

tearfund

Providing Hope For Venezuelan Refugees

THANK YOU FOR EMPOWERING THE LOCAL COLOMBIAN
CHURCH AS THEY BRING A RENEWED SENSE OF GOD'S
GOODNESS TO THE LIVES OF VENEZUELAN REFUGEES.



Project Overview



**The Local Church
on the Frontlines**

In Partnership With:



Due to Venezuela's economic collapse over the last 5 years, millions of Venezuelans left to escape starvation, violence, and disease. This year alone, as of May 31, 2020, it is reported that over 1,764,000 refugees from Venezuela have escaped to Columbia.

With this overwhelming number of refugees, Tearfund had to respond. In partnership with the Peoples Church of Toronto, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, and Canadian donors, we were able to respond through Colombian churches to provide food, counselling, and support for refugee families and children suffering from the trauma of fleeing Venezuela.

Our Colombian Church partners have been on the frontlines of this crisis helping their Venezuelan brothers and sisters integrate into a new home and life, helping families transition from merely surviving to a path of new life and new opportunities. Tearfund believes in the local Colombian Church's ability to be a catalyst for change in their own communities.

Beneficiaries

Your support has helped the most vulnerable:



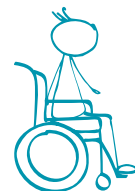
Single Mothers



Child-headed Housholds



Elderly-headed Housholds



People with Disabilities



Your generosity has funded over \$503,000 worth of programming through the local church, benefitting the health and welfare of refugee families. Thank you for your willingness to look upon the needs of the most vulnerable in Colombia!



This integrated project is designed to support both Venezuelan refugees and the Colombian Church that will continue to respond to the refugee crisis in years to come.



**STREAM 1:
Church-based
Community
Transformation**

- Strengthening the response efforts of local churches in **5 regions** of Colombia, starting with Barranquilla.
- Through Church-Based Community Transformation training, **60 Colombian churches** are being empowered to bridge the social divide existing between local Colombians and Venezuelan refugees.



**STREAM 2:
Food Assistance**

- Over **31%** of families we serve were eating only one meal a day in January 2020.
- Children did not have enough food to eat and faced malnourishment.
- **600 malnourished children** were fed daily (totalling over 219,000 meals) through three large Church-based community kitchens.
- Then Covid-19 hit and program delivery needed to pivot.
- **356 households** started receiving hygiene kits containing facemasks, household disinfectant, and items for personal hygiene.
- **370 Venezuelan refugee families** are receiving food baskets regularly, including **rice, flour, oil, beans, salt**, and other cooking staples. These baskets are helping families cope with the lockdown in place due to Covid-19.





STREAM 3:

Preventative Health & Proactive Care for Vulnerable Women and Children

- Venezuelan female refugees are facing significant healthcare issues, as many have been forced into prostitution and are now suffering from HIV/AIDS, syphilis, and other sexually-transmitted infections.
- So far, **300 vulnerable women** have received preventative health care education about pregnancy, nursing, and sexually-transmitted infections.
- **1,200 children** under the age of 10 are receiving vaccinations.
- **200 adults and children** have received urgent dental care.
- Venezuelan refugee households are receiving access and guidance to the Colombian medical, legal and education systems.



As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads around the globe, Venezuelan refugees have been disproportionately impacted by this virus. Medical care and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are limited. Social distancing is extremely difficult since multiple families have no choice but to live together in very densely populated communities of squatter homes. Children are experiencing emotional stress due to the lack of spaces to play. Individuals and families trapped in poverty are struggling daily to access food, hand soap, and masks. Work opportunities for undocumented refugees are very limited.

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, Tearfund worked with three churches strategically located in Venezuelan refugee “squatter” communities to provide community kitchen programs that served over 600 children daily! While children were fed, parents received counselling, care, assistance with documentation, and access to other services.

These programs needed to shift when the COVID-19 pandemic spread across Colombia. Colombia now has 5 times as many cases of Covid as Canada! Many of these cases are in the refugee communities where Tearfund is working. Our local partners have been working hard to safely transition the Community Kitchens programs into food basket delivery services to the most vulnerable families.



As we continue doing our part to keep our communities in Canada safe, please also pray for communities overseas, especially in Barranquilla, Columbia. Pray that God would continue to protect the health of pastors and leaders of the Colombian Church and that through it all, God’s peace would reign. Thank you for helping mobilize the Colombian church to serve the most vulnerable!



STREAM 4:

Sexual & Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Trauma Healing

- Major stressors are increasing the risk of violence against women, especially for Venezuelan refugees.
- The local Church pastors in Colombia have requested that Tearfund train key female leaders within **24 strategically located Colombian churches** to provide psycho-social support for victims.
- **90 female leaders** at 24 strategic churches are receiving training to become Biblically-based Trauma Healing facilitators.
- Over 45 of these female leaders have started Trauma Healing Groups of their own, providing emotional and spiritual support primarily to Venezuelan women and girls. Meetings are currently taking place online using phone calls and video calls, as well as in socially distanced groups due to Covid-19 protocols.
- **25 male pastors and leaders** are receiving education about how they can advocate for victims of SGBV in a biblical manner.

Sexual and gender-based violence was a global pandemic long before the Covid-19 outbreak. In Colombia, many have been impacted by SGBV as a result of years of civil war. Tearfund Latin America estimates that 50% of women in the churches they work with have suffered sexual assault at some point in their lives. Abusers are experiencing heightened financial pressures and stress.

The refugee settlements have become hotbeds for the spread of Covid-19 because of tight living quarters. Stress, the disruption of social and protective networks, loss of income, and decreased access to services exacerbate the risk of violence against women. When people are encouraged or required to stay at home, coupled with stress, the risk of intimate partner violence increases. Please pray for the vulnerable women and children at risk.



A Single Mother's Pain: A Story of Survival and Hope

Diana left Venezuela 2 years ago with her two small children, her sister and brother-in-law, and their two children. The journey to Columbia was challenging. They walked for miles after crossing the border because they did not have any money for a bus. She had to carry her children, one in each arm.

Diana's life has always been defined by struggle. Her children's father was very abusive towards her. Although she is not with him anymore, she still gets migraines from the physical abuse she endured. She is a survivor of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, carrying the weight of her abuser's actions every day.



Diana never thought she would meet anyone willing to listen to her painful story and help her recover. She found that place of safety and acceptance at the local church in Barranquilla, Columbia. While her kids took part in the community kitchens feeding program, Diana joined a Biblically-based trauma healing group that Tearfund helped implement. She became overwhelmed with emotion when the church pastor introduced her to Tearfund staff who were visiting. As tears flowed from her eyes, she told them, "thank you."

Baskets of Blessing: Relief for Claudimar in Times of Trial



Claudimar, a 35-year-old mother of 5, beams and praises God as she receives a food basket to help her family survive through pandemic shortages.

When I got the church's call saying that we were going to receive a basket of food for the family, I couldn't believe it! I shouted, "Glory to God!" and fell to my knees crying and praising the Lord. That day, we finished the last provisions of food we had, and I did not know how I would feed my children.

Before the pandemic, my children received their lunch at the church's community kitchen while my husband went out to find work so that he could earn food for the rest of us. These days, we are unable to go out and find work. Receiving these baskets of foods every other week is a blessing from God because it allows us to stay home, meaning my family can remain protected from the virus.

Other families in the community who have to leave their homes to find work have become ill. What saddens me still is knowing that my family in Venezuela does not have enough to eat, and I cannot help them. But I continue to have hope that God will provide for them too.



370 baskets of food are regularly being delivered every 14 days to Venezuelan refugee families. Baskets contain rice, flour, oil, beans, salt, and other cooking essentials. The mothers of these families were consulted during the selection and purchase of food

Thank You!

Thank you for helping Venezuelan Refugees find a renewed sense of God's promise in their lives. With the generosity of Canadian donors, churches and The Peoples Church, displaced families are discovering support and community through the local church in Columbia.

We are providing an integrated response to meet Venezuelan refugees' needs and mobilize the Colombian Church to serve refugees for years to come. Pray for the openness of Colombians towards overwhelming numbers of refugees fleeing from Venezuela.

Thank you!

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Following Jesus where the need is greatest