In April 2020, the Shelter, Energy and NFI Cluster reached, through partner organisations, 15,995 beneficiaries with a coverage of three states: Apure (8,093), Táchira (7,615), and Zulia (287). Since the beginning of the year, a total of 53,589 people benefited with a coverage of six states and Distrito Capital. Overall, the assistance has been channelled towards border areas only (Colombia-Venezuela border).

The reported number of Venezuelan returnees has increased, putting additional pressure on the temporary shelter arrangements, and especially those in the Colombian-Venezuelan border. Most of the activities were implemented in the border states, with some activities targeting the Government-run Puntos de Atención Social Integral (PASI) and temporary shelter arrangements, run by both national and international organisations, including the Church.

The World Health Organization (WHO) data compiled from national authorities as of 30 April 2020 shows 329 COVID-19 confirmed cases and 10 deaths in Venezuela. Under the coronavirus pandemic, the country decreed national lockdown and closed its border, only allowing Venezuelan returnees to enter. Access to the public services, including energy and electricity, remain low in many areas near the border with deficiencies to access electricity that last for hours and days.

In collaboration with other clusters and, within the framework of the COVID-19 intersectoral plan that was launched by OCHA on 10 April 2020, the Cluster is working on standardising the NFI kits, including infection protection and control (IPC) items, and protocols to be implemented at the temporary shelter arrangements.

NFI distributions, including both shelter and IPC items for Venezuelans returning spontaneously and for those who are in quarantine is still a priority in order to ensure dignified returns.

Power outages in areas near the border remain a priority to be addressed, focusing on securing access to a secondary energy source for health centres and hospitals in remote areas without regular access to the public grid. Power outages knock out Internet connectivity and difficult the access to water, especially in buildings with multiple storeys or any connection that relies on an electric water pump to ensure pressure.

Despite some UN agencies and organisations have already organised training programs, there are still needs in standardising health protocols, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) protocols, technical inspections, prevention and response to protection risks materials, including Gender Based Violence (GBV), and xenophobia (including negative perceptions from host community members who are afraid of the spread of the virus), among other issues. It is necessary to follow multisectoral and standardised protocols, including unified guidelines with recommendations and technical materials to ensure the contents and technical approach of the training programs are similar.

Through April 2020, 15,995 beneficiaries were provided with a better access to shelter (2%) and/or NFI (98%). Of those, 5,658 were boys, girls and adolescents (35%) (50% female and 50% male), 8,926 were adults between 18 and 59 years (50% female and 50% male), and 1,411 were adults older than 59 (50% female and 50% male).

Most of the people reached through the activities benefited from basic NFI distributions in the border states (54% of the total), with a total of 8,182 beneficiaries (57% female and 43% male), followed by 6,054 (38% of the
total) people who benefitted from a better access to NFI (including basic equipment) at the temporary shelter arrangements (40% female and 60% male). 104 (1% of the total) women benefitted from kit distributions. Those kits included a menstrual cup. 858 (5% of the total) vulnerable people benefitted from solar lamp distributions (52% female and 48% male).

- 397 (2% of the total) benefitted from a better access to shelter, including capacity building sessions conducted at the temporary shelter arrangements (42% female and 58% male), including sessions aiming to improve management capacities.

GAPS / CHALLENGES

- Despite of the recent publication of the 2020 Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP), the Venezuela 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) remains unpublished, which may lead to a gap in funding capacity among national and international actors. The activities reported in this factsheet were aligned with the 2020 sectorial logical framework; however, no funding has been received yet.
- Reportedly, the limited access to petrol stations, and the time spent on refueling, has limited the number of beneficiaries and communities reached by member organisations.