



Rainbow Railroad's Work to Address the Migrant Crisis in Central and Latin America: A snapshot

The issue:

LGBTQI migrants in Central and Latin America face two separate yet interconnected crises:

- 1) the migrant crisis in Venezuela and
- 2) the humanitarian crisis at the US–Mexico border.

What's at stake:

There are tens of thousands of migrants in Mexico currently awaiting the adjudication of their asylum claims in the United States. Since 2017, laws and policies in the United States have prevented asylum seekers, including members of the LGBTQI community, from entering the country. As a result, LGBTQI persons are left in limbo.

About 4.7 million Venezuelans have fled the country since its economy suffered a 65 percent contraction in 2013, fuelling one of the largest refugee crises in modern history. Venezuela is second only to Syria in terms of the number of displaced people living outside their country of origin. If current trends continue, this migrant crisis will outpace the speed of displacement seen in Syria. This is putting LGBTQI persons at risk.

What we are doing:

After conducting a needs assessment with our partners in the region, we have begun working in the region in the following ways:

- 1) We are providing immediate assistance to LGBTQI individuals in Mexico who are seeking asylum in the United States. Specifically, we are supporting partner organizations on the ground that provide safe houses and shelter.
- 2) We are partnering with organizations in countries such as Ecuador, which are receiving and supporting LGBTQI refugees from Venezuela.
- 3) We are supporting advocates' efforts to push the United States to receive more LGBTQI asylum seekers from Central and Latin America.
- 4) We are exploring relocating migrants at the US–Mexico border to countries other than the US.
- 5) We are providing direct support to LGBTQI persons facing persecution.



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