



Meet Critical Needs for Venezuelan Asylum Seekers in Colombia

A Proposal to Deliver Hope with a Disaster Relief Intervention


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Many of the asylum seekers coming into Colombia are single moms with children





Asylum seekers crowd a bridge entering Colombia

Rescuing Lives in Cúcuta, Colombia

Compassion is committed to releasing children from poverty in Jesus' name. While Compassion is not active in Venezuela, our ministry efforts in neighboring Colombia, in partnership with local churches, currently serve more than 87,000 Colombian children at more than 260 local church-based child development centers throughout the nation.

In the city of Cúcuta, on the border between Colombia and Venezuela, 14 frontline church partners are providing 746 children with the resources and learning opportunities they need to achieve their full potential in Christ and break the generational cycle of poverty.

But the devastating effects of the growing political and economic crisis in Venezuela have spilled into Colombia as more and more asylum seekers flee their country in the frantic search for safety, stability and the opportunity to meet their basic needs.

Of the estimated 3 million Venezuelans who have left their country, Colombia hosts the largest number: 1.1 million. Thousands have come into the country at Cúcuta, creating a massive humanitarian crisis in the city, not just for the Venezuelan asylum seekers but also for the Colombian inhabitants.

With your help, the 14 Compassion frontline churches in Cúcuta can come to the aid of the Venezuelans in their community, as well as provide for the needs that this crisis has forced onto the Compassion-assisted children and families they already serve.

Change Lives With a Gift Supporting Disaster Relief

Centers

14 Compassion child development centers, operated by frontline church partners, need help serving desperate Venezuelan asylum seekers who have crossed into Colombia

Location

Cúcuta, Colombia

Beneficiaries

2,604 Venezuelan children and their caregivers

746 Colombian Compassion-assisted children and their families



A City on the Brink

The largest migration wave that the region has experienced in the last 50 years — that’s how experts are defining this refugee crisis in South America. And it is only intensifying every day, with no end in sight. Serious shortages of food, basic products and medicines, as well as hyperinflation, have left average Venezuelans with no other option than to leave.

The Colombian government has maintained an open door policy for Venezuelan asylum seekers and committed resources to help them. But with an estimated 3,000 Venezuelans crossing the border every day, the country is overwhelmed by the magnitude of the crisis.

The border city of Cúcuta, in particular, is flooded by asylum seekers, putting a serious strain on the city’s infrastructure and economy. According to Compassion’s frontline partner churches here, the deterioration of the quality of life experienced by the children and families served by our ministry in Cúcuta is a desperate issue.

Already struggling with the challenges of poverty, Compassion-assisted families are dealing with worsening conditions, overcrowding, shrinking employment opportunities, and the increasing scarcity of health and education services and food.

Our frontline church partners in Cúcuta are moved by the love of Christ to serve the refugees in their city, many of whom are living in squalid conditions on the streets or in makeshift shelters. They have nothing and need everything. At the same time, these compassionate church partners want to ensure that the children and families in their Compassion programs have the additional needs met that this crisis has brought into their lives.

Your Support Will Make a Difference



14 frontline churches equipped for effective action



1,953 child asylum seekers rescued and protected



746 Compassion children and families assisted



651 Venezuelan caregivers provided help and hope



3,350 individuals in need experiencing God’s love



How You Can Help

In mid-February, staff from Compassion Colombia's National Office traveled to Cúcuta to assess the situation and establish an action plan to provide for the emergency needs of both Venezuelan asylum seekers and Compassion-assisted children and families.

Compassion staff members identified multiple settlements of asylum seekers near the 14 frontline church partners that need immediate intervention. These Venezuelans are primarily single mothers with an average of three or four children. The staff also identified the Compassion-assisted families most affected by this crisis.

Your generous support of the emergency relief action plan will make a critical difference in the lives of 3,350 individuals, including Venezuelan asylum seekers and Compassion-assisted children and their families.

Implementation Plan

Over the next four months Compassion Colombia aims to accomplish the following specific objectives in the first phase of a comprehensive, two-phase plan of disaster relief and recovery in Cúcuta.

1. Meet the basic emergency needs of asylum seekers and affected Compassion-assisted families by providing:

- 651 personal hygiene kits to Venezuelan families
- Three months of food supplies to 1,397 asylum seekers and Compassion-assisted families
- 350 bunk beds for Venezuelan children living in overcrowded situations
- 700 kits of basic school supplies for Venezuelan and Compassion-assisted children

- Basic sanitation facilities and access to clean water at the 14 partner churches for children of asylum seekers and in 60 homes of Compassion-assisted children. Children and caregivers will also be trained in good hygiene/sanitation practices

2. Establish two “Friendly Spaces for Children” where Venezuelan children will be provided educational, psychosocial and spiritual support to help restore a sense of normalcy in their lives.



3. Promote the protection of children during this time of heightened vulnerability by providing awareness and abuse prevention workshops for caregivers.

4. Train the staff of the 14 partner churches in basic performance and monitoring of humanitarian actions, as well as how to effectively partner with other government and non-governmental entities.

Once this four-month phase of emergency relief is completed a second phase of long-term recovery, such as income-generation training and opportunities for caregivers, will be developed and implemented.

An Opportunity to Improve Children’s Lives

The local church partner and the national country office have carefully planned and considered all aspects of budgeting for this critical intervention. Below is a summary of the overall need for this important effort.

Budget Items	Total Expense	Local Contribution	Amount Requested
Household items, beds, hygiene kits	\$105,007	\$1,138	\$103,869
Emotional, spiritual & educational support	\$120,326	\$0	\$120,326
Emergency food & cooking supplies	\$314,446	\$1,593	\$312,853
Basic Sanitation for Compassion beneficiaries and Venezuelan children	\$115,650	\$10,806	\$104,844
Operational & logistical costs	\$27,313	\$390	\$26,923
Total	\$682,742	\$13,927	\$668,815



Centers: 14 Centers in Cúcuta
Location: Cúcuta, Colombia, capital city of the department of Norte de Santander
Beneficiaries: 746 Compassion children and families; 2,604 asylum seekers
Target Implementation Timeline: Four months for Phase One

Total Need: \$668,815

**Any funds raised above and beyond this need will be applied to similar disaster relief efforts within the 25 countries where Compassion International serves.*



Ana Canas serves lentils and rice to a Venezuelan mother and son



Compassion Families Share with Venezuelans

There is a crisis in Cúcuta, capital city of the department of Norte de Santander, which is the main border between Colombia and Venezuela. Thousands of Venezuelan asylum seekers have come to the poorest communities of Cúcuta, communities where Compassion works in partnership with local churches.

Compassion has intervened to support beneficiary children and also some Venezuelan families living in Cúcuta. The first intervention took place in March, when church partners delivered some grocery packages for families of beneficiary children in need.

Yuri Bayona, the center director of a center in La Fortaleza, says, “The day we delivered the groceries all the families were really grateful and happy. Even other families from the community came to the center looking for help. There is too much need around us.”

Deybi is a 6-year-old beneficiary who lives in a humble home with five siblings and his parents. His father works in various trades at a gas station to provide for the family. Deybi was one of the beneficiaries who received groceries to share with his family, but he and his mother decided to share this blessing with others.

Ana, Deybi’s mother, met a young pregnant Venezuelan mother with her husband and a 2-year-old son. Seeing their situation of helplessness, Ana decided to provide them with food on a daily basis. Ana said, “I ask God to provide for me so I can help others. When someone gives me something, I share it with these Venezuelans, because they are also in need.”

“We help Venezuelans because at least we have a roof, but the asylum seekers are adrift.”

— Gloria Numa, mother of two Compassion beneficiary children



Your Partnership Matters

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this critical opportunity to partner with Compassion to address the crisis in Cúcuta, Colombia. With your help, Compassion and the frontline church partners can provide much-needed relief to asylum seekers, Compassion-assisted children and families in desperate need.

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