

VENEZUELA



Venezuela, once one of Latin America's most prosperous countries, is currently facing economic collapse and political upheaval following years of economic mismanagement, corruption, and a disputed election.

Country Context

Venezuela's humanitarian crisis is rooted in its economic collapse following the drop in global oil prices in 2014 and a lack of reforms to diversify the economy or reduce corruption. Following a disputed election in January 2019, Juan Guaidó, the National Assembly President, challenged President Nicolás Maduro's legitimacy and declared himself acting President. Mediated talks with the Maduro regime failed to resolve the political crisis, and nationwide protests continue. Millions of Venezuelans have fled the country, and most remain in Latin America and the Caribbean, putting significant pressure on host countries. Venezuela is ranked as 2019's most-worsened country, tied with Brazil, due to its deteriorated political structure, economy, public health system, and ability to fight crime.

Key Figures



3.8 million

in need of humanitarian assistance



4.3 million

Venezuelans have fled the country



63%

rise in infant mortality between 2012 and 2016



80%

of households do not have sufficient access to food



\$750 million

requested for humanitarian response for 2020

How is the U.S. Involved?

The U.S., alongside over 50 other countries, has supported Guaidó. The U.S. has enforced sanctions on Venezuela, including freezing Venezuelan government assets in U.S. territories. In August 2019, the U.S. Treasury Department released guidance to ensure continued financial institution access to organizations working inside the country.

On-the-Ground Perspective

- Humanitarian aid has long been politicized by the U.S., making essential goods like food and medicine challenging to access by aid staff and beneficiaries.
- Hyperinflation decreased Venezuelans' purchasing power and caused the price of goods to surge, leaving many unable to afford necessary items like food and toiletries.
- Delays and suspensions in the approval of nongovernmental organizations establishing a presence in the country limit the services they provide.

Responses and Actions

- While humanitarian access in Venezuela has been difficult due to travel and visa restrictions, national and international organizations have been able to provide basic goods like food, WASH facilities, and psychosocial support. Between April 2018 and March 2019, 8.5 million children received the measles vaccine, and between January and June 2019, 185,000 Venezuelans had access to safe water.
- Humanitarian response architecture has been established in Venezuela, allowing for a coordinated response to humanitarian needs, as well as U.N. and international NGO support for existing local and national civil society.

InterAction has a Venezuela Advocacy Task Force; to request a briefing, contact policy@interaction.org. References available at [interaction.org/2020globalsituationreport](https://www.interaction.org/2020globalsituationreport).

