E.M.P.L.E.O. MANAUS

Analysis and Strategies for the Insertion of Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants in the Manauara Labor Market

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FOREWORD

For the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the migration phenomenon is an inevitable one that permeates our societies and is part of their construction. We believe that when it occurs in a safe, orderly and regular manner, migration is beneficial for migrants, but also for the communities of origin, transit and reception. IOM works with partners in more than 100 countries to assist them in facing and understanding the challenges of migration; encouraging economic and social development catalysed by migration; and preserving human dignity and the well-being of refugees and migrants.

Since 2018, it is estimated that more than 5 million Venezuelans have left their country, with South America being one of their main destinations. Since then, in Brazil, around 900,000 consultations have been carried out on the border between the two countries and about 250,000 Venezuelans have chosen to stay. Many remained in northern Brazil, especially in the states of Roraima and Amazonas.

The socioeconomic integration of Venezuelan migrants in Brazilian society is a challenge, but also an opportunity that can truly be taken advantage of with solutions that enhance the benefits of migration, both for those who arrive and for those who welcome them. Among these, there is the richness of the cultural and experiential diversity they bring; new connections to other countries and markets; and the contribution to poverty reduction in the countries of origin through remittances to their relatives who remained behind.

The arrival of 20,000 Venezuelan migrants in Manaus over the past two years calls for much needed policies, approaches and a better understanding that can enable migration to bring its added value to the economy and the local workforce.

IOM hopes that this study can be a tool in the search for effective solutions, identifying where the Venezuelan community can most complement the Manaus economy and what barriers there are to overcome so that it can do so.

In this vein, we sought to better understand the challenges and opportunities faced by the thousands of Venezuelans who have arrived in the city in recent years. We also sought to understand their profile better, as well as their aspirations and their experiences while working in Brazil. In the same way, we also sought to hear from employers, companies and industries in Manaus, aiming to have a better grasp of their perceptions in regards to this community and its professional potential. Finally, the study also aimed to explore possible contributions from government actors and civil society to enhance their socioeconomic integration, forming the basis of the strategies proposed herein.

IOM will continue to monitor migration movements across Brazil closely, contributing as much as possible to the integration of migrants who leave their country in search of a better life. Among the many actions in this regard, IOM remains a fundamental partner within the Operação Acolhida in all its aspects, as well as a driving force in supporting the integration of migrants in the labour market through the Oportunidades project in more than eight states. We will continue supporting Brazil in creating policies and actions that materialise in good migration management practices and we are certain that this study will contribute and be a useful tool to that end.

Lia Poggio
Emergency Coordinator
International Organization for Migration (IOM)

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ACA – Trade Association of Amazonas
ADRA – Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AFICAM – Association of Industries and Service Companies from the Industrial Hub of Amazonas
AM – Amazonas
APDM – Association of the Digital Hub of Manaus
ATM – Accommodation of Transit of Manaus
CATI – Computer-assisted telephone interviews
CBI – Cash-based intervention
CEBRAP – Brazilian Centre for Analysis and Planning
CETAM – Amazonas Technological Education Centre
CFC – Centre for Training Drivers
CNAE – National Classification of Economic Activities
COVID – Coronavirus Disease
CPF – Individual Taxpayer's Registry
IBGE – Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics
IFAM – Federal Institute of Amazonas
MEC – Ministry of Education
MEI – Individual Micro-entrepreneur
IOM – International Organization for Migration
NGO – Non-governmental organization
UN – United Nations
EAP – Economically active population
GDP – Gross Domestic Product
PII – Personally identifiable information
PIM – Industrial Hub of Manaus
PNADc – Continuous Household National Sample Survey
PRM – Population, Refugees and Migrations Office of the United States of America Department of State
PVES – Informed Job Vacancy Programme
RAIS – Annual Social Information Report
HR – Human resources
RNE – National Registry of Foreigners
RNM – National Migration Registry
SEAS – State Secretariat for Social Assistance
SEBRAE – Brazilian Service of Support to Micro- and Small Enterprises
SEMED – Municipal Department of Education of the City Hall of Manaus
SENAC – National Service for Commercial Learning
SENAI – National Service for Industrial Learning
SIDIA – Institute of Science and Technology of Samsung Electronics
SINETRAM – Union of Passenger Transport Companies of Amazonas
SISMIGRA – National Migration Registry System
SWAN – Settlement, WASH (acronym for water, sanitation and hygiene) and Non-food Assistance
UEA – State University of Amazonas
UFAM – Federal University of Amazonas
USAID – United States Agency for International Development
VES – Informed Job Vacancy
ZFM – Zone of Manaus Tax Free Zone or Free Trade

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Photo: OIM Brasil

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"Lo que nos está ocurriendo es una tragedia de proporciones monumentales, pero es una oportunidad. Es una oportunidad para volver a empezar. Solo que se trata de procesos muy lentos. Tú no riegas una mata y le dices: 'Crece, crece, crece'. Tú esperas que la planta crezca, le pones abono y la cuidas. Yo espero que haya un aprendizaje porque si no, esto no ha valido de nada."

"What is happening to us is a tragedy of monumental proportions, but it is an opportunity. It is an opportunity to start again. But this involves very slow processes. You do not water a plant and say, 'Grow, grow, grow.' You wait for the plant to grow, give it fertiliser, take care of it. I hope people will learn through this because, if not, it would have been worthless."

Karina Sainz Borgo, Venezuelan writer
migrant resident in Spain

Located in the heart of the largest tropical forest in the world, Manaus is the main financial, corporate and commercial centre in northern Brazil. According to IBGE's (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) 2020 projections, the city has approximately 2.2 million inhabitants, the **seventh most populous in the country**. Its larger metropolitan region includes a total of 2.7 million inhabitants, placing it as the eleventh most inhabited in the country. The municipality has the **eighth highest GDP in Brazil**, representing 1.12 per cent of the total national GDP.

Though Manaus is **home to just over 1 per cent of the Brazilian population**, it is where roughly **7.5 per cent of all Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the country live**. Of the 5 million people who left the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in (recent) years since 2017, about 265,000 came to Brazil to stay. Of those, **approximately 20,000 reside in the Manauara capital** (Manauara means the inhabitant of or something related to the city of Manaus). They are men, women and children who have escaped precarious situations in their country or left to pursue better life opportunities, having found in the capital of the State of Amazonas a place to start again.

In interviews conducted for this analysis, more than 60 per cent of Venezuelan refugees and migrants living in Manaus stated that their life has improved a lot or at least slightly in recent years. However, during the exercise, it was found that **70 per cent of them are currently living in extreme poverty**, according to World Bank definitions. Of the 14,000 who are part of the economically active population, just over 1,000 have a de facto formal job. Therefore, it is estimated that there are approximately **13,000 individuals either working without a formal contract, self-employed or unemployed**.

The situation is even more precarious among women, with 55 per cent of them declaring themselves to be in that situation, against 35 per cent of men. Among the men, the average monthly income is R$ 723.00 (app. US$ 140) (78% lower than that of the Manauara citizen) and, among the women, it is R$ 449.00 (app. US$ 87) (70% lower than that of the Manauara citizen).

Adequate labour insertion is a fundamental condition in the process of integration of the Venezuelan population in Brazil. It is through work and income that each of these individuals will be able to provide for themselves and their families and, over time, develop their own further integration strategies.

At the end of 2019, the labour market in Manaus had about **497,000 formal jobs**, after having been slowly recovering since the economic crisis experienced by Brazil between 2014 and 2016. Since 2017, it has generated an average of **6,000 new jobs per year.**

It is not yet possible to calculate the exact impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Manaus labour market. It is reasonable, however, **to expect a contraction in 2020**. It is also reasonable to expect that, with the eventual containment of the health crisis in 2021, **a second recovery cycle** can begin. The latter is likely to be **driven by the same sectors that have been pushing the local economy since 2017**: Retail, Health, Industry, Transport and Logistics, Construction, Building Maintenance and Conservation, and some Services subsectors (such as Cleaning and Information Technology).

Chart 1:

Scaled challenge

Each square is equivalent to 1000 (thousand) formal jobs or 1000 (thousand) individuals

Manauara Labor Market

Labor situation of Venezuelan migrants in Manaus
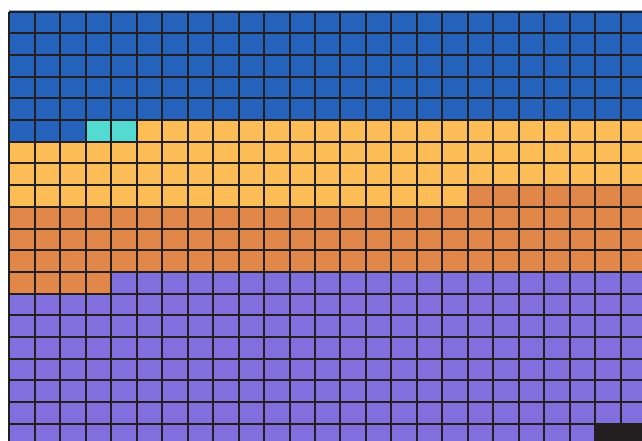
- Public administration
- Primary Sector (Agriculture, Extraction)
- Trade
- Industry
- Services
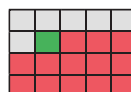
- Individuals out of working age
- Individuals in formal employment
- Individuals without formal employment

Source: 1: RAIS Vínculos – Ministry of Finance, 2019

Source 2: Survey CEBRAP/IOM-UN, May 2020 Scaled challenge

The creation of conditions for the insertion of 13,000 Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the Manaus economy over the coming years can build on an existing overall structure. Manaus is currently experiencing its third major migration inflow in 30 years. This has fostered an established ecosystem of civil society institutions that, in partnership with government authorities and the private sector, welcome and support the target population. Also, Manaus, together with Boa Vista and Pacaraima in the neighbouring Roraima state, remains a key location for Operation Welcome's ("Operação Acolhida") humanitarian services. The latter is an umbrella whole-of-Government humanitarian response strategy, supported by UN agencies and civil society. It is managed by the Federal Government and the Brazilian Armed Forces, implementing government-funded initiatives and centralizing coordination of all action in the context of the response to the migration inflow from Venezuela. It offers and coordinates a variety of services and facilities, including migratory regularization and documentation centres, shelters and humanitarian assistance, integration, voluntary relocation, among other.

This study sought to (1) understand the context of the Manauara labour market and the profile of the Venezuelan migrant residing in Manaus; (2) identify best practices in the existing ecosystem that could benefit from a more centralized and overarching coordination; and, above all, 3) present an **Action Framework**. The latter was built upon **six Action Lines** which should materialize in objective activities put forth in a collaborative way by key actors, aiming at catalysing the labour market insertion of the target population in a meaningful way. Those actors evidently include the public sector; but also the private sector; civil society (or third sector); UN (United Nations) agencies, including the International Organization for Migration (IOM); and other actors in this context.

[1]The UN operation rate of December 2020 (5,197) is used throughout the study for the conversion of BRL to USD.

E.M.P.L.E.O. RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE DISCUSSED:

Recommendation	Why is it relevant?	What does it consist of?
Establish an integrated database	Each third sector institution has its own database, thereby registering general data, professional profiles and benefits delivered to individuals of interest. The lack of integration and maintenance of this database generates: a) frequently outdated contacts; b) a limited supply of candidates, and; c) inefficiencies in the management of awarded benefits to the target population.	The creation of a single database on the target population, managed centrally by a relevant player involved in the response to the migration inflow. All institutions that act in support of the labour market insertion of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the city of Manaus should have access.
Mitigate limiting conditions for employability	The most significant barrier to employability is not the lack of vacancies, but prior challenges faced by migrants. These are referred to herein as "limiting conditions for employability" and include: a) language barrier; b) lack of basic resources for food, transportation and communication; c) xenophobia.	A series of actions will be launched to mitigate limiting conditions, such as: a) Portuguese courses for foreigners via long distance learning; b) periodic CBI (cash-based interventions) conditioned to concluding new professional qualification courses or participating in recruitment processes; c) reporting channels for labour exploitation and the promotion of awareness among businesses.
Prospect job opportunities actively	The labour profile of the Venezuelan refugee and migrant community has a 51 per cent match with the emerging sectors in the Manaus labour market. However, awareness limitations persist among the local business community: a) misinformation about the real qualifications found among the target population; b) lack of knowledge about migration laws; (c) prejudice towards Venezuelans' motivation to work.	The hiring of a dedicated professional, by a civil society organization or other actors with resources and capabilities to do so, who would be working on monitoring vacancies among firms in emerging sectors, and the labour market in general. Related functions could include: a) identify and report open vacancies through research and constant communication with businesses and business associations; b) act as a recruiter, namely in identifying candidate-job matches, forwarding profiles of candidates to companies, and monitoring recruitment processes. c) build a communication channel directly with C-level executives, while raising awareness of this target audience towards the recruitment of refugees and migrants and its benefits for businesses.
Legitimise the skills and education of the most educated	Thirty-one per cent of Venezuelan refugees and migrants interviewed in this study's original research had completed Higher Education (vs. 20% among the Manauara); 11 per cent had incomplete Higher Education (vs. 8%); and 55 per cent declared to have completed a professional or vocational course. However, qualification recognition and the revalidation of foreign diplomas is expensive and slow in Brazil. This suggests that the main challenge might not be in a lack of qualifications, but rather ways of proving education and skills.	Advocacy action towards relevant local institutions related to training, education, and the recognition of qualifications, as well as the private sector. This could include: a) dialogue with public Higher Education institutions in Manaus towards accelerated diploma validation processes; (b) creation of a Solidarity Fund with the participation of the private sector, to support refugees and migrants with fees related to degree recognition processes; (c) developing, together with CETAM (Amazonas Technological Education Centre), as well as SENAC and SENAI (National Services for Commercial and Industrial Learning), a simplified way of certifying technical skills.
Elevate the qualification of the less educated	A total of 2,400 Venezuelans among those interviewed for this analysis have not completed elementary school or have done so without any complementary professional courses (in Brazil, "elementary school" refers to the first nine years of the school career). In Manaus, there is a vast offer of technical and professional courses, some even free of charge, which offer training and skills development which are relevant for the identified demand from the private sector. Many are unaware of such courses or lack basic resources to attend them.	Creation and implementation of a Qualifications Programme. This would be coordinated by a relevant player involved in the response to the Venezuelan migration inflow. Among others, these functions would include: a) identifying demand for graduates in specific areas and related courses accessible to migrants and refugees (eleven of these courses are identified in this study); b) collaboration with CETAM, SENAC and SENAI in order to create capacity to meet the identified demand from the private sector; c) management of CBI initiatives in order to provide conditions for the less educated to be able to attend and complete courses; d) the creation and management of a fund the support cost of issuing the C and E Driving Licence for interested refugees and migrants (if applicable).
Officialise Manaus as a city of origin in Operation Welcome's Informed Job Vacancy Programme	The possible containment of the COVID-19 pandemic and eventual reopening of borders raises concerns regarding the growth of the migration inflow and the inability of the Manauara labour market to absorb additional demand. Manaus is today the Brazilian municipality that receives the highest number of Venezuelans via Brazil's domestic voluntary relocation strategy (also called "Interiorização"), but is also a city where there are also many beneficiaries who have never participated. One of the ways to become eligible is to request travel and resettlement support when the beneficiary has a guaranteed job, earned through Operation Welcome's Informed Job Vacancy Programme (VES). In its context, Operation Welcome partners themselves identify job vacancies and adequate candidates and assist them throughout the recruitment process. Currently, only those based in Boa Vista or Pacaraima can enrol in the programme, despite the high number of possibly eligible candidates who are already in Manaus.	In this context, given the current presence of a large group of beneficiaries who are potentially eligible as participants in Operation Welcome's Informed job vacancy programme (PVES) and its other services, Manaus should be considered a city of origin for the Operation, similar to Boa Vista and Pacaraima.

02. METHODOLOGY

The creation of E.M.P.L.E.O. had as its main objective the identification of a set of strategic actions that can be followed by those acting in the response to the Venezuelan migration inflow. They were designed as concrete initiatives that can contribute to the labour insertion of Venezuelan refugees and migrants who currently live in the city of Manaus, are part of the economically active population (EAP), but do not hold formal jobs.

The starting point was a review of the robust "Manaus and Venezuelan Migration: Challenges and Opportunities in the Manauara Labour Market" study, coordinated by IOM and executed by CEBRAP between April and July 2020. Its conclusions were then complemented in this exercise with supplementary analysis and qualitative field research. Understanding the economy and the labour market in Manaus, as well as the profile of the target population, through the data collected therein was fundamental to achieve this proposal for action.

The analysis was divided into 2 phases: (1) Scenario Assessment; and (2) Elaboration of an Action Plan (later renamed "Action Framework"). For greater effectiveness, it was decided that work would be non-linear anditerative, thereby making progress through successive review rounds.

Illustration of the methodological process used
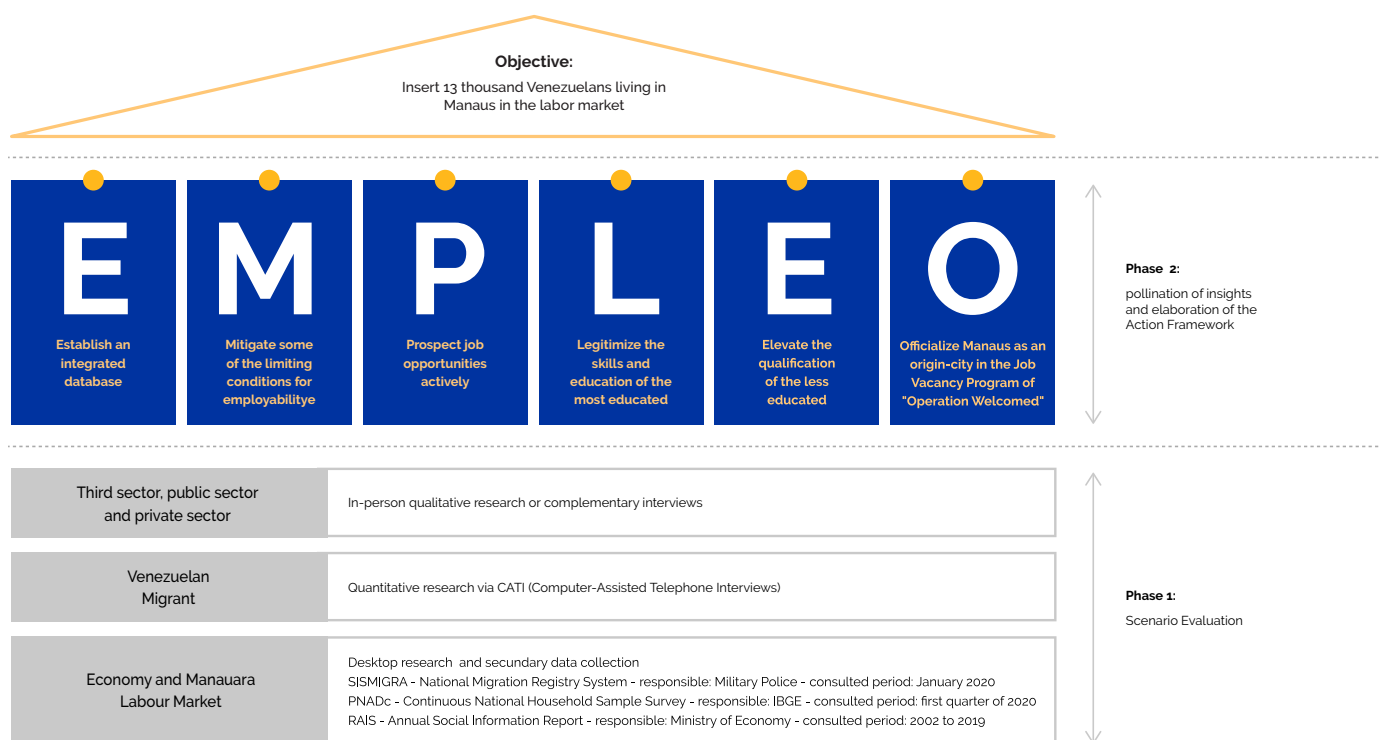
Source: Mandalah

For the first phase, Scenario Assessment, the results of the quantitative research via CATI carried out by IOM and CEBRAP earlier were particularly useful, as they already offered a very detailed profile of the target population. To complement that data, the following ensued: (1) an analysis of primary and secondary data, to better understand the economy and the labour market in Manaus; and (2) complementary qualitative research, to deepen an overall understanding of the perceptions of public, private and third sector actors regarding migration issues. The latter initiatives were carried out on-site in the city of Manaus in November 2020.

Assessment Tool	Main Goal	Detailed Scope
Desktop Research (Survey of secondary data)	Understanding the economy and the labour market in Manaus	SISMIGRA – National Migration Registry System [Military Police, January 2020]
		PNADc – Continuous National Household Sample Survey [IBGE, Q1 2020]
		RAIS – Annual Social Information Report [Ministry of Finance, 2002-2019]
		Others: Websites SENAI-AM and SENAC-AM (available courses list), Ministry of Education Online Portal (rules for revalidation of diplomas)
Quantitative Research via CATI (CEBRAP/IOM)	Understanding the profile of Venezuelan migrants residing in Manaus	Sample: Venezuelans over 16 who have lived in Manaus for at least four months
		Sample size: 402 respondents
		Questionnaire application method: CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviews)
		Type of questionnaire: structured, with an average duration of 35 min
		Error Margin: 4.9 percentage points, with a 95 per cent confidence coefficient
		Respondent acquisition approach: "Snowball"
Qualitative Field Research or Complementary Interviews (Mandalah)	Understanding perceptions and action of the three sectors (public, private and third sector)	Number of Interviews: 12 Duration: 1-2 hours Format: in-person Period: 10–12 November 2020 Entities and organizations interviewed: • IOM office in Manaus • Hermanitos (NGO) • Migrant Pastoral Charity in Manaus • Labour Prosecution Office of Amazonas State • SEAS (State Secretariat for Social Assistance) • Coroado Shelter • ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) • CETAM (Amazonas Technological Education Centre) • Sidia (Institute of Science and Technology of Samsung Electronics) (N.B.: interviews were also extended to 2 Venezuelan beneficiaries, one man and one woman.)

For the Elaboration of the Action Framework, the goal was to establish the smallest number of actions with the largest scale and effectiveness possible. This direction took into account the potential and limitations of the existing ecosystem supporting the labour market insertion of Venezuelan refugees and migrants ("ecosystem" refers to the spectrum of organizations and actors active in social and humanitarian assistance to that target population in Manaus). There was also a concern in presenting a consistent and easy-to-read Action Framework that could also maximise its "institutional marketing potential" and visual memory among the diverse actors who should play an active role in the implementation of the proposals presented herein. The formulation of the title, "E.M.P.L.E.O. Manaus" is a result of this consideration.

The research and drafting process took 5 weeks, including immersion in previously existing information, fieldwork carried out in Manaus, and the making of the final material.

Finally, the methodology applied in E.M.P.L.E.O. Manaus also took into consideration its application in other migration response scenarios in cities or countries where there is a need to formulate new strategies.

03. OVERVIEW

1. OVERVIEW OF THE MANAUARA LABOUR MARKET

The city of Manaus is a strategic and high potential location for Venezuelan refugees and migrants in search of professional opportunities. In addition to its proximity to the border, the city has the highest GDP among the capitals of northern Brazil and a per capita income of approximately R$ 24,000 (US$ 4,618) (2018), according to data from IBGE, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics.

Analysing the composition of the Manauara economy according to existing vacancies, the following scenario is observed:

a.   The primary sector, that is the extraction of goods and products directly from nature, is the least significant in the economy of Manaus: 6 per cent of the municipality's GDP and only 0.3 per cent of advertised vacancies available in the region.

b.   The secondary sector, or industry, is the second most relevant to the municipality's economy: 34 per cent of GDP comes from the Manaus Free Trade Zone[2] , but the industry as a whole generates only 17 per cent of advertised vacancies in this framework of analysis.

c.   The tertiary sector, the commerce and services sector (including public services), is the largest source of income and jobs in the city, corresponding to about 50 per cent of the municipal GDP and almost 80 per cent of the advertised vacancies available in the studied context.

In addition to the overview of the three sectors, a more detailed analysis by subsector reflected in the chart below shows that the Government is the largest employer in the city of Manaus. The importance of commerce within the tertiary sector is notable, with almost 88,000 formal job openings (17.6% of the total). Finally, it is possible to observe several important trends within the large services sector.

Chart 2: Offer of formal jobs in Manaus by subsector (% and # of jobs)

Subsector	% / # of jobs
Public administration	25,7% / 127,564
Commerce	17,6% / 87,672
Industry	17,4% / 86,423
Services – Transport and Logistics	6,2% / 30,596
Services – Other services	6,0% / 29,628
Services – Construction	4,5% / 22,146
Services – Education	4,3% / 21,595
Services – Cleaning	4,2% / 21,124
Services – Health and Social Services	3,6% / 17,929
Services – Security and Building Administration	3,6% / 17,836
Services – Accommodation and Food	3,4% / 17,053
Services – IT and Communication	1,2% / 5,882
Services – Sanitation	0,7% / 3,458
Services – Maintenance and Repair	0,6% / 2,790
Services – Energy	0,4% / 2,105
Services – Culture and Sport	0,3% / 1,632
Primary – Agriculture	0,2% / 1,155
Primary – Extraction	0,1% / 630

Source: RAIS Vínculos – Ministry of Finance, 2019

[2]The Free Trade Zone of Manaus (ZFM) is a Brazilian industrial park located in the city of Manaus, capital of the state of Amazonas. It is an area of free import and export trade and special tax incentives, established with the purpose of creating in the interior of the Amazon an industrial, commercial and agricultural centre with economic conditions that allow its development.

It is worth mentioning that one of the main challenges in the labour market in Manaus is its high degree of informality. According to IBGE's definition, the informal sector consists of: i) self-employed workers; ii) employees in private companies without an official professional record; iii) domestic workers without an official professional record; ; and iv) unpaid domestic or family workers. When analysing the context of Manaus, it is possible to verify that about half of the city's workers are inserted in an informal context, which tends to negatively impact remuneration, stability and the access of workers to social services and financial credit.

Chart 3: Informal employment in Manaus vs. other metropolitan regions of the country
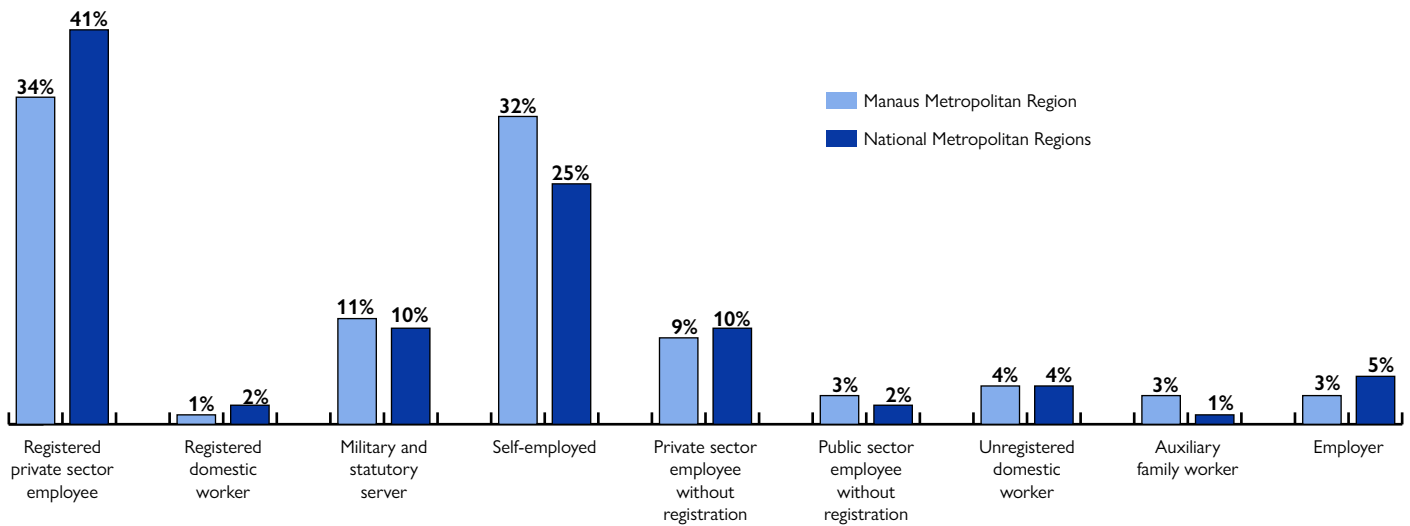
Source: Continuous National Household Sample Survey (Continuous PNAD, first visit), 2019.

When analysing the level of formality in different sectors, it can be seen that commerce corresponds to 42 per cent of all formal companies in the city. However, it represents only 17 per cent of formal employment ties. On the other hand, manufacturing corresponds to 7 per cent of formal companies and represents 18 per cent of formal employment relationships.

Photo: OIM Brasil

Chart 4: Number of formal work contracts vs. number of companies by subsector

Legend:
- % of formal work contracts
- % of companies

Values by subsector (contracts / companies):
- Commerce: 17% / 42%
- Administrative activities: 10% / 8%
- Accommodation and Food: 3% / 7%
- Manufacturing Industries: 18% / 7%
- Human Health and Social Services: 4% / 6%
- Construction: 4% / 5%
- Transport, Amazon and Mail: 7% / 5%
- Scientific and Technical Activities: 2% / 5%
- Other Sectors: 10% / 14%
- Public administration: 26% / 0%
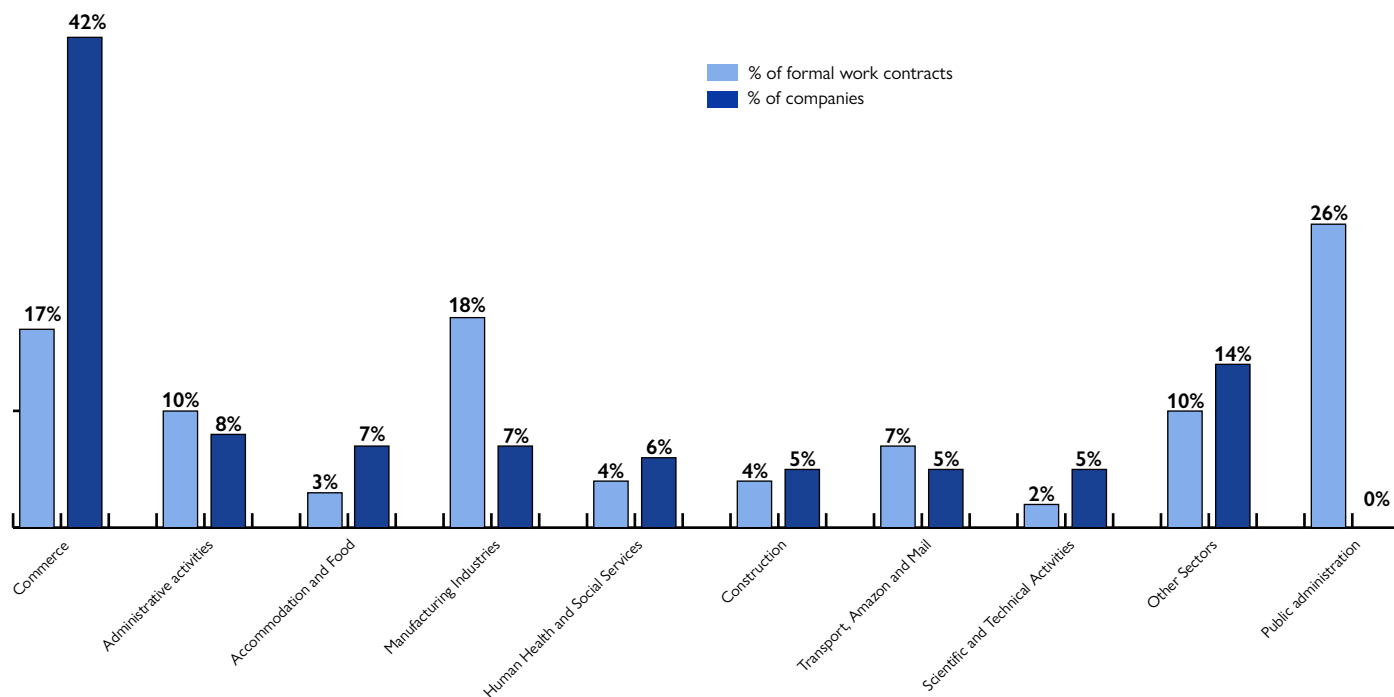
Source: RAIS Vínculos – Ministry of Finance, 2019

2. OVERVIEW OF THE VENEZUELAN REFUGEE AND MIGRANT COMMUNITY IN MANAUS

Currently, there are more than 20,000 Venezuelans living in Manaus. This number is likely to increase with a possible stabilisation of the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and a possible reopening of the Brazil-Venezuela border in 2021 (closed since March 2020 until the time of writing). To devise a strategy of labour market insertion that allows for the effective integration of the target beneficiaries in the Manauara economy, it is essential to know the reality in which this community lives. Hence, this chapter aims to present a brief portrait of its demographic and migration profile.

The highlight is that the vast majority of Venezuelans living in Manaus within working age: half (59%) are today between 22 and 49 years old. This is shown in the chart below:

Chart 5: Age group of Venezuelan refugees and migrants residing in Manaus

Values by age group:
- Up to 15: 26%
- 16 to 21: 12%
- 22 to 29: 25%
- 30 to 39: 22%
- 40 to 49: 12%
- 50 or +: 8%
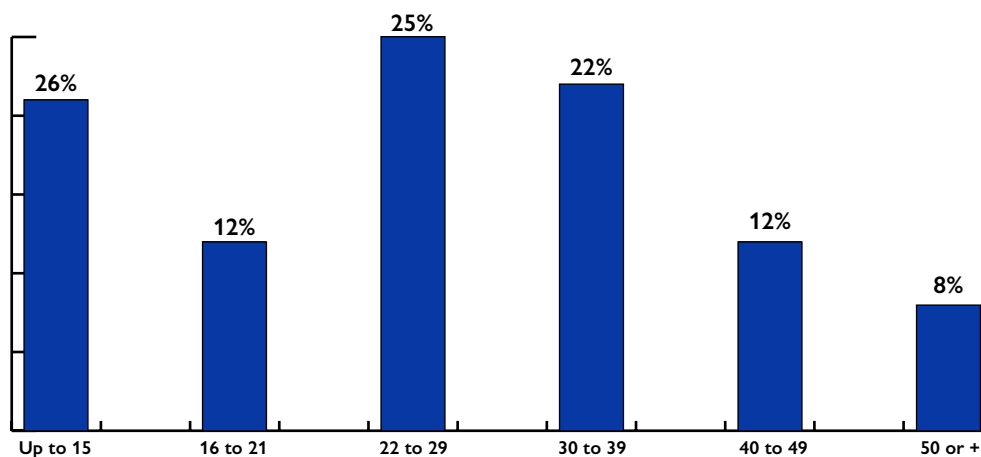
Source: National Migration Registry System, 2019.

In terms of gender balance among those registered in the city in 2019, 54 per cent were men and 46 per cent were women.
It is also important to recognise that many of the refugees and migrants arriving in Manaus already had the city as their final destination, which suggests that they could be interested in settling there permanently and looking for lasting solutions. This is reinforced by the fact that a large part of the Venezuelan refugees and migrants interviewed did not spend much time in other Brazilian municipalities; as shown chart below:

Chart 6: Length of residence in Brazil and Manaus among Venezuelan refugees and migrants
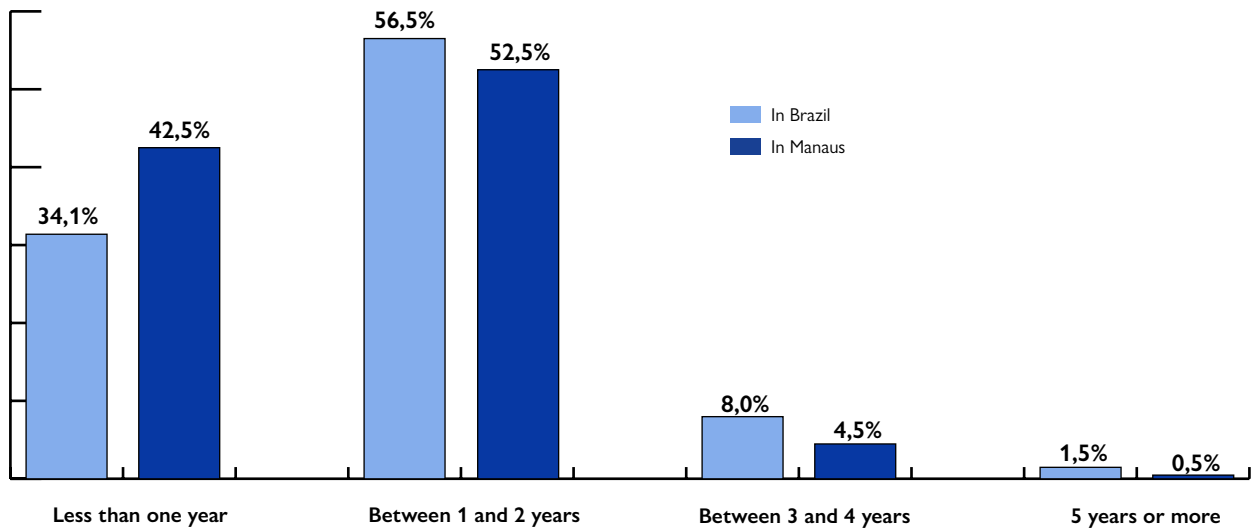
Source: Survey CEBRAP/IOM-UN, May 2020.

The chart below looks into which sectors those Venezuelan refugees and migrants who have already found formal employment in the city of Manaus are active in; with retail sales in traditional commerce coming up in a distant top spot, followed by industrial goods and services, and then administration.

Chart 7: Occupations of formally employed Venezuelans in Manaus
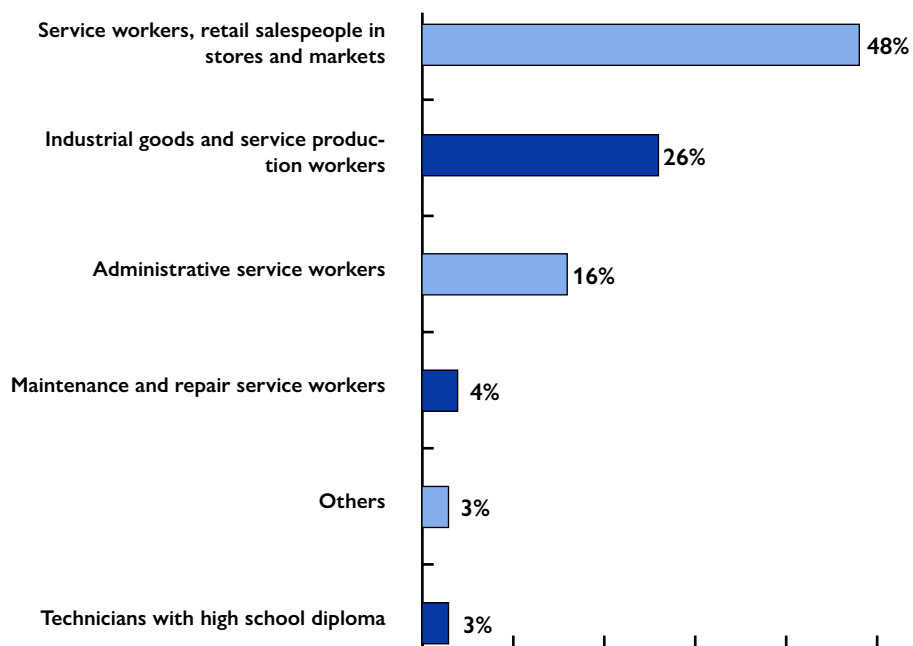
Source: RAIS Vínculos – Ministry of Finance, 2019

Although Venezuelan refugees and migrants present a higher qualification threshold than the average found among the citizens of Manaus, those who have completed high school seem to have had easier access to the labour market than those with higher education. This is an indication that the local labour market is not fully prepared to absorb more qualified Venezuelan labour. An important cause for this is the difficulty in the validation and recognition of diplomas, as well as the impossibility of using foreign certifications as evidence for qualifications. The type of vacancy offered to the target population is thus often below their qualifications.

Chart 8: Education level by demographic segment

Completed Primary Education   Completed High School   Completed Higher Education

Demographic segment	Completed Primary Education	Completed High School	Completed Higher Education
Venezuelan Migrants Residing in Manaus and Formal Jobs	13%	74%	13%
Venezuelan Migrants Residing in Manaus	17%	41%	42%
Manaus Economically Active Population	30%	42%	28%
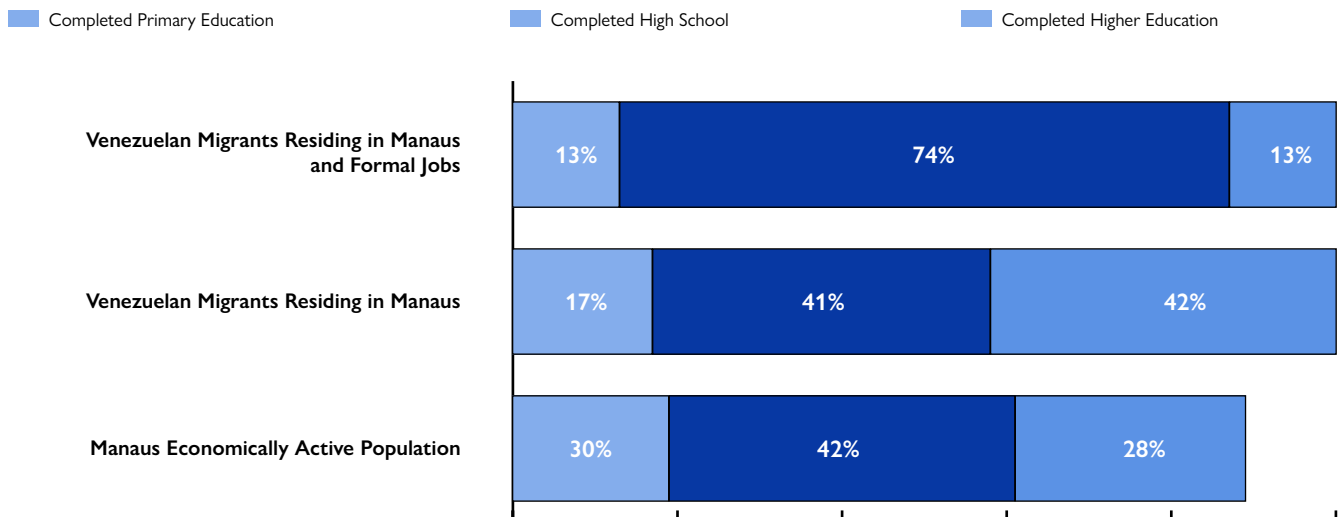
Source 1: Survey CEBRAP/IOM-UN, May 2020.

Source 2: Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNAD Contínua) First Quarter 2020/IBGE

Photo: OIM / Jessica Fernandes

04. ACTION FRAMEWORK

1. ESTABLISH AN INTEGRATED DATABASE

"Third sector institutions here in Manaus were more connected to each other. There was more exchange between us. One knew the company that was hiring, the other knew the candidate with the right profile."

Representative of a Manauara NGO specialised in assistance and labour insertion of refugees and migrants

The current substantial migration movement from Venezuela, underway since 2017, is the third significant such wave from a single country that Manaus has received in the last 30 years. In the 1990s, the city welcomed a large number of Colombians who were fleeing violence stemming from armed conflicts in their country of origin. Then, between 2010 and 2012, many Haitian migrants arrived, many finding in Manaus a place to rebuild their lives after an earthquake that killed more than 300,000, also resulting in the most devastating economic crisis in the country's history. Many Haitians working in construction were directly involved in the infrastructure put in place for the 2014 World Cup, which had the capital of Amazonas as one of its main stages.

This recent story and the size of the city explains why Manaus has a relatively more robust Third Sector than Roraima, despite of the latter's role as the most important gateway for Venezuelans entering the country. Even before Operation Welcome services were initiated in the city in 2019, there was already an established network of institutions dedicated to the protection and labour market insertion of refugees and migrants. These were generally linked to religious organizations and with strong connections in the private sector.

Most of these entities have built their own databases containing the details of refugees and migrants who come to them for assistance. In general, these are simple systems, featuring the name of the head of the family and its members, document numbers (usually the number of the asylum claim protocol or temporary or permanent residence permit); contact details (telephone, address, in some cases, email); and employment status. Some institutions also record the benefits each individual or family have received, including food baskets, clothing, and sometimes NGO-supported training courses they have attended. Others also register individual resumés, often drawn up with the support of the institution itself.

As an example, the NGO Hermanitos alone, among the youngest in the Manaus humanitarian ecosystem, has a database of 4,000 Venezuelan families with around 2,000 active contacts. They maintain a regular dialogue with beneficiaries and frequently analyse their databases to search for reliable data on the community as a whole. In mid-2020, for instance, they were able to map the most sought-after professional courses among those beneficiaries, having been able to pass on this information to other NGOs and educational institutions who were planning to offer such courses.

Figure 1. Flowchart: parallel databases and possible integration model
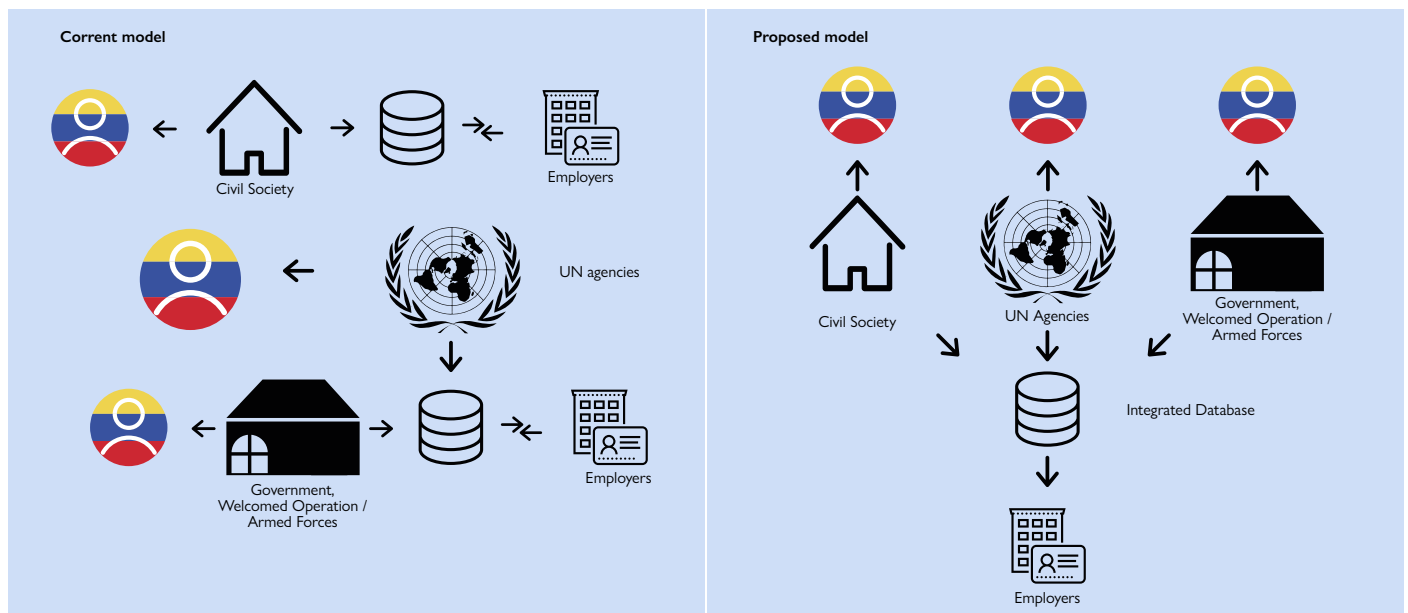
In this disperse "database environment" among partnering organizations, it was verified that there is no effort being made today to integrate these different databases, despite the reality that, in parallel to the records in the official SISMIGRA system (the Federal Police's National Migration Registry System); each is running its own. This has given rise to a number of challenges:

a. **Frequently outdated contacts:** during field research, several NGOs reported that they were often not able to contact potential candidates in their databases. This leads to losses in potential job opportunities for specific candidates, given that civil society could not find the identified fitting candidates in response to specific company queries. The dynamic day-to-day reality of beneficiaries can lead to frequent changes in their personal details, namely addresses and telephone numbers. In addition, there are no easily accessible tools (such as e-forms) for them to make quick registration updates, while access to technology overall is also often an obstacle in itself for them.

b. **Limited candidate pool:** individuals or companies that have an interest in hiring refugees and migrants usually do so via civil society institutions. This is usually done bilaterally between a company and an NGO, which means other organizations with their own access to potential talent are excluded from a given process, which therefore limits the available talent pool. This decreases the likelihood of a match, especially when the contractor requires an employee with a very specific profile.

c. **Duplicate benefits:** Third Sector institutions operate with significant budget restrictions, including in the most traditional direct assistance activities where fair distribution of essential items is vital to ensure efficient coverage among communities in need. They include the distribution of food baskets, hygiene products, clothes and shoes, available in limited supply. Currently, it is not possible, without cross-checking specific data manually, for an organization to know which items were delivered to which beneficiaries across organizations or entities. This would be key to better coordinate this assistance. A "Transparency Portal", made available by the Brazilian Government online, can be used to check which beneficiaries have received Bolsa Família (Family Allowance) Programme, for example. This is what many organizations do in order to prioritize services among beneficiaries. However, this is insufficient to ensure effectiveness in direct assistance activities.

In short, there is no way an organization can check with sufficient clarity if a beneficiary already receives support from another organization. This obstacle is also verified in the case of support given in the scope of socioeconomic integration. This includes, for example, a widespread inability of a given organization to verify who has already benefited, for instance, from support in attending certain courses, in the recognition of qualifications and certificates, or the validation of drivers' licenses.

Photo: OIM / Bruno Mancinelle

RECOMMENDATION

The first Action Line proposed herein is the creation of a single database of beneficiaries, centrally managed by IOM, UN agencies or another competent organization. All institutions active in contributing to the labour market insertion of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the city of Manaus would have a way to feed this database and access to it.

In general, there are currently three types of actors operating databases in parallel: civil society (each NGO has its own database); governmental authorities; and the Armed Forces, with the support of UN agencies and civil society [in Operation Welcome's "Welcomer System" (Sistema Acolhedor), where refugees and migrants who benefit from any of the Operation's services are registered; in particular migratory regularization and the voluntary relocation strategy). It would be appropriate to consider an overall integration, to the extent possible, between databases managed by civil society and possibly some modules from the databases managed by the abovementioned actors. The most important of which would be the "Welcomer System's" professional qualifications modules.

The integrated database should contain at least the following data:

Registration Data (editable by the entities involved in the activity)

1. Unique Identifier Number: RNM (National Migration Registry), Asylum or Residence Request Protocol or CPF (Individual Taxpayer's Registry)
2. Name and Date of Birth
3. Migration Status ("Asylum seeker", "Refugee" or "Resident")
4. Unique Identifier Number of each member in the household
5. Basic assistance items received, with respective delivery dates.

Profile Data (editable by the entities involved in the activity and by the individual via e-form)

6. Contacts (address, phone and email)
7. Labour Status ("Working", "Working but looking for opportunities", "Not working and looking for opportunities", "Under 16 years old")
8. If "Working" status: Name and Address of Current Contractor
9. Professional Objective: option 1, 2 and 3 (the use of the National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE) can assist in standardisation)
10. School completion and Proof of Status ("proven", "unproven")
11. Undergraduate, Graduate, Master's Degree, Master's Degree or Doctorate and Proof of Diploma ("proven", "unproven")
12. Previous Experience and Evidence of Previous Experience ("proven", "unproven")
13. Extracurricular Courses and Proof of Certificate ("proven", "unproven")

Data on Qualifications in Brazil (editable by the entities involved in the activity and Partner Education Institutions)

14. Courses undertaken in Brazil

Given the size of the community and existing institutional coordination, a centralized database could be achieved with relatively low development and storage costs. In regards to funding, and beyond direct funding from organizations operating in the migrant assistance context, there are technology companies in the Industrial Hub of Manaus which could be targeted as potential local partners, appealing to a social responsibility intervention. Such a project should, however ,be legally vetted so that personal data handling standards are properly followed. Its integration with the "Welcomer System", particularly with modules concerning professional qualifications, should also be considered.

A formal launch event of the integrated database is also recommended for all institutions involved. This event will serve as initial training so that all partners understand their role within the process and the technical handling of the system. The event would also be an opportunity to gather and re-launch collaboration in the Manaus refugee and migrant protection and integration institutional ecosystem. It is important for organizations and authorities to come together and foster a culture of cooperation, ahead of the following Action Lines to be proposed hereinafter.

2. MITIGATE LIMITING CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYABILITY

There are two types of barriers to employability faced Venezuelan refugees and migrants to enter the Manaus labour market: (a) limiting conditions faced by the target population; and (b) general market characteristics, which may vary over time and that affect all those looking for work, refugees and migrants included.

Among the top five, four of them are limiting conditions, not general market characteristics, and therefore the main factors undermining their interaction with the labour market. Proposals towards their mitigation are therefore crucial.

Table 1: Barriers to employability among Venezuelans living in Manaus

LIMITING CONDITION	Difficulty with language, with Portuguese	45%
	Lack of resources (for transportation and food)	30%
	Prejudice / Distrust of the employer because I am an immigrant	23%
MARKET CHARACTERISTICS	Too much competition, too many people for too few places	12%
LIMITING CONDITION	Lack of knowledge about how or where I can look for a job here	11%
MARKET CHARACTERISTICS	Lack of opportunitties in my field here	10%
LIMITING CONDITION	Problems with documentation, regulazization of my situation	9%
MARKET CHARACTERISTICS	Distance between where I live and where the vacancies are	8%
LIMITING CONDITION	No qualification, couses where vacancies exit	7%
	My diplomas or certificates are not accepted	6%
	Not knowing people here	6%
MARKET CHARACTERISTICS	Very precarious job opportunities	3%
	Work scams	2%
LIMITING CONDITION	Not having a fixed address or how to prove my address	1%

Question: Among the difficulties you faced while looking for work, which were the two worst difficulties, first and second place?
Source: Survey CEBRAP/IOM-UN, May 2020.

2.1. Language Difficulties

Command of the Portuguese language is pointed out as the main barrier when looking for work. Forty-five per cent of the interviewed Venezuelan refugees and migrants highlighted language as the first or second greatest obstacle towards employment.

It is important to note that, although more than 65 per cent of the interviewees stated to have been living in Brazil for over a year, many continue to live primarily among Venezuelans, indicating limited social cohesion, which often represents a challenge towards an organic learning of local languages, in this case Portuguese. A manifestation of this can be observed, for instance, in central Manaus, where many Venezuelans reside, in the widespread signage in Spanish featured in commercial establishments. This further contributes to the language barrier difficulty, which was also cited frequently by interviewed public entities managing shelters where many Venezuelans are being hosted, including the Amazonas State Secretariat for Social Assistance (SEAS), which runs the Coroado shelter.

In the Manaus migrant assistance ecosystem, some efforts are being made to alleviate this limiting condition. CETAM (Amazonas Technological Education Centre), linked to the State Government, for instance, has offered free of charge "Basic Portuguese for Foreigners" courses in partnership with third sector institutions. In this particular arrangement, CETAM is responsible for the course design, trainer fees, student support and certification at the end of the process. In turn, partners (in this case, NGOs) are responsible for securing the venues where the courses are held, as well as printing materials.

The model described above, however, has a limited scale. "Basic Portuguese for Foreigners" courses are offered to groups of 15 to 20 people for each module, while there is a contingent of almost 6,000 Venezuelans in need of this training. The inability to handle many potential students, coupled with the fact that language is the limiting condition most frequently cited as an obstacle to employment; represents a significant challenge. In addition, these courses require 3 hours per day of dedication, typically in the afternoon, for a period of one and a half months. However, few can afford to spend this amount of time during business hours to learn a new language.

RECOMMENDATION

Plan a Portuguese Course for Foreigners that can be offered on a large scale and outside business hours, in partnership with CETAM or another educational institution, through distance learning or night classes.

This course should have a duration of no more than 3 months and coincide with the period in which the migrant would receive "communication aid", as part of a CBI (cash-based intervention). This financial support is to be used by the beneficiaries to purchase phones and 3G Internet, enabling the attendance of online classes. More information in topic 2.2 of this chapter ahead.

The goal of this effort is to cover an audience of 6,000 people over a period of one year.

2.2. Shortage of Basic Resources

"It is common for us to identify the job vacancy, identify the potential candidate, and he just does not show up at the job interview. Then, when we understand what happened, we discover that he did not have money to get here. And he could not even communicate with the company because he did not have credit on his mobile phone."

Representative of a Manauara NGO active in refugee and migrant assistance and labour market insertion

The second biggest barrier to employability, identified as difficulty #1 or #2 by 30 per cent of the interviewed Venezuelan refugees and migrants residing in Manaus, is the lack of basic resources to cover food, transportation and communication expenses.

Few are beneficiaries of governmental financial support, and only some were able to access the Financial Emergency Aid provided by the government to low income populations during the most critical period of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. For those who could do so, this guaranteed, on average, five instalments of R$ 600 (approximately US$ 110) and three instalments of R$ 300 (approximately US$ 45) between April and December 2020. Some women with children who are heads of family were able access five instalments of R$ 1,200 (approximately US$ 220) and another three instalments of R$ 600 in the same timeframe. This coincided with a period of contraction of the labour market in Manaus. Hence, this short-term benefit was sufficient to ensure their livelihood for a short while, but it did not result in a an effective labour market insertion incentive.

NGOs that support Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Manaus also have their own social assistance activities which, in a more or less structured way, aim to assist with basic needs, especially the most vulnerable, and facilitate job search. One example is the SWAN project, run by ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) and funded by USAID (United States Agency for International Development), one of the most successful examples of this type of facilitation. This program benefited around 500 families and generated 118 formal job placements between 2019 and 2020. Conversely, other NGOs seem to act in a less systemic way, prioritising the most critical cases and acting according to their available capacity.

Looking at the current practice, three types of benefits can be identified which would be essential to boost the insertion of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the Manaus labour market:

a. Food vouchers (for example, VR's, Sodexo's,[3] or similar): in order to guarantee basic supplies (such as food and hygiene products), thereby mitigating the emergency-like circumstances in which much of the Venezuelan population depart from when trying to access the labour market.

b. Transport vouchers (for example, the Sinetram Card[4]): to be used for transportation costs, looking to tackle transport-related challenges enhanced by long distances, which are a characteristic of a large metropolitan areas such as Manaus. The latter also results in high bus fares (second most expensive fare in northern Brazil, after Rio Branco), which are obstacles for beneficiaries to participate in recruitment processes and attend job interviews. This kind of support could mitigate such transportation-related barriers.

c. Communication aid (credits for mobile phones and 3G Internet): to be used in expenditures related to mobile communications and Internet services. There are frequent reports from companies which stated that can no longer reach successful Venezuelan candidates after selection for a formal job offer. Therefore, this support could help mitigate opportunity losses and contribute to the completion of recruitment cycles, key for the professional future of refugees and migrants.

At the time of writing, the closure of the border between Brazil and Venezuela (since March 2020, as mentioned above), as well as the resulting reduction in migration inflow, does not seem to justify the need for a fourth benefit in this set, which would be related to housing assistance. According to the CEBRAP/IOM-UN survey carried out in the first half of 2020, only 17.9 per cent of refugees and migrants arriving in Manaus have no contact or support network (family, friends or institutions) that can potentially assist them with permanent or temporary housing. For eligible cases, the local government and Operation Welcome have generally been able to host those in greatest need in shelters, such as the Coroado Shelter and the Manaus Central Bus Station's temporary shelter.

It is important to note that none of the three types of benefits listed above should be offered in cash. Previous experiences, such as the aforementioned SWAN project, showed that cash benefits are often partially remitted back to Venezuela, with the aim of helping family members in need. Despite their importance as an important economic tool that contributes to the reduction of poverty in countries of origin; remittances ultimately affect the efficiency of such benefits as job seeking incentives. In addition, it is also fair to say that the three types of benefits would possibly lose efficiency if awarded separately. In an hypothetical scenario, in which only the food voucher is offered, but not the transport voucher or the communication aid for example, the beneficiary would still not afford to commute to a job interview or stay in contact with a potential employer.

RECOMMENDATION

Explore multi-stakeholder funding, involving civil society, UN agencies, government and private sector in Manaus and in the State of Amazonas overall, to **create a temporary benefits package for Venezuelan refugees and migrants who are looking for jobs.**

The package should involve the three types of benefits [food vouchers, transport vouchers and communication aid (in the form of mobile credits)]; targeting a period of three months. Successful employment would not be a condition to receive this support. However, it should be conditional on the enrolment and regular attendance of at least one family member in the Portuguese for Foreigners Course covered in topic 2.1 of this Chapter; or one of the 11 courses of the Qualifications Programme covered in Action Line 5 below.

It is worthwhile to state that, for the monitoring of these benefits, an integrated database (as suggested in Action Line 1 above) is essential to avoid duplicate benefits and ensure efficiency and scale.

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[3] Examples of companies providing food voucher services in Brazil, known to be already working in similar activities with international organizations.

[4] Union of Passenger Transport Companies of Amazonas.

2.3 Xenophobia

"The Venezuelan migrant, although he is much more qualified than the Haitian, faces many more difficulties to find work here in Manaus. One issue is current economy, of course. Venezuelans arrived at a time when the economy is no longer growing as it did. But the other issue is xenophobia. The dominant political discourse here in Manaus, since 2018, is that "Brazil cannot become Venezuela", and that "Venezuelans are used to receiving everything from the State". The businessman ends up having the wrong view: that the Venezuelan is too lazy to work."

Representative of a Manauara NGO specialised in refugee and migrant assistance and labour market insertion

Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Manaus perceive "prejudice or distrust for being an immigrant" as third biggest barrier to employability, cited as difficulty #1 or #2 by 23 per cent of the respondents.

Between 2002 and 2013, the labour market in Manaus more than doubled in size. During this period, the city saw the number of formal jobs growing on average 7 per cent every year. This resulted in tens of thousands of people leaving the informal economy and having, for the first time, a formal contract. Nevertheless, this reality changed dramatically in the years that followed. The number of formal and decent jobs shrank sharply between 2014 and 2016 and is now experiencing a slow recovery phase. The latter was however interrupted throughout most of 2020 by the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this context, it is important to point out that, in 2019, Manaus had 497,000 formal job openings. This was better than at present, but still 11 per cent less than the peak in 2013, which demonstrates the ongoing slow recovery.

Chart 9: Formal jobs in relation to the number of Venezuelan refugees and migrants (2002–2019)
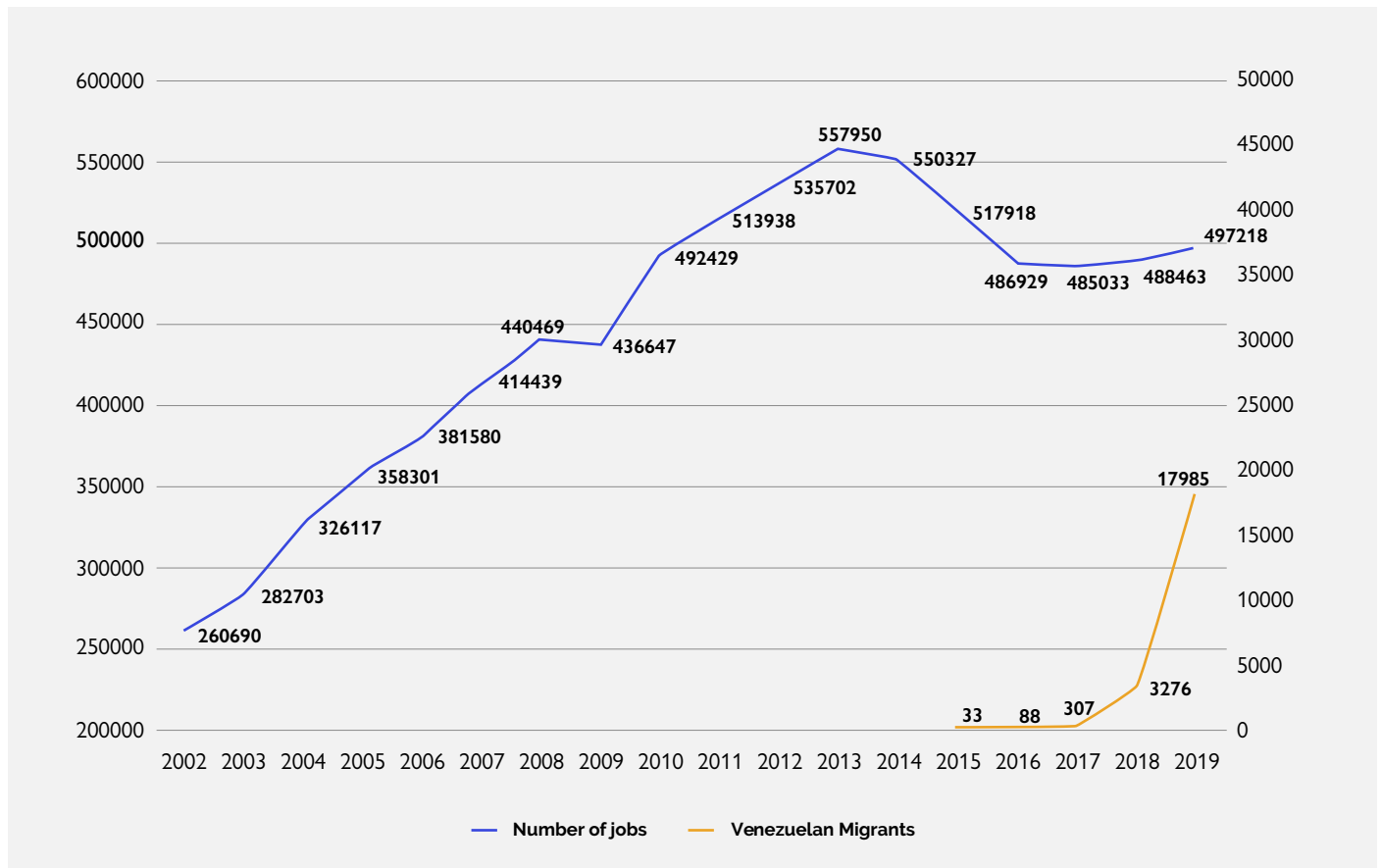
Source 1: RAIS Vínculos – Ministry of Finance, 2002–2019

Source 2: Sismigra, 2015–2019

The beginning of this sluggish growth regarding formal employment in the Manaus took place roughly around the same time as the start of the Venezuelan migration influx in 2017. Overall, refugees and migrants from Venezuela live in a difficult economic context in Brazil and in Manaus, with a generally perceived lack of job opportunities. Such conjunctures can become fertile ground for unduly targeted resentment from part of the host community towards refugees and migrants and the growth of a xenophobic discourse locally. This was at times encountered during the implementation of the study's research.

The series of interviews conducted with various actors by CEBRAP for this study (April-July 2020) resulted in a collection of important qualitative data regarding perceptions of a section of the Manauara public, private and third sectors regarding the Venezuelan community in the city. In that context, some negative and ill-informed perceptions were encountered among all three kinds of actors. Among the most common were:

a. **Low education and qualifications:** although Venezuelan refugees and migrants show, on average, higher qualifications than the Manauara citizen, the general perception is reversed. Whether due to situations of extreme vulnerability; the difficulty of proving prior certified education and training; or language barrier challenges; many entrepreneurs and government agents mistakenly perceive the target population as an unprepared workforce.

b. **Irregular legal status:** it was noted among the interviewees, particularly in the private sector, that there is a generalized lack of knowledge in regards to Brazilian asylum and migration laws and regulations. Many are unaware of the fact that by simply applying for asylum or temporary, a migrant can have justified access to a Work Permit, legally her or him to work. There are also unfounded concerns about additional costs for documentation. One of the interviewees pointed out that this perception also has a particular resonance among banking services in Manaus, with accounts of cases where refugees and migrants were illegitimately not allowed to open salary accounts, for example.

c. **Unwillingness to work:** this perception was found regularly during the interviews conducted by CEBRAP. This idea seemed to build on an understanding that the Venezuelan is "used to rely on the State"; that he or she "has no willpower to go after their goals". Absence from scheduled job interviews or ongoing qualification courses – often due to the scarcity of resources as a limiting condition, detailed in Action Line 2 – are mistakenly understood as irresponsibility and unwillingness to work.

Xenophobia towards Venezuelan refugees and migrants affects job seeking in itself, but above all limits the possibility of finding decent work. Therefore, Venezuelan refugees and migrants may be exposed to informal work as the only option, thereby increasing risks of labour exploitation, particularly for those in situations of extreme vulnerability. During the field survey, there were frequent accounts among interviewed beneficiaries describing a phenomenon referred to as the "daily 20 Reals" (approximately US$ 4). This is a sort of a popularly perceived "standard" amount, allegedly offered often to many refugee and migrant job seekers by some individuals and small entrepreneurs. The popularity of this phenomenon suggests that there is widespread risk of precarious and informal employment, which was somewhat confirmed in many accounts among interviewees, reporting long working hours, remuneration under the market average, as well as various forms of harassment. These situations are not usually reported to the Labour Prosecution Office, the Public Defender's Office or the Labour Superintendent's Office, the relevant authorities in this context. The apparent invisibility of this reality for government agents means that unscrupulous conduct by some employers is not widely investigated or punished with the desired effectiveness, enabling opportunism and xenophobia in the Manaus labour market.

Photo: OIM / Bruno Mancinelle

Table 2: Average monthly remuneration of Venezuelans living in Manaus vs general population in different geographic scopes

	Men	Women	Variation in income between men/women
Brazil[1]	2.888,00	2.274,00	27%
North Region[1]	1.946,00	1.864,00	4%
Amazonas[1]	1.885,00	1.825,00	3%
Manaus[1]	2.419,00	2.087,00	16%
Venezuelans residing in Manaus[2]	723,00	449,00	61%

Source 1: PNAD Contínua (First Quarter 2020)/IBGE
Source 2: Survey CEBRAP/IOM-UN, May 2020

Photo: OIM / Bruno Mancinelle

RECOMMENDATION

Xenophobia is certainly the most complex limiting condition to address within the scope of this proposal. Prejudice towards migrants has deep roots in a society's economy, politics and culture. It is not reasonable to expect this barrier to be removed as a direct result of this action framework. Nonetheless, it is possible to think of at least three concrete actions that may contributed to hindering the spread of xenophobic discourse through positive and constructive messages and channels. This can be achieved in collaboration between all stakeholders working towards strengthening labour insertion of refugees and migrants.

1. **Create a robust whistleblowing channel, managed by a competent organization or institutional network, with the possible support of IOM, other UN agencies or civil society organizations, so that labour rights risks faced specifically by Venezuelan refugees and migrants can be properly triggered, investigated and prosecuted, where applicable.** It is essential that situations of labour exploitation are properly documented and reported to relevant authorities (as those mentioned above). NGOs dedicated to the protection of refugees and migrants can play an important role in this process, informing communities in regards to their labour and human rights. They can also serve as an information pivot, receiving and possibly compiling such reports, while supporting beneficiaries in and referring cases to relevant authorities. Many organizations already have expertise in this kind of support. There is already a consistent local institutional dialogue to develop such channels, particularly geared to the reality of migration.

2. As part of prospecting job opportunities (detailed in the next chapter of this study, Action Line 3), it is necessary to **inform the Manauara business community about the high degree of qualification of the target population, while raising awareness about their immigration status, as well as the difficulties they face and which tend to be confused with "unwillingness to work".** This awareness-raising effort would aim to deconstruct an idea that was also mentioned by some of the actors interviewed that "hiring Venezuelans is merely a humanitarian gesture". Diversity and inclusion bring tangible benefits to businesses: teams absorb new soft skills and develop a better capacity for collaboration, which may gradually translate into improved efficiency and productivity. The benefits of migration, including diversity in the workplace, connection to new markets and cultures, as well as other positive impacts, are well known factors usually promoted by IOM and other UN agencies, and which should be reinforced in the local institutional discourse.

3. Develop and implement training for government agents who already work to protect Venezuelan refugees and migrants (shelter managers, social workers, psychologists, security agents, among others) **with the aim of developing greater empathy for the integration of the target population, while empowering them as co-creators of lasting solutions.** The role of those professionals continues to be marked by emergency intervention traits, such as maintenance of order and immediate assistance. This seemed to have persisted even with the prolonged border closure and the resulting sharp reduction of the migration inflow. Many see Venezuelan refugees and migrants as "people that are just passing through." However, for Operation Welcome and its partners, Manaus is mostly a final destination city in the context of its assisted relocation strategy. It is important that all these actors are qualified to understand the aspirations of the target population in order to act in a way that is more consistent with its socioeconomic integration, going beyond emergency assistance.

3. PROSPECT JOB OPPORTUNITIES ACTIVELY

"I have a nursing degree in Venezuela. The work I have here (health assistant) allows me to use some of what I learned there. I did not need the diploma to do what I do, but it helps. (...) I am satisfied with my work. With it, I managed to get out of the shelter, rent a house. After the pandemic, I will try to revalidate my diploma again."

Venezuelan migrant

As discussed above, the Manauara labour market had been recovering between 2017 and 2019, albeit slowly. During this period, Manaus saw a net increase of 12,185 formal jobs. However, this recovery was not homogeneous in all sectors of the economy. Retail, Health Care, Building Safety and Maintenance, Industry, Transport and Logistics, Construction and some subsectors (such as Cleaning and Information Technology) saw significant increases. This is in contrast with a decrease in other sectors.

Although 2020 figures were not yet fully conclusive at the time of writing, it was possible to estimate that the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic would affect the labour market negatively. Manaus is one of the Brazilian capitals that suffered the most at the beginning of the pandemic, with a rapid eruption in the number of cases and the resulting collapse of the local health system (May-July 2020). Conversely, it is plausible to expect a quick return to labour market growth between 2021 and 2022, provided that there is an effective containment of health crisis in the short term. In this sense, it is also probable that the same sectors that pushed that growth between 2017 and 2019 will also play this role in the short to medium term.

With this in mind, the analysis employed in the present exercise set out to match the profile of Venezuelan refugees and migrants residing in Manaus with sectors in the local economy with the greatest potential to create jobs in the short term. To that end, several factors were taken into account, building on interview rounds with the target population: (1) qualifications (education and training that refugees and migrants claimed to have taken, with or without evidence); (2) previous experience (latest professional activity in Venezuela or the three occupations that best define their professional background); (3) profession they most identify with; and (4) current professional aspirations.

In general, it was noted in many cases that the professional aspirations of Venezuelan refugees and migrants at this point tends to be more conservative (or less ambitious) when compared to their real qualifications and experience. In fact, immediate aspirations seem to be "calibrated" by the difficulties faced during the migration process. In order to make the most of their qualifications and unleash the real potential that many brought with them from their country of origin, it would be strategic to look upon those individual aspirations, so as to raise self-realization and enhance lasting and more consistent integration solutions.

The infographic below aims to map the main professional aspirations of Venezuelan refugees and migrants residing in Manaus, while overlapping them with reality of the local labour market between 2017 and 2019. It then presents a rough count of the jobs in demand per sector, projecting a full employment scenario for the target population.

Professions are also categorised according to growth rate in the analysed period: (a) professions in accelerated growth (that grow above average, plus a standard deviation in relation to the others); (b) slow-growing professions (that grow between zero and the average, plus a standard deviation in relation to the others); and (c) professions in contraction (those with a negative net balance between 2017 and 2019).

Photo: OIM Brasil

Using that order, it was possible to group the various sectors of the economy in Manaus into four clusters, according to their labour market insertion potential:

1. Sectors with the **HIGHEST POTENTIAL FOR INSERTION**: where professions/specializations were in **accelerated growth** and where, between 2017 and 2019, there were **more vacancies** than necessary to employ all Venezuelan refugees and migrants with professional aspirations in that sector.

2. Sectors with **HIGH POTENTIAL FOR INSERTION**: where professions/specializations were in accelerated growth and where, between 2017 and 2019, there were **less vacancies** than necessary to employ all Venezuelan refugees and migrants with professional aspirations in that sector.

3. Sectors with **MEDIUM POTENTIAL FOR INSERTION**: those in which there were professions/specializations in **slow growth**, but not **declining**.

4. Sectors with **LOW POTENTIAL FOR INSERTION**: those in which **there were declining professions/specializations.**

Example of interpretation of the infographic:

Most Venezuelan refugees and migrants residing in Manaus aspire to work in the Sales area (almost 14 per cent). Considering that 13,000 individuals of the target population are of working age and are not formally employed at the moment, around 1,800 jobs in the area of Sales would be needed to accommodate all of those interested in working in the sector. When comparing this information to the reality of the Manauara labour market, and according to the RAIS database (Annual Social Information Report, managed by the Ministry of Finance), it is clear that the professions in the Sales area were growing at an accelerated rate between 2017 and 2019. The 'top 6' Retail professions in Manaus created almost 8,000 job vacancies in this period, exceeding the contingent needed more than 4 times. Thus, the Sales Area – or Retail in general – is classified as a sector with the Highest Potential for Labour Insertion*.*

Photo: OIM / Bruno Mancinelle

Table 3: The Matching Matrix: potential for labour insertion

Sectors Economy	Venezuelan R&M		Manuara Labor Market				Is it a Match?
	%what ASPIRATE one vacancy in sector	# of opening required	Professions that most grow in the sector	# of vacancies existing	# of vacancies created in 24 months	Status	
Sales	13.9%	1807	Retail commerce of goods in general, without predominance of food products	5025	1954	Fast growing profession	highest potential for Insertion
			Retail trade of goods in general, with predominance of food products-hypermarkets and supermarkets	8639	1729		
			Retail trade of pharmaceutical products for human and veterinary use	4912	1269		
			Retail trade of food products in general or specialized in food products not otherwise specified	2687	1116		
			Retail trade of hardware, wood and construction materials	5949	1040		
			Retail trade of goods in general, with predominance of mini-market food products, grocery stores and warehouses	5138	846		
Health and Social service	12.2%	1586	Hospital care activities	9098	1008		High potential for insertion
administrative services	8.7%	1131	Photocopies, document preparation and others specialized administrative support services	583	376	slowly growing profession	Medium potential for Insertion
			Rental of office machinery and equipment	488	223		
			Car rental without driver	971	55		
Safety/ Surveillance and Conservation Building	7.2%	936	Combined services to support buildings except building condominiums	3823	1627	Fast growing profession	highest potential for Insertion
			Surveillance and private security activities	8498	929		
			Security system monitoring activities	1540	527		
education	6.5%	845	Higher Education - Undergraduate	6433	616	slowly growing profession	Medium potential for Insertion
Industry	6.0%	780	Manufacture of reception, reproduction apparatus audio and video recording and amplification	9874	3462	Fast growing profession	highest potential for Insertion
			Manufacture of motorcycles	10353	2654		
			Manufacture of apparatus and equipment for air conditioning	4042	1884		
			Manufacture of electronic equipment and devices not previously specified	1777	1329		
			Manufacture of computer equipment	1524	705		
			Manufacture of plastic packaging	3263	586		
			Weaving yarn of natural textile fibers, except cotton	516	516		
Repair and Maintenance	6.0%	780	Repair and maintenance of objects and equipment personal and household items not otherwise specified	307	228	slowly growing profession	Medium potential for Insertion
			Equipment maintenance and repair electronic and optical	287	152		
			Maintenance and repair of machinery and equipment electronics	189	86		

Sector	%	Vacancies	Activity			Growth	Potential
Food and Lodging	5.7%	741	Catering, buffet and other prepared food services	5746	258	slowly growing profession	Low Potential for Insertion
			Food mobile services	35	-5	Declining Profession	
			Hotels and similar	1642	-41		
			Other types of accommodation not specified previously	221	-55		
			Restaurants and other food and beverage service establishments	9409	-102		
Beausty	5.0%	650	Hairdressers and other beauty treatment activities	599	55	slowly growing profession	Medium potential for Insertion
Adm. And Management	4.7%	611	Business management consultancy activities	1423	876	slowly growing profession	Medium potential for Insertion
Transport and Logistics	4.0%	520	Collective road passenger transport, with itinerary fixed, intercity, interstate and international	1769	1562	Fast growing profession	highest potential for Insertion
			Activities related to the organization of cargo transportation	2401	652		
Construction	3.2%	416	Engineering services	2141	1375	Fast growing profession	highest potential for Insertion
			Construction of buildings	7271	587		
			Electricity transmission	540	505		
			Installation of industrial installations and metal structures	613	497		
Others	16.9%	2197	Cleaning activities not otherwise specified	2098	1588	Fast growing profession	highest potential for Insertion
			Leasing of temporary labor	8138	1538		
			Technical support, maintenance and other services in information Technology	1252	506		
			Electric power generation	1314	454	slowly growing profession	
			Cleaning buildings and households	10888	343		
			Developments of computer programs underorder	424	319		

To ensure greater efficiency in labour market insertion efforts, the recommendation is thus to focus on the sectors with the **Highest Potential for Labour Insertion**. These latter are typically mature sectors in the Manauara economy, responsible for a large percentage of the job vacancies on offer and likely to be the to be the ones most pushing economic growth in the near future.

According to some of the qualitative interviews conducted, it was already noticeable that these sectors had begun to employ some "pioneering" Venezuelan refugees and migrants. A brief overview of these sectors is as follows:

a)   **Commerce (or Sales)**
   i) Vacancies: 87,672 (17.6% of the total)
   ii) Distribution of vacancies: spread across several small and micro-enterprises
   iii) Level of formalisation: medium (many formal and informal jobs)
   iv) Level of education required: complete high school
   v) Level of fluency in Portuguese required: high (high interaction with the public)

b)   **Building Safety and Conservation**
i) Vacancies: 17,836 (3.6 % of the total)
ii) Distribution of vacancies: spread across several small and micro-enterprises
iii) Level of formalisation: high (mostly formal jobs)
iv) Level of education required: complete primary education
v) Level of fluency in Portuguese required: medium

c)   **Industry and Manufacturing**
i) Vacancies: 86,423 (17.4% of the total)
ii) Distribution of vacancies: concentrated in a few large enterprises
iii) Level of formalisation: high (mostly formal jobs)
iv) Level of education required: complete high school
v) Level of fluency in Portuguese required: medium

d)   **Transportation and Logistics**
i) Vacancies: 30,596 (6.2% of the total)
ii) Distribution of vacancies: concentrated in a few medium and large enterprises
iii) Level of formalisation: high (mostly formal jobs)
iv) Level of education required: complete primary education
v) Level of fluency in Portuguese required: medium

e)   **Construction**
i) Vacancies: 22,146 (4.5% of the total)
ii) Distribution of vacancies: concentrated in a few medium and large enterprises
iii) Level of formalisation: medium (many formal and informal jobs)
iv) Level of education required: none
v) Level of fluency in Portuguese required: low

f)   **Cleaning**
i) Vacancies: 21,124 (4.2% of the total)
ii) Distribution of vacancies: spread across several small and micro-enterprises
iii) Level of formalisation: medium (many formal and informal jobs)
iv) Level of education required: none
v) Level of fluency in Portuguese required: low

g)   **Information Technology**
i) Vacancies: 5,882 (1.2% of total vacancies)
ii) Distribution of vacancies: spread across several small and micro-enterprises
iii) Level of formalisation: medium (many formal and informal jobs)
iv) Level of education required: complete high school
v) Level of fluency in Portuguese required: medium

RECOMMENDATION

Taking the mapping presented above as a reference, it is evident that a new, more focused support to **active employment prospection** would come a long way in pinpointing the best vacancy-candidate matching. This is even more so regarding **job vacancies in larger companies, particularly those leading in sectors with very high potential of labour insertion.** As mentioned above, the first step to be able to map refugee and migrant talent in Manaus is a structured and centralised database (action line 1). Secondly, it would be crucial to support beneficiaries so they can overcome limiting conditions which affect their job search and recruitment undertakings (action line 2). And finally, active support in bridging job opportunities and the right candidates would establish a crucial connection that could generate a quick and effective matching between the aspirations of the target population and the needs of the local labour market.

For this, it is recommended that a professional exclusively dedicated to this task is hired. The latter should have the following characteristics:

- Solid experience in the Manaus private sector and a strong local network, either through working in local companies or direct contact with business and other multiplier organizations [such as the Amazonas Trade Association (ACA); the Association of the Manaus Digital Hub (APDM); or the Association of Industries and Service Companies from the Amazonas Industrial Hub (AFICAM)].

- Become familiar with the day-to-day reality and challenges faced by Venezuelan refugees and migrants who reside in Manaus, and realistic opportunities available to them.

The work of this professional would involve:

- Prospecting and monitoring job vacancies which can be of interest to the target population, particularly in sectors with high insertion potential.

- Developing direct communication channels with C-level executives of leading companies in sectors with the highest potential for labour insertion.

- Sensitising executives on topics such as the positive impact of diversity and inclusion in business; on the high level of education and qualification of the target population; and about the reality of migratory regularisation and documentation.

- Fostering the largest number of job placements possible for the target population, coordinating with Operation Welcome and its partners in Manaus;

- Working in events of SEBRAE-AM (Brazilian Service of Support to Micro- and Small Enterprises), or others of equal relevance, as a way of raising awareness among smaller companies and business owners, aiming to encourage interest in the recruitment of refugees and migrants.

While the abovementioned professional would be fully dedicated to enhance vacancy prospection, it would the role of all relevant actors to:

a) Identify 2 to 3 individuals in the database per vacancy.

b) Make the first contact with these candidates (validating registration data, confirming interest in the vacancy, and checking for limiting conditions that may prevent him or her to participate in recruitment procedures).

c) Forward the contact and the profile of the candidates to HR managers in the companies hiring.

Photo: OIM / Jessica Fernandes

4. LEGITIMISE THE SKILLS AND EDUCATION OF THE MOST EDUCATED

"I have seen many engineers taking an electrician's course, for example, just to get a paper, a certificate. The person spends weeks investing time and money to study something they already know, which for them is basic. It is very common for them to give up in the middle. The person ends up finding something informal and abandoning the course."

Representative of a Manauara NGO specialised in assisting refugees and migrant in labour market insertion support

Among the 14,000 Venezuelans who are part of Manauara economically active population (EAP), approximately 4,300 of them have completed Higher Education. In this community, only a minority can prove their education. The process of recognizing and validating diplomas in Brazil is often expensive and slow. This is also true in the capital of Amazonas. This became even more challenging since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, where such administrative services in general were practically paralysed.

In order to have national validity, the graduation diploma must be validated by a Brazilian university accredited by the Government, offering a course of the same level and area, or equivalent. In Manaus, there are three main options among public institutions: UFAM (Federal University of Amazonas), UEA (State University of Amazonas) and IFAM (Federal Institute of Amazonas). It should also be noted that there are private higher learning institutions also accredited to perform the validation, but the action proposed herein focuses on partnerships with the aforementioned public institutions.

For the validation, applicants must pay an administrative fee. The amount is not fixed by the National Education Council or the Ministry of Education and may vary between institutions. In addition to this fee, the student is often faced with additional costs as the diploma must be recognised in the country of origin by the local Ministry of Education or equivalent body; sometimes authenticated by the local Brazilian consular representation; or through the Hague Apostille process. Sworn translations of documents are often required. The whole process usually takes up to 180 days and the cost is often higher than US$ 200.

Large companies operating in Manaus tend to demand diplomas recognised in Brazil when hiring employees for administrative positions or technical positions that require greater qualification. Given this reality, and the challenges in obtaining qualification recognition, it is common to see highly educated Venezuelan professionals looking for operational or manual jobs, well below their skill levels.

Chart 10: Education level of Venezuelan refugees and migrants residing in Manaus in relation to the total Manauara EAP
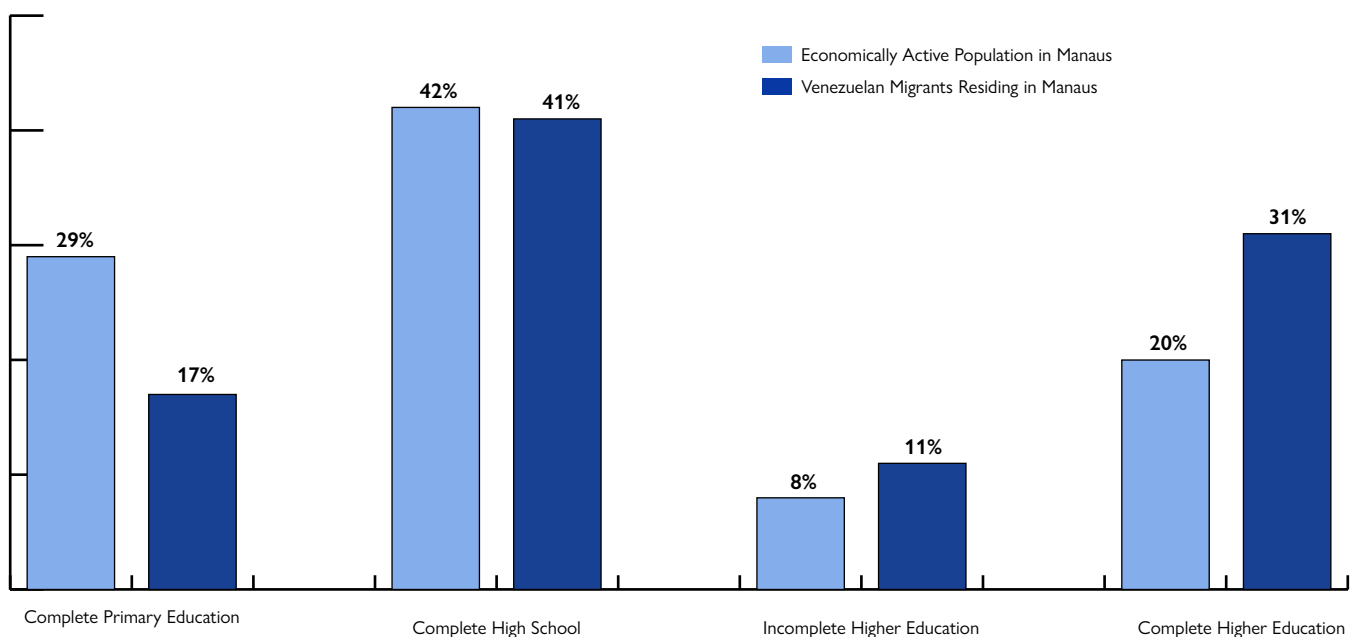
Source 1: Continuous PNAD 2019/IBGE
Source 2: Survey CEBRAP/IOM-UN, May 2020

In addition to the 4,300 Venezuelans identified as having completed Higher Education, there are around 1,500 with incomplete Higher Education, and more than 5,700 who have completed High School. Many of them hold technical course diplomas from Venezuela in diverse areas. Similar to those with higher education, the latter also find it difficult to prove the completion of studies and skills acquired in their country of origin.

In order to obtain some kind of certification that may raise their prospects of finding work in Manaus, some seek short or medium-term courses in technical areas related to their area of training. Some of these courses can be found free of charge, offered by CETAM (Amazonas Technological Education Centre) and the Sistema S[5] free of charge, in partnership with third sector institutions in Manaus.

However, these courses require time and dedication, and sometimes lengthy commuting through the city. In practice, investment in these courses by Venezuelan refugees and migrants competes with time and resources that could be spent on activities seen as having a quicker impact on their livelihood, as is searching for employment and effective work.

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[5] The Sistema S ("S System") are a group of nine not-for-profit semi-public institutions which provide vocational training and certified education. The "S System" is thus comprised of the National Service of Rural Apprenticeship (SENAR); National Service of Trade Apprenticeship (SENAC); Social Service for Commerce (SESC); National Service of Cooperative Apprenticeship (SESCOOP); National Service of Industrial Apprenticeship (SENAI); Social Service for the Industry (SESI); Social Service for Transport Services (SEST); National Service of Transportation Apprenticeship (SENAT); and the Brazilian Support Service for Micro and Small Size Companies Support (SEBRAE).

RECOMMENDATION

For more educated Venezuelan refugees and migrants (those with complete or incomplete higher education, and some with completed high school and professional courses in Venezuela), it is more important to offer **effective mechanisms for diploma recognition and validation** and **accelerated certification of technical skills**. Taking the abovementioned "time dedication vs. job seeking gains" consideration into account, reality suggests that degree recognition can become more impactful than offering new qualification courses. Something between 7,000 and 8,000 Venezuelan refugees and migrants could benefit from new, faster and more accessible mechanisms. To that end, the following recommendations could have a positive impact.

1. **Advocacy towards UFAM, UEA and IFAM and other education institutions of Manaus for the creation of an accelerated process to recognize and validate undergraduate degrees of Venezuelan refugees and migrants residing in Manaus.** This would involve:

• Working alongside those entities to ensure a consistent understanding of the necessary documentation for validation among relevant services. This would be an effort to avoid misinformation in relation to the validity of the documents submitted by refugees and migrants seeking this service. There were reports of refusal by educational institutions to start these processes from the outset, claiming it was not possible, for instance, to accept documents such as the National Migration Registry (RNM) and asylum application certificates (Solicitação de Reconhecimento da Condição de Refugiado). These are valid legal documents and applicable in the recognition process. Hence, better information and awareness of universities administrators could contribute to ensure that applicants have access to lean degree recognition processes.

• Make the case for universities and other institutions with foreign diploma validation competences to assign professionals that can focus and specialize in handling certificate validation processes specifically. This could expand the ability to analyse simultaneous cases and significantly shorten response time.

• Support those institutions in creating a joint information campaign towards the target population, carried out in a coordinated manner. This should include the three public educational institutions mentioned, but also possibly private institutions offering similar services as well. Information could specifically target the beneficiaries identified in the integrated database (Action Line 1).

2. **Create a Solidarity Fund, involving the private sector, to cover the full cost of recognition and validation of certificates for Venezuelan refugees and migrants.** This fund should cover not only administrative fees for educational institutions, but also consular and notary services that may be required during the process. Such a Fund would prioritise support to potential future employees of the contributing companies.

3. **Develop, alongside CETAM and the Sistema S, an accelerated certification system for some technical areas covered in regular courses.** Instead of short or medium-term training, "certification days" would be organized, preferably outside business hours, in which qualified applicants would take a series of theoretical and practical exams to prove existing skills.

5. ELEVATE THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE LESS EDUCATED

Among the 14,000 economically active Venezuelans in Manaus, around 2,400 have only basic education, equivalent to Primary School. In addition, there is, among the 5,700 with completed High School, a group who did not complete any professional training in Venezuela. For these two segments, the solutions mentioned in the previous topic do not apply.

As mentioned above, professional training is widely offered by numerous institutions in Manaus, in some cases free of charge and directly related to jobs in demand in emerging sectors of the local economy. Below are a few examples of courses that can equip highly employable professionals, considering the sectors with high insertion potential discussed in Action Line 3 above.

Table 4: Technical and vocational courses available in Manaus focusing on skills required by emerging sectors in the Manaus economy

Course	Institution	Duration/ Workload	Cost per student	Prerequisite (note: in Brazil, the school career roughly consists of Elementary school (9 years) and High school (3 senior years))
IT/Computer Technician	SENAC - AM	4 months, 20hs weekly	R$ 4.300,00	Elementary School certificate Proof of address Official identification document CPF (Taxpayer's Number)
Database Management	SENAI - AM (Antônio Simões)	140hs	FREE	High School certificate Minimum age: 16 Internet access
Microcomputer Operator	SENAI - AM (Antônio Simões)	160hs	FREE	High School certificate Minimum age: 16 Internet access
Advanced IT Applied to Civil Construction	SENAI - AM (Demóstenes Travessa)	60hs	FREE	5th year of Elementary School Minimum age 14
2D CAD Building Design	SENAI - AM (Demóstenes Travessa)	48hs	FREE	7th year of Elementary School Minimum age 14
Residential Hydraulics Installer	SENAI - AM (Demóstenes Travessa)	160hs	FREE	High School certificate Minimum age: 16 Internet access
Civil Construction Electrician	SENAI - AM (Demóstenes Travessa)	40hs	FREE	5th year of Elementary School Minimum age 14
Distribution Management	SENAI - AM (Waldemiro Lustoza)	160hs	FREE	Elementary School certificate Minimum age 16
FMCG Logistics	SENAI - AM (Waldemiro Lustoza)	160hs	FREE	Elementary School certificate Minimum age 16
Concierge	CETAM	Customizable	FREE	Minimum age 16
Cashier	CETAM	Customizable	FREE	Minimum age 16

Source: Mandalah Research

RECOMMENDATION

Creation and Implementation of a Qualifications Programme, coordinated by a relevant actor involved in work with Venezuelan refuges and migrants. This coordination work would focus on courses that already exist and promote them to groups of less educated beneficiaries identified above. Between 4,000 and 5,000 have this profile.

Any organization leading such an effort would have three main roles within the Qualifications Programme:

1. To identify less educated beneficiaries registered in the integrated database (Action Line 1) and interested, for instance, in one of the eleven courses listed above.

2. Develop, alongside with the three educational institutions mentioned (SENAC, SENAI and CETAM), the scope of each course - according to sectoral demand (e.g. number of classes necessary to absorb the training needs of all those interested over the course of one year). Seek forms of complementary funding where necessary.

3. Ensure that the payment of the CBI detailed above in Action Line 2 coincides with the period in which the beneficiaries are attending their respective professional training course - to mitigate the scarcity of basic resources as a limiting condition in accessing education and training, similar to the discussed impact on job searching.

Depending on the evolution of the economy and if demand from the Transport and Logistics sector so justifies, the **creation of a fund to support beneficiaries with costs for C and E Driver's Licences issuing [Centre for Training Drivers (CFC)]; could be considered.**

6. OFFICIALISE MANAUS AS A CITY OF ORIGIN IN OPERATION WELCOME'S INFORMED JOB VACANCY PROGRAMME

"My biggest concern is the second wave that is to come. Today, even with the borders closed due to the pandemic, we still have daily accounts of people who have just arrived. Once the borders are reopened, the numbers can go up a lot. I do not know if the Manauara labour market will be able to absorb all these people."

Representative of a Manauara NGO

Brazil's domestic voluntary relocation strategy (also called "Interiorização", hereafter "relocation programme"), supports Venezuelan refugees and migrants to relocate from Roraima to other Brazilian states. The programme aims to encourage relocation from the gateway state Roraima, where socioeconomic integration opportunities are scarce, to other states of Brazil where there are better integration possibilities, thereby also reducing concentrated pressure on local public services. The relocation programme is one of the main pillars of Operation Welcome, with IOM acting as one of its main partners and most involved UN agency, financially and operationally, since its inception. Between April 2018 and December 2020, approximately 47,000 Venezuelan refugees and migrants had benefited from the programme, having relocated from its "cities of origin" (Boa Vista and Pacaraima, in the state of Roraima) to more than 600 Destination Cities across the country. Relocations are directly financed by the Federal Government, IOM and civil society organizations. There are 4 types of relocation:

a. **Institutional (shelter-to-shelter):** refugees and migrants living in one of Operation Welcome's shelters located in one the "cites of origin" are relocated to another government, UN agency, or civil society-run shelter, in another Brazilian city These are "cities of destination", where there are in principle greater socioeconomic integration possibilities. They are then supported financially by Operation Welcome partners over a given period (up to three months), mostly with CBI relatedsupport. This is directed to beneficiaries who have no informed job vacancy awaiting and cannot rely on any kind of support network (family or acquaintances). This modality has benefited around 15 per cent of relocated men and 12 per cent of relocated women.

b. **Family Reunification:** refugees and migrants are relocated to a Brazilian city where their verified relatives already reside and are able to host them. This modality has benefited 9 per cent of relocated men and 9 per cent of relocated women.

c. **Social Reunification:** refugees and migrants are relocated to a Brazilian city where friends or acquaintances are already living. Their personal connection is verified through a process of qualifying interviews conducted by the Brazilian Armed Forces and partner institutions. This modality has benefited 20 per cent of relocated men and 19 per cent of relocated women.

d. **Informed Job Vacancy Programme (VES):** refugees and migrants are relocated to a Brazilian city where a job position already awaits them after undergoing remote recruitment. This modality benefited 6 per cent of all men and 2 per cent of all women relocated.

Among the four modalities, VES this is the one with the greatest potential to generate lasting solutions for relocated beneficiaries and their families. The acronym relates to an actual job-seeking, job-matching and recruitment support initiative put forth by Operation Welcome, called "Informed Job Vacancy Programme" (VES or PVES). Typically, a company seeks out Operation Welcome with the intention of hiring Venezuelan refugees and migrants, registers their profiles with the military staff serving in VES, which also checks the companies' documents and judiciary record. Once the background check is concluded and they are listed as a hiring company, they identify potential candidates for the vacancies identified in the "Welcomer System" database. As mentioned above in Action Line 1, the "Welcomer System" is a large database containing the details of virtually all beneficiaries who have been involved with Operation Welcome's services, including reception, relocation, or other. The profiles of the identified beneficiaries are then submitted to interested companies, who shortlist the desired candidates for interviews. The latter are organized in coordination with the VES person in charge, who supports and accompanies the shortlisted beneficiaries throughout the recruitment process. Once the candidate has been selected and the interest of both parties has been confirmed, the relocation process may begin.

Although Manaus has its own transit accommodation (ATM), where relocation programme beneficiaries layover before onward travel, the capital of the State of Amazonas is in fact more of a "city of destination" rather than an "city of origin" in the context of the relocation programme. The greatest evidence of this is the fact that Manaus is the city that receives the most Venezuelans in the programme. In December 2020, there had been 4,931 refugees and migrants supported with relocation to Manaus, almost 70 per cent more than in São Paulo, the second main destination.

With an estimated 13,000 refugees and migrants without formal jobs, a job market impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the prospect of a slow recovery, and public services operating at capacity, it is important to consider changing the condition of Manaus in the relocation strategy. This could have a positive impact on Operation Welcome as a whole, given the numerous refugee and migrant population subject to limitations similar to those experienced by beneficiaries in "cities of origin".

Over time, the formal support to the relocation programme provided by Operation Welcome will end, particularly in the format currently implemented by the Armed Forces and IOM for movements between Roraima and Manaus. However, it is reasonable to expect that the municipality will continue to receive an organic migration inflow in the foreseeable future. This is likely to be boosted by an eventual containment of the pandemic, the lifting of movement restrictions, and reopening of the land border, encouraging family reunification among Venezuelans.

RECOMMENDATION

Operation Welcome should establish Manaus as an city of origin for the voluntary relocation strategy, alongside Boa Vista and Pacaraima (Roraima).

In addition, greater focus is recommended in the VES modality, when compared to other relocation modalities. The integrated database (see action Line 1) will allow employers from various parts of the country to efficiently find candidates residing in Manaus with the appropriate profile for their recruitment needs.

05. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

EXCLUDED POSSIBILITIES

Just as important as making strategic choices for the design of recommendations and guidelines, it is also important to identify what should be excluded possibilities. This refers to strategic options to promote labour market insertion that were considered, but that ultimately failed validation.

First excluded possibility from the Action Framework was employment in the Public Sector. Although the Government is the largest employer in Manaus (responsible for 1 in every 4 formal vacancies in the city), and frequently hires in interesting sectors for the 19% of the analysed Venezuelan population (e.g. Health, Social Assistance and Education); it presents practically insurmountable barriers to the employability of refugees and migrants. According to the Brazilian regulations, public competitions are intended only for Brazilian citizens, a constitutional determination. Changing this scenario would depend on intense advocacy at the federal level, an effort which would have low impact potential.

Nonetheless, it is not unfounded to consider alternative ways of Venezuelan refugees and migrants to contribute professionally to publicly run services or facilities. One possibility is in a context of public-third sector partnerships . The Coroado Shelter, for example, is run by SEAS (State Secretariat for Social Assistance) with the support of a Venezuelan health monitoring officer hired through ADRA. However, this is still a rare possibility with a limited impact, and was therefore excluded from the scope of the Action Framework.

When analysing the survey conducted by CEBRAP, it was interesting to note that 53 per cent of refugees and migrants who are employed (either formally or informally) work on their own. Initially, this seemed like an opportunity to develop an activities focusing on entrepreneurship. This would have resulted in proposing throughout the Action Framework a specific set of related initiatives (e.g. guidance for registering a MEI (micro-entrepreneur registration); microcredit programmes; or a close partnership with SEBRAE-AM). However, during field work, it was verified in fact that entrepreneurship is typically a secondary activity for beneficiaries, according to collected data. While looking for formal jobs, beneficiaries showed more inclination to use a particular skill to generate income (e.g. informal daily jobs or "gigs"), rather than develop a self-run business operation. Overall, entrepreneurship development among such vulnerable refugee and migrant communities, especially in the context of the economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, was concluded to be a very high-risk strategy.

IMPLEMENTING E.M.P.L.E.O.: STRUCTURE, PARTNERS AND ENGAGEMENT

To implement the E.M.P.L.E.O. Action Framework, it would be recommendable to take the following steps into consideration:

1) Evaluation of the Institutional Network

Each organization and institution part of what throughout this study was referred to as the "ecosystem" has different mandates, capabilities and structure. Therefore, and because E.M.P.L.E.O. is designed as a multi-stakeholder strategy, it is important to take stock of the role and intervention possibilities of each participating organization or entity. It is also worthwhile to highlight recommendations related to hiring dedicated professionals, who can be of much assistance in pushing closer coordination forward. An ongoing analysis may involve:

a. A more detailed and regular measurement of the executive capacities of each organization, aiming to understand what could be an adequate division of labour and resource mobilization for the implementation of the Action Framework;

b. Action Line adjustments towards ensuring that effective implementation, aligned with the competences or mandate of each organization, is prioritized; so that the Framework may respond to identified urgent needs;

c. An analysis to determine information and workflows between partners of Operation Welcome, government and other relevant actors. .

2) Evaluation of Partners

Several of the recommendations made in this document leverage the aforementioned existing institutional ecosystem. Illustratively, some of the identified institutions were mentioned throughout this text, but partnership possibilities within the ecosystem are vast, well beyond those discussed herein. As a starting point, it is important to make a detailed mapping of all institutions (including the private sector, the public sector and the third sector) directly or indirectly involved with these actions; their structure and size, operational profile, partnerships established, among other.

3) Engagement Plan

The E.M.P.L.E.O. Action Framework aims to be a paradigm of concrete activities that allow government authorities and active institutions to connect more closely and collaborate in assisting and integrating refugees and migrants. This includes action under the Operation Welcome umbrella, but also outside of it.

It would be fair to say that a united institutional front would also be more successful in motivating local engagement. A event marking the launch of the integrated database (in presence or online, if necessary), for instance, would be a great opportunity to do so. Firstly, it would be a favourable moment to directly inform relevant actors that the database would be readily accessible and open to receive their input. Furthermore, it could be an opportunity to foster direct contact between actors intervening in the same work area, but whom have never met. It is this kind of internal engagement that would be necessary to take into consideration when implementing a multi-stakeholder effort such as E.M.P.L.E.O.

It is also necessary that inter-organization dynamics (which would need some sort of leadership and coordination in different actions) produce effective contact and advocacy action. This includes, for example, interactions with of higher education to strengthen and target degree validation services (Action Line 4); and the creation of a privately financed fund (Action Line 5). Such interactions must be centrally planned and coordinated. To better grasp the progress of the full implementation a full implementation of these actions, it would be useful to draft a "Theory of Change", which would serve as a reference document that establishes a timeline the actions to take place, their expected impact, which institutions are involved in each stage, what roles, among others.

CONCLUSION

The aspiration of this proposal was to design a realistic Action Framework that would make the best use of the capacity and the institutional competencies of the public, private and third sectors towards catalysing the insertion of unemployed Venezuelan refugees and migrants. In late 2020, it was estimated that they were approximately 13,000. This set of actions was designed to produce decisive results after one year of implementation, assuming a balanced (broad institutional participation) and progressive (quick and consistent execution) implementation of the proposed activities.

It is important to underline the "aspirational" character of this one year term, especially taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the national and local economy in 2020, and possibly throughout 2021. The E.M.P.L.E.O. Manaus Action Framework's reference was the pre-pandemic average of 6.000 created jobs per year. As such, it is important to calibrate expectations and consider these actions as initiatives that may start, but not end in 2021. Under normal circumstances, the implementation of the full set of actions would theoretically have the capacity to motivate the identification of thousands of job vacancies and widespread placement of unemployed refugees and migrants already in Year 1.

The cost of inaction must also be contemplated. Without structured and quick impact interventions, such as the proposals presented herein, it is possible that limiting conditions for employability may worsen in the near future. This also includes xenophobia, which could be used further as a political resource as the economic context deteriorates. The containment of the pandemic, the reopening of the Brazil-Venezuela border and the resulting return to an intensive migration inflow, are all factors that could affect labour market insertion.

The Manauara economy is yet to capitalise on a highly qualified community, which is ready and willing to do its part. The E.M.P.L.E.O. Action Framework is in line with a shift from an humanitarian approach to one of development and integration. The actions presented herein have the potential, over the course of three years, to contribute decisively to the integration and protection of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Manaus. E.M.P.L.E.O. was created to bring local actors together and work to enhance the potential of that community, allowing it to contribute further to the prosperity of the eighth largest economy in Brazil.

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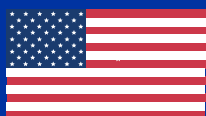incidence and social insertion". IN: BAENINGER, R.S. Venezuelan Migration. Ed. Unicamp, 2018, pp. 293-303.

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