

## Erasmus+ Programme - KA2 “Strategic Partnerships for higher education”

### InovHumRe: Innovation in Humanitarian Response

# Outlook of Stakeholders involvement in the participatory evaluation of humanitarian response

August 2021



## Technical information

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## Synthesis Report

### Introduction

Within the realm of the ISCTE-led project Innovation in Humanitarian Response (INOVHUMRE) a first step has been to conduct a mapping exercise in each participating country of the project, being Brazil, Colombia, Portugal, Spain and Turkey, to obtain the most pertinent views with regards to participatory evaluation in humanitarian contexts in each partner country.

The aim of this report is then to provide insights, based on primary data collection, into the current use and knowledge on participatory evaluation tools and methodologies amongst actors engaged in the humanitarian sector or those who carry out activities related to refugee integration in the different county contexts.

The synthesis report will briefly set out the main conceptual issues and specificities before elaborating on the methodologies that have been used in the study. The report will then highlight some of the key findings by country.

As expected, there are limited areas of overlap due to the specificity of the actors engaged in the data collection as well as the specificity of context in each country, as such highlights will be presented by country. It should be noted that data is essentially exploratory as insufficient data and as such cannot be used to generalise the situation in the country.

The report will then have a brief conclusion and outline next steps in the project.

The instruments used can be provided upon request

### Conceptual Issues and Specificities

There are a number of fundamental differences between humanitarian aid and development aid, most crucially that humanitarian aid has generally aimed to save individual lives, often by working around governments, while development aid supports structures and systems and is primarily delivered through governments (Macrae 2012).

There has been research conducted on the potential nexus between humanitarian aid and development aid. Indeed, the concept of linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) emerged in the 1990s when practitioners identified a funding gap between humanitarian assistance, relief, and development activities (Hinds 2015). However, the lack of clarity in concepts and definitions has been one of the key challenges in progressing the concept, this is particularly so for people working 'on the ground' as it remains unclear how they could best be supported (Otto and Weingärtner 2013).

There are a number of other specific challenges which Hinds (2015) has categorised in four areas: i) Conceptual, institutional and strategic gaps e.g. in relation to mandates and working principles, ii) Funding gaps e.g. the short-term versus the long-term sustainable funding, iii) Partnership and Coordination e.g. capacity gaps amongst implementers or operations with different approaches, iv) Refugees and displaced persons, this issues is often addressed from a relief perspective but therewith lacks a durable solution lens.

Although it is of importance to understand these challenges in more detail, this falls outside of the scope of our project which rather aims to understand what the differences and implications are for conducting evaluations in a humanitarian context.

As such it is important to look at the difference in evaluation criteria that are applied to the specific contexts. In general, the OECD/DAC criteria from 1991 are a key standard in conducting evaluations in development projects as they focus on the most common problems noted in development projects, proposed four quality criteria – relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact and efficiency. As for Evaluation in Humanitarian Action a set of additional criteria has been designed adding coverage and coherence, suggesting appropriateness as an alternative to relevance and connectedness as an alternative to sustainability, and proposing two new criteria: coordination and protection. These criteria reflected the biggest problems seen in humanitarian action in the 1990s.



The introduction of standard criteria makes it easier to look across projects and are likely to capture common weaknesses either in development or in humanitarian action, based on experience and research. Evaluations that use standard criteria are easier for evaluation managers and other evaluators to work with.

However, the difference in evaluation criteria between development and humanitarian project demonstrates also the difficulties in e.g. reconciling and carrying out evaluations of projects or programmes that occur in both realms.

The direct challenges that are being faced when carrying out evaluation in humanitarian context are the focus of this specific report, of immediate importance are the fact that protection and assistance are important nuances for evaluation of HA as they implicate the levels of disclosure of information, involvement of participants, confidentiality and ethics.

## Methodology

This particular study conducted in five countries made use of both primary and secondary data collection tools and employed a strong qualitative approach, these included desk review, survey and key informant interviews.

## Desk Review

Each country has conducted its own desk review depending on their focus and implementing actors within their country. For example, as for Turkey this has included the review of grey material such as project reports and websites of related national and international NGOs, INGOs and UN branches in the respective countries like UNHCR, UNICEF, UNWOMEN. This is of particular importance as otherwise data is hard to obtain. Whereas in the case of Brasil, there has been a larger focus on one specific initiative, *Operação Acolhida* (“Operation Welcoming”), which allowed for review of documents obtained directly from the field.

Also as is the case with Colombia for example, desk review resulted in a mapping of actors active in the field of refugee integration / humanitarian aid which allowed for the selection of actors to be interviewed. In other cases like Portugal and Spain the participating NGOs in the project used their expertise to map the most influential actors in the humanitarian field / refugee integration to conduct further purposive sampling methods.

It should be noted that there is large discrepancy between available funding for both humanitarian aid and refugee integration in each country with Portugal playing a minimal role compared to for example Turkey, unfortunately for the research, this also results in little aid flowing from one country to another thus the research did not elaborate on specificity in bilateral relations.

## Survey

A second tool for data collection has been through online surveys. Due to the COVID-19 situation it has been impossible to carry out personal surveys, in addition it was thought that online surveys would be of a lesser burden to those completing the survey, knowing many actors are overburdened in the field or suffer from evaluation fatigue.

### a) Instrument

As a first step a standard questionnaire was designed amongst the INOVHUMRE partners which then could be adapted to the specific country context to ensure the most pertinent questions could be addressed.

In general, the questionnaire template was used and adapted with a series of questions that followed an open and closed response format. The questionnaire was applied asynchronously by sending an email access link. The design of this instrument was based on three criteria (Flick, 2018): orientation towards the relevant topics in the study; orientation towards the research object; orientation towards the process to understand the research object. For this purpose, a brief presentation of the research was made and a funnel logic was followed in the division of the questionnaire. We started from general questions to more specific questions in order to encourage participation and focus the attention of the participants on each of the research topics. Thus, the items were distributed in four large sections that made up the instrument:

Socio-demographic data of the participating entities and of the participatory evaluation they carry out.

Use of participatory evaluation from the entities

Participatory evaluation in emergency response

Participatory assessment and online digital tools



## b) Procedure

In most country cases the survey could be applied using Google Suit: Forms application

The questionnaire was completed online using the Google Suite: Forms application. In the case of Turkey ethical approval needed to be obtained by the University's Ethical Committee before such survey could be disseminated online, which resulted in slight delays but did not hamper the quality of data neither the adherence of the deadline of reporting.

Finally, the questionnaire was completed with the consent of the participants after they had been informed of the purposes of the study.

## Key Informant Interviews

A number of participating countries opted to also conduct key informant interviews as the pool for participants in data collection was relatively small and therefore more depth was sought by having online interviews. In the cases of Portugal and Colombia for example, this resulted in a number of in-depth interviews conducted amongst stakeholders who had previously been engaged in conducting evaluations in humanitarian evaluations thus allowing for deeper engagement on understanding crucial issues in the field of Evaluation in Humanitarian Action.

The questionnaire which was used for the survey was also adapted to serve for the key informant interviews, but in a semi-structured manner.

In addition, Brasil conducted ten long-form oral history interviews with top-level decision-makers involved in *Operação Acolhida* ("Operation Welcoming"), Brazil's official response to the refugee crisis. A further goal of these long-form history interviews, besides data for this project, is to make all transcripts available to the public in publication form at the end of the project.

## Limitations of the mapping process

Before presenting the highlights of the data collected, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of the methods of data collection used for this research study. There have been three limitations that affected the mapping process.

Difficulties in accessing information. This differed from country to country but in some cases was due to a simple lack of experience in the topic of evaluation of Humanitarian Action whereas in other cases political aspects made it difficult to obtain access to necessary information, for example in the case of Colombia the data collection occurred simultaneously with political upheaval in the country including prolonged strikes.

Difficulties in accessing partners has also been a limitation in the process, in particular due to COVID and the lack of experience of some of the actors in the field of humanitarian action. However, this limitation has been largely overcome by engaging with the NGOs which are also part of the project and whose expertise allowed for at times, snowballing knowledge on actors.

COVID-19 also affected the data collection, but only in the form that it did not allow for observation or field visits and rather all data had to be collected in an online format which has been done through surveys online as explained above as well as by conducting in-depth interviews by using digital tools such as Zoom.



## Summary of Mapping

### The mapping exercise consists of information gathered in five specific areas:

According to who conducts the evaluations: whether evaluation is largely outsourced or carried out with internal capacities (internal vs external evaluation)

Outsourcing mainly occurs amongst the larger NGOs and the majority of respondents indicated to carry out evaluations with their own project personnel. Although respondents indicated often that they would have in-house capacity to carry out such evaluations this was not always evidenced in further information provided in which they indicated to lack skills and time to carry out participatory evaluations.

According to evaluation methodology: what type of methodologies have been used, in particular in highlighting types of participatory methodologies for evaluations

Although evidence has been provided in the use of other qualitative and participatory methodologies the most commonly used are focus group discussion and key informant interview. When looking at methodologies used in development projects respondents indicated to have made use of a wider variety of participatory methods such as participatory rural assessments, participatory action research, as well as different tools such as community assemblies. However, when looking at the respondents who reported to have engaged in humanitarian action and conducted evaluation of their projects there only very few would have carried out participatory evaluation in humanitarian action. From the few that would have done so only the most common methods would be used: focus group discussion and interviews. This demonstrates the lack of engagement on the issue of participation in humanitarian action although there are several factors that influence this, further research would be needed to establish the reasons but as evidenced in the case of Brazil there is a lack of capacity and understanding on participatory evaluation in HA whereas in other cases, like Portugal, the indicators for HA programming have mainly been quantitative and external oriented, as explained above.

Needs/skills identified: what have been the main skills and needs identified in the field of humanitarian evaluation and how these could be best addressed

Although a number of respondents indicated to have received training in the field of evaluation in general, they also indicated a need for further capacity building. This data combined with the fact that a majority of evaluations is being carried out by project personnel thus required additional skills. Information provided by technical experts in the field of evaluation highlight a set of skills necessary to carry out in particular participatory evaluation and include knowledge of:

- situation context,
- technical context of methods and tools,
- data analysis (especially qualitative),
- people's skills,
- ethics on evaluation in the field.

#### a) Advantages and Limitations of participatory evaluation

Those who responded to have carried out participatory evaluations found a number of advantages, indeed some respondents indicated that a non-participatory evaluation would only provide a partial image of a project as the real depth of a project lies within the knowledge of the participants. The big advantage is thus knowledge creation and the value of such evaluation over any other form of evaluation which can inform strategy development, improved programme, cross-programme learning etc.

Although the advantage is crucial in learning and accountability as participatory evaluation can fill both requirements, it does have a number of challenges which should be accounted for within the evaluation design to ensure any impact would be reduced. Such challenges include:

- **Time:** In general, participatory methods are more time consuming than non-participatory methods which have been employed in evaluations in the development context. Indeed, randomised trials or time-consuming quantitative methods are hardly used – also because of similar constraints.
- **Funding:** Often budgets are limited for monitoring and evaluation and thus allow for few days for fieldwork only. When in the field it is time consuming to get to the different places and employ the respective tools across the wide spectrum of stakeholders. To counter this there is a need to be well prepared ahead of fieldwork, to clearly establish tools, those who will participate, the respective locations and other practicalities for fieldwork like transport, access and so on. Flexibility is key in participatory evaluation especially in unpredictable contexts.
- **Access:** In humanitarian context access is an issue. Reaching isolated places, need for permits or other government documentation can be a real challenge and affects access to the area and therewith the extent of participation of a variety of stakeholders. Rather than adjusting to these challenges, it was suggested that at times it might be possible to work the other way around i.e. to bring the participants out of the respective camps / closed zones to nearby safe spaces and allowing for better quality and less bureaucratic evaluation activities in which the evaluators could focus on obtaining the data as opposed to dealing with bureaucratic elements of e.g. conflict zones.
- **Safety and Security:** The majority of the consultants highlighted that there are two levels of safety and security: the one of the evaluator, and the other of the participant. Participation in evaluation activities can be complicated in conflict areas, refugee camps, government-controlled areas, etc., resulting in possible friction, threats and even violence. Hence the lessons learned is that a risk and mitigation strategy should be taken into consideration at the outset of the evaluation design and should be a minimum standard for participatory evaluations in humanitarian settings.
- **Inclusion:** In general, in evaluation in development and even more so in humanitarian settings purposive sampling is commonly used, even when employing participatory tools. This does not allow for full inclusion of the project stakeholders across all groups. Rather purposive sampling, common in complex settings, relies on the identification of participants by for example the respective NGO and it is then not uncommon to have the same people invited multiple times. This carries several challenges: i) those invited multiple times are no longer really interested in participation, neither might be fully aware which project is being evaluated, ii) those invited multiple times provide similar answers throughout no matter the respective project, iii) can result in ‘evaluation fatigue’ amongst those participants and iv) it can also result in challenges related to equality and participation in terms of defining who is a key informant and who decides who is a key informant.
- **Validation / Triangulation:** Both NGO and consultants indicated that at times single interviews are not validated against other data and thus triangulation of data does not occur. Whether this is a result of the constraints mentioned above or originating from other constraints has not been assessed. However, in practice this means that interviews can be taken as ‘the truth’ therewith omitting other views or data sources.

- **Data Collection:** Often the participatory events do not go as planned due to quickly changing circumstances in the field, however respondents' experiences showed that, thankfully, participatory tools often provide more and deeper insights than expected going well beyond the questions set out in the terms of reference and thus further enriching the evaluation.

## Conclusion

Although there cannot be any generalizations drawn from this mapping report there are a number of issues that have come to the fore that are of importance to keep in mind for the trajectory of the project and/or might require further investigation.

### Funding modalities and evaluation.

Some of the mapping indicated that at times there might be obscurity in terms of the objectives of the evaluation in which promotion of results is rated higher than accountability and learning, the key principles of evaluation. Secondly funding is immediately related to ability to carry out participatory evaluations which are more time and resource intensive. Several respondents across countries indicated that funding often does not allow for intensive fieldwork in humanitarian settings, which is indeed riskier and time intensive and is often not catered for in the limited number of days and budget allocated to evaluation. Here a potential solution could be to have participatory evaluation as a complement to impact evaluation even as part of process of triangulation, which is then clearly articulated, something that has been absent from humanitarian monitoring and evaluation as of yet which has also focused more on external and quantitative indicators rather than community based qualitative indicators. This would potentially also shed some light or even bridge the gaps in the clarity on concepts and issues in a humanitarian and development aid. Such learning can best be obtained through participatory methodologies in evaluation.

Funding size and evaluation, from respondents in Turkey, a correlation was found in the size of the project fund and the quantitative approach to evaluation, in other words, the larger the project the more the focus is on the accountability aspects of the evaluation and thus quantitative information as opposed to strategic learning to be obtained from participatory and qualitative methods.

### Pre-dominance of self-evaluations at local NGO level

Although larger NGOs and the UN have sufficient resources to outsource evaluations, then size dependent might result in quantitative approaches, the opposite holds true for small-scale local NGOs who often do not have the resources nor networks to engage with international experts to conduct high quality qualitative evaluations. As such often these small local NGOs carry out their own monitoring and evaluation exercises with their own project personnel who may lack the relevant skills to carry out quality work in this regard.

### Focus on existing evaluations in particular on efficiency of use of resources

When assessing the focus of evaluations, the majority are carried out are either ongoing evaluation, project evaluation or impact evaluation. From this mapping report this can be considered as an expected outcome since these types of evaluations are the ones that highlights the effective use of resources by the NGO during the project

and shows that the targeted outcomes of the project are achieved. Such results are crucial to demonstrate to the donors for continuation of funding and support of the donors. In line with these types of evaluations it was also found that monitoring and evaluation is still very much carried out as an accountability services rather than an internal learning or strategy input exercise thus the evaluation is often outward looking rather than inward looking. This also results in reporting on success stories rather than on 'failure stories' as mentioned by survey participants who elaborated that focusing on failure would strengthen learning.

#### Usefulness of intersectionality, gender and feminist approaches in evaluation

Gender experts raised the issue that participatory evaluation and feminist methodology have much in common. In their experience gender mainstreaming in humanitarian projects brought about a methodological understanding which called for greater inclusion and asked for different voices to be heard in the programming process. The gender experts highlighted that participatory evaluation follows a similar pathway by calling for non-hierarchical processes and participation of all different stakeholders.

*“The greater the participation of the agents from different fields of action, the greater the effectiveness of the product achieved in evaluation”*

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## Countries Mapping Reports

Portugal

Spain

Turkey

Brazil

Colombia

## Portugal Report

### Executive Summary

Within the realm of the ISCTE-led project “INOVHUMRE” a first step has been to conduct a mapping exercise in each participating country of the project, being Brazil, Colombia, Portugal, Spain and Turkey. The aim of this report is then to provide insights, based on primary data collection, into the current use and knowledge on participatory evaluation tools and methodologies amongst actors engaged in the humanitarian sector or those who carry out activities related to refugee integration in the Portuguese country context.

Experience with participatory evaluation in Portugal is limited across the ten NGOs that participated in this mapping exercise. It should be noted that this mapping exercise does not allow generalisations for the wider civil society landscape in Portugal. Having said that, the primary data collected indicates that the experiences in participatory evaluation are limited and repetitive and the in-house capacity although indicated as available and sufficient, does not seem to match the information provided on participatory evaluation and use of tools and methods of the respondents neither is it in line with the consultants view of the evaluation capacity in NGOs.

The data collected then assists in establishing initial insights with regards to knowledge and capacity gaps in the field of participatory evaluation in the development context as well as in the humanitarian and refugee contexts. A number of recommendations has been provided by those respondents who have experience in participatory evaluation and who have provided detailed insights on the added value of participatory evaluation, the challenges and obstacles and the lessons learned. These will serve as a base and inform further discussion for the curriculum development of a Humanitarian Evaluation course as part of the INOVHUMRE project.

Although the mapping exercise has been limited in levels of inclusion and participation of Portuguese actors, contrary to the overall project idea of participatory approaches, a number of highlights have been summarised below and can serve as further discussion points.

NGOs:

1. Majority of respondent NGOs use internal evaluation as their key type of evaluation
2. NGOs view their capacity as sufficient, but resources appear low with less than 25% of staff being involved in MEL exercises and several experiencing lack of experience or knowledge of tools to hamper their evaluations
3. Four or 6 out of 10 NGOs have conducted participatory evaluation, but only 2 out of ten have done them within the humanitarian context or refugee integration
4. Employment of types of tools and methods is often limited to focus group discussions and key informant interviews
5. NGO respondents indicated a lack of experience and knowledge of tools and methods as key constraints to carry out better evaluations. Although this mapping exercise did not assess the level of knowledge on evaluation methods, the respondents did indicate that they can improve on different levels.



## Consultants:

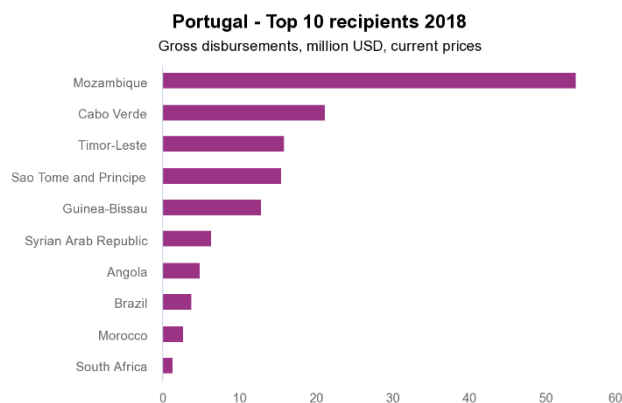
1. Identify lack of knowledge within NGOs affecting independent evaluations as consultants are sometimes requested to even write the Terms of References
2. Feel there is limited capacity in Portugal in the field of evaluation in general, let alone in the smaller NGOs
3. Consultants have been engaged in various assignments adopting participatory methodologies from design to monitoring and across organisational development
4. Consultants have deeper insights in the workings of tools and methods and argue that there is no 'superb tool' but rather depends on time, situation, participation, data need, etc.
5. Key challenges have been identified as time and access constraints for data collection, safety and security issues in the field.
6. In terms of knowledge to be acquired by those carrying out such evaluations the majority of the respondents included: situation context, technical context of methods and tools, data analysis (especially qualitative), people's skills, ethics on evaluation in the field.

## Context / Background

According to OECD data, Portugal's official development aid contribution of 0,16-0,18% of GDP is well below the general standard of 0,7% and makes Portugal one of the smaller aid actors within Europe.

Furthermore, the main recipients of Portuguese aid have been overwhelmingly Lusophone countries (see graph 1), where its main focus is on economic investment, social infrastructure & services.<sup>1</sup>

Graph 1 (OECD 2020):



Portugal's contribution to humanitarian aid is very limited. Its contribution as bilateral humanitarian aid amounted to USD 7 million in 2018 (4% of bilateral ODA) with 90% of these funds being allocated to emergency relief and response and a mere 0.5 mln USD has been allocated to rehabilitation and disaster risk reduction. (OECD 2020)

With such a small contribution it is no surprise that Portuguese NGOs operating in the international development context receive a minimal amount for implementation of humanitarian aid initiatives.

<sup>1</sup> OECD (2020), "Portugal", in *Development Co-operation Profiles*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/12c61cf7-en>.

## The Portuguese humanitarian landscape in Portugal

Portugal's contribution to and through CSOs remains limited in comparison with other OECD/DAC countries. The table below demonstrates that approximately 8 % of official aid is being channelled through civil society organisations totalling 15 million euros in 2019 out of which 10% is being allocated to humanitarian aid, totalling a small amount of approximately 1,5 million euros.

Table 1 (OECD 2020)

Portugal ODA to and through CSOs in mln euros		
	2018	2019
Total to CSO	0	0
Total through CSO	13	15
Total to and through CSO	13	15
Total bilateral aid	188	185
Percentage of bilateral aid to CSO	0	0
Percentage of bilateral aid through CSO	7	8
Percentage of bilateral aid to and through CSO	7	8

NGOs can benefit from two other sources of funds: i) the general Portuguese public and ii) applications as part of international initiatives. It is the former which provides most funds to the NGOs, according to Freitas, 85% of emergency funding for NGOs are derived from the Portuguese public.<sup>2</sup>

According to the same report on the humanitarian aid sector in Portugal, only 15 NGOs operate in humanitarian settings mainly as a result of both lack of financial and operational capacity. These NGOs, as evidenced by OECD data above, then focus on Lusophone/ PALOP countries where they benefit in terms of language and bilateral relationships giving them a competitive advantage but on the other hand confining them to the limitations of operating in a few countries based on historical ties.

Although diversification is increasingly at play in the sector, with efforts in multiple countries in terms of humanitarian action, e.g. the major emergencies have witnessed Portuguese bilateral and NGO support e.g. Syria and Haiti, Portugal remains a small player in the sector with limited capacity compared to international standards. Having said that there have been efforts to further diversify and develop the sector.

### Refugee integration initiatives in Portugal

Although Portugal is a country of migration it has received very few humanitarian migrants.

From 2008 until 2014, just before the 2015/16 surge in asylum seekers in Europe, Portugal granted humanitarian protection to less than 600 individuals over that period.<sup>3</sup> It witnessed an increase over the following period of up

<sup>2</sup> Freitas, R. 2010. Estudo sobre Ajuda Humanitária e emergência em Portugal. Plataforma ONGD.

<sup>3</sup> Finding their way – the integration of refugees in Portugal, OECD 2019. Accessed 24 May 2021 on <https://www.oecd.org/els/mig/finding-their-way-the-integration-of-refugees-in-portugal.pdf>

from 200 asylum requests annually to 1750 in 2017 alone (OECD 2019). For example, through the European Resettlement Mechanism Portugal welcomed, until the end of 2019, 551 people and through different relocation programmes in which migrants arrived in Greece and Italy were resettled in another member state, Portugal received 1,532 people.<sup>4</sup> However, with the increase in the number of asylum seekers, Portuguese civil society

engaging in refugee integration expanded rapidly. Up until 2015 it has been the Portuguese Refugee Council, established in 1990 that had been the key actors in providing support to newly arrived refugees in the country. However, by 2015 the Refugee Support Platform (PAR) had been created to help refugees navigate the Portuguese bureaucratic systems. Over the course of six years over 350 entities became member of PAR and range from NGOs to associations, foundations, universities and other institutions (OECD 2019). Fifteen organisations form the main executive committee of the Platform. PAR has been responsible for

#### REFUGEE SUPPORT PLATFORM – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Cáritas Portuguesa
- CLIB-Colégio Luso-Internacional de Braga
- CNIS – Confederação Nacional das Instituições Particulares de Solidariedade Social
- Comité Olímpico de Portugal
- Conferência Episcopal Portuguesa
- GRACE – Grupo de Reflexão e Apoio à Cidadania Empresarial Fórum Refúgio
- Fundação EDP
- Fundação Maria Dias Ferreira
- JRS – Serviço Jesuíta aos Refugiados (Coord.)
- Morais Leitão, Galvão Teles, Soares da Silva & Associados
- Paróquia São Tomás de Aquino
- SCML – Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa
- Universidade de Aveiro
- Universidade Católica Portuguesa – Centro Regional do Porto
- UNICEF Portugal

welcoming 163 families, corresponding to 378 adults and 381 children.<sup>5</sup>

## Methodology

The methodology used both primary and secondary data collection tools and employed a strong qualitative approach.

### Sample

Given the nature of this project, purposive sampling was used to ensure that the most pertinent perspectives from the different stakeholder groups were elicited. Upon discussion with both ISCTE-IUL and IMVF conducted open source research and have been guided by the knowledge of IMVF, one of the leading NGOs in Portugal who collaborates with many other organisations operating from Portugal which thus allowed for a comprehensive list to be compiled with a total of 26 NGOs and 7 consultants all active in the fields of humanitarian aid and refugee integration.

This list served as the basis to conduct preliminary outreach. Based on each partner's competitive advantage the list was split and contacts were made by email and phone. Due to the relatively small number of actors a strong qualitative approach was adopted, especially in relation to the consultants.

<sup>4</sup> Observatório para as Migrações, 2020, "Entrada, Acolhimento e Integração de Requerentes e Beneficiários de Proteção Internacional em Portugal RELATÓRIO ESTATÍSTICO DO ASILO 2020", Lisboa.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.refugiados.pt/refugiadosemportugal/> accessed on 24 May 2021

### Response overview

Type	Field	Identified	Invited	Collected
NGO	Humanitarian	16	16	9
NGO	Refugee integration	10	7	1
Consultants	Both	7	7	4

### Data collection tools and approaches

As part of the project a standard open-ended questionnaire had been disseminated which could be adapted by country and for different stakeholders according to their specific interest and background, allowing to draw parallels and have deeper insights than solely through closed surveys.

### Primary data collection

**Key Informant Interviews-** Based on the above a very targeted list had been put together to ensure that those most valuable stakeholders would be included in the data collection process. As the key groups was relatively small in size it was opted to conduct Key Informant Interviews. In total four consultants, out of the seven approached, were interviewed through semi-structured Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and one national NGO working on refugee integration participated in an online KII.

Interviews were held according to the interview questions specifically developed for the project.

**Online qualitative survey:** An additional nine external stakeholders, all NGOs operating at times in humanitarian context participated through a survey format, making use of the same questionnaire as the consultants. This approach was adopted to facilitated the feedback as NGOs had indicated to have ample time to participate and would prefer a qualitative survey.

In summary the data was collected through ZOOM-based online Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and an online survey. Data collection was conducted between 01 May and 17 May 2021.

### Limitations

Before presenting the analysis of the data collected, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of the methods of data collection used for this research study. For the purpose of this report, one specific limitation needs to be recognised and it is the lack of participation of the NGOs or associations that conduct activities in the field of refugee integration.

As mentioned above although 10 were identified out of which 7 were invited to participate in a Key Informant Interview only 1 responded to the call. This is insufficient to draw on generalisations on especially taking into consideration the nature of the organisation that responded. As such this has impacted the mapping exercise to the extent that there is a very limited overview of the landscape of projects on refugee integration and their link to participatory evaluation.

Finally, often evaluations are intellectual property of the NGO or company who requested the assignment. As such few evaluations are available to the public. This is a drawback as it would have allowed for further learning and identification of employment of tools and methods through a meta-analysis of the evaluations conducted by

Portuguese NGOs for example. In the absence of that ISCTE & IMVF requested when and where possible for evaluation results to be shared. A few have been made available.

## Key Findings

### a) Overview of evaluation function and capacity amongst interviewed actors

In order to provide a comprehensive overview of the evaluation function and capacity amongst the interviewed actors the data will be split according to two categories of respondents: I. NGOs and II. Consultants.

#### *NGOs*

As for the NGOs A total of 10 NGOs responded, 9 through survey and 1 through interview. For those the results have been accumulated to provide a holistic albeit incomplete overview of the status of participatory evaluation amongst NGOs in Portugal.

Nine out of 10 NGOs that responded, 90%, indicated to have carried out some type of evaluation. When asked what types of evaluations they have been carrying out there is a clear focus on self-evaluation or internal evaluation to which 9 of the respondents indicated to have undertaken internal or self-evaluations. Or in other words all those who have carried out evaluations have done internal evaluations (100%). Another 6 respondents indicated to have also outsourced evaluations (66%) and 4 of the respondents indicated to have carried out participatory evaluations in the area of their work (44%). Only two respondents indicated to have outsourced evaluations that have been participatory.

The overview of this data demonstrates that the majority of evaluations are internally managed and carried out and about half of the respondents, 4 in total, indicate to have used participatory evaluation methods either for internal (4) or external evaluation (2).

It should be noted that these evaluations relate to the specific field the NGO actors are operating in and are not yet assessed against the specificity of humanitarian or refugee context of which results will be demonstrated below.

However, continuing the data analysis it demonstrates that five NGOs are regularly outsourcing their evaluations i.e. in more than 50% of the are being outsourced. The remaining three respondents have lower levels of outsourcing with two of these rarely outsourcing evaluations and thus largely focusing on internal evaluations.

This is matched against the capacities that they indicated to have in-house, both in terms of human resources as well as knowledge and skills to carry out internal evaluations. Although the majority (77%) indicates to have in-house capacity to realise and conduct evaluations when set out against the number of staff participating in the evaluations 6 out of the nine respondents indicate (66%) to have less than 25% of their staff involved in such activities. The remaining respondents indicate that a maximum of 50% of their staff is involved. Unfortunately, as this has been a survey, we have been unable to assess the amount of staff working in these organisations and to what extent these numbers would be sufficient taking into consideration, size, type and intervals of evaluation.

Having said that, the data could indicate that in-house capacity although in existence in terms of staff time, might be limited at times, especially when taking into consideration that all respondents indicated to carry out in the first-place internal evaluations and fewer outsource them. This could also be one of the reasons for less employment of participatory methodologies which are usually time consuming and require the engagement with a wider group of staff in the organisation both for internal and external evaluations.

The qualitative data in the survey exactly supports such view in that, lack of experience is one of the factors mentioned as key gaps in evaluation capacity. More worrying is the general lack of feedback in the survey on the needs and gaps they encounter in evaluation, indicating a limited capacity to self-evaluate their evaluation work, especially amongst the relatively smaller NGOs.

It must be emphasized that this mapping exercise did not have sufficient data though to get detailed insights to make such general statements for the NGO sector in Portugal as a whole and thus assumptions are based on the data extracted from the limited individual responses.

### Consultants

As consultants have been categorised differently from the NGOs and rather are actual implementers of monitoring and evaluation, the first part of the questionnaire has not been applicable to them. Their detailed responses have been included in the next section.

- b) Overview of Participatory Evaluation in general in relation to the work the surveyed

### NGOs

A surprising factor is the relatively low number of respondents who have indicated to carry out participatory evaluation at all – merely 2 out of the 9 respondents indicated to conduct participatory evaluations. It should be noted that one of the respondents does not fully qualify as ‘having conducted evaluations’, but rather employs an in-house participatory feedback methodology. This has not been counted towards the total of respondents who carry out participatory evaluation.

Yet again when digging into the types of participatory methodologies and tools that have been employed in the participatory evaluations that have been carried out, the vast majority relate to the common practices of focus group discussion and key informant interviews. There has been very limited reference to the use of other participatory methods and tools. Only in a few instances there has been referred to e.g. Participatory Action Research or specific tools such as transect walks. Even the relatively trending methods and tools like Outcome Mapping received limited responses, much less than could reasonably be expected from national level NGOs currently engaged in the development sector.

### Consultants

As for the consultants that have participated in this exercise a total of 4 out of 7 participated in semi-structured interviews which allowed for more detailed discussion about their engagement in participatory evaluation.

All of the consultants that have been interviewed highlighted and confirmed that they have conducted participatory evaluations and have carried out exercises with participatory methodologies across the programme management cycle including in design and monitoring of projects and activities as well as in strategic planning and organisational development.

Contrary to the NGOs, the consultants have employed a variety of participatory tools including community assemblies, outcome mapping, etc, well beyond the common focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

The consultants, the majority of them, highlighted that they often make use of ‘workshops’ in which they employ different participatory tools e.g. world café, dialogue and discussion as well as more interactive methods e.g. make use of small work groups and post its or ‘gallery walks’.

Both the consultants and the few NGOs that do participatory evaluation highlight the added value of it as it provides insights that cannot be captured in non-participatory evaluations. As one of the consultants said, *“everything should be participatory to ensure it is relevant and can contribute to improved programming”*.

However, when discussing the application of tools and methods the respondents indicated that the selection of tools and methods strongly depend on the situation, the programme context and the number and type of participants. For example, when engaging illiterate women in refugee camps, different tools shall be used than when talking to local council representatives. What appears to be crucial though is to ensure that this has been thought through from the beginning, in the design stage of the evaluation.

According to some of the consultants, they often find that the NGOs they engage with are insufficiently aware of the different needs and ways of inclusion of the project target groups.

In short, they found there is no ‘superb tool’ that is better than others, but the tool shall be devised according to level of engagement, location, situation, type of participant (male, female, child), literacy levels, etc and in line with the data needs to be filled for the evaluation.

## Challenges / Lesson Learned

Although only few experiences have been referred to in terms of participatory evaluation, they do share concerns and lessons learned.

**Time:** In particular the issue of time is a big challenge when conducting participatory evaluation. In general, participatory methods are more time consuming than non-participatory methods which have been employed in evaluations in the development context. Indeed, randomised trials or time-consuming quantitative methods are hardly used – also because of similar constraints.

Often budgets are limited for monitoring and evaluation and thus allow for few days for fieldwork only. When in the field it is time consuming to get to the different places and employ the respective tools across the wide spectrum of stakeholders. To counter this there is a need to be well prepared ahead of fieldwork, to clearly establish tools, those who will participate, the respective locations and other practicalities for fieldwork like transport, access and so on. However, it was mentioned by all that flexibility is key in participatory evaluation especially in unpredictable contexts.

**Access:** In humanitarian context access is an issue. Reaching isolated places, need for permits or other government documentation can be a real challenge and affects access to the area and therewith the extent of participation of a variety of stakeholders. Rather than adjusting to these challenges, it was suggested that at times it might be possible to work the other way around i.e. to bring the participants out of the respective camps / closed zones to nearby safe spaces and allowing for better quality and less bureaucratic evaluation activities in which the evaluators could focus on obtaining the data as opposed to dealing with bureaucratic elements of e.g. conflict zones.



**Safety and Security:** The majority of the consultants highlighted that there are two levels of safety and security: the one of the evaluator and the other of the participant. Participation in evaluation activities can be complicated in conflict areas, refugee camps, government controlled areas, etc., resulting in possible friction, threats and even violence. Hence the lessons learned is that a risk and mitigation strategy should be taken into consideration at the outset of the evaluation design and should be a minimum standard for participatory evaluations in humanitarian settings.

**Inclusion:** In general, in evaluation in development and even more so in humanitarian settings purposive sampling is commonly used, even when employing participatory tools. This does not allow for full inclusion of the project stakeholders across all groups. Rather purposive sampling, common in complex settings, relies on the identification of participants by for example the respective NGO and it is then not uncommon to have the same people invited multiple times. This carries several challenges: i) those invited multiple times are no longer really interested in participation, neither might be fully aware which project is being evaluated, ii) those invited multiple times provide similar answers throughout no matter the respective project, iii) can result in ‘evaluation fatigue’ amongst those participants and iv) it can also result in challenges related to equality and participation in terms of defining who is a key informant and who decides who is a key informant.

**Validation / Triangulation:** Both NGO and consultants indicated that at times single interviews are not validated against other data and thus triangulation of data does not occur. Whether this is a result of the constraints mentioned above or originating from other constraints has not been assessed. However, in practice this means that interviews can be taken as ‘the truth’ therewith omitting other views or data sources.

**Data Collection:** Often the participatory events do not go as planned due to quickly changing circumstances in the field, however respondents’ experiences showed that, thankfully, participatory tools often provide more and deeper insights than expected going well beyond the questions set out in the terms of reference and thus further enriching the evaluation.

## Annexes

- List of organisation / institutions contacted / participated

### Annex I

#### NGO

AMI
Plataforma ONGD
VIDA
FEC
ADRA
OIKOS
ADPM
Saúde em Português
Cáritas Portuguesa
SPEAK

#### Consultancy companies

Stone Soup
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COATL
Mundi consulting
PPLL consulting
Logframe

## Spain Report

### Overview

The UNED and the Magtel Foundation are developing the Erasmus+ project, KA2- *Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices* (InovHumbRE Projects). For this, the research group conducted a questionnaire on participatory evaluation in emergency contexts and whose application was developed during the months of June and July 2021.

### Objectives

#### General Objective

- Analyse information on the participatory evaluation methods used by the different institutions/entities and in what context...

#### Specific objectives

- SO1. To assess what participatory evaluation actions have been carried out in the different entities participating in the study.
- SO2. Determine the main weaknesses and strengths of the evaluations developed by the entities.
- SO3. To detect those participatory evaluation actions implemented by the entities in response to emergency situations.
- SO4. To inquire about the digital tools used by the entities to perform online evaluations.

### Methodology

A mixed type study was chosen from a descriptive and interpretative approach of a nongeneralizable type, based on the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from professionals of entities.

#### a) Participants

A purposive sampling was conducted based on an analysis of the main non-profit organizations working in emergency situations. The Magtel Foundation established the recruitment of participants, considering the accessibility and feasibility of access to the sampling units. The purpose was to achieve greater saturation and for this purpose participants were asked to send the questionnaire to others to increase participation. The criteria for the selection of participants were: managers and/or professionals of non-profit organizations of reference in the field of social services in Spain in emergency situations.

Finally, 13 informants participated. The data for each of them referring to the entities in which they work are presented in the Results section.

### Instrument

A questionnaire was used with a total of 30 items that followed an open and closed response format.

The questionnaire was applied asynchronously by sending an email access link (Bryman, 2012).

The design of this instrument was based on three criteria (Flick, 2018): orientation towards the relevant topics in the study; orientation towards the research object; orientation towards the process to understand the research object.

For this purpose, a brief presentation of the research was made and a funnel logic was followed in the division of the questionnaire. We started from general questions to more specific questions in order to encourage participation and focus the attention of the participants on each of the research topics. Thus, the items were distributed in four large sections that make up the instrument:

- *Sociodemographic data of the participating entities and of the participatory evaluation they carry out.* (8 items: 1-8).
- *Use of participatory evaluation from the entities.* (6 items: 9-15).
- *Participatory evaluation in emergency response.* (11 items: 15-26).
- *Participatory assessment and online digital tools* (4 items: 27-30).

### Procedure

- The questionnaire was completed online using the *Google Suite: Forms* application. Prior to sending the questionnaire, it was reviewed by several collaborators in the research process according to the criterion of intersubjective verification typical of these research processes (Pérez, 1994). The use of this instrument is flexible and reduces research costs in terms of the resources and distribution time. Likewise, this system minimizes the social desirability of the informants' response since there is no direct, face-to-face intervention by the researchers during the narration of the discourse (Fricker and Schonlau, 2002).
- Finally, the questionnaire was completed with the consent of the participants after they had been informed of the purposes of the study, and always in line with the ethical assumptions of the Declaration of Helsinki.

### Data analysis

The content of the informants' contributions was systematically processed using the database that was automatically generated in *Google Sheets*. Quantitative data was analyzed, generating descriptive

statistics with percentages and frequencies. The qualitative data was analysed by studying the content of the informants' contributions and systematically processing the statements made by the participants in their answers to the open-ended questions. For the structuring and organization of the open discourse data, a simple category system was created that followed a process of open coding of the units of information provided into different categories (Strauss and Corbin, 2002; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Kuckartz and Rädiker, 2019).

## Results

- a) Data on the participating entities and the participatory evaluation they carry out

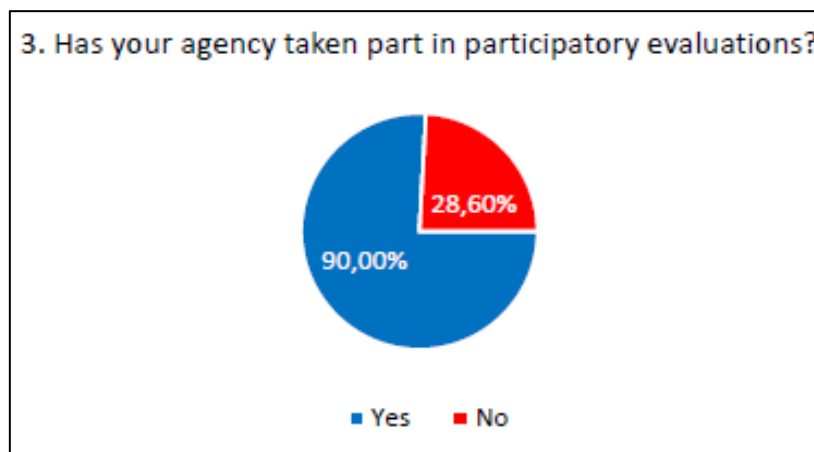
This section deals with the main sociodemographic data collected through the first eight items of the questionnaire.

### Participating entities

- A total of 14 representatives from 13 entities responded to the questionnaire, namely: Red Cross, CODENAF, Open Arms, NGO AIRE, Asociación de Apoyo al Pueblo Sirio (AAPS), Infancia sin Fronteras, Asociación Diversidades, Fundación Prolibertas (2 representatives participated), DIACONIA, Farmacéuticos sin fronteras de España, Asociación Paz y Bien, Plan Internacional España and Fundación Sevilla Acoge.
- All entities were NGOs.

### Involvement of entities in conducting participatory evaluations

10 entities (71.4%) stated that they carry out participatory evaluations compared to 4 (28.6%) that do not.



### Type of participatory evaluations carried out by your organization

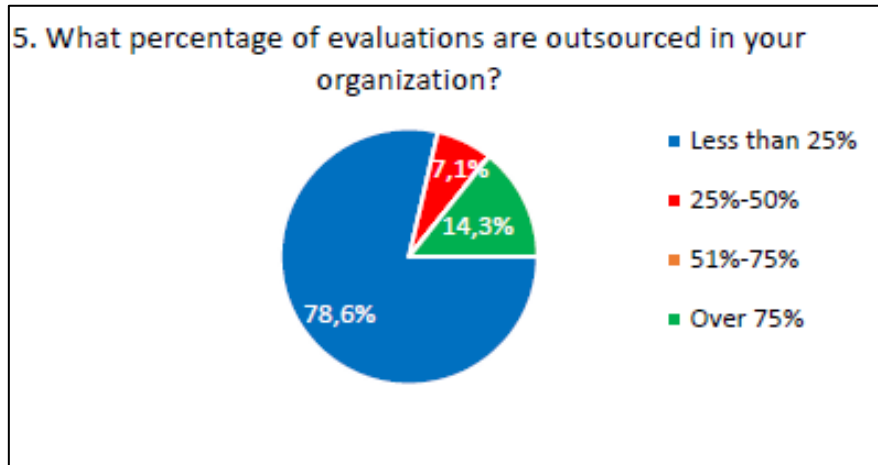
This open item collected information on the types of participatory evaluations carried out by these NGOs. Based on the statements collected, the main categories are established (some examples are given; several fall into two categories):

➤ Internal evaluations:

- a) Final evaluations on plans, programs and projects aimed at the professionals' own performance. (9 statements) "Internal or external evaluations (through local Universities primarily)". "Overall evaluations of projects implemented". "Mid-term and final evaluations of external and internal development cooperation and humanitarian aid grants/projects, Real Time Review and post-distribution monitoring". "Evaluations for strategic plans, for equality plan, for quality plan, for human resources."
- b) Intermediate participatory evaluations for monitoring and to resolve situations and/or reach agreements. (3 statements) "Mid-term and final evaluations of external and internal development cooperation and humanitarian aid grants/projects, Real Time Review and post-distribution monitoring."
- c) Training course evaluations. (2 statements). "Evaluation of training courses." External evaluations:
- d) External evaluations of satisfaction with the care received that have been carried out by users. (3 statements). "We have developed a final questionnaire evaluation of the satisfaction of the refugee programs for the beneficiaries". "Internal or external evaluations (through local Universities primarily)".

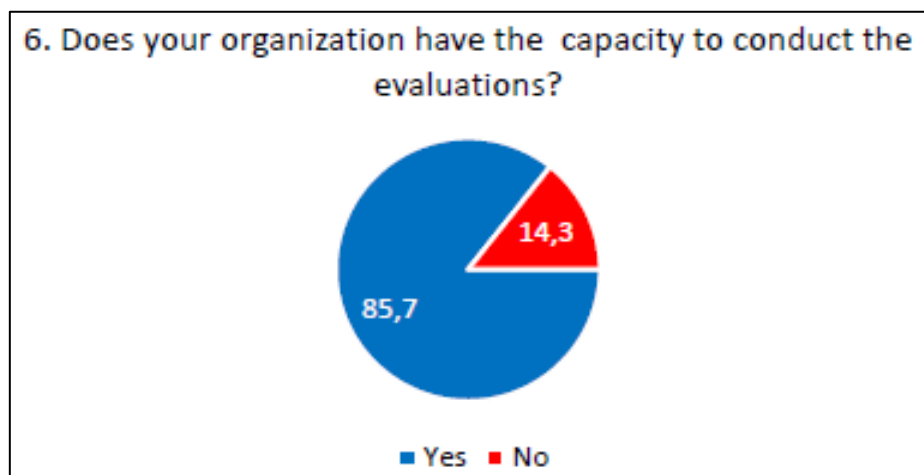
➤ Percentage of evaluations that are outsourced in your organization

- a) In this item, four alternative response possibilities were offered: 1) Less than 25%; Between 25% and 50%; More than 51% and up to 75%; More than 75%.
- b) As can be seen in the graph, 11 of the participating NGOs state that they do not outsource more than 25% of the evaluations they carry out. While only 1 (7.1%) considers that less than 50% and more than 25% of the evaluations carried out by their organization are outsourced. On the other hand, only 2 participants state that their organizations outsource between 75% and 100% of the evaluations they carry out.



➤ Do they have internal capacity to perform the evaluations?

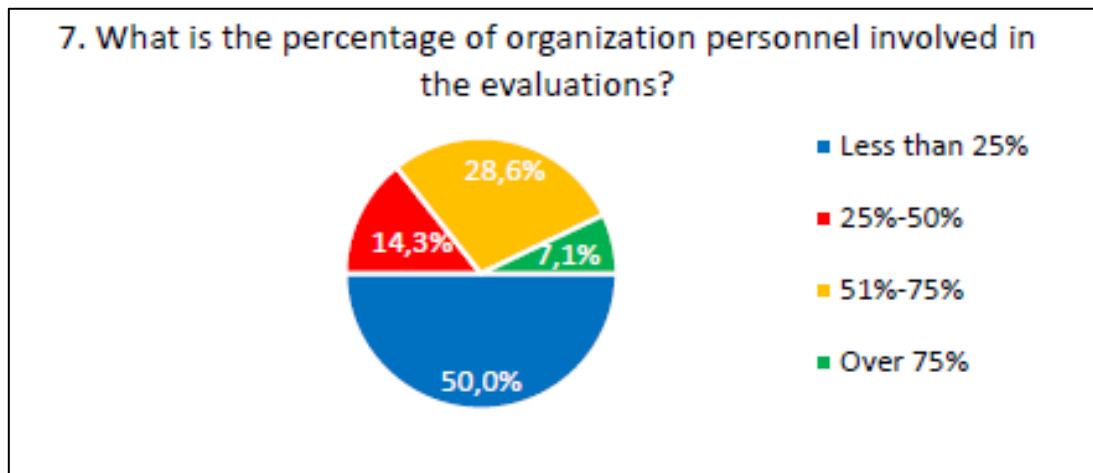
- a) 12 of the participants (85.7%) affirm that they do have the capacity to carry out the evaluations, while only 2 participants (14.3%) consider that they do not (14.3%).



➤ Personnel involved in or responsible for evaluations

- a) To the question: What is the proportion of the staff that participates in or is responsible for evaluations? Participants had four alternative answers: Less than 25%, between 25-50%, between 51-75%, More than 75%.





- b) The results show that 7 participants consider that the proportion of staff participating is responsible for the evaluations within their institution, which is below 25%. Two participants (14.3%) consider that participation is between half or less of the staff. On the other hand, 4 participants consider that more than half of the staff participate, but not more than 75% (28.6%).
- c) While only 1 participant considers that the participation of his organization's personnel in the evaluations is very high and is above 75%.

➤ Aspects of evaluation training that you consider most relevant

a) In this regard, only 12 open-ended responses were collected, categorized as follows:

- Quantitative and qualitative impact indicators of final and process evaluations by the different agents involved in the intervention. (4 citations) "Training in impact evaluation", "Knowing how to approach indicators in a way that fits real needs".
- Evaluation methodologies and techniques (6 citations). "Evaluation techniques". "Methodologies in MfDR", "Training in evaluation applied to international cooperation", "evaluation methodologies of community and participatory approach".
- Design of the evaluation plan (2 quotes). "Learning about which methodology is more appropriate for each moment of the organization or for each process", "Definition of protocols and unified forms to evaluate the same indicators".

b) Use of participatory evaluation from the entities

This section contains results on the use of the participatory evaluation of 6 items of the questionnaire.

➤ Entities' use of participatory evaluation methods

- a) In this regard, the vast majority of the participants affirmed that their entities do use participatory evaluation methods, 12 (85.7%) compared to 2 (14.3%).



➤ Examples of method and context in which participatory evaluations have been carried out by entities

- a) This open item contains some examples, which are reproduced below:

- "Training and employment".
- "Community and educational context in social intervention projects."
- "In large projects, construction of schools, specific production centers for women, etc., the participation of stakeholders in all phases of the evaluation process, from the decision to evaluate to the final use of the evaluation results. Some tools are the participation of those involved in all phases of the evaluation process, from the decision to evaluate to the final use of the evaluation results. Existing local knowledge and resources are the basis for the IFEE process. Evaluation is integrated into the Learning Cycle as a means to achieve more participatory development. Other tools used are for example - Design and planning of participatory evaluation systems. - Capacity building in participatory evaluation, through the organization of workshops".
- "Empowerment and productive development program in Niger: results restitution workshops with collectives of women beneficiaries and local duty bearers".
- "In addition to open-ended questionnaires and focus groups, the main method we use is semi-structured interviews.
- "Satisfaction surveys of both contracted staff and participants".
- "We have carried out the self-evaluation of the workers and then a shared evaluation with the coordination of the project has been carried out. The idea is to check if the worker and the coordination have the same perception of the results obtained. It is taken as an analysis of the synchrony, subjectivity or different perspectives of the people who are part of the

projects. This would be, on the one hand, self-evaluation, internal evaluation and shared evaluation. On the other hand, the questionnaires that reach the refugees are for evaluation of the program and their satisfaction. This is analyzed with a view to understanding the difficulties and successes of the program."

- "For the implementation of project identification, execution and follow-up processes. Meetings with the counterpart, meetings with representative population of the population, assessment of points of view through direct exposure, surveys and evaluations in workshops and training talks".
- "We have not applied it methodologically, but we have applied the involvement of beneficiaries at the local level, in all our projects."
- "Dialogue techniques, observation and group dynamics through semi-structured Dialogues, with key informants, with household members, with focus groups, etc. especially with girls and boys dialogue techniques centered on play/recreational activities, drawings, etc".
- "Evaluations have been outsourced under project sub-v."
- "Questionnaires and focus groups for the elaboration of strategic, quality and equality plans".

➤ Main challenges in conducting participatory evaluations in your area of work

a) Thirteen participants responded to this open-ended item. The following are some of the most relevant statements:

- "The participation of the agents involved, the scheduling of meetings and the use of shared methodological tools are the most difficult issues".
- "Applying findings ex post facto".
- "The war environment of the area".
- "Involvement of local stakeholders, reconciliation of rights holders' time, etc...".
- "The systematization of the answers and the search for the relevant aspects of the answers".
- "The willingness of people to participate, the scales to use and adjust the questions to be assessed."
- "The adequate design of the evaluation tools and the understanding of the motives and the dimension of this analysis. On the other hand, to identify from the individual analysis the great challenges shared as an area".
- "We have not conducted participatory evaluations from a specific methodology, although we have involved the beneficiary population, but we do not know if they are evaluations of that modality."
- "Adapt the methodology and techniques for each context, especially in humanitarian crisis/emergency situations, that the tools are sensitive to the culture and specificities of the interventions taking into account the differences between women, men, girls and boys, lack of access to communities due to security and COVID-19, lack of resource for training of staff conducting assessments and women-led teams. In addition to: the chaos of humanitarian emergencies, lack of baseline data, high staff turnover, humanitarian crisis in

remote locations and with damaged infrastructure, time pressure on the affected population and the fact that people may have little time to participate in an assessment, overly ambitious terms of reference and limited resources, lack of clearly defined accountability among humanitarian actors."

- "We don't have the resources to carry them out."

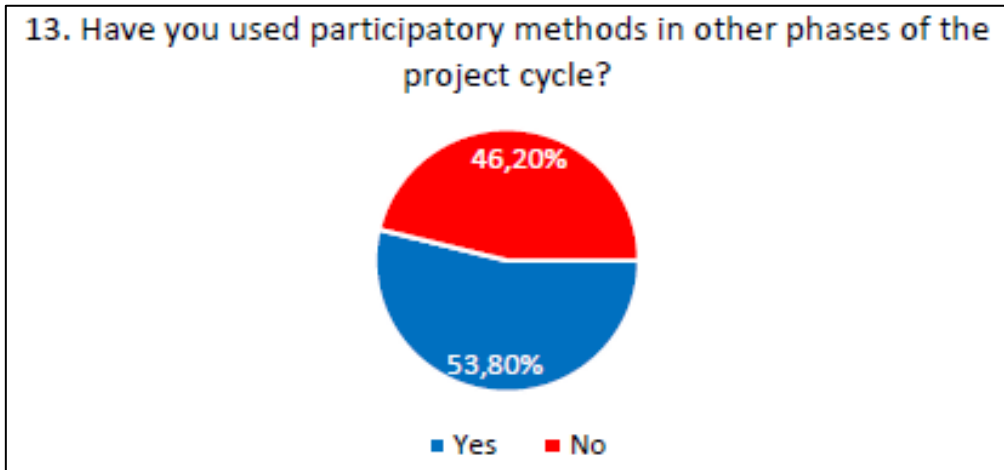
➤ Main lessons learned in conducting participatory evaluations in your work area

a) Twelve participants responded to this open-ended item. The following are some of the most relevant statements:

- "Improving employability".
- "The greater the participation of agents from different fields of action, the greater the effectiveness of the product achieved in the evaluation".
- "What is important is that all parties are convinced of its usefulness."
- "The emic perspective of the beneficiary societies must be taken into account, otherwise you can blindly propose a project or, even worse, try to break cultural structures with "good intentions".
- "Improvements in the program's intervention logic, improvements in the identification and monitoring methodology, etc."
- "The main learning is the enormous difference between the expectations of the technical staff and the expectations of the participants, with the consequent divergence not so much in the general assessment as in the aspects that are considered relevant.
- "Having to explain to participants the reasons for the need and advantages of conducting these assessments."
- "That a permanent evaluation is necessary, that we cannot act in isolation with the actors of our activities in general. That there is more than one institution to collaborate with, that there is always room for improvement. That there should be no straitjackets to carry out actions, since everything changes very quickly".
- "When the beneficiary population of a project participates in it, the evaluation is more complete."
- "Realistic time planning, the importance of involving girls, boys and young people and also the communities in all phases of the evaluation, including the design of the methodology and tools, taking into account the social and cultural characteristics of each context and the training of the personnel who carry out the evaluation".
- "That participation is fundamental in any organization where the protagonists are the people."

➤ Use of participatory appraisal methods in other parts of the project cycle

a) In relation to this item, 13 participants responded and the majority stated that their entities do use participatory evaluation methods in other parts of the project cycle, 7 (53.8%) versus 6 (46.2%).



➤ Participatory evaluation methods you have used and at what times.

a) Seven participants responded to this open-ended item. The following are some of the most relevant statements:

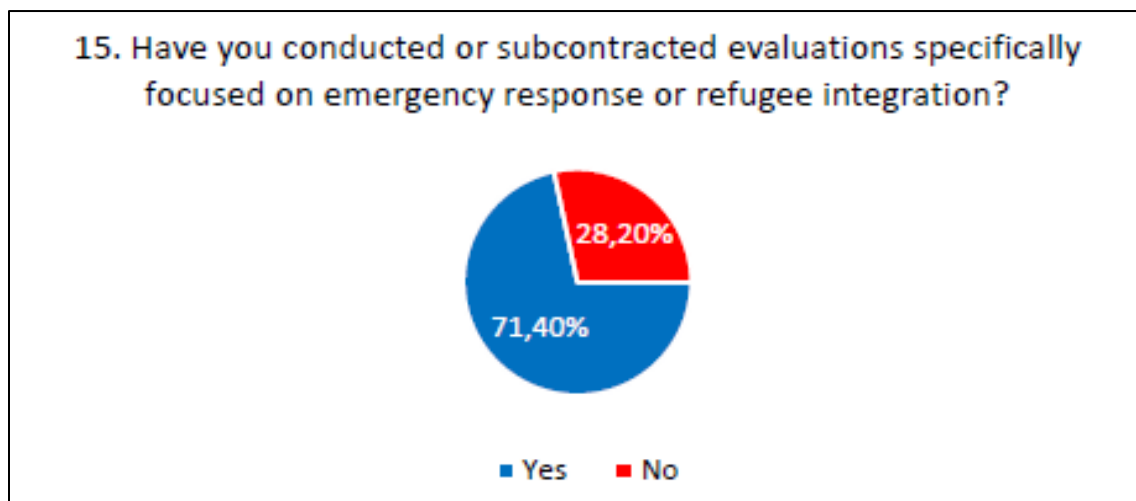
- "We always advocate procedural evaluations, so we establish a priori evaluations at different moments of the intervention so that the final evaluation has the greatest possible impact. Each moment of the project and its evaluation involves a level of meetings with the agents involved, which as a general rule tend to be focused on the before and after of the action.
- The use of specific methodological tools, as well as the debate generated in these meetings, provide us with the necessary information to check whether the path we are following is the right one. This makes it possible that if we find incidents or deviations we have time to redirect the intervention and ultimately achieve the projected results and objectives".
- "Participant observation during the identification phase".
- "Focus groups for the design of campaigns (within executions), committees for the development of activities, etc."
- "In several projects, opinions have been collected from participants to set the direction and pace of the groups, as well as their operating rules, at the beginning of certain training actions that do not depend on an official program or that can be developed with different strategies."
- "Working groups have been held for the analysis of projects that we considered to be a priority and suitable for submission or implementation.
- "In the evaluation of the project and the methodology and context have been the same, especially trying to measure the impact of the project in the long term on which I think we should work standardized models for areas of work, but leaving room to measure unique indicators of projects. In this regard, I think it is necessary to come up with more specific SDG indicators for real development cooperation interventions, those currently defined

are very general and do not allow measuring everything that is really done at NGDO level, there are things that remain".

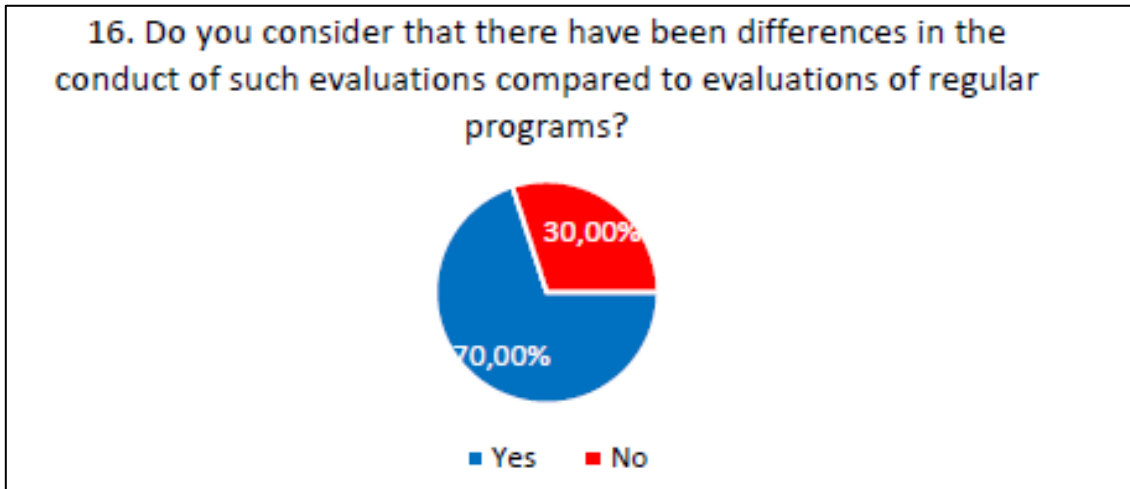
- "Specific monitoring activities of project activities, feedback and complaint mechanisms, evaluation of service providers, needs assessments, post-distribution monitoring, etc."

c) Participatory Evaluation in Emergency Response

This section contains results on the use of the participatory evaluation of 11 items of the questionnaire.

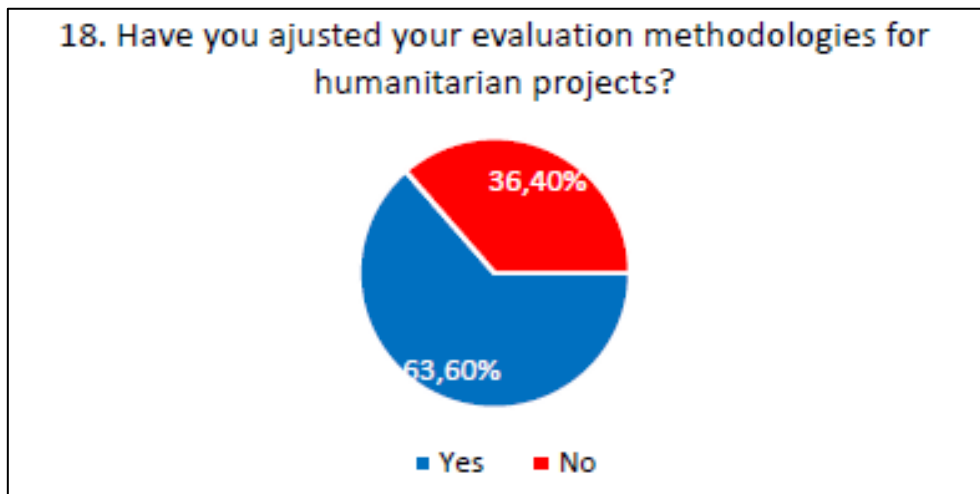


- Conducting or subcontracting evaluations specifically focused on emergency response or refugee integration.
  - a) 10 of the participants (71.4%) state that they have not conducted or outsourced evaluations specifically focused on emergency response or refugee integration compared to 4 who have (28.6%).
  
- Differences in the conduct of such evaluations as compared to regular program evaluations
  - a) In this item, participants were asked whether they found differences in the conduct of participatory evaluations in emergency situations compared to other evaluations of regular programs. The majority answer was no (7: 70%) as opposed to yes (3: 30%).



- Reasons for differences in the conduct of evaluations in emergency situations compared to evaluations of regular programs.
  - a) Those participants who responded that there were differences justified their answer by providing the reasons for these differences. They are listed below:
    - "In the emergency, other criteria (effectiveness, efficiency, accessibility) are prioritized over sustainability or capacity transfer."
    - "We have adapted the language, design and number of questions to the individual characteristics of the beneficiaries in the program."
    - "By the nature of the intervention and the crisis context and coordination with other agencies/clusters/organizations at a multi-sectoral level, specific impact of the emergency/crisis and funding."
- Adjustment of evaluation methodologies for humanitarian projects
  - a) The participants were asked whether these evaluation methodologies are adapted to the reality of the humanitarian projects they carry out. The majority of participants stated that they do (7: 63.6%) compared to those who do not (4: 36.4%) consider that they are adapted.



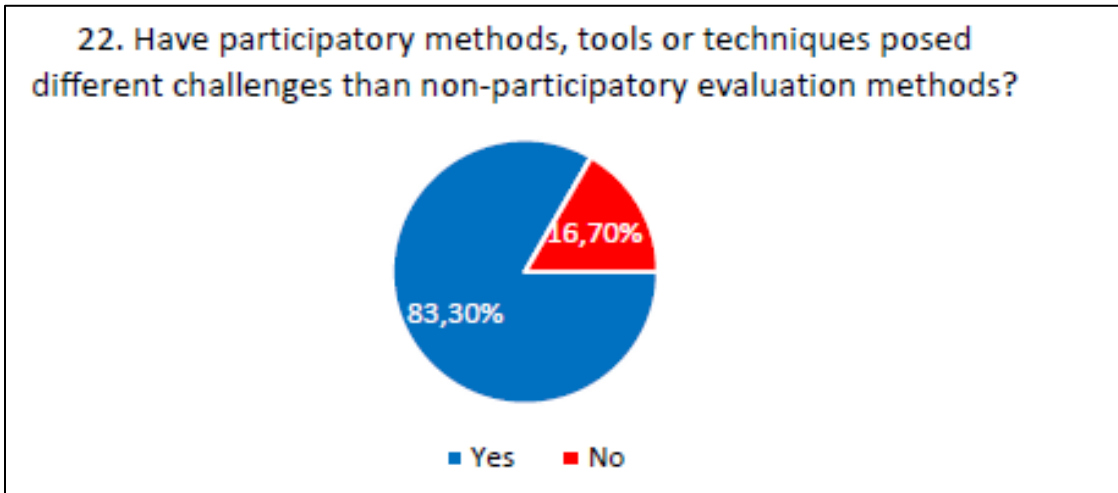


➤ Reasons why participatory evaluation methodologies are suitable for humanitarian projects.

a) Next, those participants who felt that adjustment does occur motivated their responses:

- "Adjusted to the present reality".
- "Knowing the specific situations of humanitarian crises makes it possible to carry out better interventions and above all, more adapted to reality. Often what the statistics tell us does not always work with all the people we serve, so thanks to comprehensive services such as those provided by CODENAF, we have a good idea of the reality of the people who come to our sites and in this way we can formulate projects that are more real and above all more necessary to their reality".
- " Availability of the target group, psychological situation, etc.".
- "We have tailored the language, design and number of questions to the individual characteristics of the beneficiaries in the program".
- "Humanitarian aid is carried out in a short period of time and many times we do not continue working in the area. It is very difficult to measure the long-term impact because people are either still in need of humanitarian aid in the long term under the same conditions, so you continue to treat them as humanitarian or emergency aid several months or years later, depending on whether they are refugees or whether they are natural disasters in which people are generally displaced to other places. The evaluation therefore allows you to measure, for example: number of people served, number of new people in the project, number of people with basic food, number of people vaccinated, number of people with access to medicines, number of treatments dispensed with essential medicines, number of treatments by type of chronic disease and/or frequent diseases in the population served, and budget per person in medical care, health and food. The measure will always be the same, but if you extend the care over time, you only measure the same thing. There is no improvement in quality of life as they remain in camps with no option for improvement.

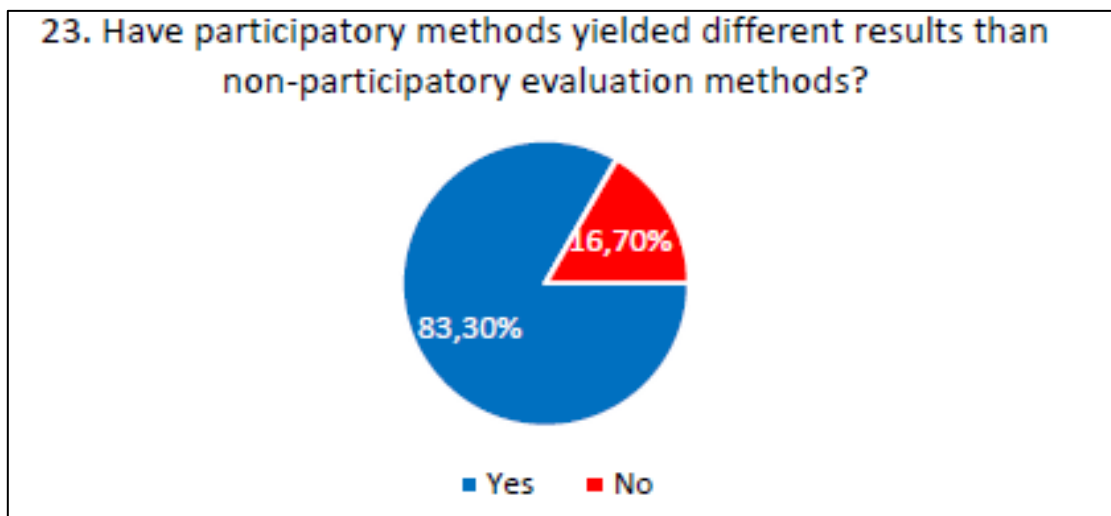
- b) Another aspect to differentiate, and that can be evaluated, is when the transition is made from emergency to development, where you can measure other aspects of improvement in quality of life.
- "We have tried to conform to the evaluation parameters for humanitarian intervention".
  - "In contexts of insecurity or displacement to take into account dynamics of mobility, security, safety and confidentiality".
- Types of participatory methods, tools or techniques you have used in conducting evaluations of humanitarian response programs/refugee integration programs.
- a) Participants were questioned about what types of participatory methods, tools or techniques have been used in conducting evaluations of humanitarian response programs/refugee integration programs. The participants' responses are shown below:
- Participatory rural appraisal (3: 21.4%)
  - Action research (4: 28.6%)
  - Community cross walks (0: 0%).
  - Focus group discussions (9: 64.3%)
  - Analysis of daily time use (3: 21.4%).
  - Scoring, ranking to facilitate dialogue (2: 14.3%).
  - Analysis of the most significant change (2: 14.3%).
  - Results mapping (7: 50%)
  - Others (6: 42.9%).
- b) Outcome mapping, action research, participatory rural appraisal and daily time use analysis stand out from the rest of the evaluation types/techniques.
- Other types:
- a) Interviews and discussions in specific groups.
  - b) Participatory dynamics.
  - c) Direct beneficiary satisfaction surveys on the services or goods provided.
  - d) KAP Survey, key informant interviews, drawings, etc.
- Participatory methods, tools or techniques that have posed different challenges to nonparticipatory evaluation methods.



a) Participants were asked whether participatory evaluation methods, tools and techniques pose different challenges than non-participatory methods. Twelve participants responded, and the results showed that the vast majority considered that they did (10: 83.3%), while only two considered that they did not (16.7%).

➤ Have participatory methods provided different results than non-participatory evaluation methods?

a) In this item, the participants were asked whether participatory evaluation methods provide different results from non-participatory evaluation methods. Twelve participants responded, and the results showed that the vast majority considered that they did (10: 83.3%), while only two considered that they did not (16.7%).



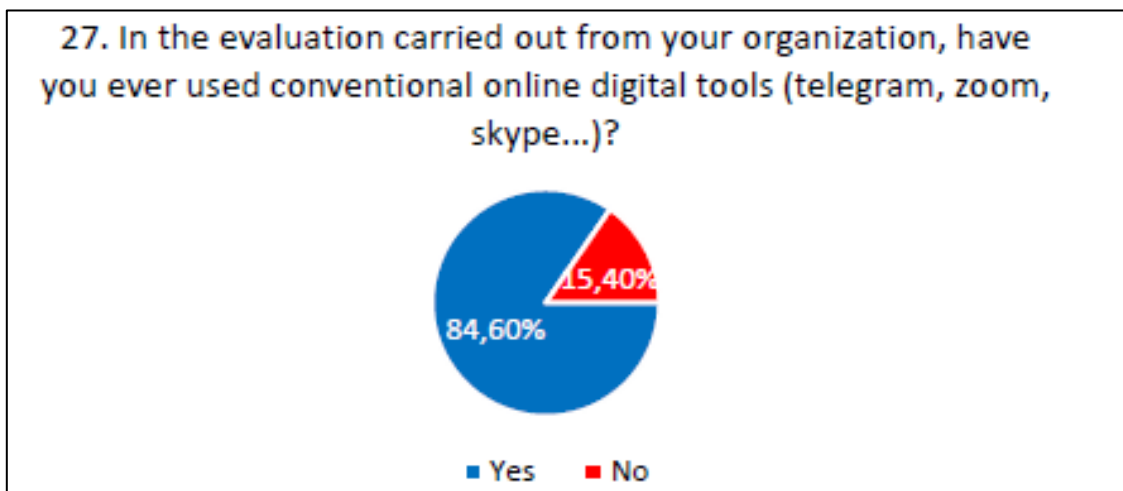
- The participatory methods they have used and what they have found useful and why
  - a) "Action research as well as group discussion and debates are more in line with the type of social intervention we work on in the entity".
  - b) "All those that allow for a change in the observer's point of view: focus groups, experience diary, etc.".
  - c) "In general, we consider focus groups useful because they allow for relevant qualitative assessments that shed light on quantitative results and on the processes to achieve them, as well as on subjectively experienced difficulties".
  - d) "Shared reflection and dialogue on project needs".
  - e) "Participatory rural appraisal, focus group discussions, most significant change analysis".
  - f) "Particularly the beneficiary survey we consider the most direct method in this area".
  - g) "Continuous dialogue and consultation with the affected population, feedback mechanisms and joint evaluations with other stakeholders through coordination mechanisms".
  
- Added value attributed to the use of participatory evaluation
  - a) "Shared knowledge, points of view based on own experiences that sharpen interventions with the collective".
  - b) "The view of the same aspect from different angles".
  - c) "Complementing the institutional vision with first-person experience, appropriation of the results achieved, etc".
  - d) "Participatory evaluation adds an essential element of active listening to the people involved and gives them a leading role in assessing results, improving or correcting projects and increasing the link between people and our projects."
  - e) "New ideas not initially contemplated that support the programs established so far".
  - f) "That you have feedback from the different actors about the reality at the moments in which you carry out the evaluation. So you measure indicators before, during and after the project.
  - g) "It is even more important if over time there has been more support, either from the same NGO or from other NGOs".
  - h) "We assume it completes it, although we are not aware of all the parameters that make up that participatory assessment".
  - i) "To take into account the perspective, needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of different people, groups, organizations, in order to use resources more efficiently and maximize impact."
  - j) "It brings a diversity of perspectives when analyzing the facts".
  - k) "The involvement of all stakeholders in a shared project".
  
- Lessons learned from the use of participatory evaluation in emergency situations.
  - a) "Without the participation of all those who in some way interact in the intervention, it means a poorer and less profound assessment of the achievements and goals that have been breached".
  - b) "What is important to maintain a balance between the needs of the parties".
  - c) "No purely quantitative assessment is 100% valid".
  - d) "Listening is difficult, but it is essential".

- e) "Adaptation to people, groups and projects by encouraging the participation and involvement of people in the organization".
- f) "The realities depending on the place and people are different, the priorities are different, and the environment is changing, therefore, funding and call models must be more open to accommodate these realities. It is not possible that the reality has to be adapted to a call, nor should it be that you cannot apply for a call because the project does not fit it. That local development should be favored in an integral manner. That alliances are important and complementarity is also important".
- g) "That it is important to continuously improve the evaluation of projects, in order to generate better projects. We have proven this in our projects in Guatemala".
- h) "That evaluations are fundamental accountability tools not only to the people affected, but also to advocate with governments and donors on the impact of programs and to make visible additional issues for which specific resources are needed. In general: conducting a situation analysis is important to understand the composition and dynamics of communities, the participation of men, women, boys and girls through a gender approach, and an appropriate selection of targets and populations based on real need and not convenience.

d) Participatory evaluation and online digital tools

This section contains results on the use of the participatory evaluation of 4 items of the questionnaire.

➤ Use of conventional online digital tools for collaborative communication



The participants were asked whether their organizations had ever used conventional digital tools for collaborative communication. Most of the participants said yes (11: 84.6%) compared to those who did not (2: 15.4%).

➤ On what occasions and for what purpose

a) Those who responded that they did use these digital tools answered on what occasions and for what purpose they used them. Their responses, distributed by category, are shown below:

b) For intervention:

- "With the pandemic we have suffered this type of tools have become fundamental weapons to be able to intervene and without them there would have been a collapse in social interventions."
- "In all projects, especially for workshops and meetings with the target populations. To have direct contact and receive their message in person".
- "Zoom and similar connections with beneficiaries". To communicate between professionals and entities:
- "Yes for all inter-entity and inter-entity issues with land".
- "We have typically chosen Zoom because of the pandemic time and capacity that the tool has".
- "Zoom - for transnational contacts in cooperation projects and for group meetings". For training:
- "E-learning platform.
- "During the Covid-19 crisis, to rethink the strategy and training methodology of an investment and production project in the rural Andean environment".
- "For team building talks, surveys, immediate collaborative communication, activity sharing and problem solving". To evaluate:
- "Monitoring and assessments due to restrictions and confinement by COVID-19".

➤ Assessment of the degree of use of these conventional digital tools for participatory evaluation developed by NGOs.

a) In this item, the participants responded to the assessment of the use of conventional digital tools for participatory evaluation developed by NGOs. In this regard, the entities scored this item from 1 to 5, being 1 not at all and 5 completely. No entity scored 5. The rest rated the degree of use as follows:

- None (2: 15.4%)
- Little (1: 7.7%)
- Quite a lot (4: 30.8%)
- Very much (6: 46.2%)

b) The results show that most of the entities use this tool from quite a lot to a lot.

➤ Digital tools that use

a) Participants were asked which tools they use. Below are the frequencies of the tools named by the participants.

- Whatsapp: 9 (33%)
- Zoom: 8 (31.3%)
- Skype: 2 (5.4%)
- WeChat: 1 (2.7%)
- LINE: 1 (2.7%)
- Facebook Messenger: 1 (2.7%)
- Teams: 1 (2.7%)
- Adobe connect: 1 (2.7%)
- Drive (forms): 1 (2.7%)
- Google form: 1 (2.7%)
- Meet (Google): 1 (2.7%)

b) As can be seen in the results, the most used tools were Whatsapp for mobile and desktop messaging; Zoom for online meetings and video calls; and Skype for video calls.

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## Turkey Report

### Introduction

This report describes the use of participatory evaluation by civil society dealing with humanitarian action targeting refugees and migrants in Turkey. It is based on a desk review of NGO reports, expert interviews and an online survey

### Civil Society in Turkey and Humanitarian Aid

Turkey is a country of 83.6 million citizens and 4 million asylum seekers. There are 125000 active NGOs in Turkey; 35% of all NGOs (42633 associations) operate in the Marmara Region, especially in Istanbul, 18% (22259) are in the Central Anatolia Region, mainly in Ankara. The structure of civil society in Turkey has its roots in the former Ottoman Empire as guilds and foundations (Mardin, 1969; Zencirci 2015<sup>6</sup>). Guilds were professional associations of craftsmen. Foundations were semi-civil and semi-governmental units that controlled bestowed resources and land and distributed aid and some services. Hence, today, professional solidarity associations still constitute the majority of civil society, followed by sports associations. The number of rights-based advocacy NGOs is relatively small, approximately 1.4%. On the other hand, 5671 NGOs (5.8% of all associations) are actively involved in humanitarian aid activities, 1086 are in Istanbul, 441 in Ankara, 291 in Gaziantep.<sup>7</sup> However, only a small number of humanitarian aid NGOs primarily target immigrants or asylum seekers in Turkey.

### Humanitarian Aid Towards Immigrants and Civil Society

Kızılay (TRC, the Turkish Red Crescent) has been one of the oldest organizations providing humanitarian aid facilitation throughout Turkey and distributing border reliefs since April 2011. AFAD, The Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency, has organized the camps and humanitarian and social services within the camps. The majority of this aid targeting Syrians is facilitated by Kızılay (Turkish Red Crescent -TRC), which is a semi-civil semi-governmental body. Humanitarian aid towards migrants and asylum seekers has become a sector with international and governmental funding and a specialization area for the civil society dealing with the forced migration of Syrians to Turkey.

Additionally, many NGOs have been trying to find their place between the government, international actors and Syrian immigrants. NGOs place themselves according to different roles and relations to refugee and migrants' communities, the government and international organizations. Most of them try to fill a gap between the needs of

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<sup>6</sup> Mardin, S. (1969). Power, civil society and culture in the Ottoman Empire. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 11(3), 258-281.; Zencirci, G. (2015). From Property To Civil Society: The Historical Transformation Of" Vakifs" In Modern Turkey (1923-2013). *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 533-554.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr/derneklerin-faaliyet-alanlarina-gore-dagilimi>. Statistics are derived from the portal of the Ministry of Interior.



Syrians living outside camps and the government. Many NGOs primarily focus on material disputes. Religious NGOs are especially active in distributing material assistance.<sup>8</sup>

As noted by Mackreath and Sađniç there remain disputes over whether providing material assistance should be CSOs' primary objective or whether the focus should be on advocacy for rights and the development of an inclusive environment with equal access to education, health and the labour market for all Syrians" (2017:2)<sup>9</sup>. There are also some local NGOs and networks solely working for advocacy and totally rejecting external funds. Hence, the NGOs targeting migrant communities can be seen in a continuum between two ends: On the one hand, there are NGOs solely focusing on funded projects and not doing any advocacy work, and on the other end, there are NGOs solely focused on advocacy and closed to any external funding as a political stance.

## Methodology

This review covers findings from research about existing participatory evaluation methods used by NGOs working in the field of humanitarian response towards migrants and refugees in Turkey. The research methodology is three-fold: (i) desk review of grey material such as project reports and websites of related national and local NGOs, INGOs and the UN branches in Turkey, UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF, UNWOMEN, UNFPA, (ii) expert interviews with professionals working in the field (iii) internet/telephone survey with NGOs that are active in humanitarian aid towards refugees, specifically Syrian refugees. The Ethics Committees Permission for this research is taken from the Ethical Committee of Hacettepe University.

For the desk review, the international organizations and NGO's with active web pages had been searched for 2011-2021 project reports about humanitarian aid activities towards refugees, and available reports were downloaded. However, the report search dates are limited to 2011 to 2021 because since 2011, Syrians have been seeking refuge in Turkey and neighbouring countries due to the war.

A list of NGOs in humanitarian action for migrants and refugees was prepared according to the records of the Turkish Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Relations with Civil Society.<sup>10</sup> Then, we checked whether these NGOs have websites. It should be noted that most of the NGO's active in humanitarian action did not have any active web pages. The internet sites were visited, and the evaluation reports of the NGOs' humanitarian action projects were downloaded. Websites of international organizations, such as the UN bodies, were also reviewed, and related project reports were downloaded. A list of evaluation reports of humanitarian action towards migrants and asylum seekers reached for the desk review is provided in ANNEX-2. All reports were scanned to determine their use of participant evaluation methods and type of information used in reporting, such as the number of beneficiaries.

Expert interviews were conducted with selected interviewees among UN organizations, national and local NGOs. For expert interviews, we used purposeful sampling, that is, identifying and selecting individuals or groups that are especially knowledgeable or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. The maximal variation was necessary in order to integrate different perspectives of different institutional actors. We tried to give voice to experts from different backgrounds who might have different perspectives and experiences. Anonymity was guaranteed in order to give the experts a safe space to express themselves freely and debate political issues. We developed a semi-

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<sup>8</sup> Sunata, U., & Tosun, S. (2019). Assessing the civil society's role in refugee integration in Turkey: NGO-R as a New Typology. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 32(4), 683-703.

<sup>9</sup> Mackreath, H., & Sađniç, Ş. G. (2017). Civil society and Syrian refugees in Turkey. *Helsinki Yurttaşlar Derneği*.

<sup>10</sup> (<https://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr/illere-ve-faaliyet-alanlarina-gore-dernekler>)

structured questionnaire with ten questions to understand the experiences and reflections of experts about their participatory evaluation in humanitarian projects. Due to Covid-19 and regional diversity, all interviews were done online. We conducted nine zoom interviews, each lasted around 60 and 90 minutes. All interviews were recorded with the permission of experts and transcribed. The interview list is provided in ANNEX-3.

We also developed an internet survey via google forms, made a pilot with the partner NGOs to revise the survey. The survey was prepared both in Turkish and in English. Syrian NGO activists answered the English version. We sent it to the list of NGOs dealing with humanitarian aid to migrants and telephoned and informed them about the survey. The survey was available for answering between 12.07.2021-09.08.2021. The survey period was set by the project's time limits and receiving of the ethical permissions and was further than ideal. However, partly due to Ramadan and Bayram that took place in July and maybe because the civil society agenda was filled with new emergencies that occurred in Turkey in August (forest fires in several cities), we received 20 fully answered interviews.

We shall note some of our observations about the limitations of the research. Big INGOs and NGOs have stringent rules about their experts' participation in any kind of public information-gathering activities, including scientific research. Three experts we approached refused to participate due to hesitations about the NGO administrations' limiting approach and political and bureaucratic atmosphere. We observed hesitations of interviewees, and people taking the survey did not want to share specific information about their experiences, such as names of specific projects. There was a willingness to learn about participant evaluation. However, most experts do not want to share their specific experiences and chose to stay anonymous.

## Findings

- a) Findings from the Desk Review of Project Reports
  - **Low internet use and dissemination:** Our search showed that most of the NGOs did not have any active web pages. About 15% of the NGOs in İstanbul claimed to have an active web page, but only half of them actually kept their websites.
  - **Low reporting:** The most intriguing finding was that most NGOs with active internet sites did not have any reports published on their web pages. They mainly provide some pictures of the humanitarian action and a short description of the activity that had taken place.
  - **The general content focuses on promotion rather than evaluation:** These NGOs were mostly functioning as mediators between the beneficiaries and the benefactors. Since these humanitarian activities were not funded through an application to a sponsor but rather funded by multiple benefactors, they might have chosen to use their resources to promote their activities via their web pages to attract more benefactors. So, these NGOs did not prepare an evaluation of their activities but rather chose to promote them with rather short explanations of the action and some visuals. These are generally annual reports, providing short information about the services provided and the number of beneficiaries reached.
  - **Annual evaluations rather than single action evaluation:** There were too few NGOs that were actively involved in humanitarian action, which also published their reports about those activities. Most of the reports were not specifically written for the evaluation of a specific humanitarian action, but they were in

the form of annual reports.<sup>11</sup>. Such reports included numerous projects that were conducted during the year, and the evaluations of those reports were on the general performance of the NGO rather than the participatory evaluation of the outcomes of humanitarian action projects. The evaluations of the NGOs' performance were based on self-evaluation. Quantitative methods, such as surveys, are preferred for the needs assessment.

- International organizations also publish annual reports and fact sheets providing information about humanitarian actions performed and the number of beneficiaries<sup>12</sup>.
- **NGOs' relations to funding affect their reporting of evaluations:** There are INGOs who act as the first implementer of large funding programmes of big sponsors of humanitarian action, undertaking 3-4 year term region- or countrywide projects. Then, there are two main groups of national or local NGOs that engage in humanitarian actions. The first group consists of NGOs, which act as mediators between beneficiaries and the medium scale humanitarian action projects of governments and INOGs. Some of them especially work for distributing in-kind aids. These NGOs are focused on promoting their activities to gather more aid from sponsors. Their reporting lacks the effort to evaluate their activities but rather describe their activities without any evaluation.
- **Differences of NGOs:** The second group of NGOs also engage in humanitarian action projects and try to gather donations from multiple benefactors to fund their activities. Nevertheless, unlike the first group, these NGOs have their own projects funded through some more extensive project programmes, such as the EU Commission's civil society funding programmes. This arrangement requires evaluation reports written and confirmed for the continuation of funding and new upcoming projects. However, such reports delve into the details of how the project had been carried out and mainly focus on showing the effective use of resources to secure future funding. These NGOs generally perform self-evaluations rather than using participatory evaluation techniques in their reporting. Additionally, in some projects, interim reports evaluate potential beneficiaries' situation before the project, but they do not report how these beneficiaries are then affected by the interventions.<sup>13</sup>.

There is also a third group of NGOs focusing more on the advocacy and human rights of migrants, refugees and minorities. Some of these NGOs either get no funding and rely on voluntary work (such as Halkların Kardeşliği/ Brotherhood of People in İzmir, Göçmen Dayanışma Ağı/Migrant Solidarity Network in İstanbul, Kalkınma Atölyesi in Ankara) others use small external funding for organizing their activities such the Kırkayak in Gaziantep. These are generally local NGOs, well known among the intellectuals of their cities. These NGOs publish reports based on field research and field observations.<sup>14</sup>, which are very valuable to be

<sup>11</sup> Association of Assistance Solidarity and Support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers 2018 Annual Report; Association of Assistance Solidarity and Support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers 2019-2020 Annual Report; Refugee Support Center Annual Report 2019; Refugee Support Center Annual Report 2020.

<sup>12</sup> UNICEF- Turkey (2020), Humanitarian Situation Report No.40.,41; UNICEF 2021: *UNICEF Whole of Syria Humanitarian Situation Report Mid-Year 2021*  
<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNICEF%20Whole%20of%20Syria%20Humanitarian%20Situation%20Report%20-%20January%20to%20June%202021.pdf>

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<sup>13</sup> Hayata Destek Derneği, 2018 Şanlıurfa Viranşehir Sahası Şartlı Nakit Destek Programı Ara Raporu (*Şanlıurfa Viranşehir, Conditional Cash Support Program Interim Report*, trns. by the author)

<sup>14</sup> Kırkayak Kültür, (2017) *The Dom The Other Asylum Seekers from Syria Report.*; Kırkayak Kültür (2018) *Encouraging Integration and Social Cohesion of Syrian Dom Immigrants Proposal for a Regional Social Inclusion Strategy Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.*; Kırkayak Kültür (2020) *"Being educated is a distant dream to us." Dom and Abdal Children's Education in Turkey: The Cases of Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa* ; Kalkınma Atölyesi (Development Workshop Cooperative) Report on Seasonal Agricultural Workers 2020a;2018;2014; Kalkınma Atölyesi (2020b) *Poverty, Rivalry And Antagonism The Report On The Present Situation Of In Seasonal Agricultural Production In Turkey Foreign Migrant*

informed about the local situations. Some of them do public campaigns, publish field observations about the living conditions of refugees in Turkey and provide helpful information about the daily matters for immigrants<sup>15</sup>. However, these documents are not participatory evaluations of projects.

- **Funding:** As the funding increases, and as the activities become more widespread and more aid-based, reports become more quantitative and aggregate like the reports of TRC<sup>16</sup> and UNHCR<sup>17</sup>, as the most prominent national actors. TRC reports provide annual numbers of trucks facilitated in border relief (6246 for 2020), the number of border relief points (14), sectoral distribution of border reliefs (food, health, education, shelter) and total costs, the total number of cash assistance beneficiaries (2.6 million people). TRC also reports its vocational training, psycho-social support and child programs only in terms of the total number of beneficiaries and amounts spent; some reports also provide gender breakdown.
- **External Evaluation:** The INGO and UN reports<sup>18</sup> generally use external experts for project evaluations. However, local NGOs generally depend on project personnel for monitoring and evaluation work, this observation from the desk review is also validated by the survey (please see Table 8). Some international organizations have external expert evaluation reports for project parts realized under bigger projects. These reports provide a more detailed evaluation of the implementation of a project in a particular locality. These reports<sup>19</sup> evaluate projects in accordance with donor's and UN's general success criteria, including predefined targets and measures. Some UN project evaluation reports<sup>20</sup> use both quantitative and qualitative methods including focus groups, interviews; however, the publicly available reports only present output with numbers and graphs. These approaches bring about objectivity in project evaluation as well as comparability, however, does not include individual changes experienced by the beneficiaries. This issue is also underlined in expert interviews.

The changes experienced by the beneficiaries are tried to be reflected by single case stories provided as examples in annual reports of some international organizations, which mainly gives short information about the programmes and number of beneficiaries<sup>21</sup>.

External experts are also used in needs assessment reports carried under more significant projects.<sup>22</sup>. National NGOs with solid partnerships with governmental bodies and the UN agencies also conduct and

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*Workers*, by Saniye Dedeoğlu; *Kalkınma Atölyesi (2020c) Bitter Lives on Fertile Lands: Syrian Women's Work and Labor in Turkish Agricultural Production*, by Saniye Dedeoğlu

<sup>15</sup> <https://m.bianet.org/bianet/toplum/180918-gocmen-dayanisma-agi-herkes-icin-sinirlardan-guvenli-gecis-saglanmali>, [www.gocmendayanisma.com](http://www.gocmendayanisma.com) Migrant Solidarity network has been established in 2015.

<sup>16</sup> TRC reports are published on the webpage: <https://www.kizilay.org.tr/raporlar>

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.unhcr.org/tr/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2021/03/3RP-Turkey-Country-Chapter-2021-2022\\_EN-opt.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/tr/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2021/03/3RP-Turkey-Country-Chapter-2021-2022_EN-opt.pdf) pp. 25;27;32-37.

<sup>18</sup> UNCHR 2013, *An Evaluation of Poverty Alleviation Programs in South East Anatolia*,

<sup>19</sup> WHH (Welt Hunger Hilfe) (2016) *Central evaluation of the project 'Food and winter support for vulnerable war-affected population in Northern Syria and Turkey' (SYR 1022) with particular focus on cross-cutting issues of cash-based interventions at Welthungerhilfe*, Evaluation on Behalf of Welthungerhilfe Bonn [WHH: SYR 1022; AA: S05\_51-321.50 SYR 28/15] by Katharina Hackstein.; WHH (2017) *Field Manual for Humanitarian E-Voucher Programs In Turkey*.

<sup>20</sup> IOM 2016/17 Interagency PDM report.

<sup>21</sup> UNDP Turkey (2019) Annual report 2019; UNDP-Turkey (2018) 3RP Monitoring Report.

<sup>22</sup> WHH (2020) *Needs Assessment Report of Mardin for Syrians and Iraqis*; IOM (2013) *Reaching out to unaccompanied minors and promoting delivery of social services in their best interest in Turkey*, by Karataş, K., Rittersberger-Tılıç, H., Atasü- Topcuoğlu, R. ve Demir, O.Ö.; IOM (2012) *Profiling Migrant Children in Turkey*, Special report to IOM by Atasü- Topcuoğlu, R.

publish needs assessment research<sup>23</sup>. Such efforts can be classified as participation of the target groups as long as their findings are used as input in the design of the programmes and projects.

- **Best Practice Example:** The most informative evaluation report was the GiZ, 2020<sup>24</sup> Project evaluation report. It was conducted and written by outsider experts and targeted to report the evaluation of the project rather than actions done and the total number of beneficiaries. The evaluation questions were "based on the OECD/DAC criteria for evaluating development cooperation, namely relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability". The project was evaluated according to its contribution to the 2030 Agenda and its principles (universality, inclusiveness, 'leave no one behind', multi-stakeholder partnerships), as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender and conflict sensitivity.

The project was about Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Employment Promotion for Syrian Refugees. The evaluation was threefold, (a) evaluation of the project documentation – provided in Annex-1 (excel table), and (b) assessment of project indicators – evaluating whether the predefined targets were reached or not, (c) baseline monitoring that was field research with project implementers and beneficiaries.

The evaluation used both quantitative and qualitative methods. "The quantitative analysis included the review of the monitoring tables provided by the project team... interviews with key informants at the German Embassy, BMZ, GIZ headquarters and the GIZ country office in Turkey, members of the project team, representatives of partner organizations (MoNE DG TVET, İŞKUR, RIZK) and service providers (Sparkassenstiftung, Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce, Entrepreneurship Foundation, PERYÖN, psycho-social consultant). The evaluation team visited five randomly selected TVET High Schools and two Vocational Training Centres in Bursa, Ankara and Nizip that are supported by the project. In all three towns, at least one girls' school was visited. The visits included an in-depth interview with the school director, a focus group discussion with teachers, particularly those who had participated in GIZ-supported training and socio-cultural activities, and separate focus group discussions with Turkish and Syrian students." (Giz, 2020, pp.23).

## b) Interview Findings

Expert interviews provided some important hints about the functioning of civil society in humanitarian action as summarised below:

1. **The context of humanitarian action targeting migrants and refugees:** Interviewees mentioned two general trends in humanitarian action toward migrants and refugees, firstly it is mainly targeting Syrians and secondly there is a strong preference for social assistance against service provision. Interviewees international donors mainly open programs for Syrian refugees. Most of the humanitarian aid provides social assistance and sometimes distribution of them is subcontracted to newly emerging religious NGOs, typically as food packages in Ramadan. This brings about criticisms that the implementation was not human rights-based but rather philanthropic logic. Especially, at the beginning of the Syrian crisis, Turkey experienced many challenges in humanitarian aid management, starting from deficiencies in registration prolonging to inefficient assistance

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<sup>23</sup> ASAM (Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Refugees) (2018) Türkiye'de Geçici Koruma Altındaki Suriyeli Kadın Ve Kız Çocukların İhtiyaç Analizi, (A Needs Assessment Report In Collaboration with the UNWOMEN).

<sup>24</sup> Central Project Evaluation Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Employment Promotion for Syrian Refugees and Host Communities in Turkey (PN 2016.1852.9) Evaluation Report 2020.

delivery. As one expert mentioned that; "In Antep, although some families got 4 different humanitarian assistance packages while some others were not able to reach one. " This situation got much better with the establishment of the provincial directorate of migration management and enhancement of INGO branches and service stations in various cities. In addition, interviewees also underlined the shortcoming due to the COVID-19 pandemic conditions, as the mismatch of the existing social assistance generally composed of one-time packages with people's needs that have become more complex and gross.

2. **General evaluation practice:** NGO's use different evaluation techniques and have different sensitivities about project evaluation. One of the experts harshly criticized the general insensitivity: "No one would do any project evaluation if the donors were not asking for it. Now that they are asking, the NGOs try to fulfil the indicators". In accordance with the desk review, all experts agree that the monitoring and evaluation parts of the reports do not provide enough information about the processes and experiences of beneficiaries as well as practitioners.

Additionally, some experts mentioned that interim evaluations are rather seldom and in many major NGOs' projects external evaluation is not obligatory. However, they underlined that the external view is important to understand the process holistically and to overcome possible bias in evaluation.

Impact evaluation is absent in both NGO and INGO reports. Project monitoring and evaluation activities are always funded within the project time span. There is no funding for assessing the impact of a project after it is finished. We cannot reach a report about the sustainability of the effects of an implemented and finished project.

3. **Existing participatory techniques and concepts:** Some of the experts mentioned that they are using "a kind of participatory evaluation" in their projects however with different terminology. One expert mentioned that they preferring the term "situation evaluation" instead of participatory evaluation. Two experts mentioned focus groups as a frequently used technique for evaluation that enables participation.
4. **The importance of feminist methodology:** Three gender experts mentioned that participatory evaluation and feminist methodology have much in common. In their experience, gender mainstreaming in humanitarian projects brought about a methodological understanding that calls for participatory evaluation, by calling for non-hierarchical processes, participation of all genders.
5. **Merits of project success:** All experts answered the question "What makes a project successful?" with 4 important merits:

- a. Present indicators: these are the indicators of success set at the project proposals, that cover measurable or non-measurable outputs, goals and budgetary quotas.

Outputs: Outputs can be concrete such as financial assistance or abstract such as consciousness-raising. This has a direct effect on determining evaluation techniques. Not only outputs but also indicators -as tools- may have become goals to be reached. Depending on the output present indicators may vary, However, quantitative indicators are always favoured against the qualitative ones. Experts underlined the quality criteria for success but it is at the least considered point in the project. Not only the number of beneficiaries -quantitative measure- but also how they are affected by the project -qualitative measure- are important to really understand the success.

(iii) Evidence-based projects: In the interviews, experts also mentioned the usage of evidence-based projects which includes photographs or telling stories of immigrants. Some experts gave examples of "success stories of Syrians". As we mentioned above, quantity and outputs are important for projects. "Someone's" story makes a project more visible and is also supported with videos and photos which are called evidence-based. NGOs or donors want to see successful refugee stories. Experts mostly underlined



that quality is missing part of the project, so they are questioning that “how can a refugee's life change so much in a short time? In our view, evidence-based projects are defined with “evidence” like photos, videos but from a broader perspective it gives a chance to link research to practice and provides useful information for experts.

(iv) Team quality: The professional team involved in the project should be aware of the field, be educated, be sensitive to culture (local and universal) and the political atmosphere that experts mentioned. One of the experts mentioned that the project expert is also taking part in the recruitment of a professional for the project. And she added, “If you have well-equipped (as mentioned above) experts in the field, projects will be successful.” One expert gave an example “if a partner told you a lie about the activities or set unachievable targets, field experts can warn the partner about it.” So, forward-thinking and experienced experts contribute to the success of the project. Another expert underlined the importance of a professional team and added that “the success rate is related to the fund”. An expert team who knows the field.

(v) Budget management: Spending the whole budget according to the foreseen time plan shows successes. As mentioned below this may cause some problems.

(vi) Although it is not an established merit of success, 4 experts mentioned the importance of using simple expressions, politically correct terms in reporting in order to make the reports usable not only for the experts but also for the beneficiaries and laymen.

## **6. Disadvantages due to merits:**

(i) Time pressure limits participation: Tight time schedules of the projects force the implementers to choose superficial methods in evaluations instead of in-depth knowledge-gathering methodologies. This time pressure also avoids project teams from reflecting on their deeds and organization as well as on the target groups, beneficiaries’ life experiences. One of the experts described this hurry in the project business as a “take the picture and leave the field” mood. All experts underline tight time schedules and heavy workload as the main difficulties of their work and healthy project evaluation.

(ii) The importance of “Quantity”: All experts mentioned the importance of quantitative data in measuring project success, Especially INGO-government partnership projects that have big funding dominate and shape the field for humanitarian action for migrants and refugees in Turkey. Such long term 3-4-year development projects are generally taken on by INGOs and international organizations such as the United Nations, generally in partnership with the governments. Some of these projects are partly implemented by funding national or local NGOs called implementation partners. Hence, there is a funding and work hierarchy in the humanitarian action field, where the expectations and main rules for programme and project evaluations are set. Donors of INGOs and international organizations set measurable indicators and targets for ensuring the use of funds, which enforces a quantitative perspective on evaluation. As mentioned by an expert, the donors, the governments, NGOs always focus on the number of beneficiaries as the success indicator. One expert mentioned that “Sometimes the quantity is seen as a quota filling job. All technical issues were calculated, so if there is a missing part, INGO’s put pressure on the partners to reach the target”.

(iii) Developing expertise is not a field of investment even for powerful actors. Some NGOs (like Save The Children) give opportunities to experts for building personal capacity and they support the professional team. Contrary to this, UN NGOs usually found a well-equipped expert and did not support them for further self-development. Some experts need capacity-building activities.

(iv) Experts mentioned that due to currency fluctuations (while the project budget is Euro, the expenditure is at the Turkish Lira rate) difficulties in budgeting/funding. At the end of the day, if the fund stays in the NGOs pocket, that seems NGOs failure that experts like them often emphasize. Also, “in some conditions for saving the fund, the

project is written in haste”, mentioned one of the experts. It is necessary to go to the field by performing a needs analysis.

**7. Limits of partnerships:** Experts mentioned two important limitations in partnerships:

(i) Local NGOs partnership possibilities are limited due to capacity: The major INGOs (ex: UN, GIZ, ...) usually establish partnerships with national NGOs like ASAM, KIZILAY. INGOs are looking for "reliable" partners with institutional capacity. Local NGOs lack such institutional capacity and cannot take part in the core partnerships of long-term projects. Local NGOs need funding, education for capacity building. "Civil düşün" and "Etkiniz" provide this service. In the interviews, INGO experts offered a bond between the UN and local NGOs for capacity building.

(ii) Limits of NGO-government partnerships: In order to become an implementation partner in the government partnered projects, NGOs have to make a written protocol, which brings about some restrictions in NGO action. In addition, such partnerships not only bring about formal rules but also there are non-written rules and ideological boundaries. In order to secure existing cooperation project reports do not cover some shortcomings and have no critical view.

Additionally, such restrictions were especially underlined in terms of gender mainstreaming activities. For example, one interviewee mentioned that "in the sphere of gender perspectives, the government prioritizes the family perspective and does not want to give space for gender equality in projects." Another interviewee mentioned that "As the gender expert, I am the last one invited to the field activities or visits, and then I am expected to write gender reports by relying on what I can gather from other reports." Interviewees describe that projects without a governmental partnership are relatively flexible. Also, some NGO experts criticize the current situation that government-NGO partnerships are restricted by political and ideological commonality and alliances. One expert gave an example in the İzmir earthquake crisis, GIZ offered to help immigrants but AFAD rejected and they said they provide service to everyone, like these movements are related to the political and diplomatic atmosphere.

**8. Best practice example of participatory evaluation:** UNICEF and GIZ experts mentioned that they implement triangulation evaluation with the participation of partners, donors, practitioners and beneficiaries through the use of focus groups, face-to-face interviews and surveys to ensure the success of evaluation. To show the change, they use pre- and post-surveys. To ensure trust and protect the privacy of the beneficiary and to avoid any self-censure, GIZ contracted translators conduct face-to-face interviews without the presence of any third party. The expert from GIZ defines the participatory evaluation’s advantages are preventing duplication, providing services based on needs and rights, and using the budget in a balanced way.

**9. Expert Suggestions**

- The experts underlined the need for bridging academia and the humanitarian field.
- A university course on project monitoring and evaluation preferably at the master or PhD levels would be very efficient for mainstreaming participatory evaluation.
- Local governments should be encouraged to take part in humanitarian action and be supported for capacity building.
- All of the experts underlined that NGOs should write “why they failed”, and these unsuccessful stories should take part in the reports. They mentioned that they always write the “successful” stories, targets etc., but if field experts see what was wrong, this will give an idea for solutions.
- Reports should target not only professionals but beneficiaries and laymen.
- Donors should emphasize that evaluation is worth time and money and international organizations should add participatory evaluation as a criterion in project implementation.



- International organizations, as well as INGOs and NGOs, should encourage and provide time and finance for the further development of experts and practitioners in the field.

c) Survey Findings

We conducted a survey about participatory evaluation targeting project coordinators and workers in NGOs providing humanitarian response to migrants and refugees in Turkey. It was both Turkish and English, conducted online and as a telephone survey. The English version enabled us to reach out to foreign NGO activists and professionals currently working in the field. 20 surveys in total were filled properly. All participants approved the informed consent form. All of the participants were experienced in humanitarian projects targeting migrants and refugees.

**Table 1. What are your humanitarian aid projects mostly aimed at?**

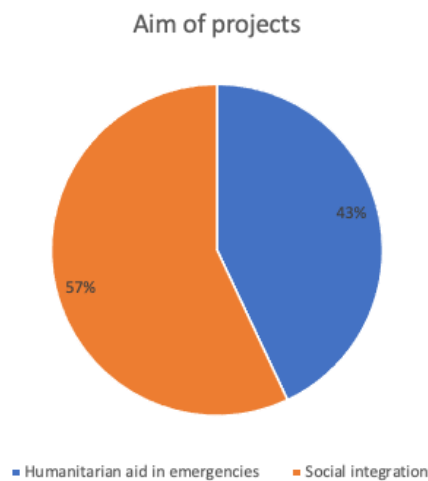
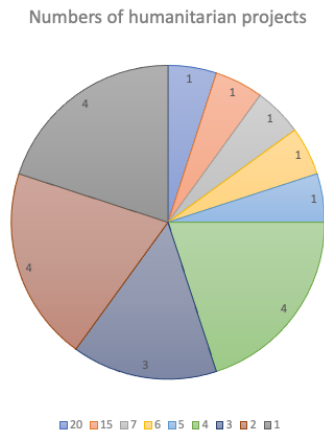
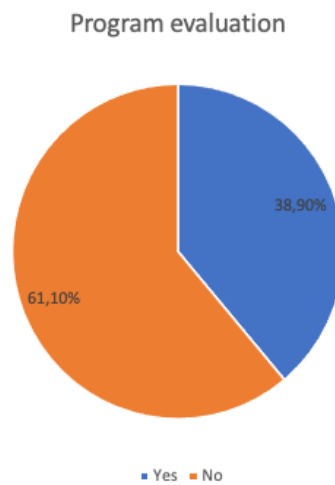


Table 1 shows that 57% of the humanitarian aid projects towards migrants and refugees target emergencies, and the rest aim for social integration. This might be the opposite of what is expected since Turkey has more than a decade of dense migration increasing the need for social cohesion rather than emergency aids. But recent events like the COVID-19 pandemic and global economic crisis, sudden climatic changes and recent natural disasters like earthquakes, large forest fires and floods throughout Turkey might have increased the need for humanitarian aid in emergencies.

**Table 2. How many humanitarian aid or support projects have you run for immigrants or refugees in the last ten years?**



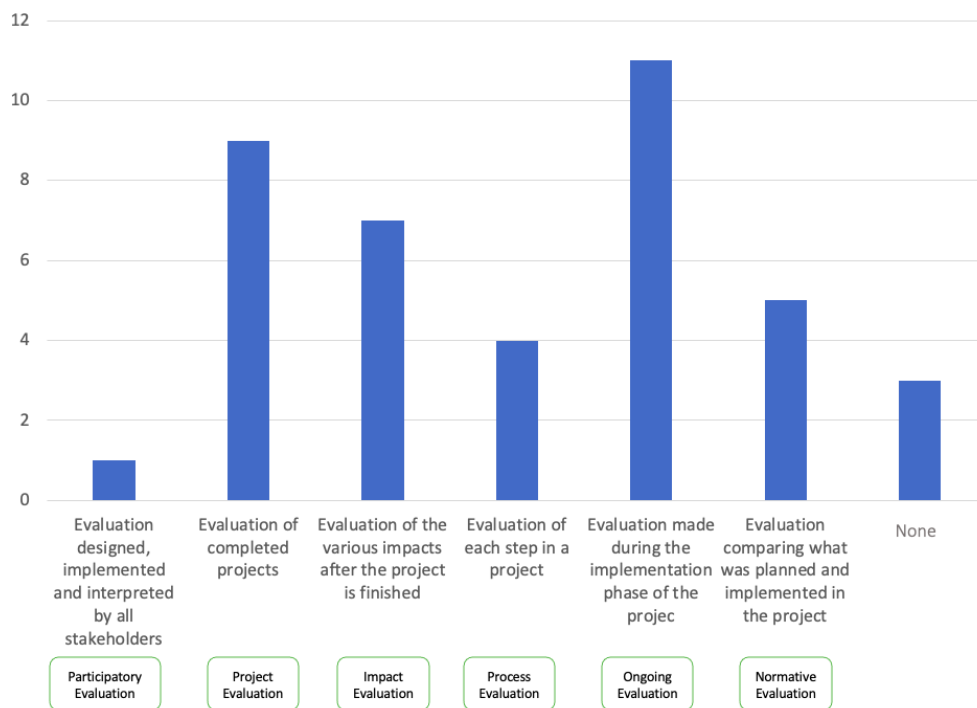
**Table 3. Have you made a program evaluation?**



Less than half of the participants were engaged in program evaluation. This might be due to the fact that most of the participants were in local NGOs mostly engaging in small-scale projects which do not require a wide evaluation at the program level.

**Table 4. Which of the following evaluation activities have you used in your projects for immigrants and refugees?**

Table 4 shows mostly produced types of evaluations. Ongoing evaluation was the most used type of evaluation followed by project evaluation and impact evaluation. This can be considered as an expected outcome since these types of evaluations are the ones that highlights the effective use of resources by the NGO during the project and shows that the targeted outcomes of the project are reached which are the main factors for ensuring the ongoing support of the sponsors.

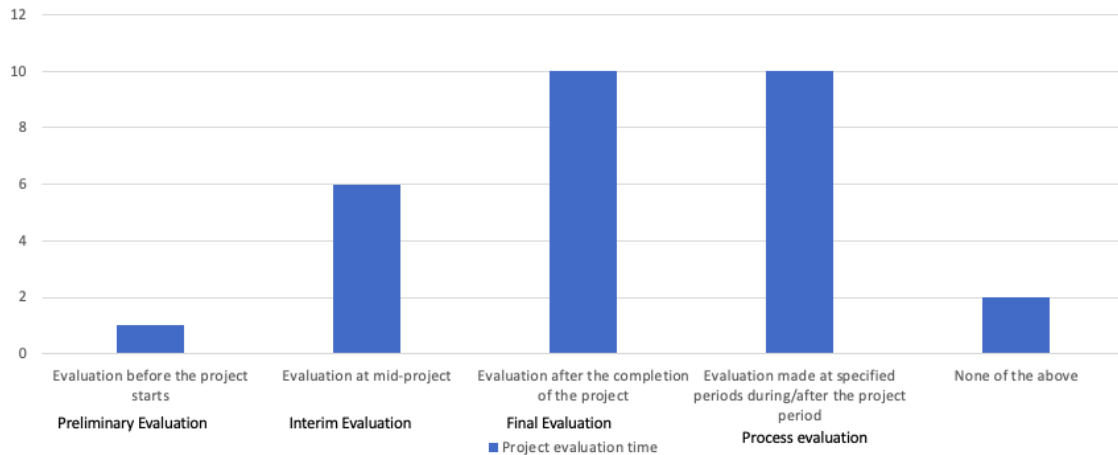


Nearly 40% of the experts reported that they made a program evaluation in the projects (Table 3). That is in accordance with the finding that many NGOs are dependent on their own personnel for monitoring and evaluation of the projects. Program evaluations require relatively higher amounts of resources such as time, money and personnel which most NGOs experience difficulty to have.

More than half of the survey participants (11 people) indicated that they mostly use “ongoing evaluation” in immigrant and refugee projects. In addition to this, nearly half of them (9) indicated that “project evaluation” is mostly used in projects. Surprisingly, three of them (out of 20 in total), have never used any of the activities below.

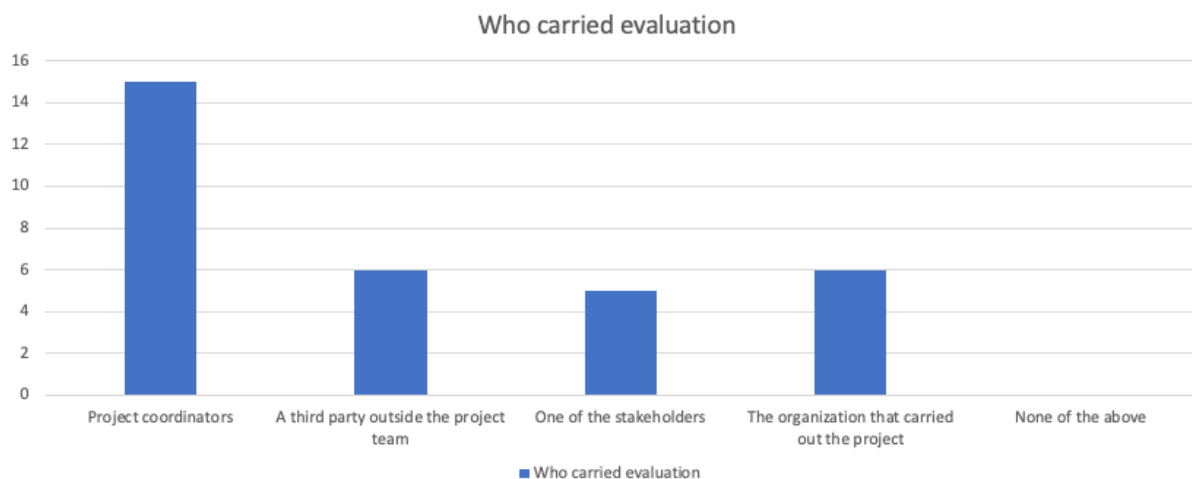
The maximum project experience of the survey participants was 20, and the minimum was 1, the mean was 4.

**Table 5. When did you evaluate your projects?**



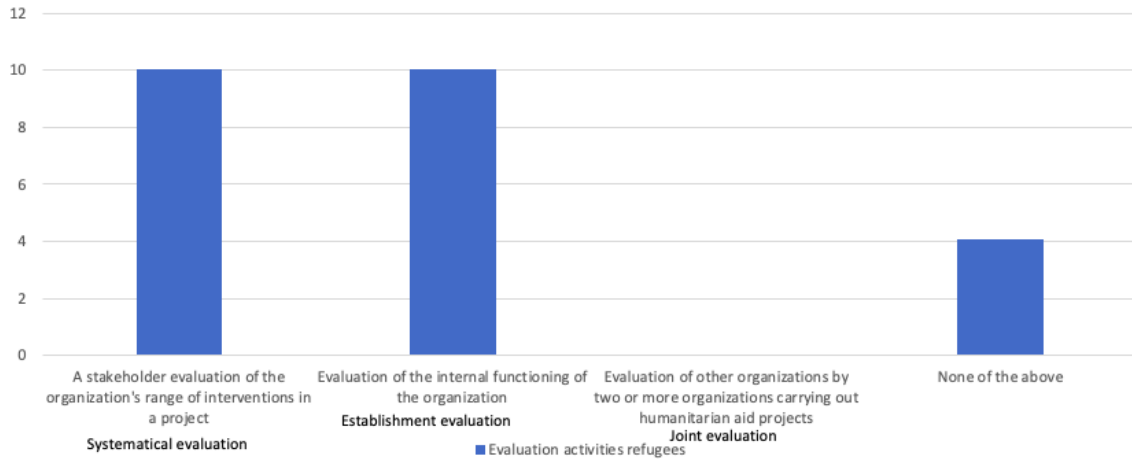
Project evaluations are also classified according to their timing. Table 5 shows that evaluation generally takes part within the process and towards the end of the projects. A preliminary evaluation is not typical, which may lead to shortcomings in documenting the change from the beginning to the end. It is also coherent with our findings from the interviews pointing out that the NGOs are prone to show the outcomes and the effectiveness of the project process rather than reflecting the perception of all stakeholders including the beneficiaries.

**Table 6. Who carried out the evaluation activities of your projects for immigrants and refugees?**



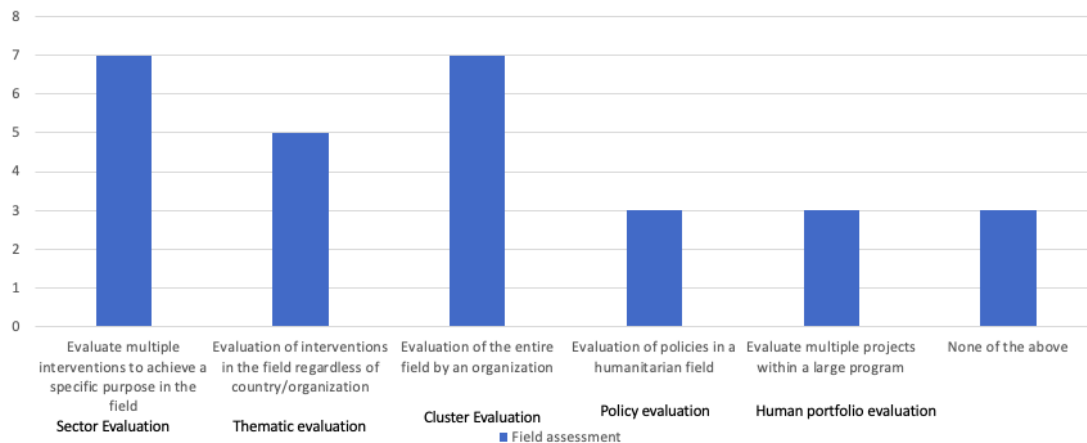
Most of the evaluations are conducted by the project coordinators or leading organizations. However, one-third of the participants also used external and stakeholder evaluation. This is mostly due to budget- and time- limitations of projects.

**Table 7. Which of the following evaluation activities did you use in your projects for immigrants and refugees?**



Having table 6 and 7 together, one can interpret that, most frequently conducted systematic and establishment evaluations -shown in table 7-, are generally conducted by the project coordinator and team-as shown in table 6. Additionally, half of the participants reported that they evaluated the internal functioning that means they value ensuring the effective functioning of the NGO.

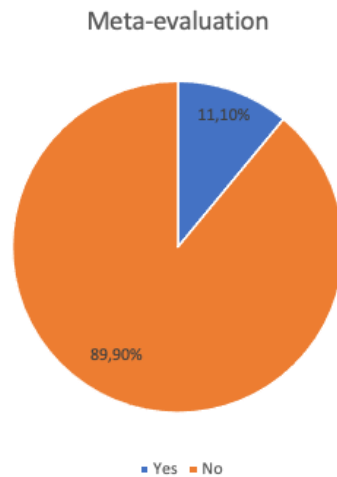
**Table 8. Have you participated in any of the following field assessments?**



In this question “*Have you participated in any of the following field assessments?*”, one could choose more than one answer. Table 8 shows that sector and cluster evaluations were used seven times each. However, policy and human portfolio evaluations are not commonly used among the participants. This is expected since most of the

NGOs make an evaluation of the latest situation of the field in which they propose a project. Sector and cluster evaluations were chosen because proposal writing and reporting processes require the evaluation of the target field and project activities. However, a wider or deeper perspective in evaluation is not necessary for ensuring grant applications and fulfilment. So, meta-evaluation is a rare practice (see table 9).

**Table 9. Have you done a collective evaluation (Meta-evaluation) of many evaluations?**



Meta-evaluations are seldom practised since they are needed for big projects. It is also very difficult to undertake for local and regional NGOs since such evaluations require more resources such as time, personnel and finance which they lack. As a natural result, meta-evaluations are rarer than other types of evaluation.

**Table 10. Who is responsible for different aspects of evaluation?**

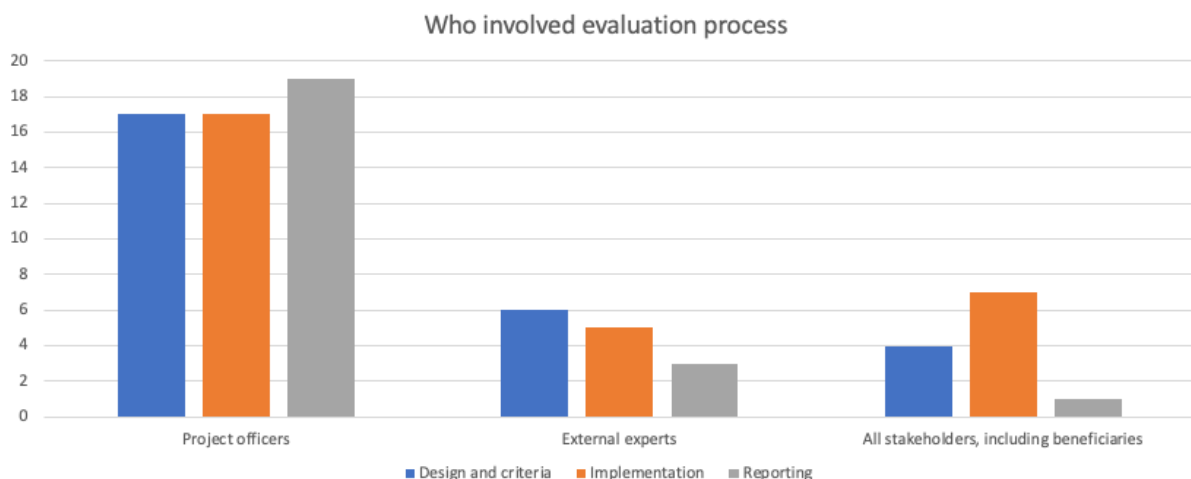
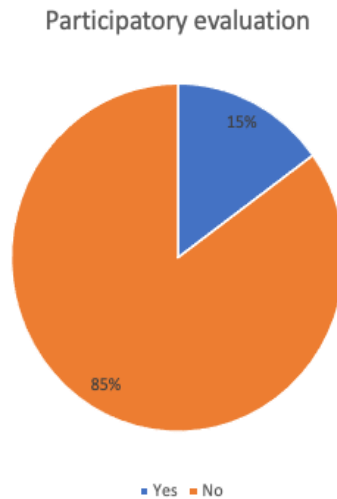


Table 10 shows that project officers take responsibility for designing, determining and selecting criteria, conducting and reporting the evaluation. Therefore, the project coordinators responsible for writing, implementing and reporting projects should be a target group for any informing and training activities for participant evaluation. In

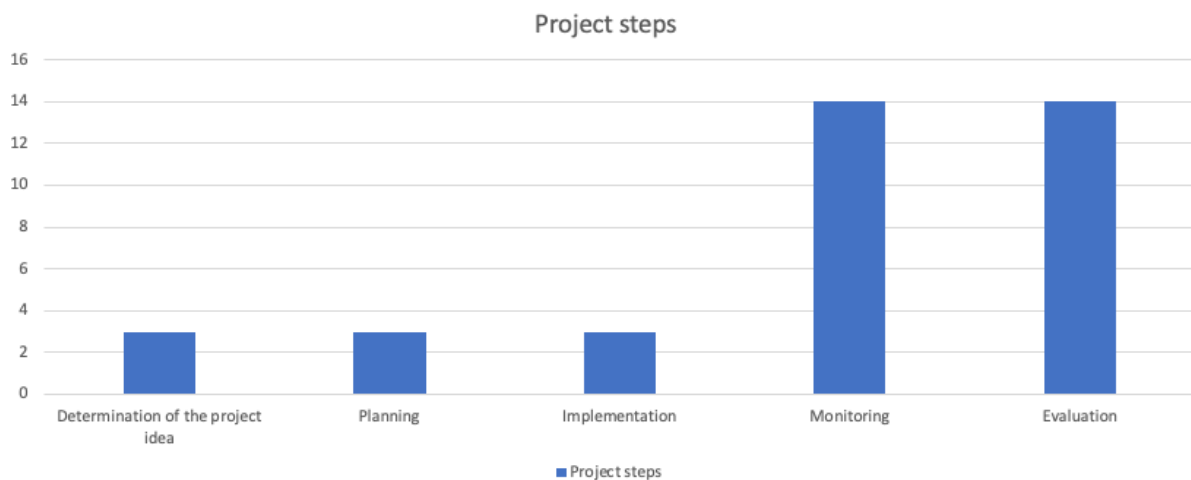
addition, as shown in Table 6 and Table 10, external experts are employed rather rarely. Therefore, there is also a need to provide information about external expert use and involving beneficiaries and all stakeholders in participant evaluation processes.

**Table 11. Have you ever done a participatory evaluation in your organization?**



85% of the participants have never done any participatory evaluations. Lack of resources such as knowledge, time, personnel and budget can be considered as prime reasons for this. Yet, lack of training about participatory evaluation can also be a contributory factor. Therefore, there is a need for training on the subject.

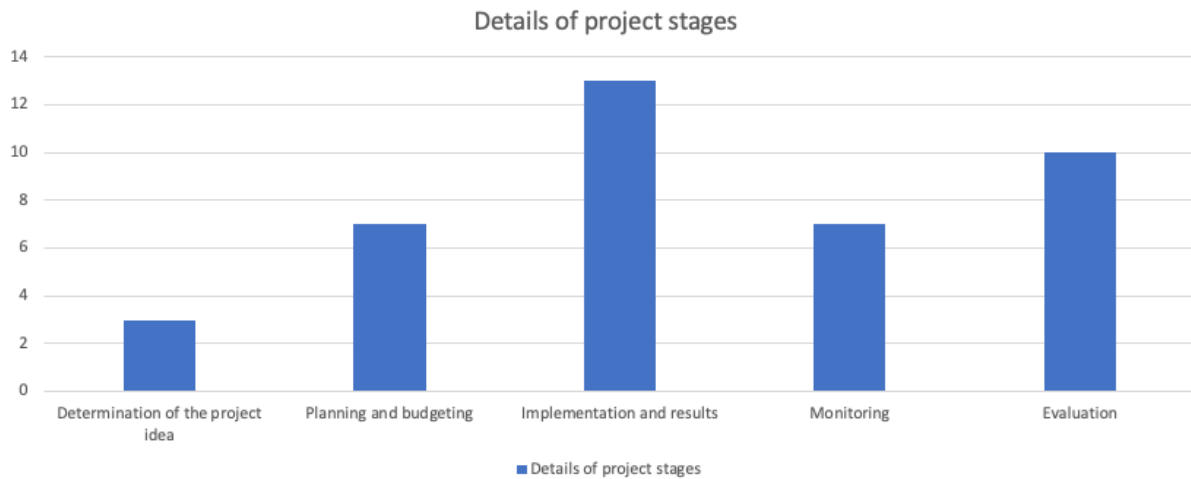
**Table 12. What are the project steps that you get the contribution of stakeholders other than the direct implementer of the project?**



According to Table 12, stakeholder involvement is not commonly preferred either in developing the project idea, or in planning and implementation, but rather expected in the monitoring and evaluation process. Therefore, there

is a need to discuss the pros and cons of using participatory perspectives in the initial phases of any humanitarian project.

**Table 13. Details of which stage(s) of your projects are most often included in your reports and records?**

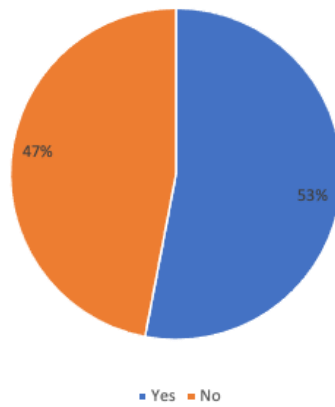


Most of the project reports inform about implementation and results, and this is followed by evaluation and monitoring. Initial project processes and budgetary aspects are reported relatively less. This can be due to the interview findings that project reports mostly focus on the promotion of the NGOs, show the successful implementation and completion of the projects to guarantee further financial support from sponsors. Table 13 shows, the most frequently reported aspects are the implementation and results, that is followed by evaluation, budgeting and monitoring. Such reporting focus combined with the common use of internal personnel for evaluation may be related to the situation that most project reports are primarily written for the satisfaction of the sponsors. There is a need for enhancing the current understanding of reporting and evaluation, in favour of the participation of all related actors especially the beneficiary groups.

**Table 14. Have you received training on evaluation in your organization?**



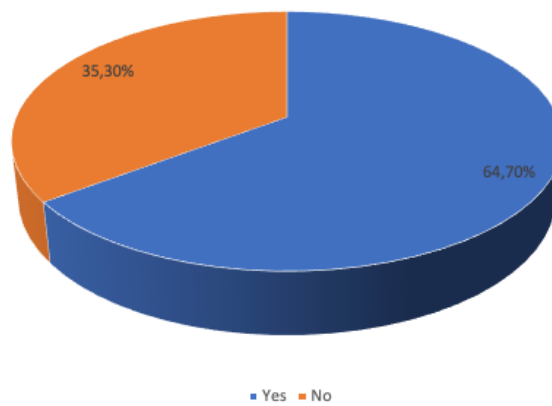
Training on evaluation



As it is shown in Table 14, more than half of the participants received training for project evaluation. This can be considered as an encouraging situation since such a distribution provides a solid ground towards additional training for participatory evaluation.

**Table 15. Do you feel the need to change the methods and approaches you use in the evaluation processes of your humanitarian aid projects?**

Changing needs of methods



65% of the participants feel the need to change their evaluation methods and approaches.

**Table 16. Do you need training in evaluation?**



%70 of the participants are willing to take training in participatory evaluation. These findings indicate another proof that there is a solid ground for training on participatory evaluation.

The survey has an open-ended question section about participants' experiences and thoughts about participatory evaluation.

The participants think that the positive aspects of participatory evaluation can be as follows:

1. Better observing of the needs of the clients,
2. Providing the self-efficacy assessment of human resources capacity,
3. Raising capabilities,
4. Better impact assessment.

Also, participants mentioned that the projects with participatory evaluation can be more sustainable than others.

Participants think that adding participatory evaluation to their future projects may bring about the following:

1. Experts will gain new job experience,
2. Projects may become more need-based,
3. Sustainability chances may increase,
4. Empowerment,
5. Interaction may increase between donor, project team and beneficiaries,
6. It may contribute to planning activities in projects and help to avoid some of the previous mistakes;
6. It may improve the quality of projects.

Lastly, we asked participants about what do they need for using participatory methods of evaluation. The suggestions are as follows:

1. Professional training, capacity building
2. New projects and programmes that target sustainable outputs,
3. Building trust and collaborative relationships with governmental bodies,
4. Establishing a holistic perspective,
5. Beneficiary's demanding participation,
6. Better physical conditions.

## Conclusion

The review of the project reports, expert interviews and the survey show that the NGOs targeting migrant communities in Turkey can be seen in a continuum among (a) strongly engaged implementing partners and (b) totally independent voluntary organizations. The strongly engaged implementing partners generally work under a contract or a memorandum of understanding with the government and undertake a considerable workload in the largely funded humanitarian action field projects. The Turkish Red Crescent is an example of this group. The totally independent voluntary organizations, such as the Migrant Solidarity Network, focus more on advocacy work, have more direct relations with migrants and place themselves in and among the migrant communities. But their project making capacities are low due to lack of funding. However, they have an influence on public opinion and amplifying migrant voices. Most of the national and local NGOs can be placed between these two groups.

The experts in the field consider the visibility of stakeholders' experiences in the field quite important. This brings participatory evaluation into focus since it is a method bringing the experiences, needs and perceptions of all stakeholders including the beneficiaries as an effective process. Additionally, participatory evaluation has characteristics that can easily be "translated into" the budgetary operations of project implementation. Hence, it brings about financial transparency. Besides, it can be used at any stage of a project to ensure the stability of the project phases. Participatory methods may enrich various types of evaluations like institutional evaluations for keeping an eye on the effective functioning of the NGOs by bringing richer perspectives on the subject. Due to such reasons, participatory evaluation can be considered a necessary stage to be included in projects, making evaluations more effective. Such necessity can be seen from the findings (Table 14 and 15) that most participants found it necessary to change the methods of evaluation and are willing to have training in participatory evaluation.

## Brazil Report

### Participatory Evaluation in Brazil's *Operação Acolhida*: Preliminary Notes

This document is a second version of our preliminary analysis of the data gathering exercise currently being conducted by the Brazil team as part of the InovHumRE Initiative. It takes into account both new data collected in the interim and the feedback received from the colleagues in the InovHumRE team.

Our team has continued to collect evidence on the use of participatory evaluation methods by public and private actors involved in the response to the humanitarian emergency created by the sudden inflow of Venezuelan refugees into Brazil's northern state of Roraima. We are ultimately interested in using this material to draw lessons from the Brazilian case that would be useful for professionals working in humanitarian emergencies in other contexts.

We are collecting evidence from three types of sources. First, we have conducted ten long-form oral history interviews with top-level decision-makers involved in *Operação Acolhida* ("Operation Welcoming"), Brazil's official response to the refugee crisis (more details on *Acolhida* below). Our goal is to make all transcripts available to the public in publication form at the end of the project. Second, we have continued to undertake a systematic survey with Brazilian and international NGOs that have had an active role in the refugee situation in Brazil using an adapted form of the questionnaire devised by the InovHumRE ISCTE team (a copy of our version of the questionnaire can be found in the Appendix below). Finally, we have been amassing a trove of documents produced by the Brazilian government and by IOs working on the ground that contain information about their experiences in the field.

While there are still data to be gathered and analysed, we do hope to offer some preliminary conclusions. First, in the case of *Operação Acolhida*, participatory evaluation *per se* is only sparingly used. This is likely a result of a combination of factors, including the small salience of the Venezuelan refugee crisis for the Brazilian state and for major civil society organisations with expertise on the use of this methodology, the geographical isolation of the crisis focal point from the largest urban centres in the south where the overwhelming majority of the population is located, and the limited experience with evaluation in general by small and medium-sized NGOs in Brazil in general. Second, most use of participatory evaluation as part of *Operação Acolhida* has been done by international organisations, whose staff have used such techniques borrowing from their experiences from similar emergencies in other parts of the world. Third, while not formally undertaking participatory evaluation, government officials working as part of *Operação Acolhida* have made occasional use of techniques that resemble those used in participatory evaluation for their ongoing monitoring practices. In fact, informal mechanisms designed to provide policy planners with feedback from beneficiaries appear to have proliferated organically as the day-to-day challenges of running such a complex operation presented themselves. We have also found evidence that these methods have been developed and implemented in close collaboration with IOs and NGOs. Thus far we have found no evidence that government officials within *Acolhida* have undertaken formal evaluations besides following a target for the number of refugees sent from Roraima to other parts of the country, in the process called "interiorização".

Our preliminary assessment of the existing evidence allows us to draw two important lessons from the case, which we will discuss in more detail below. First, we believe that use of participatory evaluation (and evaluation in general) has been so limited within *Operação Acolhida* because decision-makers framed the refugee crisis as a temporary emergency. With this mindset as a starting point, policy makers have thus far put little effort in developing a systematic evaluation framework that would help both government officials and NGO experts to draw lessons and build capacity for the long term. Second, effective use of participatory evaluation requires that at least one of the organisations playing a leading role in crisis response to have experience in using such techniques. In Brazil, the

armed forces' limited experience with evaluations meant that no effort was put on effectively incorporating such techniques as a central tool for drawing systematic lessons.

Besides this short introduction, this document includes three sections. Section One briefly discusses the Brazilian government's experience with participatory governance. Section Two looks at the context of the humanitarian emergency in Brazil's border with Venezuela and how the government, international organisations, and civil society have responded to the largest refugee crisis in Brazil's history. Section Three offers some preliminary analysis and outlines our next steps.

## Participatory Governance in Brazil

Mechanisms of citizen participation in politics are crucial for the well-functioning of democracies (Hirschman 1970; Putnam 1993; Verba et al. 1995; Cleary, 2007; Paterman, 2012; Prillaman, 2017). Since the end of military rule in the mid-1980s, Brazil has taken significant steps to create opportunities for its citizens to have direct input over public policies. The country's 1988 Constitution requires the federal and local governments to engage in systematic consultations with civil society before enacting major regulatory change (Abers and Keck 2009). Over time, the federal government created a web of participatory councils formed by representatives of civil society organisations, business interests, public intellectuals, and civil servants. These councils often have direct input over policymaking in areas such as budgetary policy, education, healthcare, and human rights (Pogrebinschi and Samuels 2014).

To be sure, one should not overstate the role of participatory governance in Brazilian democracy. Government resources allocated through participatory mechanisms remain meagre and some observers have pointed to the strategic use of such policies to bypass traditional democratic governance by minority governments (Paterman, 2012). While some areas of public life – such as healthcare policy and education – have been deeply affected by participatory governance, others have been less so.

Furthermore, while participatory governance has been a staple of Brazilian politics for decades now, use of systematic policy evaluation techniques in general is still limited and the vast majority of NGOs contacted by our team were not at all familiar with participatory evaluation. Both government bureaucracies and civil society organisations have only recently began incorporating such techniques into project designs and many decision makers still see investment of limited resources in evaluation with scepticism.

This context is particularly relevant for the institutional design of *Operação Acolhida*, the federal government's umbrella term for the inter-agency effort designed to address the humanitarian crisis posed by the inflow of Venezuelan refugees into the northern state of Roraima since 2018.

Over the last decades, Brazilian civil society organisations have successfully institutionalised mechanisms of participation in most issues of high political salience. In areas of policy such as education, healthcare, drug policy, sanitation, and policing, large civil society organisations have developed the organisational capacity to use methods such as participant evaluation and to use the findings from such exercises to engage in policy debates. Yet the low salience of policy towards refugees means this issue has not attracted as much attention from large civil society organisations or from the country's public opinion in general.

Unlike most other countries of its size, Brazil has had little experience with large-scale inflows of refugees. According to the country's Ministry of Justice, there were only 31.996 persons with refugee status living in the country in

2019, the largest number since the beginning of systematic data collection on the issue in the late 1990s.<sup>25</sup> As a result, the specialised agency working on the issue within the federal government, the National Committee for Refugees (*Comitê Nacional para os Refugiados* - CONARE) has a small staff and is only able to maintain permanent offices in Brasília, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo. At the local level, the São Paulo city government has a small, specialised staff working on policies for refugee populations, mostly constituted of political appointees with temporary job contracts, while other local governments have little to no dedicated bureaucratic capacity to address the issue.

The limited salience of the refugee policy in Brazil has meant that the Venezuelan refugee inflow was treated by the government mainly as a temporary emergency that did not warrant long-term investments in capacity building. With both state and municipal governments in the northern state of Roraima unable to address the inflows, the federal government resorted to the deployment of armed forces personal as an emergency measure. As we detail below, our interviews with leadership personal both in the military and in international organisations on the ground show that the framing of the refugee issue in Brazil's northern border as a temporary crisis has meant that there was little concern in developing long-term procedures and thus few formal evaluations were conducted. Our next section details the evolution of Brazil's response to the refugee crisis in the country's border with Venezuela.

### Humanitarian Emergency in the Brazil-Venezuela Border and the *Operação Acolhida*

As the humanitarian situation in Venezuela deteriorated, it was apparent to policy-makers in Brasília that they would not be able to rely solely on the existing bureaucratic structure within the Ministry of Justice. Instead, the government would have to set up an ad hoc system to address the problem. The Ministry of Defence was tasked with leading this effort, mainly because no other government agency had the resources and organisational capacity on the ground. It is worth mentioning that the Brazil-Venezuela border is one of the least densely populated regions of the country. The entire state of Roraima has a population of approximately 600.000 inhabitants for an area of 5.687 km<sup>2</sup>, the vast majority of which live below the poverty line. Few government agencies have a significant presence in the region and fewer still have the capacity to quickly deploy personal to respond to a crisis of such magnitude.

For policy planners involved in the early stages of *Operação Acolhida*, the only case of a refugee emergency in Brazil remotely similar to what was happening in Roraima was the flow of Haitian refugees that had arrived in the Brazilian-Peruvian border in the years following the 2010 earthquake. At the time, hundreds of Haitians had left their country to undertake a perilous journey, beginning with a flight to Panama followed by a long ride through the Colombian and Peruvian Amazon jungle to reach the Brazilian border at the small city of Brasiléia, in the state of Acre. Between 2012 and 2016, the government issued over 38.000 visas to Haitians arriving through this route. Yet our interviews show that decision-makers consider this experience to be a failure precisely because decision-makers at the time failed to develop policies that would take into account the needs of refugees. Later studies indicate that the vast majority of Haitians that were given work visas between 2012 and 2016 ended up leaving Brazil because they could not find employment.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Brasília. International Migration Observatory, Ministry of Justice and Public Security/National Committee for Refugees (Conare). *Refúgio em Números: 5ª Edição*.(Brasília, DF, Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2020). Available at: [Refúgio em Números e Publicações — Ministério da Justiça e Segurança Pública](#). Accessed 24 May 2021.

<sup>26</sup> Wagner Oliveira, *Haitianos no Brasil: Hipóteses sobre a distribuição espacial dos imigrantes pelo território brasileiro*, FGV DAPP, 2017. Available at: <http://dapp.fgv.br/haitianos-no-brasil-hipoteses-sobre-distribuicao-espacial-dos-imigrantes-pelo-territorio-brasileiro/>. Accessed 19 May 2021.

Without a ready-made model from which they could draw, the leadership of the armed forces appears to have resorted to its previous experiences in peacekeeping operations and to lessons learned during their previous activities in support of law enforcement agencies in mega-events such as the Olympics and the World Cup. Their first priority appears to have been working with UN agencies and NGOs already on the ground in Roraima to set up basic infrastructure for temporary refugee shelters and a system by which refugees could be matched with employers and sent to live in other parts of the country, a process they referred to as “interiorização”.

Our first interviews indicate that the Army eventually incorporated techniques that could be described as participatory through their cooperation with UN agencies, albeit without specifically referring to them as such. These informal mechanisms of incorporating participant feedback have been most explicit in reports of day-to-day management of refugee shelters in the cities of Boa Vista, the capital and largest city of Roraima.

In collaboration with UN agencies, the Army worked with refugees to set up committees to manage day-to-day activities in and around camps. One Army officer and one UN official were designated in each shelter as “coordinators” and would both help communities organise, while also serving as focal points for any demands that might arise. Such coordinators would also work with “committee leaders” chosen by the beneficiaries themselves to both undertake collective efforts in areas such as cleaning or distributing food and to discuss the issues and demands that existed among Venezuelans. Coordinators would be instructed to pass information on through the chain of command so that it could be acted upon. Such efforts apparently not only helped improve service quality, but also kept managers informed of crime and potential for violence within camps. Repeatedly in our interviews, officers praised these channels as crucial in averting violence and improving their efforts at finding jobs for refugees in other parts of Brazil.

To the best of our knowledge thus far, all participatory techniques employed by the Army are informal and not part of a systematic policy of participation. This appears to have both advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side, it appears to give planners significant leeway to adapt to specific situations on the ground and learn from practical experience. In fact, our interviews thus far show that some mechanisms of participation are constantly changing on the ground. On the other hand, it also means that there is no formally established system whereby lessons learned could be formalised. For example, rarely have our interviewees reflected on how the experiences of Operação Acolhida should impact training of a next generation of officers involved in humanitarian emergencies.

To be sure, the use of such techniques to manage day-to-day activities may not fall under the rubric of participatory evaluation *per se*, but instead be classified as a management technique.

Finally, it is important to note that most of the efforts of beneficiary participation have been more closely linked with monitoring, but not impact evaluation *per se*. Indeed, it is hard to tell how policy makers define success beyond monitoring raw numbers of refugees that are “interiorizados”. In one interview, a former chief of staff to *Acolhida* mentioned that, months after he had left Roraima and returned to his job in Rio de Janeiro, he found Venezuelans living on the streets in the neighbourhood where he lived. He approached them to ask if they had come through Roraima and how they had ended up there. The man told him that the *Acolhida* staff had found him a job in Rio and that he was duly sent there. As the COVID-19 pandemic hit, however, he was fired and couldn’t find another job. He had turned to the local government for help, but none was available. The Army officer was left wondering how many other Venezuelan arrivals were in similar situations. Despite their best efforts to help them find jobs in wealthier areas of the country, he reasoned, there was no effective mechanism in place to follow-up on beneficiaries after a certain time.

This lack interest in evaluation in general—and in participant evaluation in particular—comes to some extent from a lack of information. The evidence from both our interviews and survey responses shows that neither government officials nor NGO leadership personal had much knowledge about such techniques and about what role they could play in improving service quality and helping draw systematic lessons from the ongoing crisis. The fact that the vast majority of NGOs and CSOs working on the refugee crisis were quite small and had limited resources meant that



they had to coordinate their actions with the armed forces personal, who themselves did not pay much attention to the issue. But overall, we find that the vast majority of those involved in *Operação Acolhida* considered the efforts to address the Venezuelan refugee crisis as a temporary emergency.

The partial exception to this were the international organisations that established offices in Roraima. Such organisations operated through contracts signed between the Brazilian government and their head offices abroad. Such contracts often specified that they would play a role in helping government officials (in this case, the armed forces personal) in addressing the crisis. While their contractual role in this crisis meant that they largely took a backseat in drafting policy, they did engage in some participatory evaluation with Venezuelan refugees who went through *Acolhida* and resettled elsewhere in Brazil.

## Lessons and next steps

The discussion above draws from our in-depth interviews, an examination of the trove of official documents that our team has collected thus far, and the limited number of responses that we received to the survey of NGOs.

We plan to continue our attempts to collect data from NGOs and IOs through our survey. Our team has identified 34 organisations that are working on the Venezuelan refugee crisis or that have partnered with *Operação Acolhida* to support their activities. We are reaching out to them individually and have continued to ask for support with our survey plans. The table below provides names and websites of all organisations in our database. The appendix at the end of this document contains the version of the survey questionnaire currently being used.

Thus far, the evidence we have collected suggests two important lessons. First, we have identified only international organisations engaged in participatory evaluation within the universe of organisations working to address the Venezuelan refugee crisis in Brazil. The findings from such evaluations have been spelled in reports that these IOs sent to the federal government as part of their ongoing contracts. Furthermore, even such efforts have had small scale and there is no evidence of a system to incorporate them into government policy in the future.

As we discussed above, we believe that there are two main causes to this. First, policy makers have largely framed the refugee crisis as a temporary emergency. As a result, they sought largely to address short-term needs of local governments in a poorer region of the country, without much attention to any long-term lessons that could improve the quality of services that are provided to refugees. Similarly, NGOs working on the issue are small and have few resources. Oftentimes their main area of focus is not refugee policy, but something else. These organisations have also largely taken a short-term approach to the issue.

The second lesson is that we draw from the evidence is that the lack of focus on evaluation by organisations playing a leading role in the response to the crisis severely hinders the probability that such techniques will be used. In the case of Brazil's response to the Venezuelan crisis, the overwhelming role of the armed forces in managing the response to a crisis posed by an issue of low salience and happening in a remote region far from the country's urban centres in the south meant that there was little to no interest in evaluations.

Name of Organization	Type of Organization	Website
Abraço Cultural	NGO	<a href="http://www.abracocultural.com.br">www.abracocultural.com.br</a>
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	IO	<a href="http://www.acnur.org/portugues">www.acnur.org/portugues</a>
Instituto Adus	NGO	<a href="http://www.adus.org.br/">www.adus.org.br/</a>



África do Coração	NGO	<a href="http://africadoracao.org/">africadoracao.org/</a>
Associação Palotina (Casa Acolhida para Mulheres)	NGO	<a href="http://caemipalotinas.com.br">caemipalotinas.com.br</a>
CAMI	NGO	<a href="http://www.cami.org.br/">www.cami.org.br/</a>
Compassiva	NGO	<a href="http://compassiva.org.br">compassiva.org.br</a>
CARE	NGO	<a href="http://www.care.org">www.care.org</a>
Cáritas Arquidiocesana de São Paulo	NGO	<a href="http://www.caritassp.org.br/servico-de-acolhida-e-orientacao-para-refugiados">www.caritassp.org.br/servico-de-acolhida-e-orientacao-para-refugiados</a>
Centro de Apoio ao Migrante (São Paulo)	NGO	-
FICAS	NGO	<a href="http://www.ficas.org.br/">www.ficas.org.br/</a>
Fundação Banco do Brasil (FBB)	NGO	<a href="http://fbb.org.br/pt-br/">fbb.org.br/pt-br/</a>
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	IO	<a href="http://brazil.unfpa.org/pt-br">brazil.unfpa.org/pt-br</a>
Human rights Watch Brazil	NGO	<a href="http://www.hrw.org/pt/americas/brazil">www.hrw.org/pt/americas/brazil</a>
Medicine sans frontières	NGO	<a href="http://www.msf.org.br">www.msf.org.br</a>
Missão Paz	NGO	<a href="http://www.missaonspaz.org/home">www.missaonspaz.org/home</a>
Missão Scalabriniana		<a href="http://www.missionariascalabrinianas.org.br/Missao.sao.aspx">www.missionariascalabrinianas.org.br/Missao.sao.aspx</a>
PARES Caritás	NGO	<a href="http://www.caritas-rj.org.br">www.caritas-rj.org.br</a>
Programa de Apoio para a Recolocação dos Refugiados	NGO	<a href="http://www.refugiadosnobrasil.org">www.refugiadosnobrasil.org</a>
Save the Children	NGO	<a href="http://www.savethechildren.org">www.savethechildren.org</a>
Serviço Franciscano de Solidariedade	NGO	<a href="http://sefras.org.br">sefras.org.br</a>
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	IO	<a href="http://brazil.iom.int">brazil.iom.int</a>
RedeMir	NGO	<a href="http://www.migrante.org.br/membros-da-redemir">www.migrante.org.br/membros-da-redemir</a>
Associação Carioca de Apoio à Mulher Portadora de Neoplasia e Refugiados	NGO	-
Centro de Defesa de Direitos Humanos	NGO	-
Fraternidade Federação Humanitária Internacional	NGO	<a href="http://www.fraterinternacional.org">www.fraterinternacional.org</a>
Fundação Pan-americana para o Desenvolvimento	NGO	<a href="http://www.padf.org/brazil">www.padf.org/brazil</a>
Fraternidade sem Fronteiras	NGO	<a href="http://www.fraternidadesemfronteiras.org.br">www.fraternidadesemfronteiras.org.br</a>
Pirilampos	NGO	<a href="http://www.pirilamposrr.com.br">www.pirilamposrr.com.br</a>
Associação de Bem com a Vida	NGO	-
Cia Cultural Bola de Meia	NGO	<a href="http://bolademeia.org">bolademeia.org</a>
Ação do Coração	NGO	<a href="http://www.acaodocoracao.org.br">www.acaodocoracao.org.br</a>
ActionAid Brazil	NGO	<a href="http://actionaid.org.br">actionaid.org.br</a>
Centro Mulheres do Cabo	NGO	<a href="http://www.mulheresdocabo.org.br">www.mulheresdocabo.org.br</a>
Oxfam	NGO	<a href="http://www.oxfam.org.br">www.oxfam.org.br</a>

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## Colombia Report

### Executive Summary

There are many definitions of the concept of "humanitarian action"<sup>27</sup> One of the most used was provided by the Good Humanitarian Donation initiative (n,d), The dimensions of humanitarian action have been gradually expanded, includes the protection of civilians and those no longer taking part in hostilities, and the provision of food, water and sanitation, shelter, health services and other items of assistance, undertaken for the benefit of affected people and to facilitate the return to normal lives and livelihoods (Good Humanitarian Donorship, n.d, párr. 6).

Previously, the concept was associated with saving lives, but now the need to protect livelihoods also becomes particularly important (Good Humanitarian Donorship, n.d). Our definition of work refers to maintaining human dignity, and, in this sense, the ability to overcome oneself is an important part. "Humanitarian action measures are taken to save lives, alleviate suffering, maintain human dignity during and after crises, and prevent and strengthen responsiveness for when such situations occur" (Good Humanitarian Donorship, 2003, párr. 1) There is a growing perception of the importance of responding to recovery needs immediately after a natural disaster. In conflicts and other prolonged crises, it is often unclear when the emergency ends, and recovery begins; in practice, both types of support are often needed and provided simultaneously (Slim, H and Bonwick, A, 2005).

However, to guarantee the effectivity of this actions to relay on with Humanitarian Action Assessment, these can be "defined as the systematic and objective review of such action, drawing conclusions to improve policy and practice, and increase accountability" (Abrisketa & Pérez De Armiño, 2000). It is crucial in these assessments to include a certain level of objectivity in the process, like through an external facilitator, or experienced, independent, and competent persons involved or leading the team. This, reducing bias should be a target in all assessment (Abrisketa & Pérez De Armiño, 2000).

Aguilar (2011) refers that considering those who carry out the evaluation process, the values that are promoted and political context in which the evaluation unfolds, it is necessary the implementation of new approach models that integrate diverse actors and interest groups (stakeholders-based evaluation) (p.91).

Participative evaluation is not an innovative approach in social projects, it is linked with accountability based on performance and the achievement of results, in turn, it focuses on the impact of success through its monitoring process, according to this approach, "actors participate from the formulation and design of the evaluation at different levels as well as in the constant reformulation throughout the Project" (Aguilar, 2011, p. 91).

To analyze the evaluation of humanitarian action in Colombia about migration phenomenon and contribute new perspectives from the intersectional and gender perspective tending to know the evaluation processes of the routes for the processing of humanitarian attention of vulnerable groups with special emphasis on mixed migratory flows from Venezuela, we have established the following Participatory Evaluation parameters.

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<sup>27</sup> "It is difficult to give a precise definition of humanitarian action. There is no clear consensus among authors and organizations on its meaning and scope, which has to do with its complexity and the multiplicity of contexts, activities, actors, and objectives involved. To this is added a colloquial use often excessively broad and imprecise. The concept of humanitarian action is often used interchangeably with that of humanitarian aid, and that of emergency aid or even humanitarian relief. However, with the reservations imposed by the diversity of existing approaches, some distinguishing features seem to emerge from the specialized literature in general." (Abrisketa & Pérez De Armiño, 2000).

First, we need to collect and retrieve data to answer descriptive questions about the activities of the project, the various results it has had and the context in which it has been implemented. For this purpose, we made an interview that explored the perceptions, challenges, and skills of the interviewees as representatives of their organizations, in terms of what is understood by formal evaluation, participatory evaluation and the methods, tools and techniques used. The average time was 1:30 hours after consultation with the interviewees. Also, A semi-structured questionnaire model was developed from the shared question format; this questionnaire was made in Question Pro Program, and it composed of 4 sections with 28 questions, to learn about evaluation processes and lessons learned.

Collecting and analyzing the data was a challenge due to answering causal questions during the pandemic and current public order restrictions were situations that caused severe limitations to the conducting of interviews, as many of the actors subject to this mapping were occupied at different fronts due to human rights violation risks. Because of this context, many actors were willing to do the interview, but it was not feasible to conduct it.

However, with the documentary review and interviews made, the focus of the humanitarian action for the migrant population in Colombian can be determined. According to this, the main form of evaluation for their actions is by characterizing the population, measuring needs, and building the action plan according to their strengths (Rossi, Lipsey and Henry, 2018). Several actors were found working with the migrant population subject to special protection such as children and women in pregnancy, offering services such as psychological and educational accompaniment. The analysis will be presented from three levels of actors, macro, intermediate and micro, as different dynamics are generated according to their size and impact as shown in Annex 1 of this document titled "Non-State Actors in Humanitarian Assistance Refugee and Migrant Population Colombia".

## Context / Background

Before discussing the Venezuelan migration situation, it is necessary to understand that massive displacements of people are a common situation in Colombia. This is important to mention, due to despite the peace agreement, in some regions of Colombia, humanitarian challenges are still focused on the vulnerable population and victim of armed groups or criminal organizations (OCHA, 2021)<sup>28</sup>. For example, according to humanitarian response website, a considerable number of humanitarian assessments and reports of different places show this conflict dynamics, that persists Buenaventura, Valle del Cauca, Putumayo, Cauca, and Bolivar departments<sup>29</sup>.

Due to the internal conflict (in its distinct stages), the civilian population has had to endure direct violence by armed actors, which has led to them having to flee their territories (Unidad de víctimas, 2020). Colombia is a country that has been in this internal conflict for more than five decades; different armed groups have been protagonists of this history. Among those are armed groups such as the FARC-EP<sup>30</sup>, ELN<sup>31</sup>, M19<sup>32</sup>, EPL<sup>33</sup>, and para-state armed groups

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<sup>28</sup> (Women, girls, boys, ethnically differentiated communities, LGTBQ population, and rural communities)

<sup>29</sup> Consult the reports on the website [humanitarianresponse.info](http://humanitarianresponse.info).

<sup>30</sup> Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia- Ejército del Pueblo demobilized in 2016 with the peace agreement, however there are still small armed factions that did not want to benefit from the agreement.

<sup>31</sup> Ejército de Liberación Nacional is a guerrilla group founded in 1964 and currently has a presence in 17 departments of Colombia as well as operating bases in Venezuela. (Fundación Pares, 2020).

<sup>32</sup> Movimiento 19 de abril was an urban armed group, demobilized 30 years ago and that built as a political party the creation of the 1991 political constitution.

<sup>33</sup> Ejército Popular de Liberación was a guerrilla group formed in 1967 and demobilized 30 years ago, however, many of its members formed criminal gangs for the trafficking of drugs and weapons.

such as the AUC<sup>34</sup>. And more recently, the gangs that feed on common crime and drug trafficking known as BACRIM<sup>35</sup>. According to UNHCR (2018), Colombia has the highest number of internally displaced persons globally; this figure reaches 5.6 million people as of the end of 2019 (Unidad de víctimas, 2020). This has caused humanitarian crisis that have increased multisectorial needs of this vulnerable population and has affected away men, women, boys, and girls indifferent, depending on the class, ethnicity, disability status, geographic location, among others. However, these are not the only actors that have been affected, victims of natural disasters and immigrants from Venezuela are also people in need of humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 2021).

The massive outflow of the Venezuelan population is caused by a severe economic and humanitarian crisis. "The International Monetary Fund estimates that Venezuela will reach an inflation rate of 5,500% at the end of 2021" (García, R & Rueda, J., 2021, párr. 15), and its GDP contraction will be 10%. This scenario is the root of the tremendous multidimensional crisis, due to which Venezuelans have had to leave their country. However, it is necessary to consider another phenomenon: "pendular migration," which refers to people who live in one place and work or study in another (Migración Colombia, 2019). Hence, they must commute daily and return home, this migration can take a day or several months. This is the case experienced between Colombia and Venezuela, as they share the longest border of both nations. According to national government figures, about 60,000 people crossed the border daily through official crossings before the pandemic (Torrado, 2021).

On the other side, the growth of refugees in Colombia has been high, however, due problems with incomplete applications, or withdrawal, the total number of refugees does not correspond with the number of applicants. Starting in 2017 with 19 to 299 in 2019 (Colombian presidency, 2020). According to the United Nations Refugee Agency (n.d), this phenomenon has been reflected in all Latin America, "where the number of Venezuelans that seek for refugee status has increased in 8000%" (párr. 2) . In recent years, more than five million Venezuelans have left their country. Most of them reside in Latin America and the Caribbean, and Colombia is the country that hosts most of them, with 1.3 million migrants and refugees at 2019 (UNHCR, 2019).

According to the World Bank (2021), Colombia has opted for a large aid vision. During these years, borders were kept open, and resources focused on primary care, creating policies to guarantee access to education, health system and work for the migrant population in need. The Colombian government has taken different measures since the beginning of the crisis<sup>36</sup>, among which we can highlight the following: The first one represented the government strengthened to the institutional presence in critical border points. In addition, special attention was paid to the approval of the provision of health services for the migrant population, advancing vaccination campaigns, and building temporary shelters (NPD, 2018).

Secondly, 2017 began with the regularization process of the migrant population. In this point, the Colombian government created the "Tarjeta de Movilidad Fronteriza" (TMF)<sup>37</sup> (NPD, 2018). As a result, Venezuelan citizens could move through the Colombian border territory for seven days. Also, the creation of the "Permiso Especial de Permanencia" (PEP)<sup>38</sup>, which intended to give a regular migratory status to its bearer and is one of the first steps to acquire a Colombian residency. This special permit has been issued three times by the national government, due to the large influx of Venezuelan migrants arriving in Colombia (NPD, 2018). Furthermore, this identification

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<sup>34</sup> By 2020, there were 63 paramilitary groups in Colombia, with presence in all departments, the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) are investigated with their close ties to the Army and politicians in crimes against humanity such as disappearance, torture, and displacement (INDEPAZ, 2020).

<sup>35</sup> BACRIM are criminal organizations with presence in 27 of the 32 departments of Colombia, its members come from common crime, armed groups, guerrillas, and drug trafficking clans. (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2019).

<sup>36</sup> For more information, read: <https://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/normativa>

<sup>37</sup> Decree 1220 issued on 2016 and Decree 1845 issued on 2017

<sup>38</sup> Decree 5797 issued on 2017; modified by Decree 1288 issued on 2018. This can be consulted: <https://www.alcaldiabogota.gov.co/sisjur/listados/tematica2.jsp?subtema=30717&cadena=>

document has facilitated access to banking, health, and education services to around 600,000 Venezuelans between those that already had it and those that were doing the process by the end of 2018 (NPD, 2018).

However, Colombia has historically been a country of origin rather than a place of transit and destination, this means that its migratory policy and its institutions were not enough to affront the new migratory flux of Venezuelan immigrants (Colombian presidency, 2020). Faced this problem, Colombia defined its response policy to the migratory crisis originating in Venezuela through document CONPES 3950 (National Council for Economic and Social Economic and Social Policy), issued on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018 (Colombian presidency, 2020).

This document, “became the first public policy document that diagnosed the migration phenomenon” (Colombian presidency, 2020, p. 16), and generated strategies to support the migrant population arriving from Venezuela in critical areas such as health, education, first aid assistance, basic supplements, among others. This is crucial due to the transversal vulnerability evidenced, many asylum seekers and migrants from Venezuela are victims of xenophobia and stigma, with the weakening of international relationship between both countries and the closure of borders due to COVID 19, they are exposed problems such as long walks, malnutrition, lack of medical care for pregnant women, insufficient access to basic services.

In response to Venezuela's humanitarian crisis and the significant percentage of population with irregular status, the Colombian government structured the “Estatuto de Protección Temporal para Migrantes Venezolanos” (ETPMV), that can be translated as Temporary Statute of Protection for Venezuelan Migrants. It consists of massive register exclusively for Venezuelan people, who under specific conditions can have access to a “Permiso de Protección Temporal” (PPT) or Temporary Protection Permit (Colombian chancellery, 2021). This decision made by the Colombian government has been described as historic, as it demonstrates a high degree of commitment to improve the living conditions of the Venezuelan population in Colombia. Furthermore, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Filippo Grandi, considered it as the “most important humanitarian gesture made in the continent since 1984”, that is, since the Cartagena Declaration (El Tiempo, 202, párr. 27).

Currently, the statute is in the second stage (biometric registration) with more than 1 million registered users on the portal “Visibles”<sup>39</sup> (Migración Colombia, n.d). This new scenario guarantees that migrants and refugees have access to health, work, and education. Although, this statute has a valuable mission, it also generates inequalities towards asylum seekers, as the Permiso de Protección Temporal (PPT) requires the termination of the procedure for recognition of refugee status, or withdrawal of the refugee status if they have been recognized as such.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, the refugee status does not allow working, while the PPT does, which is one of the population's main necessities, thus encouraging the abandonment of international protection.

Despite the situation described above, it can be considered that much of the Venezuelan population have taken the first steps to be part of this State policy. According to the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2021), around 1,119,649 Venezuelan citizens have created an account to access the first phase of the Temporary Protection Statute. These figures are very encouraging, since this policy's first stage began on May 5, 2021, so it promises to welcome the most significant part of Venezuelans within Colombian territory and to fight against the humanitarian emergency that these actors must face and that has been aggravated by the Covid-19 crisis, since many remain without access to public services, education, work, lack of food security and are threatened by armed actors (OCHA, 2021).

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<sup>39</sup> See: <https://www.migracioncolombia.gov.co/visibles>

<sup>40</sup> paragraph 1, Article 17 of Decree 216 of 2021.



## Methodology

To determine which assessment processes of humanitarian action are being used in Colombia, a mixed methodology approach may be more appropriate, involving qualitative and quantitative aspects. This methodology allows us to work with different sources and databases, as well as provides a deeper and more detailed approach (Hernández, Fernández, Baptista, 2010). Moreover, a greater number of cases can be covered, which is important given the size of the investigation. For this reason, we have chosen two research methods that will be applied sequentially: a semi structured survey and an in-depth interview. For each, a guide has been made.

The investigation process involved 4 phases: construction, implementation, evaluation, and the sharing of research findings. So far, all the phases have been completed. The University (Icesi) research team conducted an exploratory approximation based on the list of bibliographic references provided. Once the main concepts were understood, this process started with a mapping of actors using a national database, reports, and websites. As a result of this, a list was generated containing possible organizations, institutions, and actors to work with.

This process made it possible to identify three different levels in which state and non-state actors have influenced the country's most significant mixed migratory flows from 2015 up to 2021. These are the macro, intermediate, and micro levels.

At the macro level, could be identify international cooperators, such as Non-Governmental Organizations, government programs, and projects implemented by grassroots organizations, all of which have effects nationally and internationally. At the intermediate level, we found local institutional administrations combining efforts with NGOs, and civil or religious associations, which work in an articulated way to develop projects at a regional scale. They are also concentrated at regional levels, primarily but not exclusively in central cities such as Ríohacha, Barranquilla, Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali. Finally, at the micro level, there were civil associations, educational institutions, and grassroots organizations that develop programs in communal or other specific areas of their cities by articulating and supporting themselves on cooperators and government sectors<sup>41</sup>

Despite finding different organizations, not including government actors, we made a depuration of the database, choosing only actors that have humanitarian response projects with immigrants. After this, a final list of 74 actors from the three different levels was made of which a sample of 35 was selected, they were classified on a scale of 1 to 5 according to their influence and technical capacity. The influence is understood as the number of projects executed in a specific territory at the national level; on the other side, technical capacity refers to different economic and logistical elements necessary to carry out humanitarian assistance projects.

During the construction phase, the exploratory approximation and the mapping were helpful in the elaboration of a semi-structured survey guide. This instrument for empirical data collection was chosen because it allows an efficient and large data collection (Hernández, Fernández, Baptista, 2010). In addition, closed questions give a better systematization of the data, while open questions allow a deep dive into certain relevant aspects. Once the pilot guide was ready, informal meetings were arranged with workers from UNHCR, IOM, Corporación Opción Legal (COL) and Danish Council for Refugees that provided different perspectives, allowing the restructure of some questions, making the guide more understandable and appropriate to the investigation objectives.

Although we sent the invitation letter to participate in the project to 35 organizations. Only 14 participated by filling the survey, and of these, 4 organizations agreed to participate in the interview. When the research team contacted the organizations to which the letters were sent, some responded that they had no time or interest in participating in the project. While others agreed to participate, but did not fill out the survey, nor did they get in touch.

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<sup>41</sup> These actors were found in the mapping exercise and can be found in the database

### Limitations:

Right now, Colombia left behind the third wave of covid as well as a national strike that involved mobility, time, and security concerns. Due this complicated context, the decision to carry out the investigation methods online was made. However, using this medium for the survey may generate incomplete replies, concerns about data security, and fatigue, especially if the questionnaire is a long one and must be completed without guidance (Rocco & Oliari, 2007). On the other hand, it is also important to mention that because of the impossibility to map all the actors that work in humanitarian assessment, this report is not representative. However, for the in-depth interviews, we asked the organizations if they wanted to participate in this instrument, however due to schedule problems, only four accepted. To carry out this kind of method, it was necessary an interviewer with the ability to keep a fluent conversation and obtain detailed information about the topic (Restrepo, 2007). To acquire these skills, we developed two formation sessions with the research-team.

Other obstacles were related to the response time of the actors that is around 20 days, and the permits we must process with the ONGs to conduct the interviews and the surveys, these bureaucratic measures prevented the phases from developing more quickly.

### Findings

#### a) Documentary analysis and gender perspective

From the findings of the documentary analysis, it is important to mention some key concepts and how these are used in the Colombian case with some consensus among the organizations that develop assistance, intervention, accompaniment, and humanitarian response projects, as well as the influence they have on the most widely used evaluation processes.

As stated in the beginning, there are many definitions for humanitarian action as response to a crisis. According to ALNAP42 (2016) one of the most comprehensive and frequently used is the Good Humanitarian Donorships (2003), definition, which states that the objectives of humanitarian action are to save lives, alleviate suffering, preserving human dignity during and after a crisis, as well as preventing and strengthening efforts to prepare for these situations.

This definition expands what was originally considered humanitarian action, as we can see, it is not only limited to saving lives, but also saving people's means of life. Therefore, and according to ALNAP (2016), humanitarian action involves assistance and protection, assistance in preventing crises and later recovering and reconstruction; the prevention and reconstructions are in the middle of humanitarian activities and long-term development.

In turn, the actors involved follow the principles of humanitarian action that serve as the basis for humanitarian response: I) Humanity: human suffering must always be addressed, as the purpose of the actions is to protect life and respect for human beings. II) Neutrality: Humanitarian actors cannot engage in political, racial, religious, or ideological conflicts; and must no take part in any hostilities. III) impartiality: Humanitarian action must be supplied according to the necessities present, prioritizing urgent cases, without discriminating based on race, gender,

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<sup>42</sup> is a global network of NGOs, UN agencies, members of the Red Cross/Crescent Movement, donors, academics, networks, and consultants dedicated to learning how to improve response to humanitarian crises.



nationality, religion, etc. IV) Independence: Humanitarian action must be independent from any political, economic, or military objectives in the places where the measurements are being taken (OCHA,2012)<sup>43</sup>.

Likewise, to achieve effective, equitable, and participatory humanitarian action, it must respond to the differentiated needs of women, girls, boys, men, diverse LGBTIQ people, and ethnic groups (Carter, 2021). For this reason, it is necessary to incorporate the gender approach, since it reinforces respect and guarantees the protection of human rights, dignifying the lives of the people who require such help. The gender approach is fundamental, since "Gender" is part of our social construction of masculinity and femininity, what we expect socially from women and men in their roles, duties, and responsibilities (Griffith, Metzl, and Gunter, 2011). However, this expectation also denotes different barriers, privileges, and opportunities depending on the social position that the person occupies, and it is essential to face it. Gender, such as age, sexual orientation, and gender identity, determines the ability to access resources and exercise them autonomously. Although international frameworks guarantee rights for people, the reality is that the experiences they socially live are different and are embedded in the power imbalance of gender roles and stereotypes (Wingood, and DiClemente, 2002).

Understanding autonomy and the ability to decide on one's own life is one of the structural examples that make the difference that women have, for example, in making decisions about their bodies, or in access to economic resources, or the same marital status (Narayan,2018). Likewise, it is important to remember that neither the realities of women nor that of men are homogeneous, although socially we can differentiate asymmetries of power based on gender, other intersectional factors guarantee a deeper reading and closer to the reality of the person in need of humanitarian aid. That is, it is not enough to only recognize gender inequality, but also sexual identity, whether they have a disability, geographical location, ethnic origin of the person, nationality, educational level, or religious beliefs. as its context of urban or rural life (Mackenzie and Stoljar, 2000).

Thus, the gender approach in humanitarian action is important because it allows humanizing and dignifying the affected people's lives since gender inequalities already existed before the crisis, which means that their impact and response must be given in a differentiated and subject to access to resources (Lafrenière, Sweetman and Thylin, 2019). The crises affect and intensify gender inequality, discrimination, and the vulnerability of women exposed to sexist violence, as we can well remember in the Covid-19 crisis. The increase in calls for sexist violence was globally known, as many men felt frustrated and humiliated during the crisis, which had an impact on the increase in physical and psychological violence against their partners. The pandemic reflected that the home is not a safe place for most women, and this was evidenced in the 127% increase in calls for intrafamily abuse and the record of 445 femicides in Colombia between January and September 2020 (McCord, 2021).

Regarding on evaluation processes in humanitarian action, the ALNAP (2016), defines it as a systemic and objective exam of a humanitarian intervention, to determine the value or significance of a given activity, policy, or program, to extract lessons that allow said policies or activities to be improved. They also emphasize that to be systemic, it requires a consistent focus and approach based on reliable methods, and that objectivity implies creating some distance between immediate assistance so it can be analyzed from a distinct perspective based on evidence. These last two elements are the ones that determine the objectives of humanitarian action evaluation, which can be the accountability of subjects with authority or learning new lessons through experience (ALNAP, 2016).

Since humanitarian actions occur in contexts where some inequalities and conditions affect men, women, boys, and girls in a different way, but also according to class, ethnicity, condition disability, or migrant, etc, the evaluation should be designed with an intersectional and gender perspective. These pre-existing and cross-cutting inequalities imply that individuals and women are more likely to suffer adverse consequences and a context of humanitarian crisis can exacerbate them (IASO, 2017).

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<sup>43</sup> See: [link](#):

According to the UN (2015), an evaluation with a gender approach allows taking into consideration how power relations give rise to situations of discrimination and how the action, in this case, humanitarian action, allows or not, changes in these relationships. An evaluation with these characteristics is advantageous because it helps to consolidate gender equality and the empowerment of women; can contribute to social change, when new interventions (strategies, projects) involve the lessons learned and promote accountability concerning gender equality (UN, 2015).

Now, the challenges of humanitarian assistance processes and their assessment methods should be considered, these challenges are best characterized by UNHCR (2012) in its report "The Situation of Refugees in the World: In Search of Solidarity". The main ones during humanitarian action are discussed as follows. First, the organization intends to make it clear that the conflict dynamics at the time when the organization was created, i.e., 1950, are different from the current ones. Previously, the conflicts in which UNHCR was competent to act were between two States. Currently, internal conflicts are responsible for the largest influx of refugees in the history of the organization. In 2011 alone, 27.5 million people in the world were displaced due to internal conflict (UNHCR, 2012).

However, when referring to the challenges that organizations that intend to provide humanitarian aid must overcome, two important points must be considered: the changing nature of conflicts and local, or international, state support. Regarding the first point, UNHCR (2012), determines that conflicts can have multiple nuances, from political, religious, ethnic, or even economic conflicts. Each one of these different nuances must be considered when carrying out humanitarian action. A good recognition and evaluation of the dangers associated with the diverse types of conflicts will be an indicator of success to be able to carry out humanitarian action without endangering the organization and its workers.

Additionally, it is important to identify those conflicts do not affect populations to the same extent, the confluence of identity axes such as class, race, ethnicity, gender, health, among others, contribute to complicate and delimit the aid that is needed. Women, girls, boys, and men have specific needs in the face of a crisis, therefore, the actions taken to mitigate the problems must be differentiated, placed, and prioritized depending on these particularities (Ochiltree and Toma, 2021). This represents a great challenge in national, regional, and local terms. Although efforts, regulations, and aid have been established in the face of global crises, it is important that efforts be articulated to involve the diverse types of population and people who are being served, include their needs, and recognize the different points of view and experiences regarding the responses that they can be given in emergencies.

Regarding local or international state support, UNHCR (2012), refers to the fact that humanitarian action should be apolitical if the different circumstances allow it. In some cases, it will be necessary to have local support when entering highly dangerous conflict zones. In addition, when talking about urban refugees, humanitarian action can be truncated by different legal obstacles that States adopt such as restrictions on access to health, legal or educational services for refugees. Regarding international support, according to UNHCR (2012), the response of the international community must evolve accordingly to ensure that protection and assistance are available to all people who are forced to leave their homes and international solidarity must also be a common rule.

In addition to the above, it is important to bring up the great challenge that the pandemic has brought to states, governments, and the general population. Since 2019, the world faces devastating effects in all areas of life. This pandemic has exposed not only global health issues but also the structural, political, social, and economic conditions of the most vulnerable populations and territories, more than just a health crisis, it is a general crisis that has affected the economy, security, and human rights, that is, a humanitarian crisis that spans different edges (Jensen, Kelly & Avendano, 2021). If we focus on women, we find that they have been most affected, according to a technical report by DANE (2021), in Colombia, the proportion of women employed in informal jobs was 48.2%. In vulnerable territories where a dignified life is not guaranteed (work, education, health, safety, among others), women resort to informal daily work (in most cases precarious) as a form of daily sustenance, this situation diminishes their

capacity to solve economic shocks. In addition to this, many women take care of the home and at the same time are exposed to situations of gender violence.

In this context, the challenge facing the humanitarian response is increasing, the pandemic and crises do not affect all population groups in a homogeneous way but are accentuated in those groups with historical and pre-existing vulnerabilities. This is the reason humanitarian aid must be thought, planned, and implemented under a differential approach that recognizes the realities and needs of these populations.

The experience of implementation at local level in the country has some differences with the other countries in the region, Colombia is experiencing humanitarian crises resulting from a complex set of factors. The prolonged conflict between the Colombian government and the different armed groups, including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), has displaced millions of people, resulting in the designation Colombia as the country with the highest number of internally displaced persons in the world (UNHCR 2018).

However, the devastating effects of the armed conflict have had a unique behavior on the body and life of Colombian women. Both indigenous women, Afro-descendants, peasants, workers, urban and rural leaders, have had to face the various forms of violence presented by the armed conflict and gender discrimination typical of our patriarchal society (Vargas, 2018).

Women often have fewer resources and mechanisms to protect themselves from the effects of war, which means that women, along with their children, represent the largest proportion of displaced and refugee populations, of survivors. conflict (UN Women, 2020). Official data indicate that, in Colombia, until June 30, 2021, there are 9,153,078 victims of the armed conflict, due to different victimizing events (Victims Unit, 2021). Of these, 4,470,606 are women, 3,731 belong to the LGBTQ community and 426 are intersex, representing 49% of the total registered victims.

In the context of the armed conflict, women face selective killings, torture, forced displacement, kidnappings, disappearances, sexual violence (abuse, forced pregnancy, and abortion, sexual slavery). Historically, the main tactic of war directed against them is sexual violence. The body of Colombian women has been used as spoils of war during the last 60 years in the context of the armed conflict. Until April 30, 2020, 29,035 women affected by crimes against freedom and sexual integrity have been included in the Single Registry of Victims (RUV), out of the 32,092 victims of this crime (Victims Unit, 2020). In other words, of the total number of people reported as victims of sexual violence, 90.5% of the victims are women.

The logic of war increases the patriarchal control and domination exercised over the lives and bodies of women. It is the bodies and lives of peasant, mestizo, indigenous, and Afro-descendant women that operate as places of intersection and encounter of structurally vulnerable and discriminated populations. The articulation of gender, race, class, and other identity axes, when linked to situations of conflict, violence, exile, kidnappings, among others, create forms of discrimination and social exclusion.

Given this prolonged exposure to armed conflict, natural disasters, displacement and restricted mobility, Colombian organizations have significant record of accomplishment and experience in humanitarian response, as well as a unique understanding of the intersection between humanitarian issues, governance, peacebuilding, and human rights (Saavedra, 2016). Although Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities in Colombia suffer the impacts of the humanitarian and human rights crises disproportionately, they are also home to many strong local organizations, thanks to decades of social mobilization work (UNHCR, 2018).

Although the country has faced several financial, political, economic, and social crises, the pandemic, and the forced closures as we mentioned in previous paragraphs have increased these crises, including unemployment, which has affected the quality of life of the country's inhabitants, who do not have access to basic services such as food, education, and health, which has led to an increase in poverty rates, which rose from 35.7% to 42.5%. According to

recent DANE reports, two out of every five people are living in poverty in the country, which is equivalent to a total of 21 million people living in poverty and 7.5 million in extreme poverty.

This situation is worrying and worsens if we guide the discussion and analysis including the gender perspective. According to DANE (2019), the incidence of monetary poverty according to the sex (man/woman) of the head of the household was 34.4% for men and 38.2% for women, even of the 24 municipalities surveyed, in only 2 of them men have higher monetary poverty than women (Great Integrated Household Survey, 2019). So, the previous data show us how there is an unequal economic distribution between men and women that is increasingly pointed out with the entry of the pandemic, the lack of job opportunities, and the little implementation of differential policies that prioritize employment. and a life worthy of women. Added to the above situation are the complex migration crisis and the inequalities and exclusions that are exercised against women, girls, and young people who leave their native countries and migrate to others for better living conditions.

It is also worth noting that the immigrant population, mostly from Venezuela, has been forced to return home due to the lack of access to health and social security, as Venezuelans rely heavily on the informal sector. However, border closures have left them more vulnerable than ever, as many of the returnees have not been able to enter their country.

To know the difficult conditions of Venezuelan migrants in Colombia, the Proyecto Migración Venezuela conducted a study between December 5 and 17, 2020, which revealed the difficult conditions in which most of the 1.7 million Venezuelan migrants in Colombia live, of which 97.4% of Venezuelans are not working, and 60.9% of them detailed that they were left without work due to the pandemic, and showed the following (Semana, 2020):

- 48.8% of this population faces critical overcrowding in their homes.
- 51.7% in a situation of multidimensional poverty.
- 97.7% of households are deprived because they have informal jobs.
- 85.4% due to lack of health insurance.
- 51.4 % due to school backwardness.

The arrival of COVID-19 has posed a historic challenge for the world. In addition to the health risk, the pandemic will reduce incomes for many, and put millions of people out of work. reality is showing that the virus disproportionately affects the most vulnerable populations, among which are migrants, particularly those in an irregular situation, as well as women and in this same logic, migrant women).

Since 2015, more than 5 million Venezuelans have left their country and more than 4 million reside in Latin American and Caribbean countries. Pre-existing inequalities in many countries of the region in economic, housing and access to health care terms, increase the risk of migrants' exposure to the virus. At the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the arrival of the virus is of particular concern because, in this context, the vulnerabilities suffered by forced migrants are dramatically accentuated. For migrants, domestic confinement measures are difficult to follow without fixed housing or living in overcrowded conditions. According to the 2019 Yearbook of the Jesuit Migrant Service, 18% of migrants in Chile live in these overcrowded conditions.

However, overcrowding is not the only problem the migrant population is facing, according to a report on migrations in the world IOM (2020), 74% of migrant women are in the service industry, such as domestic work, most of which do not have legal benefits contributing to job insecurity. Care work in many of their homes is represented by women, but with the arrival of the pandemic, an overload of care has been evidenced throughout the world. The closure of schools, the care of sick people, and the quarantine generated greater demand for care, often assumed or imposed on women.

In addition to the above, these restrictions on mobility and the "Stay at home" policies, implemented as quarantine measures, forced women to stay at home with their "abusers" or "potential abusers". Gender-based violence was exacerbated by informal employment, lack of employment, migration, and isolation. For many migrant women, seclusion in the workhouses inhabited by their aggressors represents latent daily dangers. The pandemic does not discriminate between nationalities, in this case, the centers for the care or reception of the migrant population are usually places with a high influx of people who do not always have biosafety supplies, which puts protection and prevention measures at risk.

On the other side, practicing prevention measures is difficult for migrants without access to hygiene products and drinking water. The R4V platform (2020), estimates that 1.65 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela and members at the host community need WASH assistance across the region. Irregular migrants may avoid health centers if they have symptoms for fear of being deported. With these facts and considering that approximately 10 million Latin Americans and Caribbeans reside in another country in the region, it is of most importance for the IDB that migrants are included in national COVID-19 response plans to protect everyone from health risks, as well as unemployment and exclusion. To learn firsthand how countries receiving sudden and large-scale flows are dealing with migration in times of COVID-19, the IDB held a Dialogue with senior migration authorities in Latin America.

Despite this, many of the receiving countries in the region were already implementing inclusive migration policies prior to the arrival of COVID-19. Countries such as Chile, Colombia, and Peru, that have guaranteed migrants' access to health services to treat coronavirus both through regular channels for regular migrants, and through emergency assistance for those with irregular status<sup>44</sup>. However, given the saturation of many health systems in Europe and other countries, there is real concern about the response capacity of the systems in the region. For this reason, governments such as Argentina, Chile and Peru have followed Portugal's and other European countries' lead by issuing a decree allowing health professionals with foreign degrees to practice their profession during the emergency. Migration is facing challenges unimaginable months ago, for which it is important to identify and adopt innovative ideas so that no one is left behind.

Another important aspect to highlight in terms of the differential effect of the pandemic is how it has had effects on the possibility of employability that migrants have. According to the survey on the quality of life and integration of Venezuelan migrants in Colombia, carried out in 2020, there are more migrant men working than women, that is, migrant men have a higher employment rate (79.9%) while those women have a lower employment rate (44.7%) (IBD,2020).

On the other hand, the unemployment rate is higher for migrant women with a 26% difference compared to men, likewise, the informality rate according to survey data is also higher for women. Following the above, the inactivity rate is higher for migrant women, since they are inactive at 26.5% while migrant men are inactive at 18.3%. Thus, it should be clarified that the inactivity rate is determined either because there is no desire to work but also because there is a dedication of time exclusively to domestic work and unpaid care, which again indicates a significant difference in terms of their distribution. Chores (ibidem).

Thus, it is relevant to note that Covid-19 has had differentiated effects on the migrant population, but it has also had them due to gender and has exacerbated situations of inequality, so we can recover from the gaps that the population has increased. The pandemic will not be easy. Ensuring care services without discrimination and attending to the needs of each population group is a fundamental task to improve the humanitarian assistance that is being provided to the migrant population. Establishing plans, programs, mechanisms and facilitating care routes for women is the next step to mitigate the negative effects caused by the pandemic. In this sense, the differential approach will make it possible to identify and locate the realities of people to meet their needs.

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<sup>44</sup> From Washington, Carissa F. Etienne, director of the Pan American Health Organization, confirmed that the agency's revolving fund will be used to help countries in Latin America and the Caribbean acquire sufficient vaccines to control the health crisis unleashed by covid-19. (Infobae, agosto, 2021)



## Local Humanitarian Action in Colombia

For some time now, critics of international humanitarian aid have been calling out for greater inclusion of actors from crisis-affected countries. The increased attention paid to this issue over the last decade has come together to produce a series of agendas that position the concepts of "localization" of humanitarian assistance, local humanitarian leadership" (LHL) and "local humanitarian action" (LHA). However, there is little consensus on the key definitions related to these terms. What does "local" really mean? Who qualifies as a "local humanitarian actor"? What are the objectives of these agendas? In general, these conversations have been driven by, and centered on the experiences of international humanitarian actors, a dynamic that has guided the discourse around the status quo and needed reforms.

The Feinstein International Center and the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University collaborated on a study to hear the perspectives of a diverse group of local humanitarian actors and their notions and definitions for local humanitarian action, the main obstacles, and opportunities for local humanitarian leadership, as well as priorities for further research and dialogue in the future (Oxfam, 2019). The research was organized around case studies taken from three different humanitarian responses likewise the response to the multi-conflict migrant and displacement crisis in Haiti and displacement crisis in Colombia.

A flexible methodology was designed to enable local actors to drive the orientation and priorities of the discussions; this openness produced three vastly different case studies. Despite the differences, patterns emerged in the narratives and observations of the three cases.

- International actors are also not homogeneous and can produce both positive and negative impacts on local humanitarian action and leadership. According to several local actors, to have a positive impact, international actors must intervene before (or between) crises on issues that are not traditionally considered humanitarian issues, such as governance or resilience. Although the literature focuses on international systems and actors as barriers to local humanitarian leadership, many local actors note that their governments pose an equal, if not greater, challenge to local humanitarian action. However, frustrations with states have not been seen as a justification for international actors to override the international actors to bypass state authority during a crisis.

Even though many local humanitarian actors considered funding and resources, essential components of humanitarian action, all interviewees emphasized the importance of the participation of this population in decision-making on how to deliver humanitarian aid. Although it is not possible to draw conclusions beyond the scope of the specific cases we studied, these cases can contribute to the broader discussion about humanitarian reforms related to local humanitarian leadership.

From the revised documents and reports of the organizations that carry out humanitarian action it is evidenced that they carry out evaluation of their actions, but consider that to determine the needs, there is a barrier about the availability of data, despite having various analyses carried out from the humanitarian community. Some databases of official sources of information and some gaps that need to be addressed from the humanitarian architecture were identified. Strengthen these analyses for future evaluation processes, expressing that the socialization and dissemination of needs assessments of the prioritized territories, in coordination spaces such as GiC and GTMI, is very important to be an input of the analysis. In addition, the changing dynamics and new<sup>1</sup> junctures in the country represent new analytical challenges.

The limitation on information of humanitarian consequences or refugees and migrants is due to the novelty of the methodology (which calls for the measurement of the severity and intensity of humanitarian needs), as well as the review of available sources of information. There are no elements needed to achieve these objectives and provide a disaggregation of humanitarian consequences for our population groups. In Colombia there is an interagency group, GIFMM, which is articulated for the humanitarian action of refugees and migrants, generating better results.

Colombia is the only country with a Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) that is also part of the R4V platform and Other major limitations of GIFMM are mainly due to sampling and the construction of different exercises; while sources of information meet the objectives in identifying needs, their lifting periods are heterogeneous. (OCHA HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OVERVIEW, 2020). It is noteworthy that there are important synergies between the different actors that generate the realization of better evaluations but that there is still a lack of stronger participation of the beneficiaries.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), in their 2019 report of identification of protection needs of the Venezuelan population in Colombia and other host countries, note that 52% of the migrant population are in irregular condition, this makes them especially vulnerable as their access to basic rights is more difficult. Regarding humanitarian assistance, 92% of interviewees stated they received food assistance; however, the population remains under extremely critical conditions in relation to this and other rights. Medium- and long-term strategies need to be implemented so they can have immediate access to institutional basic services, and economical integration that allows them to have lasting solutions based on self-sufficiency.

According to data from Migración Colombia (2021), Colombia had approximately 1,749.256 regular and irregular migrants from Venezuela residing in its territory. This population has entered the country, due to the neighboring country's complex economic, political, and social situation. In particular, the fall in oil prices has brought with it an unprecedented contraction in the neighboring country's gross domestic product, which has been accompanied by a rapid drop in purchasing power, real wages, and the exchange rate. Additionally, social, and political instability has materialized in historically high crime levels. The increase in the number of migrants from Venezuela has generated care needs for this population in terms of health, education, housing, water and basic sanitation, and job placement. Additionally, its accelerated increase in such a brief time generates pressure on the institutions in charge of border and migrant care, which do not have the sufficient capacity to continue serving this growing number of people.

That is why the Colombian government, through the national department of planning, convened a national council of economic and social policy with the participation of several national institutions, including: the Ministries of the Interior, Foreign Relations, National Defense, Health and Social Protection, Labor, Mines and Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism, National Education, Housing, City and Territory, the Administrative Department of the Presidency of the Republic, Colombian Institute of Family Welfare, Special Administrative Unit Migration Colombia National Institute of Health, National Institute of Medicines Surveillance, Unit for Comprehensive Attention and Reparation to Victims, National Unit for Disaster Risk Management, National Apprenticeship Service, and the Special Administrative Unit of the Public Employment Service.

Through this, a national council of economic and social policy (CONPES 3950 issued on 2018) document was created where it was made a compilation of the measures previously taken to deal with the migratory phenomenon from 2015 to 2018, as well as the needs for care and integration of the migrant population from Venezuela for later establishing strategies in health, education, early childhood, childhood and adolescence, work, housing, and security, as well as articulate the existing institutional framework and define new instances for the care of the migrant population from Venezuela in three years. The Action and Follow-up Plan (PAS) for this public policy is made up of a total of 22 actions that are agreed with by the different entities participating, which will be financed with the budget of each entity according to the Medium-Term Fiscal Framework current.

### Actual situation and funding:

According to OCHA (2021), Colombia is a country with multiple humanitarian needs. “Of 6.7M people in need, at least 2.9M exhibit critical needs that are classified as catastrophic in their severity” (párr.1). Due to the Covid-19 this situation has been aggravating and it has created new challenges for the government that needs to implement strategies to protect the people from armed violence, natural disasters, Covid-19, as well as population that arrived due the mixed migration flows OCHA (2021).

For the immigration case, Colombia issued the Temporary Protection Statute that grants legal status for Venezuelan migrants, allowing them access to work, education, and health system. The Statute also “includes the registry of the population target and a protection permit” (Brigard Urrutia, 2021) that can relate to their context, main challenges, and vulnerability. This aims to consolidate an information database that could be used to create new public policies that effectively respond to the migrant necessities. However, to guarantee their effectiveness, the Colombian government needs international funding and help. According to (Colombia presidency, 2020) in 2020, the public spending was taking between 0,19 and 0,5 of the Country GDP. For example, to implement all the strategies that CONPES 3950 include, around USD 106 million are necessary. In 2019, ICBF spent USD 66 million in programs to provide social attention; Education Ministry USD 116 million; Health Ministry 139 million. However, the money spent did not supply “all the budget associated with comprehensive care” (Colombia presidency, 2020, p. 229). It is due this context that the importance of promoting socioeconomic integration for the migrants was indispensable to reduce the public spending, improve their wellbeing, as well, generate economic growth (Colombia presidency, 2020).

Claudia Blum (Minister of foreign affairs) said in February of this year, that “Colombia's institutional capacity was overwhelmed so international cooperation was required” (Moreno, 2021, párr. 1). Some of the countries that have contributed are: United States, which donated around USD 300 million for the host countries that are supporting Venezuelan migrants and refugees. Spain, that donated EUR 144 million to Colombia to guarantee humanitarian assistance in border zones of the country (Moreno, 2021). The Arab Emirates donated USD 2 million “to strengthen humanitarian assistance and protection of the migrant population” (Today in 24, 2021). Colombia’s president Ivan Duque, thanked the financing of USD 800 million that the World Bank and Interamerican Development Bank gave the country to support the public policy of attention to migrants (chancellery, 2021). However not only the funding is needed, but also the coordination of different actors (international governments, local institutions, and NGOs) to support migrants and create last longer solutions (Reliefweb, 2021).

#### b) Key Stakeholder Mapping results

Under the methodology of the Mapping of Key Actors (MAC) of a structural type, it allows the creation of the theory of social networks, the functions and influence exercised by the main actors within a given phenomenon, as well as their primary interests and the articulation and incidence in the policymaking (Fundación Cambio Democrático, 2016). For example, the phenomenon of mixed migratory flows from Venezuela represents a break in the process of care, assistance, and accompaniment in humanitarian response. Colombia has historically been established as a country of constant internal and external migratory flows due to the armed conflict, the fight, and dispossession against drug trafficking and land tenure.

In turn, social vulnerability is reflected in dynamics of food insecurity, generalized violence, and lack of opportunities to meet basic needs. Although at least in the 20th century, four waves of Colombian migration abroad can be seen through the reasons mentioned, it is since 2015 and with the gradual deterioration of economic and



social conditions in Venezuela that generated an unprecedented wave of international migrants and asylum seekers in the country, as well as an unparalleled return of Colombian nationalized Venezuelan citizens who had to return to the country (Cancillería de Colombia, s.f).

The non-state and state actors that once focused their efforts on the phenomena of internal vulnerability did not cease to be present or eliminate humanitarian assistance programs but instead created and integrated new spaces to respond to the international migration crisis of At least, according to UNHCR figures of 4 million Venezuelan migrants, with about 2 million present in Colombia, making it internationally the country with the second highest reception and transit of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the world (UNHCR, 2020).

In this way, four groups of actors have been identified according to their influence and response capacity in humanitarian assistance, for this purpose a scale of value was assigned to each actor from 1 to 5. Thus, those with greater national scope of execution and greater power of alliance and influence are grouped in the first group. the second group is constituted by actors that have national scope, but influence and response is on a smaller scale. The third group corresponds to the actors that participate from government sector and the civil association. This Group has a medium scope and medium influence in the implementation of humanitarian assistance projects. Finally, the fourth group represent grassroots organizations, Wich in most cases generate the necessary spaces for first contact with the population. Its scope is limited to the sub-national sphere and greater influence at the local level.

In the first group, we found at least 41 international cooperation organizations, the first and most influential according to the value scale is assigned towards the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees -UNHCR- Its position is since 1997 in Colombia; it has worked hand by hand with the government, communities, civil society organizations, and United Nations agencies. It has also help with the strengthening asylum procedures for people in need of international protection, contributing to the prevention of displacement and protection of displaced persons, guaranteeing humanitarian assistance in cases where the state cannot respond, optimizing public policies related to durable solutions, and promoting the development of the legislative framework for the prevention and protection of stateless persons and those at risk of being apart (UNHCR, 2021).

In turn, it has 11 offices and about 300 employees, who work to respond to the humanitarian challenge generated by the massive arrival of the population from Venezuela with international protection needs. Also focusing on the strengthen institutional and community capacities for the prevention and protection of internal displacement. UNHCR also monitors the Peace Agreement with emphasis on the rights of the victims (Point 5 of the Agreement) to contribute to the process of reconciliation and peacebuilding, including sustainable solutions and guarantees of the rights of the truth, justice, reparation, and non-repetition of the victims of forced displacement in the country (UNHCR, 2021)

Currently, according to the APC Colombia page<sup>45</sup> aimed at monitoring intervention projects, there are assistance programs called: Migrant Center whose objective is to provide guidance and advice to the asylum-seeking population, returnees, deportees, displaced persons which human rights have been violated because of the migratory phenomenon, despite being built in 2010 in the Caribbean region of Colombia, in the border areas of Guajira and Maicao similar projects have been carried out in the interior and south of the country.

In turn, another actor that shares its degree of influence in the region and with similar technical and logistical capacities is the International Organization for Migration -IOM- which, being an intergovernmental organization because of the flow and displacement caused by the Second World War focuses its efforts under the slogan that

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<sup>45</sup> The Presidential Agency for International Cooperation of Colombia, APC-Colombia, aims to manage, guide, and technically coordinate public, private, technical, and financial non-reimbursable international cooperation that the country receives and grants; and to implement, administer and support the channelling and implementation of international cooperation resources, programmes, and projects, in accordance with foreign policy objectives and the National Development Plan.

migration inhumane conditions and in an orderly manner benefits migrants and society, has generated enormous international acceptance. (IOM, 2021).

In Colombia, the IOM has been characterized as a leader in Colombia in the execution of projects that benefit the population in search of international protection, returning migrants, labor migrants, victims of human trafficking, and displaced persons; Children and young people disengaged from illegal armed groups, demobilized linked to reintegration processes, victims of illegal armed groups and displaced due to natural disasters, as well as the strengthening of government capacity in the migration agenda, the organization has designed its activities in Colombia to serve population groups linked to forced migration. These groups include the population victim of internal forced displacement; Boys, Girls, and Adolescents disengaged from illegal armed groups or at risk of involvement; people in the process of reintegration into civil life and victims of illegal armed groups (IOM Colombia, 2021).

Currently, emergency response programs and assistance to displaced persons are additionally implemented to contribute to the Colombian government's efforts to address the humanitarian needs of migrants, returnees, and vulnerable people from host communities affected by the flows. Migrants from Venezuela migratory flows. Likewise, efforts of less influence and of a more regional order stand out. The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation currently exercises assistance and accompaniment programs to the return migration process in the border departments of Guajira and Nariño with the aim of improving conditions life of the Venezuelan and Colombian population returned to Colombia. In turn, participates as the main donor with a contribution budget of USD 329,015.00 in programs in Cúcuta and its metropolitan area (Villa del Rosario, Zulia, Los Patios) in order to provide primary and humanitarian care services to the Venezuelan and returnee population entering Colombia, the executor is the Spanish Red Cross CRE.

Under the same regional scope, Action Against Hunger, under a current cooperation project with investment funds of the Canadian government, implements nutrition and protection programs in Colombia for populations affected by the migratory crisis to increase human dignity and contribute to improving the quality of life of women and girls in La Guajira and Norte de Santander through a comprehensive response with a gender perspective.

For its part, Global Affairs Canada as a donor and the International Rescue Committee in the position of executor develop humanitarian assistance programs that seek to carry out protection and health activities, as well as a characterization system for the granting of monetary transfers and inclusion of financial institutions to the population from Venezuela, its influence is centered in the northeastern region of the country, mainly in the department of Norte de Santander in the municipalities of Cúcuta, Los Patios and Villa del Rosario.

Global Affairs Canada also runs programs to reduce the gap in quality access to sexual and reproductive health services for women, men, and adolescents from both migrants and host communities, oriented from April 2019 to March 2020 in The Caribbean Region. Likewise, it participates in programs to guarantee the right to safe, quality learning and with a gender perspective for girls affected by the crisis on the Colombian-Venezuelan border.

Another key actor and with a strong institutional presence in the territory is the Norwegian Council for Refugees, which as executor and under the financial and technical assistance of USD 2,283,640.00 from the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection -ECHO- of the European Commission, provide humanitarian assistance and protection to people affected by the Venezuelan crisis in Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Venezuela. In the country this program is present in the departments of Atlántico, Cesar, La Guajira, Magdalena, Cundinamarca, Norte de Santander, Arauca, Cauca, Nariño, and Valle del Cauca (APC, s.f).

ECHO also provides financial assistance to the International Rescue Committee, which as executing agency develops integrated multisectoral programs in Venezuela and Colombia in response to the humanitarian crisis. This action seeks to address the critical needs to save lives among the affected populations under the approach of

comprehensive access to services, quality, nutrition, and protection, as well as the development of capacities and support to local partners in Colombia, focused on Bogotá, Norte de Santander, and Antioquia.

Likewise, as a donor, it executes the assistance of the humanitarian assistance program in Venezuela and neighboring countries with Oxfam as executor; the purpose of this project is to address the humanitarian consequences of the Venezuelan crisis both in Venezuela and in the host countries.

In the tracing, the United States Agency for International Development USAID also stands out for its capacity to influence and technical capacity, which develops School feeding programs to strengthen capacity at the national level and serve the migrant population enrolled in schools in schools. Priority areas of the country. In the departments of Cundinamarca, La Guajira, Magdalena, Antioquia, Atlántico, and Valle del Cauca, it establishes alliances at the local level under the consortium for effective urban assistance -CUA- that aims to save lives, alleviate suffering, and reduce social and economic impacts. Of the Venezuelan crisis in vulnerable Venezuelan migrants, such as repatriated Colombians, internally displaced persons, and mixed migrants.

At the same time, under the objective of supporting the need for health and washing for Venezuelan migrants in Bucaramanga and Medellín, it generates assistance programs in health services and medical supplies. The assistance that is articulated to the intervention programs that were already carried out in the country, specifically in the departments of Cundinamarca, Guajira, Norte de Santander, and Arauca, for the reduction of sanitary and health needs within the framework of migratory protection and host communities.

USAID and ECHO have been two of the guarantors with the greatest cooperation resources for the administration of the migratory crisis. The USAID Food for Peace Office provides food assistance to migrants and host communities in the north and center of the country as well as the implementation of programs for the protection of children on the move, which together with UNICEF as executor supports efforts to protect unaccompanied children in the migratory flow from Venezuela passing through and residing in Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.

Within the Mapping of Key Actors carried out, it is considered relevant to include the government entities and institutions that within the territorial autonomies and in the joint work plan with the presidency of Colombia have generated spaces for inclusion, assistance, and accompaniment of the asylum-seeking population, refugee and migrant from Venezuela., The support can be classified in all the entities consulted as very active, with a moderate interest in part due to the legal articulation and political will that there should be in government decisions, it depends largely on the level of involvement of the organizations in assisting the channels that the local and national government open in allowing humanitarian attention.

Finally, the same migratory dynamics as indicated by the Colombia Migration figures went from 2014 to 2017 from being a phenomenon with the greatest impact on the border to being perceived in the main cities and tertiary municipalities from 2018 to the present, the exponential proportion of migration flows exerted pressure on local entities, as well as on national institutions to generate opening channels.

At the national level, the government at the head of the presidency and its ministries has generated routes of action and accompaniment as well as the creation of channels that allow access and regularization of the migrant population, in accordance with international protection treaties and agreements. To human rights, among them is Decree 216 of 2021 Being the government's largest regularization commitment, seeking to regularize more than 1 million migrants, reduce statelessness and the risk of statelessness (Law 1997, 2019), guarantee the right to health (Decree 1288, 2018), education (Circular No. 16, 2019) and mechanisms of labor flexibility and regulation (Decree 117, 2020).

At emergency assistance level, local governments have overseen generating care and support routes in Valle del Cauca whilst the district mayor's office created programs that seek to advance care programs for the Venezuelan population, focused on carrying out productive projects and incentivize labor reintegration. More programs include the installation of information points in the transport terminal, as well as the qualification of humanitarian corridors

for the Venezuelan population. Buses were offered for their return to Venezuela because of the Covid-19 pandemic, a dynamic replicated in Huila, Cauca, and Antioquia.

In Bogotá, the district mayor's office has generated the opening of a Migrant Attention Center where humanitarian assistant services are provided, delivering hygiene items, personal items and if you require accommodation, for up to 5 days in the temporary reception for migrants that the Secretariat has,

There were various routes activated by the government at the national level with the Colombian Family Welfare Institute, the Colombian Civil Defense, the National Risk Management Unit, and the Ombudsman's Office to present inter-institutional actions aimed at the comprehensive protection of children and migrant adolescents, installation of the Strategic Table for Migrant Children. They aimed at three components: comprehensive protection and stabilization, integration and future, support for the delivery of humanitarian aid on the border with Venezuela, various vaccination campaigns, medical services, etc.

A third group within the mapping constitutes civil society organizations. These organizations usually carry out medium-scale work, their assistance position is active but does not have a presence throughout the territory, efforts are focused on certain specific areas with moderate interests, the Organización Compartir por Una Vida Colombia seeks to implement comprehensive programs in a safe, dignified, and appropriate environment against child malnutrition of the refugee, migrant, and host population. They are currently developing the Stay in School program with a wide network of allies, which seeks to consolidate protective environments in educational spaces to promote the integral well-being of children and adolescents in the context of migration in Norte de Santander.

In turn, the Venezuelan Foundation in Cúcuta is one of the most recognized at the national level, which has been positioning itself as an important ally in humanitarian aid programs and projects for the inclusion of the Venezuelan diaspora. Under the Yo Apoyo a Casa Venezuela program, they seek to make commitments for the payment of rent for the vulnerable Venezuelan population; likewise, the Casa Venezuela Collection Center program in Villa del Rosario seeks to activate a contingency plan that allows offering solutions for food, security, supply of supplies of personal hygiene and some medicines.

The positioning of most of the organizations appeals to the sense of inclusion and improvement of the quality of life of those most affected by the Venezuelan crisis. The Nueva Ilusión Foundation aims to group, and support returned Colombians, mixed families, and Venezuelan migrants with the main action on the Colombian-Venezuelan border through community dining programs, assistance with toilet kits, legal advice, and psychosocial care.

From the labor sector, community leaders, influencers, and artists seek to promote and generate impact through programs. The AidLive Foundation has promoted periodic programs such as Somos Uno, Somos Uno x Choco, Alimenta el Futuro, Stay in School, Walking with Hope, Walking without Borders.

Finally, and at a level of interrelation and less influence in varying degrees of georeferencing so far described, is the fourth group: grassroots organizations that have a work of socialization, dissemination, and awareness of programs, agreements, and updates that allow the social inclusion of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and returned Colombians. An example of this is the Fundación Hijos de la Guajira who seek to raise awareness in our community about the importance of loving, caring for, protecting and educating our children at times when that the social and political crisis in Venezuela forces their parents and relatives to emigrate many times against their will in search of a better future through medical days, educational and recreational activities that encourage our children to love our animals, conserve and care our environment and to foster respect and tolerance among communities.

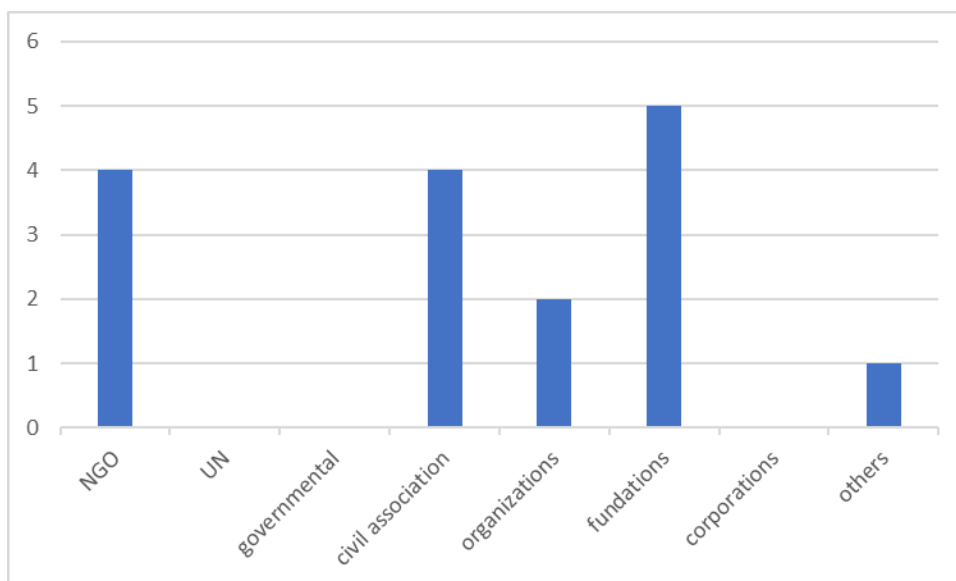
Following the same trend, we find it relevant to point to Venezuelans by Decision, who provides advice to migrants and returnees on labor issues, explaining the steps they must take to remain in Colombia legally, operations to collect clothing, food, and supplies. For Venezuelans arriving at the Bogotá transportation terminal. Advice to Venezuelans in judicial cases, for example, rapes, robberies, among others. Preparation of awareness workshops in cases of protection of minors, in which they must do to obtain their legal support and avoid begging in the streets.

In turn, grassroots organizations are the main ally in terms of humanitarian aid and rapid response in areas with the greatest presence of vulnerable populations, the organization Casa de Paso Divina Providencia develops food programs for Venezuelans, they receive supplies, clothing, and all kinds of aid that are donated to migrants and deliver medicines when they make donations and in support of the transit of migrants to other countries in the region, such as Tricolor Walkers who articulate programs for the delivery of donations in food, medicine, hydration, which they distribute to shelters or directly to walkers. They provide help and education to migrants on duties and rights. They give workshops on access to health, education, work. They treat and advise on issues such as xenophobia, the productive incorporation of Venezuelans.

c) Interview findings

Of the organizations and non-state actors that were surveyed a sample of 14 actors. This sample that included non-governmental organizations (4), civil associations (2), grassroots organizations (4) and foundations (4). Among the responses to the mission carried out in the country, most of the responses focus on the content of accompaniment, assistance, and advice to vulnerable populations in the country, emphasis is placed on interrelated work with other organizations, as well as promotion of moral and Christian values for the improvement of the living conditions of its beneficiaries.

**Table No. 1: Type of organization/institutions.**



Regarding the vision of the organizations, the interviewed representatives indicate categories such as the empowerment and training of the target population. This using the conventions, international and national legal framework, as well as social responsibility and practices of transversal inclusion as a Colombian labor market, the effective enjoyment of rights, intervening in a practical way to human development, being a national and international benchmark for their ability to contribute and assist in transformations through the design and implementation of social projects. The most common themes developed are access to education, sexual and

reproductive health, AIDS programs, community empowerment, access to services for cancer patients, nutritional treatments, stays, transits and shelter for migrants.

Most interviewees point out that the projects executed and those that are in force depend on the alliances built to carry them out, both non-governmental organizations (macro), civil associations (meso) as well as grassroots organizations and local foundations (micro) generate effective alliances to cover the spectrum of attention and accompaniment, others related the projects according to the regions in which they have incidence, as well as their executive capacity measured in data of impact on the population with social projects or demographic characterization.

Regarding the legal constitution and impact on projects, we identified a proliferation of grassroots organizations from the same expansion in the dynamics of mixed migratory flows from Venezuela, 75% of the cases this dynamic is followed. In turn pointing out how they were expanding to other regions despite having an incorporated headquarters and differentiating the programs aimed at the refugee and migrant population from the traditionally benefited population, in areas such as Bogotá, Cartagena, Cali, Ipiales, Medellín, Cúcuta, Guajira, San Andres Island, and Providencia Island.

Most organizations relate the issues in which they work to the empowerment of the vulnerable population in areas such as regularization and acquisition of goods and services and empowerment of rights; the dynamics vary according to the field of action of each actor, in specific cases, we find issues aimed at migrant children and adolescents from counseling and psychosocial support to pedagogical support, in all cases, the problems seek to be integrative with the rest of the community.

The humanitarian assistance projects in the selected sample are remarkably diverse, in which the holistic vision of configuring environments accessible to all members of the community in which they are developed is established, thus, the most significant mentioned by them are:

- Migratory legal advice, access to rights, legal assistance in health, education, land, and housing.
- Training in bakery, beauty makeup, and hairdressing
- Support for business ventures
- Family planning for migrant women
- Primary and secondary health care programs.
- School-feeding programmes, basic education services, provision of school kits.
- Funeral aid to low-income people, food security.

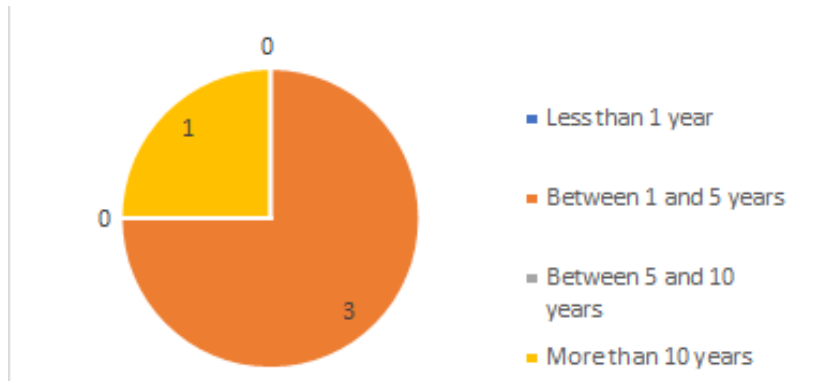
### Evaluation models

About evaluation models, the organizations surveyed in this sample at the general level have internalized follow-up processes to their indicators as well as management in terms of internal capacity, financial, technical and personnel resources, as well as the acclaim in geographic location or by themes.

Of the 14 organizations surveyed, 71% have carried out evaluations of results in meeting objectives compared with 29% who do not. These organizations are: Fundatransvida; Mesa interreligiosa; Sepaz; Fundación Hijos de la Guajira.

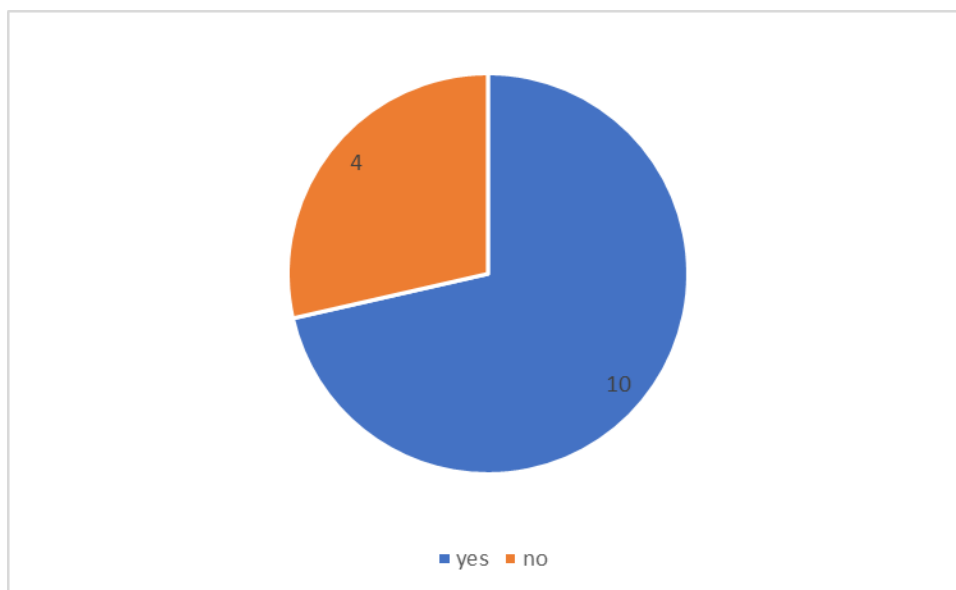
The main reason is that its constitution time is less compared to other organizations, in all cases arose to respond to the Venezuelan migration crisis, also, the 4 cases are micro-level organizations, that is, grassroots organizations that entrust their processes to the project sponsors:

**Table No. 2: How long ago was your organization constituted?**



For the total sample, the 14 organizations responded to the question whether or not they are involved in the evaluation processes carried out, either by themselves, the sponsors or mixed, 71% responded positively, equivalent to 10 organizations (Concejo Danes para los Refugiados; Fundacion Fuerza y Fé; Fundación Carvajal, Fundación ColVenz, Aldeas Infantiles Colombia, Corporación Opción Legal, Pastoral Social para Migrantes, Fundacion Manitas Amarillas, FUNDACION NIÑOS Y NIÑAS CON CANCER SOÑAR CUCUTA, Fundación Comparte por una Vida Colombia):

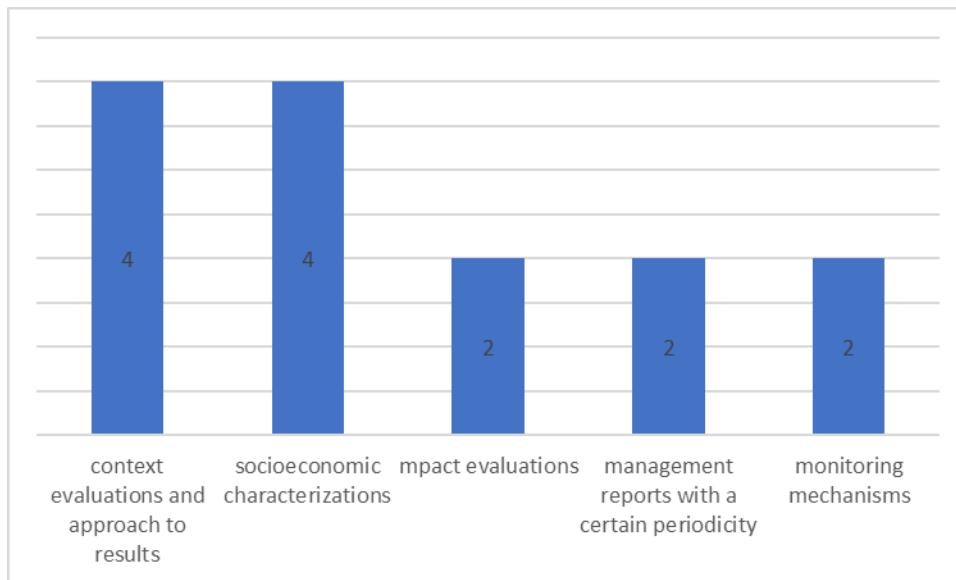
**Table No. 3: Has your organization ever been involved in conducting performance and goal achievement evaluations?**





When asked about the type of evaluations they have developed, most of them indicate that they have assessments aimed at identifying shortcomings and challenges, as well as the effective fulfillment of the goals defined by them and by their sponsors. Only one stakeholder mentions not having its own defined or standardized tool, even though it continuously explores the results from the training conducted: Thus, they identify the type of evaluation as: context evaluations and approach to results (4), socioeconomic characterizations (4), impact evaluations (2), management reports with a certain periodicity (2), monitoring mechanisms (2):

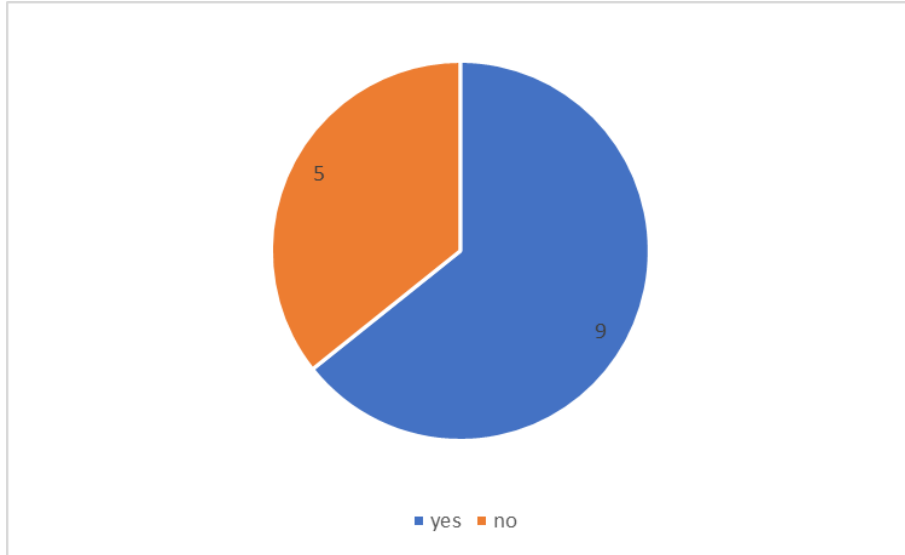
**Table No. 4: Types of assessment most used by participants**



In turn, the internal capacity of the organization to carry out evaluations of results understood as having technical equipment, measurement instruments or monitoring plans, 64 % of those interviewed indicate that their organizations have this capacity, compared to 26 % that do not have it, This means that 9 organizations say they have the capacity to advance these processes compared to 5 that do not, where the grassroots organizations formed in the last 5 years do not yet have the capacity translated into technical equipment, measuring instruments, monitoring plans (*Mesa interreligiosa, manitas amarillas, Fundación niños con cáncer, fundatransvida, Fundacion fuerza y fé*).

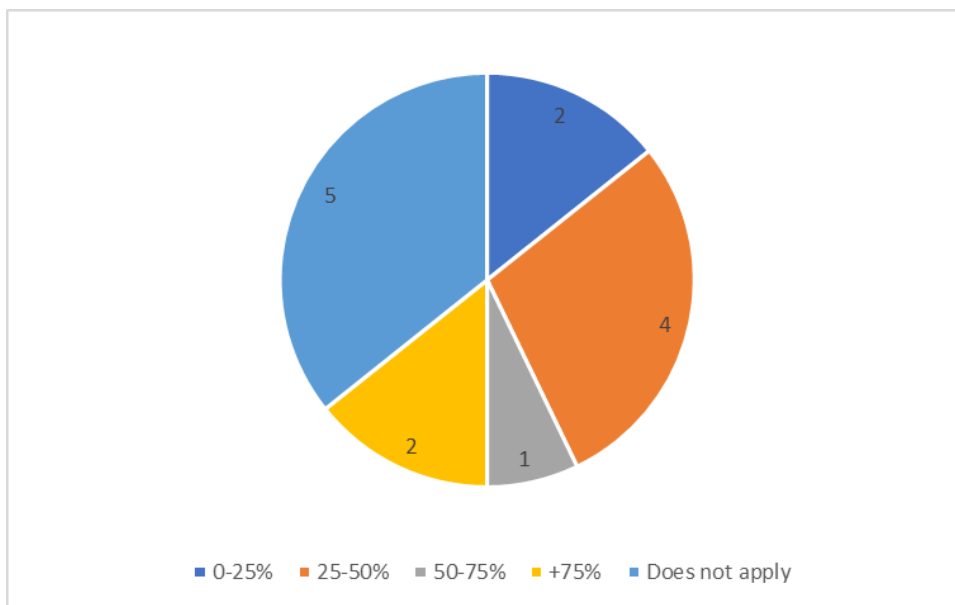


**Table No. 5: Has internal capacity (technical equipment, measurement instruments, monitoring plans) to conduct performance evaluations?**



Depending on the capacity of each organization, it is the proportion of the personnel that participates or is responsible for the evaluations, so in each defined category find that 5 participate less than 25%, 4 of respondents have staff or staff directly involved in the evaluation between 25 and 50%, In just one case, your staff is involved in between 50% and 75% of the evaluation, in 2 cases participate in a percentage greater than or equal to 75%, Finally, two of them did not want to answer:

**Table No. 6: What is the proportion of staff who participate in or are responsible for the evaluations?**



Regarding the open question on the elements that they consider relevant to the evaluation processes in their organizations, the representatives pointed out that despite in many cases not having the local capacity to carry out evaluations, the groups meet in order to express and provide feedback on the work they carry out, so that in most cases with hierarchical structures the coordinators can learn about the challenges faced by the personnel who have direct contact with the beneficiaries: most organizations have evaluation processes based on permanent training such as the characterization and challenges to be met and through instruments that allow evidence of the impact of their projects, the shortcomings, the correct application in the completion times, budget, and compliance with indicators.

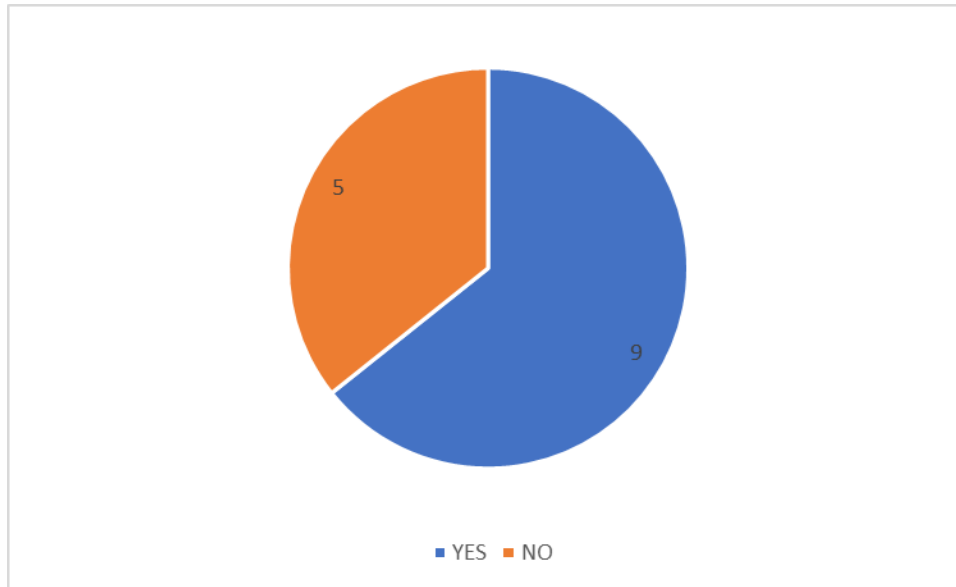
Regarding the challenges and perspectives, the grassroots organizations state that a great challenge to implement participatory evaluation methods is the lack of monetary resources and, consequently, the impossibility of hiring personnel to support the application of the evaluations. Grassroots organizations function with the resources that the founders and directors themselves contribute. Only for 2021 they celebrated projects with sponsors who can transfer resources to them and, they hope to be able to implement some type of evaluation within the project lines. But the panorama changes when the corporations were interviewed because they do implement evaluation methods and therefore, they indicate that the main challenges are to generate well-executed evaluations to receive adequate responses and ensure that different actors who have different roles and characteristics participate.

Although there is a difference between grassroots organizations and corporations, since the former do not implement participatory evaluation models, while the latter do, it is pertinent to highlight that both groups recognize the importance of evaluating the lines of their projects. This is because they are aware that evaluation is a way of plotting and measuring what has been planned and executed for a subsequent measurement of objectives and results. Therefore, regarding the perspective that organizations have on participatory evaluation, they consider it important and necessary to evaluate their projects and participate in larger-scale projects together with international organizations.

### Participatory evaluation

64% of the respondents consider that their organizations use participatory evaluation methods against 36% who do not consider it. In other words, despite they understand participatory evaluation as the approach that attempts to build models of monitoring and compliance of indicators from the interaction between the human talent of the organizations and the beneficiaries to understand first-hand the needs of the beneficiary in the project and the decisions taken by the organization, there are challenges such as the ability of the organization to develop more participatory strategies as well as the context of the last 2 years to approach the community.:

**Table No. 7: Does your organization use participatory evaluation methods to measure the results obtained?**



The participatory evaluation processes of the surveyed organizations relate in all cases the integration not only of the contracted team but also of the beneficiaries. Through formal and informal meetings, they discuss the progress and challenges they encounter in the implementation of the project; it does not seem to be the norm that there is periodicity in their evaluation meetings. However, they mention that the sessions are constant and consist of discussing the implementation, budgets, and approach of the activities; they also note that the agenda is proposed by the funders and under the times that are previously stipulated.

Regarding the challenges in the participatory evaluation, a shortcoming pointed out by all interviewees was the issue of internet connection due to the requirements of limiting face-to-face meetings by covid-19; they also relate that there is a lack of training for both hired personnel and beneficiaries. In the case of personnel, they point out that training is required from the correct filling out of the matrices and formats to how to approach or communicate with the target population; regarding the beneficiary population, it is needed to be constantly in communication to achieve the objectives: Likewise, they tend to consider the levels of vulnerability to which assistance is provided and the barriers that these manifests to carry out the evolution of the projects, highlighting the current difficulty of staying in contact with all the beneficiaries.

Also, the interviewed identified in lessons learned the importance of planning and verification that is achieved with the direct and permanent contact of the team and its beneficiaries, as well as the importance of adapting the models, approach and methodologies dictated by the sponsors to address the specific context, as well as keeping in mind that all assistance and accompaniment work must be following human principles and values.

They point out the importance of complying with the planning as an element to evaluate the work carried out, the need to give voice and participation to the project beneficiaries, have a holistic understanding of the context and recognize the intersectionality and differential approach since this allows the differentiated impacts to be made visible that are sought in projects.

Regarding participatory methods, the interviewees pointed out that the evaluation processes in most cases are transversal and do not depend on a single differentiated cycle. Despite this, some organizations point out that they have closed processes where the feasibility of the project is discussed between coordinators and advisors, in turn, depending on the project, the participants and those in charge are designated, all relate that the process is

democratic and participatory, through surveys and suggestion boxes they measure the impact and perception of the beneficiaries to articulate the advanced process.

The Information is constantly collected for the characterization of the community, continuously enriching it, considering that the conditions of the community are continually changing. They are currently developing another instrument where the migrant community can express their opinions on the management of the organization and future goals, such as a suggestion box. He considers that they are the base of the pyramid that is in direct contact with the people, being the link between the beneficiary population and other organizations.

Participatory methods are transversal, the different departments generate a hierarchical model where workloads are discussed, the response and follow-up to indicators, and round tables are held to strengthen the shortcomings evidenced in areas such as translations, time issues, etc.

It is a network where volunteers have the initiative to get help for the beneficiaries, and as the number of volunteers increases, they can increase their impact in different ways on the needs of the population. Before implementing a project, they have feasibility meetings, but they are closed to the leaders and volunteers; during the implementation, the beneficiaries do participate directly, but the directors (volunteers involved and leaders) make the decisions about the continuity of the project and the way to execute it.

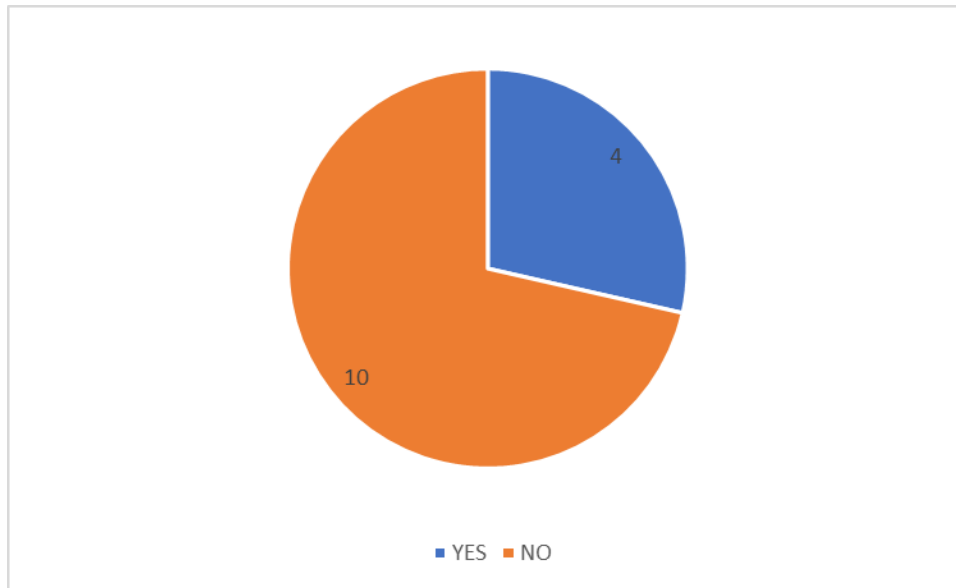
They always consider the population according to the profiles identified in the database. For example, to receive medical care, they consider migrants with training in the health sector to participate in the projects during project planning. During implementation, they receive feedback from the beneficiary population to be able to solve eventual problems better, but decisions are made by the board of directors.

It is carried out in a transversal and participatory manner; the satisfaction surveys allow to measure throughout the project cycle the comments and suggestions of the beneficiaries. There is also a line of friendly spaces with community leaders and a suggestion box where they are encouraged to participate.

The gathering of information, the assessment of needs and deficiencies, as well as the evaluation of results and measurement of results are considered open and democratic, but also adaptive to the needs of the funders and their own objectives as an organization.

In turn, 71% it indicated that the evaluations carried out or subcontracted do not focus directly on emergency response for the refugee and migrant population, compared to 29% that do have differentiated evaluation processes for this population group:

**Table No. 8: Have you conducted or subcontracted evaluations that specifically focused on emergency response or integration of refugees and migrants?**

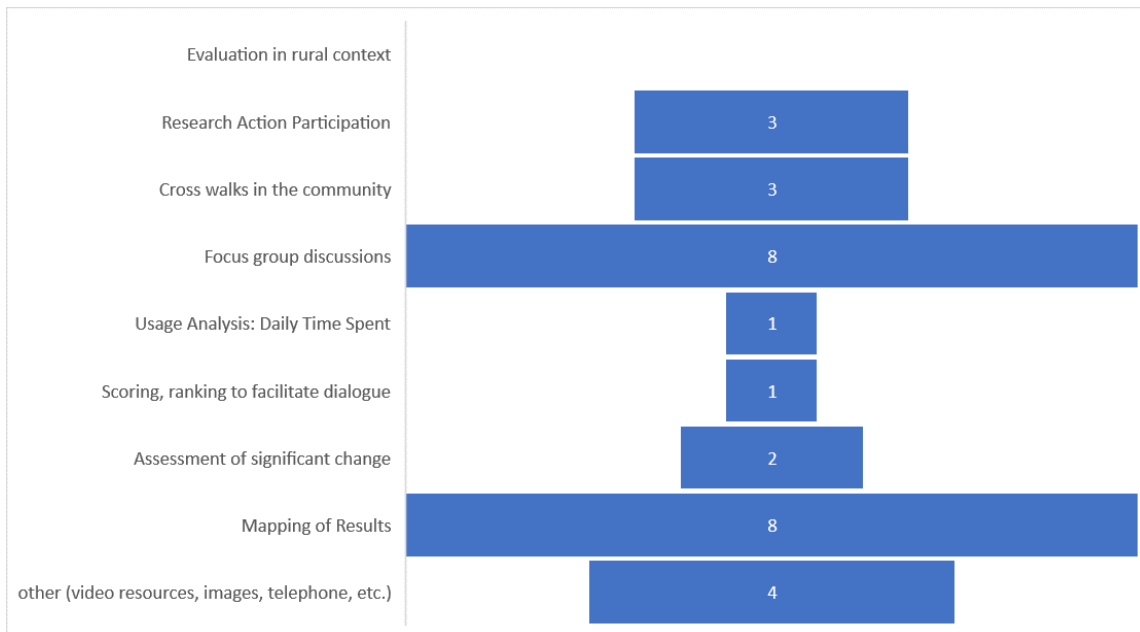


Regarding the 29% who indicate that there is a differentiation in their evaluation processes of the migrant and refugee population compared to the evaluations regularly followed in the programs implemented. It is estimated that the assessment of the accompaniment and legal advice phase should be approached differently from the assistance in food and delivery of necessities kits.

Regarding the adjustment made to the evaluation methodologies for humanitarian projects, the interviewees pointed out that sometimes the matrices provided by the sponsors fall short of what is needed to measure the specific cases and thus guide the action, and that the best evaluation tool is sought based on the objectives. Likewise, they point out that the methodological adjustment of the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms has been gradual and progressive, seeking not only the adaptation of new strategies but the implementation of new projects, that is, a constant review and integration of new objectives.

The following graph shows the participatory methods, tools, or techniques most used in humanitarian response programs or integration programs for refugees and migrants implemented by the interviewees. In most cases, focus groups (8) and outcome mapping (8) methodologies are used, followed by asynchronous survey resources, dialogue and opinion gathering used in time of coronavirus pandemic (4):

**Table No. 9: What kind of participatory methods, tools, or techniques have you used to conduct evaluations of humanitarian response programs/refugee and migrant integration programs?**



Regarding the challenges posed by participatory evaluation methods versus those that are not, interviewees point out that the main challenge is in terms of coordination between the various elements raised by both program staff and beneficiaries. Here they highlight the importance of feedback but also point out how the technical aspects can become a challenge in environments that are more face-to-face and require field visits and direct accompaniment; the COVID pandemic, public order problems, and internet connection are recurring themes.

About the different results that participatory models may have compared to those that are not, the respondents indicated that participatory evaluation models have always been used, while others related it to the diversity of the objectives, making them more of a complementary tool, while others pointed out that, since they are ever-changing and quite dynamic processes, meeting the objectives and generating positive impact would be the expected results:

In turn, they point out that they have provided different results as far as it allows them to show opportunities to improve aspects that are not considered in the formulation and to collect more precise information on the results and impact of the interventions from the change of context or the appearance of new social phenomena.

The interviewees consider that the most useful methods are discussion, internal focus groups, support from experts, workshops, audit processes, application of interviews and measurement surveys, petition and claim system, development of committees that are transversal to implementation with the participation of other actors and reports for monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of their projects, as they allow them to constantly propose and evaluate:

Likewise, they point out the importance of direct conversations, interviews, and surveys as more effective mechanisms when it comes to participatory measurement, if these are carried out across the entire project.

The added value perceived by the respondents is the communication network created in the participatory evaluation processes, as it allows them to identify gaps, increase the impact of their projects, gather more accurate information, and focus on benefits:

They identify as added value the connection between the team and the beneficiaries, the constructive criticisms carried out that allow the exponential growth of the action capacity of their organizations, as well as the constant redesign because the schemes must be adjusted to the conditions and capacity of the participant and organizational population.

Regarding the key lessons learned from their experience in the participatory evaluation process, the respondents indicated that there are challenges and that they are continuously working on them, one is the volume of work and the capacity to respond to all the demands it proposes, on the other hand, they point out the need for international organizations and government administrations to generate integration campaigns for the refugee and migrant population as well as the routes that are available at the government level, ways of social, economic, psychological assistance, among others.

The implementation of a gender perspective within organizations is very diverse. In the first place, there are those organizations that do have a gender focus or perspective within the lines of projects and evaluations. This perspective includes the characterization of the population, the disaggregation between genders, the link between men and women in the labor market, among others. Based on this, they incorporate differential actions aimed at identifying risks and impacts at the head of specially protected groups. Second, there are organizations that, although they do not implement gender perspectives in their evaluations, do have differential mechanisms to process cases that require a gender perspective. For example, an organization observes whether in the specific case the woman has suffered from gender-based violence, is assigned a female collaborator or refers to the relevant judicial authority. Third and last, there is an organization that does not implement a gender perspective and that, in addition, considers that it is not necessary since it states that the duty is to serve the entire Venezuelan migrant population without giving a different procedure.

The gender perspective presents different nuances depending on the organization, its nature and size, as well as the scope that is handled and the approach that is to be provided within each process. To illustrate, it is worth comparing three organizations that participated in the interviews: Fundatransvida, Corporación Minuto de Dios and Opción Legal.

The Fundatransvida organization works with Venezuelan family heads in the development of projects and training to improve their living conditions. In addition, they have family planning lines as an alternative mechanism that allows counteracting the institutional barriers that exist with respect to access to contraceptive methods.

One of the methodologies that is implemented in the attention lines are the focus groups where a great diversity of people gets involved to tackle problems depending on the topic to be addressed. In the words of its director Edgar Antúnez, “we had about 500 pregnant women in these focus groups. The fact that this group was reduced to 60 and the family planning group increased to 600, there we already see the impact of all women who have family planning” (Antúnez, 2021). Addressing family planning from organizations that carry out humanitarian actions implies recognizing the importance of guaranteeing sexual and reproductive health as a fundamental intervention in the dignified life of the migrant population.

However, carrying out this type of intervention and action requires a differential approach that allows us to understand the realities and complexities of migrants who ask for help. Although the aid must be provided in a comprehensive manner and without excluding any person, organization or community, they all have particularities that require different attention. The procedures and differentiated strategies are important because the requirements of the people are not the same. If a woman goes to an organization in order to obtain family planning mechanisms, the treatment must be different from that of a man who goes for the same request. Taking into account the context in which the problem is framed allows identifying the possible solutions that can be given to it.

For its part, the Minuto de Dios Corporation, through the projects it carries out in employability and reestablishment of rights in the Venezuelan migrant population, identifies that one of the ways in which the gender perspective is incorporated is in the processes of characterization of the beneficiary population of each project. One of the main results of this characterization is to realize that those who attend the employability projects the most are migrant women. However, they are the ones who report the most acts of discrimination, for example, in the interviews they carry out to access a job. Angélica Castaño, an employability professional at the Minuto de Dios Corporation, points out that migrant women “were asked questions in (job) interviews if you plan, how many children do you have, who cares for your children, then it is an issue that is It presents frequently, in fact, there are some companies that if women are not operated so as not to have more children, let's say so, they do not hire them” (Castaño, 2021).

Taking these results into account, the Corporation implemented the strategy of not specifying gender in the vacancies that are posted on its job offers platform. Although this is a strategy that seeks to mitigate possible actions of discrimination based on gender, the Corporation's employability team does not identify the incorporation of the gender perspective in a transversal manner within its practices. The gender approach appears as an isolated issue from the entire work of the Corporation (intervention, training and support for employment) and as an issue that is limited to the definition of the number of men and women beneficiaries of the project. Additionally, within the techniques used for the evaluation of humanitarian action, the employability team makes use of a survey before and after the interventions carried out by the team in the migrant population, in a way that allows them to evaluate the fulfillment of indicators and the work plan they have implemented. Only a part of the impacted population participates in this evaluation, the entities that finance are not involved, and the format used by the Corporation's headquarters (Bogotá) is used. In other words, the evaluation processes of this organization do not have a multi-stakeholder approach, it is not carried out during the entire intervention phase or the entire project cycle, and it does not consciously incorporate the gender and intersectional approach.

Finally, the Legal Option Corporation shows a greater degree of maturity, both in incorporating the gender perspective and in the use of participatory methodologies for humanitarian action. Carolina López Saavedra, National Coordinator of the area of access to improved legal resources for the migrant, refugee and displaced population of the Legal Option Corporation:

“The incorporation of differential actions aimed at identifying risks and impacts in the head of specially protected groups have been gradually incorporated into the Corporation's interventions, including the evaluation processes. In this sense, some experiences that have been worked on stand out, especially with women victims of the armed conflict, who have been participants in focus groups, interviews and surveys, whose purpose has been to evaluate the scope and impact of the implemented projects”.

In turn, our monitoring, monitoring and evaluation systems in real time include questions and / or variables to verify access to the Corporation's service offerings by women, children, ethnic communities, people with sexual orientation and identity. gender diverse, and population with disabilities. At the same time, we have the possibility of measuring effective access to the supply of state services, where the Corporation has managed or encouraged rights enforcement mechanisms.

It is essential that the evaluation processes recognize and include the intersectional, differential and gender perspective, in order to contribute to reducing the gaps and historical discrimination suffered by these population groups. At the same time, the incorporation of these approaches improves the possibilities of effectiveness and social contribution of the projects.”

Likewise, Legal Option identifies the importance of incorporating a multi-stakeholder participation approach, “which allows the identification of differentiated experiences and perspectives, according to the role of each project participant. Encouraging the measurement of indicators,” as well as the challenges and barriers presented by the evaluation, the participatory methods, tools or techniques in humanitarian action (López, 2021):



“Participatory evaluation has the disadvantage that it usually requires more time and resources to carry out. There are limits to the feasibility of participatory evaluation, sometimes it is too ambitious to expect to involve beneficiaries in an evaluation, either because of the context, risks, availability or limited ownership of the project since not all project beneficiaries will want to / may be involved in the process.

On the other hand, and in consideration of the high levels of vulnerability of the beneficiary population, it is noted that there are material and social barriers that discourage or reduce the levels of participation of the population in these processes. It is important to specify that the mixed application of evaluation methods and techniques leads to obtaining better results.”

By way of conclusion, it is vital to point out the relevance of incorporating participatory evaluations into humanitarian action and aid. The evaluation is participatory when the various positions are considered, not as a sum of interpretations, but as a comprehensive set of stakes that recognize the variety of actors present in humanitarian actions. Although the needs and problems are not the same for everyone, they are also the possibilities for solutions. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the realities of the people who require these interventions, without ignoring their place of origin, their beliefs, their sexual orientation, their ethnic-racial belonging, among other forms of identification.

Finally, they were also asked about the need to create a course, seminar or training on participatory evaluation for organizations, community leaders and diverse population groups. 100% agree on the need to create learning spaces on the subject, since it allows unifying efforts to achieve project objectives, strengthen the analysis of barriers and difficulties they present on a daily basis, improve the impact, scope and monitoring, as well as accountability for sponsors and donors, develop a "toolbox" to apply according to the context in which it is developed, As in time of emergency for coronavirus they found many difficulties to maintain contact with the beneficiaries, distribute aid and assistance, here are some of their comments on the subject:

Participant no. 1:  “It is very valuable to achieve the connection with the direct beneficiaries”	Participant no. 2:  “It allows to show the shortcomings within the daily process from the actors that participate and collect the experiences.”	Participant no. 3:  “Greater constructive criticism that allows a greater impact and rapid growth in the organization, establishing a network of contacts by reference that allows you to access greater programs and own initiatives.”	Participant no. 4:  “The exchange of information is achieved, ideas that achieve the construction of actions that allow the concertation of adjustments of plans and programs.”
Participant no. 5:  “The participation of the beneficiary community is satisfactory because it lets you know that you are helping your community, and by belonging to the same community, they also benefit themselves	Participant no. 6:  “Spaces of active and participatory listening allow to generate networks of interaction both to the people who are beneficiaries and to the collaborators, to focus and strengthen the capacities and the indicators in order that	Participant no. 7:  “Two-way communication, process improvement, opportunity to link new elements to the strategy, topics or processes new to what is proposed. The most important thing is that it allows you to be at	Participant no. 8:  “Participatory evaluation turns out to be a fundamental mechanism for the proper design, execution and evaluation of social projects. Considering that this type of projects must adjust

because the organization is made up of people who are migrants.”	the activities are fulfilled.”	the forefront of the type of attention you propose to do, that is, to have tact and understanding of the dimension of the processes that are being undertaken. “	their operating schemes to the realities and real conditions of the beneficiary or participant population.”
Participant no. 9:  “Reliable results in the project being executed.”	Participant no. 10:  “Teamwork and analysis of results with specialists in the field”	Participant no. 13: “Being able to listen to the needs of each person”	Participant no. 14:  “The immense value of participatory evaluation is the fact of being able to identify real needs, to provide successful solutions.”

## Conclusions and lessons learned

The Colombian context has many humanitarian challenges that make humanitarian action and participatory evaluation important, among its causes is internal displacement caused by the internal armed conflict and the fact that Colombia has been one of the countries that has received the most migrants. Venezuelans since the beginning of the crisis in this country. The methodology of this report begins with a bibliographic exploratory phase, here we said that humanitarian action is a concept that has evolved, has expanded, now it is a protection of human dignity. Then we move on to the concept of participatory evaluation, we indicate that an objective and systematic review is necessary that leads to proposed results, is related to performance and results orientation. We also explored how participatory evaluation is in Colombia, we reviewed them mainly in the field of Venezuelan migration, we took into account an intersectional and gender perspective, mainly in relation to the routes of care. Objectivity is the main element in humanitarian action evaluation processes, whose goal is to extract the lessons learned throughout the project and increase accountability, all to improve in the future.

From a methodological aspect we can conclude that there are dozens of actors across the country that provide different kinds of humanitarian action to migrants, but due to limitations such as the covid-19 pandemic, public order restrictions, and overall narrower outlook of the project, the final list included 74 actors, 20 of which were analysed.

Later we made a mapping of actors, they were classified according to the level of incidence. From these we selected a sample of actors, with whom a mixed methodology was used: it included a semi-structured survey and an in-depth interview. It should be noted that we had problems collecting and analyzing data due to issues related to the occurrence of the pandemic and the willingness of the actors. From the results, we highlight that organizations have challenges in providing humanitarian assistance. It is important to distinguish the characteristics of the population and identify the different vulnerabilities in which the same type of population can fall. There is also an emphasis on the need of gender and intersectional approaches to women, children, LGTBIQ community and ethnic groups when providing humanitarian action and evaluating it, as crises usually affects more deeply those that are more vulnerable due to social barriers and their needs must be addressed in particular ways. Evaluation of the action can

be used to analyse if the action has helped to affect or continue any of the previous power relationships, as it can be a tool to reach equity.

The migratory crisis is great, it has been growing, the dynamics of the country has changed. Traditionally, people migrated, now many people arrive, and this has had an impact on the institutions. Even so, there are many governmental and non-governmental actors involved in offering basic assistance, but it is necessary to look at the long and medium term, in addition to considering the intersectionality's of those involved.

Finally, from the interviews with the stakeholders, most organizations have evaluation models. However, a significant percentage of organizations indicate that they do not have it. Most of the organizations use participatory evaluation methods to measure the results obtained, however the main methods used are meetings with focus groups, discussion scenarios with the stakeholders involved, and mapping of results. This allows cross-sectional feedback between the team and the beneficiaries. Additionally, they emphasize the importance of planning, differentiating and characterizing the target population; This makes it possible to contemplate the challenges and differences between the actors involved, and to adjust actions that are aimed at evaluating performance and achieving goals.

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## Glossary

- ACNUR - Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
- Civil society organization - Is a group of people that operates in the community in a way that is distinct from both government and business.
- Determination of refugee status -States or the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) carry out the legal or administrative process to determine whether a person is a refugee per national, regional, and international standards. Source (adaptation): Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), The Plan of the 10 Points in Action: Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration (December 2016), Glossary, p. 279.
- DIH - Derecho Internacional Humanitario - Humanitarian Law
- Formal assessments - Formal assessments have data which support the conclusions made from the test. We usually refer to these types of tests as standardized measures. These tests have been tried before on students and have statistics which support the conclusion such as the student is reading below average for his age. The data is mathematically computed and summarized. Scores such as percentiles, stanines, or standard scores are mostly commonly given from this type of assessment.
- Foundation - is a non-profit corporation or a charitable trust that makes grants to organizations, institutions, or individuals for charitable purposes such as science, education, culture, and religion.
- GEIH Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares - Integrated Household Survey
- GIFMM - Grupo Inter agencial sobre Flujos Migratorios Mixtos/ Inter-Agency Group on Mixed Migration Flows
- GTMI - Thematic Information Management Group
- GTP - Thematic Protection Groups
- Grassroots movement - A grassroots movement is one that uses the people in each district, region, or community as the basis for a political or economic movement. Grassroots movements and organizations use collective action at a local level to effect changes at local, regional, national, or international level.
- HNO - Humanitarian Needs Overview.
- Irregular stay - Presence in the territory of a State of a foreigner who does not comply or has ceased to meet the conditions of entry, stay, or residence established in that state. Source (adaptation): European Parliament and Council of the European Union, Directive 2008/115/EC on standard rules and procedures in the Member States for the return of irregularly active third-country nationals (December 16, 2008), OJ L 348/98, art. 3, apart. 2, the definition of "irregular situation."
- Macro-actor - A macro-actor is the articulation of several individual or collective subjects through a translation from one to the other that allows the translators to present themselves as representatives of the whole. This implies that a macro-actor is always the result of a process of representation and, therefore, is a type of



participation. However, within the macro-actor we find diversity. This diversity is cohesioned by power as legitimate domination that allows the flow of translation to be maintained in a stable manner.

- Migración Colombia - Migracion Colombia's customs agency responsible for monitoring and carrying out immigration control within the framework of national sovereignty and in accordance with the law.
- ONG - Organización/es No Gubernamental- Non-Governmental Organization(s)
- Participatory evaluation is an approach that involves the participation of the stakeholders of a program or policy in the evaluation process. This involvement can occur at any stage of the evaluation process, from the evaluation design to the data collection and analysis and the reporting of the study.
- PRA - Participatory rapid appraisal
- Quantitative data/methods - Measures and explains what is being studied with numbers (e.g., counts, ratios, percentages, proportions, average scores, etc). Quantitative methods tend to use structured approaches (e.g., coded responses to surveys) that provide precise data that can be statistically analysed and replicated (copied) for comparison.
- Review organizations of the United Nations system -United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- Reporting - The process of providing analyzed data as information for key stakeholders to use, i.e., for project/programmed management, donor accountability, advocacy, etc
- Social movement organization - Often capitalized in academic literature as Social Movement Organization or abbreviated as SMO is an organized component of a [social movement](#) (SM). SMOs are generally seen as the components of an SM, where the SM will have a goal that can be much narrow, or much broader, than the SMOs goals or





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