezuela is a founding member of the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the Union of South American Nations, the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America, Mercosur, the Latin American Integration Association and the Organization of Ibero-American States.

In recent decades, however, Venezuela has gathered attention not for its cultural richness or natural beauty but for its profound political, economic and social crisis. The roots of these crisis can be traced to the late 1990s, characterized by growing disillusionment with the political establishment that had dominated since 1958. This discontent paved the way for Hugo Chávez, whose rise to power in 1998 marked the beginning of a tumultuous era known as the "Bolivarian Revolution". Chavez established populist social welfare policies, funded by the oil bonanza, that initially boosted the Venezuelan economy and increased social spending, temporarily reducing economic inequality and poverty in the early years of the government.

However, the reliance on oil revenues soon revealed systemic vulnerabilities. Economic benefits linked to reduction of global oil prices exposed decades of underinvestment in non-oil sectors. Simultaneously, Chávez's governance stifled dissent and press freedoms, exacerbating societal divisions. By the time of his death in 2013, Venezuela was already caught in unrest, as protests against the government surged.

Chavez's successor, Nicolás Maduro, assumed the power amid an intensified crisis. The new political policies, as same as falling oil prices, speculation and economic mismanagement led the country's economy to the collapse, resulting in post-2004 to hyperinflation, economic depression, commodity shortages and a drastic increase in unemployment, poverty, disease, infant mortality, malnutrition, and crime; decimating the middle class and prompting mass migration.

International responses to Venezuela's difficulties ranged from humanitarian aid to sanctions levied against government officials and the national oil enterprise. Amid this complex backdrop, opposition leader Juan Guaidó emerged in 2019, declaring himself as interim president in a bid to challenge Maduro's legitimacy. This move garnered international backing yet ultimately failed to shift the power dynamics, as Maduro retained military support and alliances with global powers like Rusia, China and Iraq.

Some signs of economic stabilization emerged after Maduro relaxed price controls and began dollarizing the economy in 2019, and the United States permitted U.S. oil giant Chevron to resume limited operations in the country at the end of 2022, in part to help offset rising global energy prices due to the war in Ukraine. However, the chronic humanitarian crisis remains. In 2023 Maduro's government and the opposition agreed to continue dialogue, including the request of the United Nations for managing the release of 3,000 million dollars for the social protection of the Venezuelan population.



As of 2024 the situation remains precarious. The elections in Venezuela have attracted significant global attention amidst ongoing economic hardship and political instability. Despite a heightened atmosphere and initiatives for electoral fairness, the government retained a stronghold, casting doubts on the electoral process's integrity. On election day, the National Electoral Council reported that Maduro won about 58% of the votes, which was met with scepticism from opposition leaders and international observers due to claims of fraud and voter intimidation.

Immediate international reactions, particularly from the U.S. and the European Union, questioned the election's integrity and called for investigations, raising the country's unrest. Maduro's ongoing presidency poses serious implications for civil liberties and economic stability in Venezuela, which is grappling with high inflation and declining living standards.

Humanitarian consequences of the crisis

The socioeconomic crisis in Venezuela has deteriorated since 2019, causing a collapse in services, weakening health facilities, and affecting the food security and nutrition of the population. This period has seen one of the biggest mass displacements in South America's history with at least 7.71 million Venezuelans leaving the country since 2014 (UNHCR). Between 2020 and 2021, inflation skyrocketed, increasing poverty and deteriorating living conditions, resulting in food and medicine shortages, as well as an increase of deaths due the collapse of the healthcare system.

The improvement in some macroeconomic indicators between 2022-2023 has not translated into improved living conditions for the population; the most vulnerable groups, such as women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities, continue to be the most affected. People in Venezuela maintain high levels of vulnerability, with more people falling below the poverty line. The World Food Organization estimates that around 9.3 million people are food insecure, with a notable decline in the nutritional quality of available food, which has led to alarming rates of child malnutrition. The economy is 75% smaller in terms of GDP compared to the last year of growth in 2013. Thus, it would take at least 15 years of growth at a rate of 5 per cent per year for the economy to return to half its previous size.

The humanitarian crisis persists, with tens of thousands of Venezuelans fleeing abroad - with record numbers arriving at the US border this year after crossing the perilous jungle trek through the Darién Gap between South and Central America, facing discrimination and precarious conditions in host countries. It is projected that by the end of 2024 there will be approximately 6.82 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the Latin American and Caribbean region, with 4.71 million in need of assistance.

Internationally, the crisis has generated diverse responses, from support for democratic processes to humanitarian aid. International aid agencies play a crucial role, although they face logistical and security challenges that hinder their efforts to meet the growing needs of the Venezuelan population.



Summary of HI presence in the country

HI has been supporting vulnerable persons over Latin America region since the 90's with a specific focus to improve the living conditions of people with disabilities. HI is currently active in Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Cuba, Honduras and Venezuela.

In the last 20 years, HI developed extensive knowledge of Latin American context and actors and has implemented interventions in various sectors, through several modalities, to respond to various crisis. Through the regional dynamics, HI has established operational and strategic partnerships with stakeholders of the disability sector in Venezuela, notably with Consorven, whose President holds the position of Vice-President of the Latin American DPO Network (RIADIS).

In 2019, as part of HI's Regional response to mitigate the impact of the migration crises, HI started its operations in Venezuela with an ECHO funded project focusing on improving access to essential services (such as health, protection and food assistance) for the most marginalized groups with a special focus on persons with disabilities and/or mental health and psychosocial distress which were later extended thanks to the financial support from CDCS.

In 2022, HI redefined its strategy in Venezuela, by identifying gaps in the humanitarian response for which HI's added value as last-mile responder could pose a solution. Thus, three new states were pre-identified after taking into consideration factors as intersectionality of vulnerability, degree of humanitarian response and context/access deterioration levels.

During 2023 we consolidated our presence in Apure, Amazonas and Monagas and increased our reach to provide assistance to the vulnerable population, with special attention to people with disabilities, in Delta Amacuro, Miranda and the capital district. We continue examining opportunities that allow us to respond to the humanitarian needs - including logistical gaps - identified in these and other states of the country.



Overview on ongoing projects

Sectors where HI conducts projects and focus on beneficiaries and operational partnerships

Project title & main sector(s) of intervention	Main activities	Beneficiaries	Partner(s)	Location	Project start and end dates	Donors who finance the project
Promoting opportunities for young people in Apure Protection against violence and abuse, Inclusive Governance, Economic Inclusion, Conflict Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase youth capacities for dialogue and effective participation in their community • Ensure access to sexual and reproductive rights • Increase youth prevention initiatives to facilitate local conflict resolution and increase social cohesion. • Reducing different types of violence and conflict transformation • Productive initiatives 	Young people in vulnerable situations in four parishes in the municipality of Paez.	REPAS (Implementer) TINTA VIOLETA (Implementer)	Apure State – Paez Municipality	02.2023 - 01.2025	DG INTPA (International partnership services of the European Commission)
Integrated response to address the protection, water, sanitation and hygiene, food security and health needs of the most vulnerable migrants and their host communities, with a special focus on indigenous populations in the department of Vichada in Colombia and the states of Amazonas and Delta Amacuro in Venezuela	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction or improvement of inclusive-friendly community hygiene/sanitation facilities • Provision of gender-oriented water, sanitation and hygiene kits • Education on diseases prevention (malaria, covid-19, dengue, cholera, zika) • Analysis of access barriers and support for access to health services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host communities • Indigenous population • Migrants in route • Elderly • People with disabilities 	ORPIA (Ally in Amazonas) REPAS (Implementer in Apure)	Amazonas State – Municipalities of Atures, Autana and Atabapo (Venezuela) Apure State – Paez Municipality	06.2023 - 12.2025	German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) (Sub of HelpAge Germany)



Project title & main sector(s) of intervention	Main activities	Beneficiaries	Partner(s)	Location	Project start and end dates	Donors who finance the project
Water Sanitation & Hygiene, Mental Health & Psychosocial Support, Emerging Infectious diseases, Food Assistance, Inclusive Humanitarian Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of assistive products (lens, canes, wheelchairs, and walking frames) • Provision of professional psychosocial support • Provision of food and non-food items kits • Design of comprehensive disaster risk management plans 					
Implementing Partner of World Food Programme for the School-Based Program in Monagas State Food Assistance, Supply chain & access capacity building of humanitarian and market actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recurrent delivery of school meals, served in schools and/or take-home meals • Delivery of family baskets to take home • Provision of minimum maintenance actions in school kitchens, to ensure the continuity of the dish served. • Nutrition-sensitive actions that support learning and protect children's nutrition within the prioritized state and schools • Strengthening of local capacities in actions linked to the development of the school-based programme. 	Special education schools		Monagas State	10.2023 - 09.2024 Extension until 08.2025	World Food Programme (WFP)



Project title & main sector(s) of intervention	Main activities	Beneficiaries	Partner(s)	Location	Project start and end dates	Donors who finance the project
Integrated and inclusive response to the humanitarian needs of the municipality of Paez (Apure State), Venezuela. Physical and functional rehabilitation, Food assistance, Protection against violence and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection, health and risk management interventions • Complementary food assistance actions • Access to comprehensive protection, particularly for women and girls, • Access to physical rehabilitation, • Access to mental health care, • Access to food security, • Activities to reduce environmental risks and armed violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most vulnerable populations affected by the crisis in the municipality of Páez in particular women, adolescents and girls, people with disabilities, ethnic communities, as well as other marginalized groups such as LGBTQI+ people. 	REPAS (Implementer) UNIANDES A.C. (Implementer) FUNDAFID (Implementer)	Apure State – Paez Municipaity La Victoria, El Amparo and Guasdulaito	07.2024 - 08.2025	CDCS
Educando juntos: Multi-sectoral response in emergency education and protection in vulnerable communities in Venezuela. Inclusive Education, Protection against violence and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening institutional, educational and intercultural protection mechanisms with an inclusive approach • Providing case management of protection cases at educational and community level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and adolescents between 5 to 17 years of age • Vulnerable and at-risk Venezuelan population • Indigenous population • Elderly • People with disabilities 	ORPIA (Ally in Amazonas) TINTA VIOLETA (Implementer)	Amazonas State – Municipalities of Atures, Autana and Atabapo Delta Amacuro State – Municipalities of Tucupita y Pedernales	06.2024 – 05.2026	ECHO (Sub of World Vision)
Multisectoral assistance and life-saving protection services for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide vital protection services and multisectoral assistance 	Survivors and persons at risk of gender-based	ORPIA (Ally in Amazonas)	Amazonas State	10.2024 – 09.2026	BHA (Sub of HIAS)



Project title & main sector(s) of intervention	Main activities	Beneficiaries	Partner(s)	Location	Project start and end dates	Donors who finance the project
the most vulnerable and at-risk Venezuelans affected by the crisis in Venezuela Protection against violence and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Systematization and application of standardized intervention protocols, to comprehensively promote protection, safety and general well-being• Foster a coordinated and efficient humanitarian response that minimizes gaps in services.	violence, sexual violence and human trafficking, children and adolescents, the elderly and persons with disabilities		Apure State Delta Amacuro State Miranda State Capital District		



Donors

<p>DG INTPA</p>  <p>Funded by the European Union</p>	<p>Crisis and Support Centre (CDCS)</p> <p>Avec la participation de</p>  <p>MINISTÈRE DE L'EUROPE ET DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES</p> <p><i>Liberté Égalité Fraternité</i></p>	<p>German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO)</p>  <p>german humanitarian assistance</p> <p>DEUTSCHE HUMANITÄRE HILFE</p>
<p>DG ECHO</p>  <p>Financiado por Unión Europea Protección Civil y Ayuda Humanitaria</p>	<p>World Food Program (WFP)</p>  <p>WFP</p> <p>World Food Programme</p>	<p>Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)</p>  <p>USAID</p> <p>FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE</p>