

# Venezuela's Humanitarian Crisis: International Response and Obstacles

Outreach Aid to the Americas

## International Response

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, along with other partners, has a response plan in Venezuela. The plan targets Venezuela's most vulnerable populations in the areas of health, water, sanitation and hygiene, food security, nutrition, protection and nonfood items, and education. The 2021 plan calls for \$762 million in assistance.

In April this year, the World Food Programme and the Maduro regime entered into an agreement allowing for the provision of food assistance to children, a program budgeted at \$190 million.



Photo Credit: Federico Parra

## U.S. Government Response

The United States Government has supported Venezuelan democratic and civil society actors through the U.S. Agency for International Development and the National Endowment for Democracy.

For fiscal year 2021, the Biden administration has requested \$200 million to support a potential transition in Venezuela.



## Intimidation and Harassment of the Humanitarian Community

The Maduro regime has repeatedly harassed the international humanitarian actors. Its tactics have included raiding their offices and arresting staff members, and targeting humanitarian workers through legal action. The government impedes humanitarian efforts by restricting aid shipments, blocking border crossings, and imposing difficult bureaucratic requirements. These policies make

it difficult for humanitarian organizations to reach the population, resulting in a worsening national situation and an increase in dangerous outmigration. This has also prompted humanitarian organizations to focus their efforts on refugees and others who are migrating, rather than trying to reach those who remain inside Venezuela, who remain the majority.

## Restrictions on NGOs and Civil Society

In October 2020 the government began requiring all international NGOs to register and report their intentions. A month later, all financial institutions were asked to monitor the business and financial operations of non-profits. In January 2021, the National Assembly restricted civil society organizations and the rights of human rights defenders. Finally, in March, the Ministry of Interior and Justice began requiring NGOs to provide previously private information about their beneficiaries' activities, contributions, and names. These intrusive tactics are justified as necessary anti-terrorism measures. In April 2021, Human Rights Watch declared the government's repression of NGOs attacks on Venezuela's civil society.

