



Towards Joint Action: Migration & Displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean

Event Report

actalliance

Towards Joint Action: Migration & Displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean

Document review

ACT Alliance Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and members of ACT Alliance that made part of the event

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I. About ACT Alliance

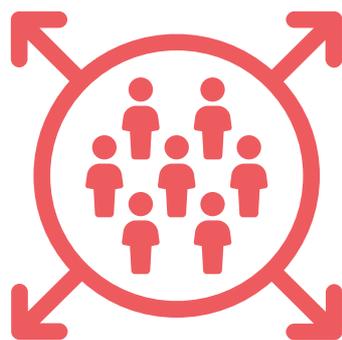
ACT Alliance is the largest coalition of Protestant and Orthodox churches, and faith-based organization working in the humanitarian, development, and advocacy sectors around the world. The alliance counts with close to 147 members that worked together in more than 125 countries to generate positive and sustainable change in people's lives -regardless of religion, political views, gender, sexual orientation, race, or nationality, and in accordance with the main international codes and standards. This approach allows the Alliance to support local communities through the axes of Humanitarian, Climate Justice, Gender Justice, Migration and Displacement, and Peace and Human Security.

Act Alliance aims to advocate for the dignity and rights of the most vulnerable to guarantee that all voices are heard, while facilitating sustainable development activities allowing them to address their needs and increase their resilience and that of their communities. Counting with the engagement of its members and ecumenical partners -with extensive experience working with communities at the national, regional, and global level in each country- becomes key to the fulfilment of our mission.

ACT Alliance and its members are strongly committed to the promotion of localization, enabling the collaboration between international, national, and local members. This focus on localization allows also to reinforce the skills and systems of care and response of local organizations.

ACT Alliance: Migration and Displacement

ACT Alliance aims to achieve its main goal through the implementation of five programmatic themes from Humanitarian, Climate Justice, Gender Justice, Migration and Displacement, and Peace and Human Security. More specifically, ACT Alliance's **Global Program on Migration and Displacement**[1], has the following thematic axes to be developed from a global scope:



Capacity Building

This aims to place local and national implementations, as well as the presence and experience of ACT members in the field, at the heart of successful change, while recognizing the importance of promoting their actions and results at the regional and global level.

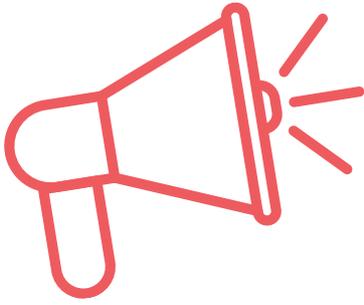
Developing the technical capacity of the different actors is considered to guarantee the assistance to people on the move, concerning the provision of services and the fight against xenophobia. Capacity building also contemplates working to foster the skills of stakeholders to advocate for and follow up of government commitments allowing to improve the development and implementation of policies, political agreements, and mechanisms at the national and international levels.

Migration and forced displacement

ACT Alliance is highly committed to the meaningful participation of Refugees, Migrants, Displaced People, Returnees, and Deported People (RMDRD), and looks for durable solutions enabling their self-sufficiency, as well as promotion of clean energy in displacement setting. Moreover, the alliance -jointly with its members- has participated in global consultation and dialogue spaces on climate action and protection work. Finally, the alliance works closely with local ecumenical actors to facilitate migration and forced displacement response and advocacy for rights-based solutions, humanitarian response, and preparedness.



[1] See ACT Alliance: <https://actalliance.org/migration-and-displacement/>



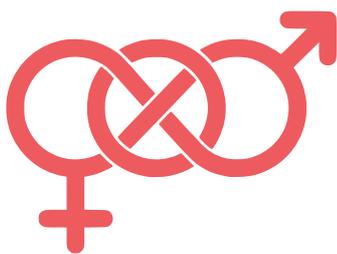
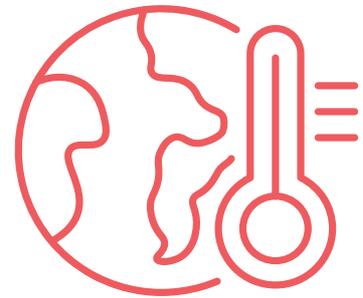
Advocacy and migration

ACT Alliance has been a led voice in the defense of the rights of the RMDRD people in global spaces, including the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and the United Nations Network on Migration (UNNM).

Advocacy actions have focused on fostering political dialogue with the Member States and United Nations (UN) agencies on improving the protection of the people on the move and the impact of climate change on migration and forced displacement. The alliance has also been coordinating the development of guidance for the member States to improve their availability and accessibility of pathways to enhance the protection of the RMDRD people.

Migration and climate change

Generating a common agenda between the areas of migration and climate change is crucial. This is why the alliance has been working internally to organize events and external consultations with experts, UN agencies and other civil society groups. ACT Alliance is also a steering group member of the Climate, Migration and Displacement Platform (CMDP), and is developing a policy brief on the issue. Moreover, the alliance has supported the development of Regional Migration Review Forum, as well as the first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) in 2022, to promote the participation and perspective of its members.



Gender Justice

Migrant women and girls crossing through the Dry Corridor and other mixed pathways are particularly exposed to different types of violence. The Gender Justice Program has been coordinating advocacy and joint work for three years on six different thematic, including migration and forced displacement.

During 2022, four strategic projects were implemented in Pakistan, Afghanistan, El Salvador, and Honduras creating tools to advance work of the to foster more advocacy at the global, regional, and national levels. The program has developed a tool, the Gender Justice Advocacy Framework, that allows to ensure that advocacy will be forum -centered, forum driven and rooted. Likewise, the tool aims to guarantee that Advocacy will be faith and rights-based and will rely on evidence and the experience of forums and members. The Gender Program is committed to coordinating and fostering joint action in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), especially in the mapping of good practices, in the development of a policy document and of a training program in regional advocacy school.

II. Towards Joint Action: Migration & Displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean

In the aim of promoting joint action by members in the region, the Global Program on Migration and Displacement and the Regional Office of Latin America and the Caribbean of ACT Alliance invited them to an in-person meeting in Bogota (Colombia). The event aimed to:

- 1) Connecting and reconnecting after three years without face-to-face events and be able to learn about the current work of the members and forums.
- 2) Analyzing the needs for a joint action and decide on the first steps for action by members and forums concerning migration and forced displacement.
- 3) Generating teams that can carry out the commitments obtained, during the event, considering ACT Alliance member-driven / “forum-driven” model.

The above, understanding that the strengthening of processes requires time, and that there is still a long way to go in terms of joint action at the national and regional levels.

A representative of each forum (in-person and online), members of the United States, strategic allies, the coordinator of the Gender Program of ACT Alliance and the Regional Secretary team participated in the event “Towards Joint Action: Migration & Displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean”. Moreover, the Migration and Displacement Program Manager of ACT Alliance accompanied virtually the event.

The following pages correspond to the systematization and recompilation of the multiple expositions, dialogues, debates, and engagements undertaken during the meeting.

Work on migration and forced displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean

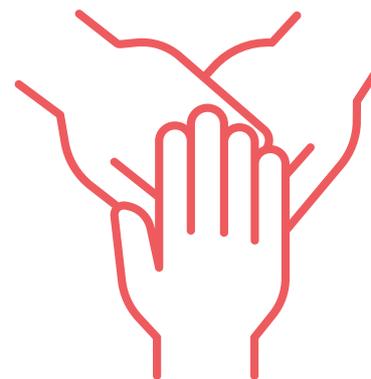
ACT Alliance has members from 14 different countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The region has one active sub-regional forum: the South America forum (including Argentina, Brazil, Chile[2], Colombia and Peru). It is hoped that Central America and the Caribbean will be reactivated in the future.

The members of the alliance have extensive experience in responding to humanitarian emergencies and implementing development programs. To this effect, it is important to highlight that Latin America is a region that is highly exposed to severe natural hazards and that has been the heart of diverse historical human migration flows derived from climatic, socio-political, and economic crises, and the territorial border with the United States of America (USA). Three main areas stand out among the main areas of response and assistance of the members of the alliance, in terms of human mobility:



Humanitarian Assistance

Humanitarian assistance actions include an integral response to the immediate and basic needs of RMDRD populations (including displaced indigenous people); as well as the generation of strategies to facilitate their access to services and opportunities that guarantee their rights, integration, and settlement at the medium and long term. Among the responses implemented by some members of the region, the following stand out: the delivery of food assistance, hygiene, and health kits in situation of displacement; mental health care and psychosocial support (at the individual and communitarian levels); health assistance; orientation and attention concerning basic rights and attention routes; referral to the educational system; legal and rights-orientation assistance; referral to protection services and safe spaces for the most vulnerable; child protection (including recruitment prevention from illegal groups, assistance to reinserted children and adolescents, accompaniment processes, family reunification and resettlement); spiritual accompaniment of the people in transit; remodeling and featuring of shelters and other attention spaces for RMDRD people.



Response and attendance actions are generated from different scenarios, including churches, community spaces, shelters, border areas and virtual and telephonic attention spaces (through social media (mainly WhatsApp) and call-center services. To guarantee a greater impact of response and care actions, members facilitate coordination at the national level and between countries, including cross-border attention of cases and case-management and referral at the international level.



Development

During the event, the work of members in inclusion, integration and development of capacities was also highlighted.

The role of members concerning the integration and non-discrimination RMDRD people is key to guarantee their rights and to promote community acceptance and resilience.

These are some of the efforts to facilitate social cohesion activities, approaching peace culture, addressed by the members: developing workshops on biblical studies and migration (including the generation of handbooks in Spanish and English); working on raising awareness -from churches and religious spaces- in communities on the importance of welcoming, protecting, and supporting RMDRD persons, and the opportunities for growth and development that human mobility offers countries of transit and destination.

Moreover, members work to facilitate the knowledge of the RMDRD population concerning their universal rights, services, resources, and comprehensive protection

[2] There is currently no forum in Chile.

systems, that are available in the different transit and hosting countries, through the generation of informative pieces (adapted to the needs of each person, considering their age, physical condition and reading skills). Considering that Latin America is a region where migratory flows of non-Spanish-speaking nationalities converge (especially from Haiti, but also from Africa and Asia), with a vast population of indigenous groups and other ethnic minorities, efforts have been made to translate informative materials, available in border and transit areas, into different languages (especially English and French/Creole). Finally, the members have developed socio-cultural integration spaces, including workshops on the Haitian culture for host communities and officials of government institutions and services providers.

The work with media has been also identify as an important initiative to facilitate social cohesion, as media play a key role in the perception of public opinion and hosting communities towards the RMDRD population. Therefore, the members have worked on the study of evidence concerning the representation of the mentioned groups in the various communication, as well as on awareness-raising initiatives to generate positive narratives focusing on the rights and needs of the RMDRD people, and the opportunities that they bring to hosting countries and communities in terms of growth and development. Moreover, efforts have been placed to strengthen community media (including media of the RMDRD population) to facilitate the generation and dissemination of non-traditional narratives starring people on the move and host communities.

The implementation of economic support programs, with a gender perspective, stands out as a development initiative, as it facilitates vocational training and access to seed capitals for women and other vulnerable populations (including deported people, returnees, and internal displaced persons (IDPs), allowing them to generate self-sustainable livelihoods. Another important initiative has been the work in agricultural activities with deported families and families with an irregular migration status.

Finally, important work is identified concerning the capacity-building of all stakeholders. The members of ACT recognize the importance of working with different actors to facilitate a better understanding on the rights, needs, and opportunities of the RMRDRD population. For this reason, they have developed a series of activities addressed to public officials, service providers, churches and spiritual institutions in border and settlement areas, and students from multiple disciplines (especially Law and Social Work, among others). Capacity-building initiatives include some of the following thematic: Psychosocial support, Human Rights, Human mobility, Gender, Integration, and Socio-pastoral accompaniment. Along with these actions, recreational and informative materials have been produced (including guidelines, videos, curricula, among other pieces).





Advocacy

In the aim of ensuring practices and norms that favor the fair and equal integration of the RMDRD, the members work on the positioning of an agenda based on the demands, specific needs, and opportunities of RMDRD people before decision-makers at the local, national, and global levels. Members also advocate for the inclusion of the human mobility as a key axe in the responses to climate change. On the other hand, there is a constant analysis of the contexts and articulation among members, and with other stakeholders, for the generation of statements and other pressure mechanisms for the development, funding, and accomplishment of laws and processes that guarantee the rights of the RMDRD population.

Along with the mentioned strategies, the members also count with extensive experience in the generation of social mobilization activities and in the production and dissemination of awareness campaigns on the conditions, needs, and rights of the people on the move in their countries of destination -based on evidence[3], as well as cultural and artistic components led by the members of the communities, civil society, churches, private companies, government institutions (through the support of the State), international organizations, and educational institutions, among others.

Finally, research work and articulation with theological faculties and churches have been also carried out to promote the values of integration and equality, with a human rights and gender perspective, in different religious and spiritual spaces. The latter aims to ensure greater reception of the RMDRD population by the host communities, based on an understanding of the impact that human mobility has on the lives and development of the people – especially women, girls, boys and the LGBTIQ+ community.

The advocacy actions, developed by the alliance members, have as a cross-cutting value the position of the RMDRD population as a protagonist of the processes, demands, and opportunities, as well as of positive transformation for the communities, countries, and region.

[3] Some of the members have worked in the development of this type of characterizations.

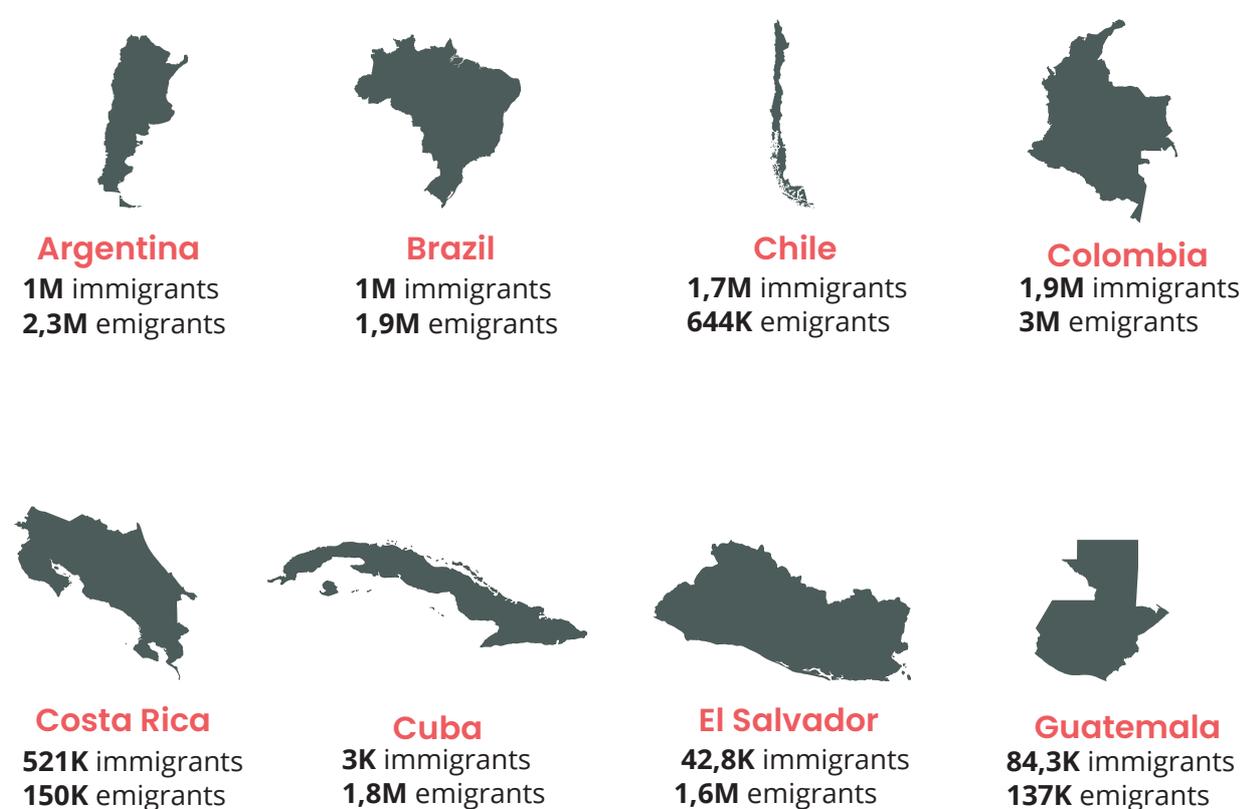


III. Migration and displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean

Human mobility landscape

The region of Latin America and the Caribbean has been historically characterized for being the scenario of international, national, and internal human mobility flows. Thus, most of the countries play a dual role as expellers and receivers, while others have a triple role by being also transit countries. For all that, there has been a greater flow of returnees and deported people in recent years, because of the implementation of increasingly restrictive mobility and settlement measures throughout the continent, including the ones adopted by the Government of the United States of America (USA) as well as the sociopolitical and economic crises in the different countries in the region.

Trends concerning the movements of migrants in the different countries of the region, during 2020, are reflected in the table below[4]:



[4] Data derived from the platform: Data portal on Migration: <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/es>



Haiti

1M,9K immigrants
1,7M emigrants



Honduras

985K immigrants
39K emigrants



Mexico

1,2M immigrants
11M emigrants



Nicaragua

719M immigrants
42K emigrants



Peru

1,2M immigrants
1,5M emigrants



Dominican Republic

1,6M immigrants
640K emigrants



Venezuela

1,3M immigrants
5,1M emigrants

Note: the figures do not reflect the increase in flows generated after the borders opening during the pandemic.

On the other hand, it is important to consider the following specific events that have a high incidence on human mobility flows in the continent, described below:

Darien Gap Crossing[5]

Darien is the poorest department of Panama, bordering Colombia, and it is in one of the most dangerous and extended jungles in the world. Climatic and geographical conditions of the area, in addition to the compelling presence of illegal armed groups, make it the only break point of the Pan-American Highway.

It is estimated that between 2010 and 2020, more than 120,000 people, coming from Haiti, Venezuela, Cuba, African and Asian countries, will be arriving in the area. Transit flows have skyrocketed in recent years, with nearly 134,000 people crossing in 2021 and 248,000 in 2022. In January 2023 alone, more than 24,500 cases of people crossing the zone were recorded, of which about 41% were of Haitian origin, 26% Ecuadorian and 9% Venezuelan.

[5] Source: Report on mixed movement of the Darien. UN Agency for the Refugees (UNHCR) <https://reliefweb.int/report/panama/unhcr-mixed-movements-darien-january-2023>

Venezuelan Exodus[6]

Since 2017, Venezuela became an expelling country starting an unprecedented human mobility crisis in the region. The Regional Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants of Venezuela (R4V) estimates that, by February 2023, more than 7,1 million of Venezuelan have left their country, from most have settled in Colombia (2,5M), Peru (1,5M) and Ecuador (520K). Venezuelan refugees and migrants represent today close to 25% of the country's population by 2017.

Migrant caravans from Central America

Since 2018, there has been a register of massive and organized flows of people transiting in caravans to enter to the USA, by transiting from Central America and through Mexico. In June 2019, the Mexican government, under pressure from the US Government, deployed its National Guard on the Southern border to prevent the access and generation of caravans. Caravans are mostly composed by people coming from Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala, with a greater register of people coming from Haiti, Venezuela, and Cuba). In this regard, it should be noted that the formation of caravans has put the alert in terms of humanitarian needs and human rights, due the clashes with authorities from the transit and destination countries. Moreover, during their journey, the people making part of those caravans are highly exposed to pathways with a great influence of illegal groups and cross through areas at high risk of natural hazard.

Central American and Mexican Human Mobility[7]

By 2022, over 1.3M internal displaced persons, asylum seekers, and refugees were registered in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Mexico. Around 600.000 people from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have applied for asylum, while close to 200.000 Nicaraguan have applied International Protection. Meanwhile, over 130.000 asylum applications have been submitted in Mexico alone. That said, it is important to notice that only 13% of those requests have been granted. In the case of Nicaragua, the number of applications that have been positively processed downs to 5% only. However, it is estimated that there are more than 300.000 internally displaced people in Honduras and El Salvador.

Political and socioeconomic instability, food crises, the presence of illegal armed groups and gangs, and climate change and natural hazards have been the main causes of this phenomenon. Only in 2020, the hurricanes Iota and Eta had a devastating impact in the region, and directly affected over 6,5 million people (from close to 441.000 were evacuated and suffered significant losses of their homes and livelihoods, being even more exposed to a situation of human mobility).

Prioritized thematic by ACT

The Global Humanitarian Overview 2023[8] estimates that this year close to 30 million of people in the region will have humanitarian needs. Human rights and protection conditions tend to worsen due to political and socioeconomic instability in some countries, in addition to increased protection risks related to crime and violence, as well as the exposure to high-level natural hazards, as a consequence of climate change. To address the needs of the region, seven Humanitarian Response Plans have been designed for needing populations in Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, and Venezuela.

In addition to the above, the members of ACT Alliance highlight the importance of attending the needs of the Nicaraguan population, as a result of the country's current political and socioeconomic situation, the human mobility flows of people from Haiti throughout the continent, most of whom have language and cultural barriers with respect to the population of the host and transit countries; the increase in human mobility of people of Ecuadorian origin, the flows of Cuban population and the increase in mass displacements throughout the region as a result of climate change, critical natural events, and the increase in scenarios of violence related to gangs, drug trafficking, armed conflict and state and military violence.

During the event: "Towards Joint Action: Migration & Displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean", the representatives of the forums and members of ACT Alliance[9] in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador and Venezuela - as well as representatives of forums and institutions at the regional and international level- met to better understand the subcontinent's priorities for strategies and tactics for human mobility advocacy (with a focus on Gender justice and Climate justice), as well as four priorities to bring humanitarian response in the context of migration and forced displacement.

Having analyzed the landscape of the region, the following priority issues were identified for work at the local, national, regional, and international levels:

[6] Source: Regional Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants of Venezuela (R4V) <https://www.r4v.info/>

#1 Gender justice, fundamentalisms* and migration: the role of churches and faith-based organizations (FBO) and their capacity to influence in the promotion of the Human Rights

(with a differential and special approach on children, women and LGBTIQ+ community)

#2 Climate Justice: Climate induced migration and forced displacement

#3 Design and implementation of strategies for the eradication of xenophobia, racism, and other forms of discrimination with a rights-based approach.

Themes #1 and #2 received respectively a voting score of 68%, while the theme #3 received a voting score 48%. Participants could vote for two themes, therefore voting results are not accumulative.

*Note: During the workshop it was expressed that there are different definitions and feelings concerning the term “fundamentalisms” among the members. Thus, it has been identified the needs of discussing the definition and its use or non-use, as well as other possible expressions or synonyms that may identify this phenomenon. For the purposes of this report, it was decided to keep the voted wording to respect the work done by the members during the journey, while understanding that the dialogue on the word is still pending.

[7] Source: Platform: Displacement in Central America (UNHCR) <https://www.acnur.org/desplazamiento-en-centroamerica.html>; Response to Hurricanes Eta and IOTA (Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and World Health Organization (WHO) <https://www.paho.org/es/respuesta-huracanes-eta-iota>

[8] Source: <https://www.unocha.org/2023gho>

[9] Participation of the members from Nicaragua, Cuba and Haiti was virtual only due to technical circumstances related to the acquisition of visas and international treaties between those countries and Colombia (where the event was undertaken).



#1 Gender justice, fundamentalisms* and migration: the role of churches and faith-based organizations (FBO) and their capacity to influence in the promotion of the Human Rights (with a differential and special approach on children, adolescents, women and LGBTIQ+ community)

As the migration and displacement crises progress in the region, members perceive with concern a rise in the flows of women travelling alone, travelling alone with children, or remaining alone and unprotected in the places of origin, in high-risk context of violence or natural hazards. Furthermore, there is an increasing flow of people belonging to LGBTIQ+ community, highly vulnerable to different forms of discrimination and violence due to their gender and sexual orientation.

Due the specific risks and vulnerabilities faced by these groups, there is an urgent need for an integral and differentiated response to address the specific needs - in terms of protection and health, among others- of women, girls, boys, and people from the LBTIQ+ community. Likewise, it urges to design and implement prevention and response routes to address sexual and gender-based violence, as well as human trafficking, with regional coordination level. On the contrary, members are aware of a rise of sexual violence and femicide cases that go unpunished in their respective countries and in transit areas.

In addition to mechanisms for differential attention, it is considered key to generate other processes to guarantee the compliance with treaties on gender policies. Likewise, it is necessary to adopt public policies, along the region, focused on addressing the needs of women heads of household and mothers in their role as caregivers, to facilitate their citizen participation, protection, and generation of sustainable livelihoods.



#2 Climate Justice: migration and forced displacement as consequence of climate.

Most of the population from Latin America and the Caribbean currently depends on the agricultural sector, generally exploited from an extractive model that tends to affect the sustainability of the soils and the environment.

This dependence has exposed the population to ever more vulnerable conditions, due a greater affluence of floods and droughts. As consequence, the region has been witnessing of food crises and rural exodus -including indigenous populations- with no precedents and consequence of climate change.

It can be said that climate change affects the RMDRD population in Latin America and the Caribbean on two levels: first, by being on the main causes of human mobility. Second, as the population in the move is forced to settle in areas that are highly exposed to natural hazards including river flooding and landslides, among others. In addition to the flows generated by floods and droughts, there are also those that are consequence of other natural hazards of high magnitude, as it was the case of the hurricanes Eta and Iota in 2020 (with more than 441,000 people evacuated and significant losses of their livelihoods and housing).

The lack of mechanisms that facilitate the regularization of people on the move is having a significant impact concerning the guarantee of human rights in the region, as people lack access to basic health and education services, as well to decent housing, and sustainable livelihoods (increasing the exposition to labor exploitation) in safe conditions. On the other hand, initiatives restricting migration and forced displacement have also an impact in transit countries, as they become a refuge for the hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers waiting for an official response. Mexico has been particularly affected by situation, as it is the only country in the region sharing a land border with the USA, whose entry and settlement measures are becoming increasingly demanding and restrictive.

Among the main causes of this phenomenon, there is a global and regional trend to perceive and work human mobility from a national and international security approach; having as consequence an increase in discrimination and xenophobia at the community and State levels. The last has also led to a militarization of borders and checkpoints within transit and hosting countries, as well as to greatest repression of the RMDRD population by authorities and illegal groups. In this regard, the members of the alliance agree on the importance of retaking the discussions and approach to migration and forced displacement from a Human Rights perspective.

However, the States of the region have traditionally lacked the necessary infrastructure and governance to address the needs of their citizens (in terms of protection, access to basic services and livelihoods, and food security, among others). As consequence, States also lack the capacity to meet the emerging needs of human mobility. In face of the response deficits, civil society and churches play a major role in prevention, response, and advocacy actions to the needs arising from migration and forced displacement -both for people in the move and hosting populations- at the local, national, and global levels. That said, their actions are increasingly limited given a global reduction of the funds allocated to humanitarian action and development in the region. Moreover, there is a trend to criminalize and unprotect Human Rights defenders in the region. An example of this is the closure of many registered non-governmental organizations in different countries.

#3 Design and implementation of strategies to eradicate xenophobia, racism, and other forms of discrimination with a rights-based approach.



As mentioned before, the RMDRD people in the region has been highly exposed to racism (especially those coming from Haiti and African countries), xenophobia and discrimination. The last has a mayor impact in the fulfillment of their rights and on their opportunities for development and growth as individuals and communities. Thus, there is a need to work on advocacy initiatives allowing to facilitate social cohesion among the population in the move, communities, and institutions of the hosting counties, as well as to have a greater understanding of human mobility from a positive and rights-based perspective. For this purpose, it will be key to work directly with the media, churches, service providers, governmental institutions, and faith-based organizations, among others.

On the other hand, there is a need to adapt current information mechanisms to ensure they can overlap cultural, idiomatic and access barriers (especially through social media) that RMDRD people face due their migratory, age and reading ability.

Other voted thematic were:

Creation, implementation and follow-up of policies and legislative actions for the rights of the RMDRD population



The region has witnessed the implementation of increasingly restrictive measures for the entry and stay of RMDRD people, in the recent years. The mentioned measures include the imposition of visas, new requirements for asylum seekers, borders closures, and the creation of temporary reception and regularization measure (while there are no new initiatives allowing to facilitate permanent stay). Since 2020, as consequence of COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation of restrictive measures and policies implemented limiting access and settlement to transit, and destination countries has increased.

Finally, the members of the alliance recognize the fundamental role of churches, faith-based organizations, and ecumenical bodies in promoting the rights of women, girls, and members of the LGBTIQ+ community. In this sense, the mentioned actors are considered key for the promotion and incorporation of discourses, at the political and community level, that protect and empower the most vulnerable, while allowing to eradicate imposing and harmful dynamics that affect their freedom and development, including sexual and gender-based violence.

Broad visibility of the different mixed migratory flows in the region and generation of multilevel joint action mechanisms.



Latin America and the Caribbean have historically been the scenario of different human mobility flows at the national and international levels, derived from conflict, economic instability, climate change, community and governmental violence, and food crises, among others. During the last years, the Venezuelan Crisis received special attention as it became the second largest flow of refugees and migrants in the world, after Syria. As consequence of this greater interest, other humanitarian crises in the region that also require an integral and articulated response were left behind by the international community and public opinion.

ACT Alliance recognizes the need of continuing addressing the needs and problems that resulted from the Venezuelan Crisis and considers that it is also key to capitalize on the experience and knowledge acquired in his response to strengthen initiatives that aim to respond to other crises in the region. The last would include the migration and forced displacement of people from Haiti, Cuba, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico; as well as the specific needs of the countries of Central America and Mexico, which play a triple role as origin, transit, and destination countries.

Given this context, the members of the alliance highlight the lack of official figures concerning migratory flows of these populations (especially in the case of Haitians), and the lack of knowledge on the part of the members of the community and governmental within the countries. Moreover, the members emphasize on the need of replicating inter-regional coordination and monitoring mechanisms, applied to the Venezuelan Crisis response, with a focus on gender, climate change, access to essential services, and sustainable livelihoods. The generation of evidence, from such coordination and monitoring would be essential to ensure a better advocacy on restrictive policies – at the individual, community, and State levels- in the region. Evidence-making would also support a greater fundraising at the global level, as well as the identification of new migration and forced displacement trends and routes. Lastly, the members have highlighted the importance of working with the media, decision makers and other relevant actors from the public opinion on how to address migration from a positive perspective and with a human-rights perspective.

Finally, it is considered important to work with the media to facilitate the comprehension of the reasons why RMDRD people decide to move to other countries, and on the conditions and risks they face during their journey. Working with opinion-makers becomes key for generating a vision of migration and forced displacement as an opportunity for growth and economic, social, and cultural development for expelling, transit, and destination countries. This partnership would also be crucial to promote recommendations and initiatives to foster the protection

of people affected by human mobility, during the processes of preparation for the journey, transit, settlement, and stay (including people staying in the country of origin while the family decide to live).

Exposure to security and protection risks

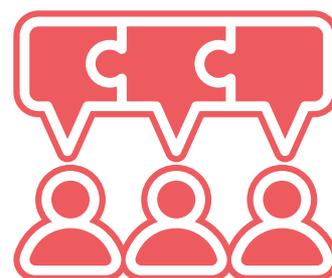


The raise in organized crime and drug trafficking in transit and settlement areas is recognized as a situation that requires special attention, given the greater exposition of RMDRD people to organized criminal networks (including members of the national authorities and institutions that have been permeated by narcotraffic and other illicit economies).

As consequence, RMDRD people face a greater risk to suffer extortion, forced recruitment, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, physical violence (including robbery, violent death, amputations, among others), and family separation. Moreover, new forms of violence have resulted of these dynamics, including kidnapping, and hired assassination.

The security situation for RMDRD tends to become ever more delicate as the socioeconomic conditions of the communities and people in human mobility deteriorate, as well as the governance of the different States (including the persecution and exile of people who demonstrate against their governments). At this point, it is essential to remember the exposure of the most vulnerable populations (including women, girls, boys, members of the LGBTIQ+ community, deported persons, indigenous people, and members of other ethnic minorities).

Direct participation of migrants in consultation, advocacy, and decision-making spaces



The members of the alliance observe that people on the move face great limitations in influencing ordinances, decrees, laws, and public policies in the respective countries where they are staying. Moreover, restrictions to acquire a regular migration status have also limited refugees and migrants to access to participate into democratic spaces and elections. The above evidence the need for promoting and facilitating the voices of the RMDRD by the different governments and media, and to allow them to access local, national, and global scenarios. In this sense, the members of the alliance in LAC consider it key to emphasize on the experiences of those populations, and to allow spaces of participation for them and young returnees to bring visibility of their needs and opportunities. Thus, ACT Alliance expresses their engagement to raise the voices of the communities in movement in LAC, as expert voices, and protagonists of their own experiences.

Increased continental and transcontinental transit flows

Due to their geographical conditions (especially the land proximity to the USA and the Panama Canal), the countries of Central America and Mexico have been characterized by their role as transit places (in addition of being expelling and receiving countries (mainly in the case of Mexico)). On the other hand, countries as Brazil and Peru have also been traditional transit points for the Haitian population that seeks to settle in Chile.



In addition, there have been other important human mobility flows of people coming from Africa and Asia. According to the Organization of the American States (OAS)[10], thousands of transcontinental migrants travel temporarily through South and Central American every year. The main points of entry into the continent are Brazil, Ecuador, and Cuba. Moreover, there is a great register of asylum requests, from people from those continents, in Argentina and Brazil. Once in the Americas, most of them continue their journey by land or by sea routes (speedboat) through Colombia, Panama, and Central America. Most of the African migrants come from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Senegal, Cameroon, and Guinea; while the main nationalities of the migrants coming from Asia are Nepalis, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, and Sri Lankan.

Even though most transcontinental migrants have a transit vocation when arriving to LAC, it is estimated that close to 95% of them arrived in the Caribbean after spending a period of up to six months, or more, in a South American country (being Colombia a mandatory space for transit). In the case of the Caribbean and Central America, it is estimated that asylum seekers stay in the sub-region for between three and seven years, awaiting a permanent solution.

[10] See Organization of the American States (OAS)
http://www.oas.org/es/sadye/publicaciones/reporte-oim_oea_spa.pdf



IV. ACT Alliance agreements for the rights of RMDRD people

The members of the alliance recognize that there are multiple thematic and angles from which the rights of the people on the move should be addressed. That said, they also recognize that there is an important need to prioritize, to operationalize the joint work. As previously mentioned in point III, Migration and Displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean, the ACT Alliance prioritized three thematic concerning human mobility, for the 2023-2024 cycle:

#1 Gender justice, fundamentalisms* and migration: the role of churches and faith-based organizations (FBO) and their capacity to influence in the promotion of the Human Rights (with a differential and special approach on children, adolescents, women and LGBTIQ+ community)

#2 Climate Justice: migration and forced displacement as consequence of climate

#3 Design and implementation of strategies to eradicate xenophobia, racism, and other forms of discrimination with a rights-based approach

The prioritized tactics were considered for both advocacy and humanitarian response, and are explained below:

Advocacy tactics

Publication of a political statement on human mobility with a focus on gender, climate justice, and participation in advocacy spaces

Harmonizing and unifying the language and criteria and having a common vision that reunites the diverse ways of thinking and political positions inside the ACT Alliance is important. Therefore, the need of generating a document that pushes us to think on definitions, views, and commitments that we share as a coalition. Thus, this document will gather our common feeling and it will serve as a reference for the members whenever they require or seek key messages, language and positions for future advocacy or programmatic initiatives. Considering that it is essential to continue working to strengthen the participation of the alliance and its members in different advocacy and decision-making spaces at the regional and global level, this document will also serve for positioning us as a technical alliance with a vast experience on migration and forced displacement.



Strengthening internal competencies for forum-driven advocacy on migration with a focus on Gender and Climate Justice

Prioritization of the work for levelling the competencies of the actors for developing effective advocacy based on Human Rights in national, regional, and global spaces. This commitment includes implementing efforts to achieve the unification of the same language that aligns with technical terminologies, international norms and standards, and the socio-cultural context of the region. In this sense, it is agreed to draft a concept note for a Training of Trainers (ToT) on gender-focused advocacy.

Mapping of regional scenarios and emblematic advocacy days

The members agree on the need of better planning and benefitting the various regional and global advocacy opportunities for civil society, faith-based organizations, and churches. Therefore, they have discussed the need of generating a calendar highlighting the most relevant events at the regional and global level, allowing them to anticipate the procedures required to ensure participation, as well as to follow up on international advocacy commitments and agendas.

Mapping of successful advocacy scenarios for the fulfillment of people's rights - in MH

While members recognize existing challenges to influence decision-making, public policies, and laws in the region; they also consider that there are successful cases of national, regional, and global advocacy. Thus, we agree on the need of identifying successful cases and lessons learned in advocacy work, that can inspire others and collect what has been learned by the members of the alliance who have dedicated their efforts to advocacy or influencing work.



Tactics for humanitarian response

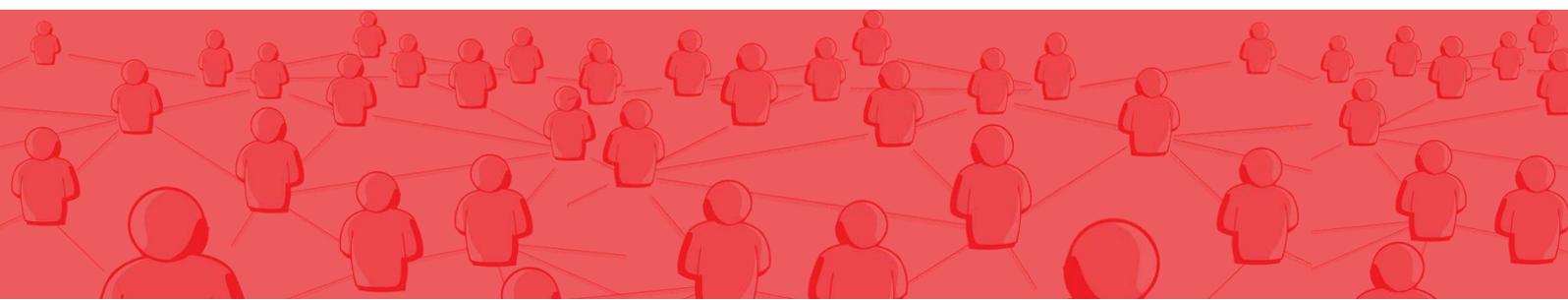
In addition to the advocacy strategies and tactics, four tactics for humanitarian response, in the context of migration and forced displacement, were identified during the event “Towards Joint Action: Migration & Displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean”, decided to be developed in the period 2023-2024. The last considers the broad experience of the members of the alliance in responding in a timely and effective manner to different emergencies.

Regional mapping of members and their activities in terms of human mobility response programs

Having a solid knowledge concerning the members of the alliance, their activities and programs related to human mobility is needed for increasing collaboration, articulation, joint programming, and fundraising. Thus, there is a need of developing a mapping of the members that work in human mobility. The mapping would address a general context, as well as an approach to member organizations one by one to conduct interviews and proper systematization of the gathered results and information.

Exchange of good practices and experiences concerning humanitarian response with a gender perspective

It was agreed as a priority the improvement of the knowledge and exchange of successful experiences on strategies, activities, and tactics in different contexts and by various members of the ACT Alliance in LAC. The last, recognizes the vast experience of our members and their long history working in humanitarian response. To begin these exchanges, the Regional Secretariat proposes to consider participating in two regional discussions on fundraising in consortia, as this has already been planned for 2023 and that fundraising has been a recurring theme during the event, especially among local organizations.



Training on Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS)

The members agree on the importance of continuing strengthening compliance with the CHS in all operations in the region. They also agree on the need for certification in this area to achieve a greater success in fundraising with institutional donors. Thus, there is an agreement on the need of translating documentation that is currently available in English only, to facilitate the reading and consultation by members (ACT Alliance available material in FABO, for instance). Given the above, generating capacity-building and training spaces (in person or hybrid) between 2023 and 2024 becomes particularly relevant.

Aid workers care / self-care

The members recognize the daily impact of the work performed daily on the health and wellbeing of the humanitarian staff, mainly those in the field. Therefore, it is prioritized to generate direct training and ToTs on those topics, as well as to promote self-care spaces during the alliance events.



V. Current and potential articulation spaces for joint work

ACT Alliance is characterized for the diversity of its members -including religious leaders, faith-based organizations, Human Rights defenders-, and for its extensive experience on bringing assistance to the most affected people, communities and areas by human mobility and its root causes -in humanitarian response and development contexts-. The alliance has as its core the defense of human rights and considers gender as a cross-cutting approach that is necessary to ensure the protection, resilience, and development of the people. This vision become highly important for advocacy initiatives at the regional and global level, considering the close collaboration and articulation of the alliance with secular and religious actors that promote the defense of human rights, or thar promote the defense of the last generation rights that have a significant weight into behaviors and decision-making processes, at the individual, communitarian, and political levels.

The alliance and its members actively participate in different advocacy spaces that are key to positioning the needs and rights of the RMDRD people -and the opportunities they offer to host countries and communities in terms of development, cultural, social, economic, and political growth- on the regional and global agendas. As part of the strategies of the alliance, at the regional level, it is also planned to ensure participation in other new spaces (see Annex 1: Current and potential spaces for joint work).

Further information

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