Premise

Case Study

USAID Project Uses Premise to Pair Satellite and Crowdsourced Data to Accelerate Colombia Humanitarian Response

Challenge

Colombia is home to nearly 1.8 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants. Meeting their needs for health, education, and water and sanitation services is a priority of the U.S. Agency for International Development's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/ BHA). Through its Support to Humanitarian Data Collection and Analytics in Colombia project, implemented by iMMAP, USAID/BHA collects data that enable the timely, targeted delivery of humanitarian assistance. But assessing the needs of Venezuelans— and even figuring out where they have settled—is a time- and resource-intensive task that has only become more difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Solution

The Humanitarian Data Collection project used Premise to identify and understand the needs of Venezuelan communities across Colombia. In Phase One, 100 Premise Contributors validated the existence of probable informal settlements first identified by a USAID partner using satellite imagery. In Phase Two, Contributors assessed the needs of Venezuelans living in the validated settlements, collecting data on proxy indicators based on standard humanitarian needs assessment tools.

The project asked Contributors to:

- Characterize and take photos of settlement infrastructure (e.g., housing and road conditions, home-building materials)

- Describe and photograph water and sanitation infrastructure (e.g., piped water sources, rain barrels)

- Describe and photograph community infrastructure (e.g., schools, health clinics, community gardens, stores)

Findings

Premise Contributors validated the existence of 350 informal settlements of Venezuelan people across the country. Sentiment, observational, and geo-localized data gathered by Premise gave the Humanitarian Data Collection project a rapid, comprehensive, and cost-effective picture of settlement conditions, as well as of the needs of their inhabitants.

Premise became the eyes and ears on the ground for USAID/BHA and iMMAP during the pandemic when parts of the country were largely inaccessible. The project was able to use the data to coordinate with local humanitarian organizations and to more effectively target aid and leverage resources.

Photos taken by Premise Contributors helped to validate the existence and location of more than 350 Venezuelan settlements throughout Colombia.

Implications

Equipped with these observations from Premise, the Humanitarian Data Collection project was able to:

- Improve its humanitarian response by working from data sourced directly from communities

- Prioritize settlements in which to carry out more in-depth needs assessments

- Coordinate with humanitarian organizations to inform the development of a formal humanitarian aid strategy to meet the needs of Venezuelans living in informal settlements in Sucre (in partnership with United Nations sector coordinating groups)

"Over the past few months, with major restrictions imposed due to the spread of COVID-19, Premise has been vital for iMMAP to collect information on humanitarian needs throughout Colombia. From mid-March through August, our information management staff was immobilized and national flights and bus travel were prohibited. Fortunately, Premise allowed iMMAP to collect information on needs directly from the local community. This information has facilitated an improved humanitarian response by identifying needs which otherwise may have not been observed due to limited humanitarian access.

Without Premise's information on a number of needs we would not have been available to responders in many cases.*"*

— Jeffrey Villaveces

Colombia Country Director for iMMAP, USAID/BHA's implementing partner on the Support to Humanitarian Data Collection and Analytics in Colombia project

About Premise

Premise is a crowdsourced insights company. Our technology mobilizes communities of global smartphone users to source actionable data in real-time, cost-effectively and with the visibility you need. In more than 125 countries and 37 languages, we find Data for Every Decision™.

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