



**LOCALIZATION STRATEGY:
STRENGTHENING THE
ORGANIZATIONAL AND
PROTECTION CAPACITIES
OF COMMUNITY-BASED AND
REFUGEE-LED ORGANIZATIONS**

**Promising Practice
in Community-Based Protection
in Peru**



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Cover photograph: Volunteers from *Veneica*, an RLO supported by UNHCR, offering legal advice and support to Venezuelan refugees and migrants seeking access to documentation in southern Peru.

Photo credit: © VENEICA/Nancy Navas

Title: Localization strategy: Strengthening the organizational and protection capacities of community-based and refugee-led organizations in Peru

Type of practice: Emerging Practice

Programme objective: To strengthen the capacity of community-based organizations to deliver protection and solutions to refugees and migrants with most protection needs

Dates: April 2021 to present

Population groups: Community-based organizations led by refugees and host community members in Peru

Partners: Unión Venezolana en Perú (UVP), HIAS, and Encuentros Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes (SJM)

Programme overview

Recognizing that local actors, including [refugee-led organizations \(RLOs\)](#), are often the first responders in humanitarian situations and provide support and services when UNHCR and partners have limited or no access, UNHCR in Peru is working towards the empowerment of local organizations, in all their configurations, as part of a [localization strategy](#) to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of humanitarian responses. Since 2021, UNHCR has supported over 30 community-based and refugee-led organizations from seven regions of Peru to build their capacity by enhancing the quality of protection services they provide; expanding their outreach within communities and strengthening their organizational development and resource management competencies. UNHCR, in consultation with community-based organizations (CBOs)¹, has developed a comprehensive strategy that includes the creation of a network of mapped CBOs to help their members come together to learn and further develop their capacity; the provision of targeted training and technical advice both in the fields of protection and organization building, as well as in-kind support and small grants to increase their operational capacity and provide financial support for the implementation of small-scale projects designed by CBOs.

¹ The UNHCR [Peru localization strategy](#) targets both RLOs and CBOs led by host communities working closely with and for Venezuelan refugees and migrants.

Context

By the end of 2022, there were over 1.5 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Peru, making it the country with the highest number of Venezuelan asylum-seekers worldwide (532,000).² The country's capital, Lima, also hosts the largest number of Venezuelans living in a city outside their country.³

Despite the efforts of the Government and the host community, further support is still needed to provide the most at risk Venezuelan refugees and migrants with access to basic rights and vital services, which often remain limited or unavailable due to the lack of documentation, reduced infrastructure, or discrimination from public or private institutions.⁴

A number of self-managed, community-based organizations emerged within the Venezuelan community in Peru in recent years, whose leaders and volunteers provide technical or professional services and support the distribution of assistance to other members of the community.

Some of these structures came into being during the COVID-19 pandemic, becoming key actors in responding to the needs of marginalized Venezuelans. In addition to guaranteeing the participation of the refugee community in the humanitarian response, these CBOs have a key protection role as they can often reach areas and communities to which other humanitarian actors have no access and provide local knowledge of the most at-risk individuals within the community.

After an initial capacity assessment of these organizations, UNHCR identified that CBOs have varying capacities and that some require tailored support to enhance the quality of the services they deliver and/or their competencies in project management, internal controls and fundraising. By building these capacities, CBOs would be better positioned to seek self-sufficiency and take an even greater role in the protection response for those forcibly displaced. Some CBOs could eventually develop the required skills and capacities to engage in partnership agreements with UNHCR.



Community-based organization (CBO) delegates and UNHCR staff posing during a CBO network coordination meeting in Lima, organized by UNHCR Peru. © UNHCR/Stefanny Peláez

² UNHCR (2023). [Annual Results Report 2022 Peru](#)

³ [Factsheet UNHCR Peru – Annual Report 2022](#)

⁴ Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela. [RMNA 2022 - Refugee and Migrant Needs Analysis](#).

Resources and partnerships

The main partners supporting the [localization strategy in Peru](#) are Unión Venezolana en Perú (UVP), HIAS and Encuentros. These partners support the decentralization of services in coordination with CBOs throughout the country and assist with the implementation of peaceful coexistence activities and communication with communities (CwC) campaigns. With UNHCR support, UVP, which is also a member of the CBOs network, assists RLOs with their legal formalization process.

Implementation of the localization strategy also relies on enhancing cooperation with municipalities and regional authorities, engaging them to participate in information sessions with RLOs and communities on access to documentation and public system benefits, inter alia.

UNHCR in Peru has a dedicated budget for strengthening community-based networks that includes a training component as well as material and logistical support. The 2022 budget was US\$ 73,000, encompassing assistance to four community networks, one of which was the CBO network. For 2023, a separate budget of \$31,500 was allocated specifically to strengthening the CBO network. Additionally, a total amount of \$28,197 was disbursed through the nine [grant-agreements](#) signed with CBOs during 2022.

The UNHCR Peru Country Operation oversees implementation of the operation's community-based protection strategy and manages the grant agreements. Staff from other units are also engaged in capacity-building training for CBOs included in the strategy, as well as in supporting implementation of the activities scheduled under the CBO network, as needed.

Process and activities

1

IDENTIFICATION OF EXISTING COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

During the COVID-19 response in late 2020, UNHCR set out to identify and engage community-based associations led directly by Venezuelan refugees and migrants or working closely with them through field visits and community sessions. By mid-April 2021, 20 CBOs were identified, allowing UNHCR to better understand

the communities in which these organizations operate and the services they provide, as well as the main organizational needs and possible options for engagement and integration of these organizations in the operation's protection response.

2

ESTABLISHING A CBO NETWORK TO ENHANCE COORDINATION

UNHCR supported the establishment of a CBO coordination network with the following objectives:

- ▶ To exchange information about available services for refugees and asylum-seekers (both within and outside the network) to strengthen collaboration and case management in coordination with UNHCR and other relevant stakeholders.
- ▶ To coordinate joint activities to maximize the reach and impact of planned interventions.
- ▶ To boost the technical capacities that will promote the self-sustainability of the CBOs.

- ▶ To generate continuous learning and capacity-sharing opportunities for its members and ensure minimum standards for the quality of services.

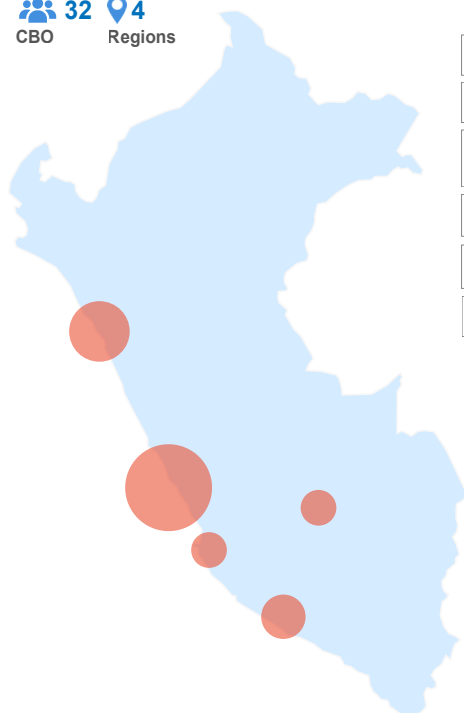
- ▶ To set up a mechanism for case referrals and emergency assistance for refugees facing heightened protection risks.

In 2023, the size of the network increased to incorporate 32 organizations in the following geographical areas: 24 operated in the Lima and Callao regions; 4 in Trujillo; 3 in Arequipa; and 1 in Ica. Coordination meetings continue to be developed regularly, being progressively led by CBOs themselves on a rotational basis.

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in territory

Community-based organizations throughout the country have organized themselves to respond to the situation of vulnerability experienced by refugees and migrants. After the massive exodus of Venezuelans to Peru, it became relevant the work of organizations led by Venezuelans or Peruvian leaders offering specific services to the Venezuelan population at greatest risk.

32 CBO
4 Regions



Lima y Callao (24)

Ate (1) Civil Asociación Granma V	🏠 🧑 🧑 🧑 🧑
Carmen de la Legua (1) Tod@s	🏠 🧑
Cercado de Lima (2) Féminas Fraternos	🏠 🧑 🧑
Chorrillos (1) Abrazando TEA	🏠 🧑
Comas (1) Pasos Firmes	🏠 🧑 🧑 🧑
Lima Provincia (1) Comunidad de Mujeres Positivas	🏠 🧑 🧑 🧑 🧑

Lince (1) Rosas Mujeres Lucha	🏠 🧑 🧑
Los Olivos (1) Engadi	🏠 🧑
Miraflores (3) Roraima Quinta Ola Veneactiva	🏠 🧑 🧑 🧑 🧑 🧑
Pueblo Libre (1) CIRINEO	🏠 🧑
Rimac (1) Trabajando sin fronteras	🏠 🧑
San Luis (1) Se hace camino al andar	🏠 🧑 🧑 🧑

San Isidro (1) Unión Venezolana	🏠 🧑 🧑 🧑 🧑
San Martín de Porres (1) Movimiento Migrante	🏠 🧑
San Juan de Miraflores (1) OCASIVEN	🏠 🧑
Surquillo (4) APPV Asistendisc Lo natural es ser diverso Mag the Bay	🏠 🧑 🧑 🧑 🧑 🧑 🧑 🧑
Villa El Salvador (1) Banderas sin fronteras	🏠 🧑
Villa María del Triunfo (1) Acción Solidaria Araguayey	🏠 🧑

Arequipa (3)

Arequipa (2) Ángeles del Camino APPV - Arequipa Movimiento trans del Perú

Ica (1)

Ica (1) Venelca

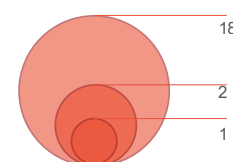
Trujillo (4)

Trujillo (4) ASOVENTRU Red Internacional de Cooperación Humanitaria VEO. Venezolanos Organizados Vida Nueva

Services from CBOs

- 💡 Cultural activities
- 🏠 Disabilities
- 📖 Education
- 🍲 Food
- 👥 Gender based violence
- ⚖️ Legal counseling
- 🌱 Livelihoods
- 🩺 Primary medical attention
- 🧠 Psychosocial support
- ✝️ Spiritual and religious support

N° of communities



3

ASSESSMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All members of the CBO network complete an initial self-evaluation survey on their protection and organizational capacities and training needs. The application and analysis of this tool within the first months of operation of the network revealed a significant disparity among the different organizations in terms of size and capacities. To address this, UNHCR developed a specific tool to monitor their growth over time⁵, conducting evaluations at the beginning and end of the year. The organizational development baseline applied in 2021 served as a basis for initial categorization of CBOs, informing the capacity-building areas to be prioritized and the provision of accompaniment tailored to each organization's level of organization.

As part of this exercise, CBOs are encouraged to set their institutional goals and develop workplans that optimize available resources by narrowing down their interventions by sector and defining the targeted population prioritized by age, gender and diversity considerations. These considerations are meant to **gradually allow for the integration of an age, gender and diversity (AGD) approach into the programming and delivery of services**, as well as reduce overlapping activities and unnecessary competition for resources resulting from interventions that target similar sectors and population groups.

⁵ The most recent version of the tool is included in UNHCR (2023) [Peru Localization Strategy](#)

INTEGRATION OF ACTIVITIES THROUGH A COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION COOPERATION NETWORK ANNUAL WORKPLAN

UNHCR integrates activities proposed by CBOs participating in the cooperation network, developing annual workplans that include the number of field brigades to be conducted by location and thematic area, as well as outreach activities targeting vulnerable populations in the different communities. Based on these proposed activities and the

internal assessments of the capacities of CBOs, aggregated planning also reflects the training sessions to be conducted, as well as the material support to be provided to each organization. Starting in 2023, separate annual workplans were developed for each of the four regions in which the localization strategy is being implemented.



Venezuelan volunteer physicians examine refugees, migrants, and members of the host community during a community health brigade organized by UNHCR-supported RLO Arguaney in Lima. © Arguaney/Ysmarín Marin

5 PROVISION OF IN-KIND SUPPORT

Members of the CBO network receive logistical and in-kind support from UNHCR (transportation, food, connectivity, etc.) for the delivery of services and the purchase of key materials required for their events. CBOs also receive basic kits to improve the quality and dignity of their working conditions, including furniture, equipment and

office supplies. In addition, UNHCR assesses the organizational needs of CBOs, to provide support such as items promoting visibility and communication with communities (CwC), to provide organizational materials (banners, uniforms, bulletins, etc.) and to organize joint CwC campaigns.

6 TRAINING

UNHCR develops an annual training plan with learning opportunities that are open to all members of the CBO cooperation network. At the beginning of this process, the capacity-building component of the strategy focused on the development of protection and case management skills. As internal monitoring tools and the organizations' self-assessment surveys began to reflect the need to boost operational and administrative capacities, topics related to these thematic areas have been progressively integrated into the training strategy.

Training activities are facilitated mainly by UNHCR staff through in-person and online modalities, entailing a wide-range of topics such as international protection, child protection,

gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and case referral, participatory assessments, communication with communities, accountability to affected people (AAP), conflict resolution, the age, gender and diversity approach, mental health, project design, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, public and private fundraising, income-generating ideas, procurement, human resources policies, internal financial controls, data collection, inter alia. The training programme has also capitalized on the expertise of two organizations that are members of the CBO network, covering topics related to access to justice for the refugee population and how to obtain legal status in Peru for non-profit associations which is a pre-requisite to acquiring non-governmental organization (NGO) status.

7 PROVISION OF GRANT AGREEMENTS

In 2022, UNHCR piloted the provision of [grant agreements](#) to CBOs in Peru. This financial tool was introduced by UNHCR in 2021, enabling operations to partner directly with organizations led by displaced and stateless persons and CBOs, without intermediaries. This opportunity to finance small-scale projects designed by

CBOs with up to \$12,000 in total per year, was integrated into a wider strategy to fully engage CBOs with the tools they need to achieve self-sufficiency, thereby serving as the main UNHCR tool for simultaneously improving resource management capacities and strengthening the quality and reach of protection services.⁶

⁶ [Localizing innovation: Supporting community-based initiatives in new ways \(unhcr.org\)](#)

In 2022, UNHCR put out a call for grant proposals through the CBO network. To be considered, interested organizations were required to meet certain eligibility criteria⁷ and to commit to participating in five project design and proposal writing workshops covering the topics of: developing a problem statement; setting objectives, goals and indicators; project budgeting; and supporting documentation. Twenty-one organizations registered to participate in the workshops but only the 10 CBOs completing the training were formally invited to apply for the grant.

Following the submission of draft proposals, CBOs received individualized feedback from UNHCR that allowed the CBOs to further identify and classify their areas of work and to integrate recommendations addressing major protection gaps identified. This step was also meant to promote equal participation among CBOs, taking into consideration that some were more experienced than others. To accommodate these disparities, the operation authorized the disbursement of smaller portions of the grant to CBOs that were not yet in a position to implement their project proposals, so that they could take initial steps in that direction (e.g. acquiring registration in the Single Taxpayers' Registry (RUC) in Peru as a preliminary step to obtaining legal status).

A total of nine final project proposals were submitted and reviewed by a multifunctional team composed of national and international

staff members from the protection and programme units. As a result of the process, three CBOs obtained the maximum grant amount and the remaining six benefited from partial grants (please refer to the table on page 14 for more information about these organizations and their profiles). The selected organizations also received technical support to help them submit the documents and complete the administrative formalities enabling the grant to be transferred to their bank accounts.

In addition, the integration of grant agreements into the localization strategy has promoted the standardization of processes and the identification of parameters to measure and strengthen the level of organizational development of the CBOs supported, across four main categories: protection, project management, internal controls and fundraising strategy.⁸

As part of this process, a template has been created to support the development of annual operational plans for the CBOs for the upcoming years. Through this tool, organizations are encouraged to develop a four-year strategic vision to facilitate identification and prioritization of the steps required to achieve self-sufficiency. The exercise also contributes to narrowing down the areas of specialization of services for each organization and the setting of priorities for a given year using a results-oriented approach.

⁷ Eligibility criteria include: a minimum of six months' participation in the cooperation network; regular participation in the CBO network meetings; an institutional organigram and internal rules on alternance of leadership.

⁸ [UNHCR Peru Localization Strategy](#)

► Participation and accountability

Technical and financial support to RLOs is central to the UNHCR localization approach and contributes to ensuring that displaced and host communities are treated as equal and active partners. The strategy to strengthen the organizational and protection capacities of community-based organizations in Peru has been developed through a participatory process and incorporates feedback provided through self-assessment surveys, field visits, capacity-building spaces and grant implementation reports. As a result, the refugee community has been able to contribute to the process, helping

to adjust and improve the strategy's main tools as needed.

Moreover, CBOs have received training on participatory assessments, accountability to affected people, and AGD mainstreaming coupled with individualized technical support for the creation of their annual workplans, to ensure that they incorporate groups at heightened risk of discrimination and exclusion, such as persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ people, women and girls, children and youth, as targeted beneficiaries of their planned activities and responses.



CBO network members during a participatory evaluation of the localization strategy organized by UNHCR in Lima in 2023.
© UNHCR/Stefanny Peláez

Achievements, results and impact

By the end of 2022, the CBO cooperation network led by UNHCR had brought together 32 community-based and refugee-led organizations from seven regions in Peru. Among these, 24 were headed by women and 5 by members of the host community, 2 provided specialized services to persons with disabilities

and 4 to LGBTIQ+ people. All organizations benefited from training throughout the year on protection and project management-related topics. Additionally, the operation awarded 9 grant agreements to 8 organizations and supported 10 organizations with in-kind and logistical support.

1

EMPOWERMENT OF THE REFUGEE POPULATION

A central result of the localization efforts is that refugee leaders and other members of the community are now more empowered and have gained greater autonomy and capacity to collectively meet their needs and address the protection and integration challenges that they face. Emerging efforts to help each other and reach members of the community at heightened protection risk are being recognized and supported. As a result of UNHCR efforts to strengthen their self-

organization and community mobilization efforts, individuals and groups participating in the CBO network today can do more for their communities and can do it better. Moreover, refugees themselves are taking part in the humanitarian response in a more visible, structured and sustainable manner and other stakeholders, including local authorities and the donor community, are becoming more aware of the capacities they bring and also how they can be better supported.

2

QUALITY AND REACH OF CBO PROTECTION SERVICES STRENGTHENED

Integrating CBO network activities through the development of annual workplans has complemented implementation of the operation's urban strategy, community-based protection strategy and territorial approach: it supports volunteers, enhances outreach, promotes community mobilization, decentralizes services and permits advocacy with authorities. Furthermore, it has contributed to enhancing the conditions for local integration through the decentralization of essential services and the inclusion of peaceful coexistence activities.

Since the launch of the CBO network in 2021, implementation of the strategy has proven successful in expanding access to rights and vital services for marginalized Venezuelan refugees and migrants. The inclusion of field brigades in the CBOs annual workplan has prioritized access to documentation, health, education and gender-based violence prevention services, allowing the operation to support beneficiaries who were previously mostly out of reach. Through these field services provided by CBOs with the

Strengthened community capacity to protect and integrate children with disabilities through the Growing without Limits project in Lima

Mag the Bay implemented a training and support programme for parents and caregivers of children with disabilities, which included visibility materials, the development of a work methodology and the provision of support group sessions and individualized assessments of children, as well as providing families with practical tools on psychoeducational and behavioural development techniques that can be applied at home. Through the grant agreement with UNHCR, the organization, which provides services in collaboration with Venezuelan and Peruvian health practitioner volunteers, was able to double the number of people usually reached with its own resources, reaching a total of 75 families. The grant supported the rental of office premises, the purchase of training and visibility materials and the provision of stipends to two additional volunteers.

complementary support of partner agencies and other community-based networks supported by UNHCR, the operation reached over 20,000 people with information and community services in 2022.⁹

Moreover, the establishment of a mechanism for case referrals and emergency assistance within the CBO network has contributed to preventing, mitigating and responding to gender-based violence. For instance, in 2022 there was an increase in the number of reported cases of GBV (29 per cent) and the number of survivors receiving mental health and psychosocial support (13.5 per cent), which was linked to the promotion of UNHCR services in community spaces.¹⁰

Internal assessments regarding the level of organizational development in CBOs show progress towards enhancing the quality and effectiveness of their protection services. This is reflected in the self-assessments of CBOs regarding their protection capacities and UNHCR monitoring tools, including field visits, as well as in more consistency being observed in their results-based planning approaches.



CBOs Mag The Bay and Abrazando TEA provide specialized services to children with disabilities and their families during an education fair “Educafest” in Lima, supported by UNHCR Peru. © Mag The Bay 2023

The following overview of the eight CBOs supported with nine grant agreements in Peru during 2022 showcases how combining financial and technical support has proven crucial to enabling experienced CBOs to deliver specialized services to more beneficiaries, while planting the seeds of organizational growth in smaller organizations with fewer capacities:

⁹ [Annual Results Report Peru 2022](#)

¹⁰ Ibid.

Organization	Location	Women-/ Youth-led	AGD focus (if any), or area of specialization	Project title
Organización Civil Ángeles del Camino	Arequipa	Women-led	Social support; legal counselling	Grant 1: Strengthening capacities of community outreach workers. Grant 2: Participatory assessments with communities living in street conditions in Arequipa.
Hermanas de la Misericordia	Puno	Faith-based organization (FBO)	Food, shelter, legal guidance	Support and humanitarian assistance for refugees and migrants in transit.
El Ciríneo	Lima	Women-led	Legal counselling	Legal advice, support and representation for the refugee, migrant and LGBTIQ+ population in Peru.
Movimiento Migrante	Lima	N/A	Children	Empowering refugee children through educational and cultural activities.
Asociación Somos VAIDA	Callao	Women-led	Psychosocial support and local integration	Cultural, recreational and educational activities for refugee and migrant women and children.
Veneica	Ica	Women-led	Legal counselling	Support for organizational growth.
Mag the bay	Lima	Youth-led	Persons with disabilities	Growing without limits ¹¹ : protecting and integrating children with disabilities through support spaces for parents and caregivers (*see box for more information).
Acción Solidaria Araguayey	Araguaney	Women-led	Primary medical attention	Support for organizational growth.

3

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITIES OF CBOs IMPROVED

Following the completion of the first round of projects supported with grant agreements in 2022, the office in Peru developed a tool containing nine criteria for measuring the effectiveness of the localization strategy in strengthening the organizational capacities of participating CBOs.

Six out of eight CBOs have been assessed by UNHCR to date. Based on these preliminary results, there is evidence that CBOs have taken important steps towards acquiring legal constitution, while also showing promising results in improving their strategic planning, project management and reporting skills.

The following table systematizes the results:

Assessment criteria		2021 (No. of CBOs, of a total of six)	2023
1.	Registered as a legal entity	1	5 (1 in process)
2.	Holds tax-exempt status for the receipt of donations	0	0 (3 in process)
3.	Possesses premises or workspace	0	6
4.	Has developed organizational charts	0	6
5.	Has established strategic alliances	0	6
6.	Has developed operational plans	0	6
7.	Has implemented projects (outside of the project funded by the UNHCR grant agreement)	1	4
8.	Has demonstrated reporting capabilities	1	6
9.	Has increased the number of volunteers	0	4

UNHCR is planning to undertake a more in-depth evaluation of the pilot phase of the grant agreements in the coming months.

¹¹ The CBO webpage can be consulted at: <https://magthebay.org/#proyectos>

Lessons

Although the localization strategy in Peru has been consolidated in a relatively short period of two years, reflections by the operation have led to the identification of key factors contributing to its success, as well as challenges encountered:



ENABLING FACTORS

- 💡 Though the profile of the Venezuelan population in Peru is diverse, many refugee leaders bring strong professional or technical capacities in various fields (e.g. social work, medicine, psychology and law) and experience in community mobilization and advocacy with governments from their country of origin. In Peru, they have been able to further develop their civic activism with no legal restrictions.
- 💡 Members of the refugee community spontaneously decided to take action on their own and use their capacities to help other members of the community and advance efforts to self-organize in their host country.
- 💡 The UNHCR operation at large understands the value of community capacities and recognizes the role that refugees and community members play in humanitarian responses, taking action often in everyday situations and before authorities or humanitarian actors.
- 💡 There is consensus within the UNHCR operation to prioritize a localization strategy and work with CBOs as a central element of the multi-year protection and solutions strategy; staffing and resources are allocated accordingly.
- 💡 Having a pre-existing consolidated network of grass-roots organizations actively engaged with the work of UNHCR has facilitated the grant allocation process. The familiarity of UNHCR with the nature and quality of their work has helped determine in advance whether they can be trusted and how to accompany them throughout the process.
- 💡 The localization strategy in Peru showcases the cost-effectiveness potential of these interventions. With UNHCR support, some CBOs were able to increase the numbers of people normally reached with their own resources, a result that would require more funding to achieve if a traditional NGO partner was selected to attain the same objective starting from zero.
- 💡 Participation of both Peruvian organizations and RLOs in the CBO network promotes better understanding among members and contributes to local cohesion among displaced Venezuelan and host communities reached by their services.



UNHCR Peru and the CBO network meet before signing letters of intent in Lima, August 2023.

© UNHCR/Stefanny Peláez



ADVERSE FACTORS AND CONSTRAINTS

- Divisions among some of the members of the CBO cooperation network have affected group dynamics in some of the planned activities, including communication and coordination efforts. This has prevented UNHCR from handing over or delegating the coordination of some of the activities within the networks as originally intended.
- RLOs leaders face their own personal challenges. Many community leaders themselves struggle to meet their basic needs and provide for their families, or continue to face protection issues in the host country, such as lacking documentation to lead a civil association, among others.
- Some local governments have not allowed CBOs to register as social organizations, thus preventing them from accessing benefits and resources, which also affects their positioning as a relevant actor in their communities.
- Some CBOs that were supported with grant agreements in 2022 expressed the need for more training and technical support on project management and administrative and internal control processes.
- CBOs generally have scarce resources and face fundraising and sustainability challenges. This has direct implications for their own working conditions and structures (e.g. most CBOs cannot afford an office or stipends for volunteers).
- Negative portrayals of Venezuelans promoted by some media outlets and by some political actors can narrow the humanitarian space for CBOs.
- Certain social norms or attitudes and practices by local actors affect gender equality and the role of women-led CBOs.
- In general, individual interventions by UNHCR or its funded partners are recorded in the UNHCR data management system (ProGres). As RLOs do not have direct access to ProGres, this prevents them from undertaking registration activities on their own, affecting the length of these processes.
- The lack of experience of RLOs in resource management discourages potential donors from further investment in these organizations.

Tips for replication and scaling up

- ✓ Ensure the engagement of a multifunctional team, including relevant technical functions across UNHCR (especially programme, partnerships, AAP, community-based protection, legal protection, child protection and gender-based violence), to design, implement and monitor the localization strategy and work with CBOs.
- ✓ Stay true to the participation revolution underlying the localization strategy: ensure that mechanisms and processes are in place for the consultation and meaningful participation of CBOs through the entire process.
- ✓ Promote a geographical and/or functional division of services among CBOs, including clear roles, responsibilities and referral pathways among them to prevent tensions or undue competition.
- ✓ Demystify the myth that refugee capacities are scarce or rudimentary by systematically mapping the professional and technical capacities of the refugee population, identifying opportunities for members of the community to show their solidarity to one another.
- ✓ Support CBOs, even those that are small and not legally registered. Promote initiatives in which CBOs could assume new roles and responsibilities that enable them to grow. Pay particular attention to strengthening the capacities of CBOs to raise and manage resources.
- ✓ Strengthen the technical knowledge and capacity of UNHCR, partners or other actors supporting CBOs on organizational development. Establish parameters and criteria to measure the growth of the organizations they are supporting.
- ✓ Build the capacity of CBOs and support their participation in the humanitarian infrastructure and coordination forums for networking and relation-building with humanitarian actors, local authorities and potential donors; create opportunities to forge meaningful partnerships among these stakeholders.
- ✓ Link CBOs with relevant initiatives developed by local authorities to avoid parallel systems and promote complementarity and sustainability.
- ✓ Be clear and transparent in your communications with CBOs from the very outset, outlining what UNHCR can and cannot do. Effective communication goes a long way in managing the expectations of members of the community and building trust with and among CBOs.
- ✓ Investing in a coordination space for CBOs contributes to mitigate challenges in relation to communication and competition for resources among different community groups.
- ✓ Plan enough time and resources to build the capacity of CBOs and analyse when and how the operation should transition to other forms of engagement with, and support for, these organizations as part of the localization strategy.
- ✓ Operations should not be discouraged by progress in small steps or a lack of tangible outcomes. Community-based protection is a process and UNHCR should continue investing in this process even if results take time to materialize or are hard to measure in the short term. Start with small-scale activities and progressively move towards the implementation of projects with higher outreach.

- ☑ Ensure that the four main pillars of the strategy (strengthening protection quality, project management, internal controls and financial sustainability) are equally emphasized when planning capacity-strengthening activities. Convey to CBOs the importance of each pillar for self-reliance.
- ☑ Further analysis is needed to identify and engage strategic actors that could further support CBOs in developing key skills and competencies in project management and financial sustainability (e.g. public institutions supporting community organizations, the private sector and universities).
- ☑ Develop a capacity-strengthening action plan for each CBO, based on their specific goals and stage of organizational development. These action plans will help the CBO to focus on those capacity-strengthening priorities that would benefit from UNHCR support and thereby determine the scope and duration of that support. CBOs can thus plan complementary steps towards achieving self-reliance in the longer term.

Next steps

UNHCR plans to continue supporting the self-sufficiency of CBOs in Peru by gradually increasing the capacities of organizations benefiting from the localization strategy. In 2023, the operation signed eight additional grant agreements (including some of the previous year's recipients as well as new ones) for a total amount of \$29,923 and is planning to introduce a team-building programme and to run sessions on strategic planning in Lima as part of its training strategy.

UNHCR will hold discussions with CBOs on measures to overcome identified challenges, including divisions among members of the community, practical barriers to legal registration, xenophobic demonstrations and the need to develop strong financial accountability mechanisms. The operation will also raise awareness among the donor community of the need to expand the base of potential funding sources for RLOs. Further interactions with local authorities will be promoted to ensure the sustainability and complementarity of community-led interventions.

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