

VENEZUELA

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Key Figures



7 million

in need of humanitarian assistance



5.1 million

Venezuelans have fled the country



1 out of 3

Venezuelans is food insecure



Only 18%

of the population has consistent access to clean water



\$750 million

requested for humanitarian response for 2020

Venezuela is currently facing economic collapse and political upheaval following years of economic mismanagement, corruption, and a disputed election. COVID-19 only exacerbates these challenges.

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](#). Millions of Venezuelans have [fled](#) the country, and most remain in Latin America and the Caribbean, putting significant pressure on host countries. As COVID-19 spreads in Venezuela, a weak health system is collapsing, educational opportunities are disappearing, and food insecurity is on the [rise](#).

How is the U.S. Involved?

The U.S. has [allocated](#) \$12.3M in COVID-19 humanitarian assistance to the Venezuelan people to help surveil the spread of the virus, provide water and sanitation supplies, and manage COVID-19 cases. The U.S. has enforced sanctions on Venezuela, including [freezing](#) government assets in U.S. territories. In August 2019, the U.S. Treasury Department released [guidance](#) to ensure continued financial institution access to humanitarian organizations working inside the country.

On-the-Ground Perspective

- Even before the current COVID-19 crisis, Venezuela's health system had nearly collapsed. [90%](#) of hospitals face shortages of medicine and critical supplies, and [70%](#) do not have regular access to water.
- The country has [eight](#) hospital beds per 10,000 people and only [84](#) ICU beds for a population of 32 million.
- 77% of hospitals lack even basic necessities like soap or personal protective equipment, and [90%](#) of hospitals don't have the protocols for respiratory care necessary to treat COVID-19.
- An increasing number of refugees and migrants are [returning](#) to Venezuela as quarantine measures in host countries leave people without assistance and at risk of being exposed to and spreading COVID-19.

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 and water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities.
- Humanitarian actors have realigned current programming to meet new needs, including increasing remote mental health and psychosocial support and distributing necessary materials to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

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



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