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Dynamic Spaces of Refugee Governance:

The Case of Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil

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Master of Arts in Geography

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Dynamic Spaces of Refugee Governance:

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This thesis examines the scalar politics within spaces of refugee governance in Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil. Centering on Operação Acolhida (Operation Welcome), the Brazilian governmental response to the increase in Venezuelan migration to Brazil, this thesis expands on neo-liberalizing trends of governance structures. Through detailing the inter-organizational relationships and coordination practices, I demonstrate how Boa Vista's shifting spaces of refugee governance often leads to upscaling and devolution of authority and responsibilities both within and between state and non-state actors. I then conduct a comparative analysis of the UNHCR and IOM's institutional vulnerability models to demonstrate how universal

vulnerability metrics largely obscures the vulnerability specificities of the remote state of Roraima. Lastly, I demonstrate how devolution and upscaling manifest specifically in the case of vulnerable Indigenous Venezuelan refugees in Brazil. I connect the historical-political trajectory of FUNAI (the Brazilian federal agency for Indigenous populations) to its current avoidant practices towards incoming Indigenous Venezuelans and the subsequent reliance on civil society infrastructure. I conclude by considering how the current spatial-temporal context of COVID-19 has both modified and challenged these dynamic spaces of refugee governance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
ANVISA	Brazilian National Health Surveillances Agency
AVSI	Association of Volunteers in International Service
CMDH	Center for Migration and Human Rights of the Diocese of Roraima
CONARE	National Committee for Refugees
CPF	Brazilian Social Security/ Taxpayer Registry Identification
CVB	Brazilian Red Cross
DoMV	Determinants of Migrant Vulnerability Model
DPU	Federal Public Defender's Office
EBSERH	Brazilian Hospital Services Company
FA	Armed Forces
FFHI	Fraternity- International Humanitarian Federation
Fraternidade	Fraternity Without Borders
FUNAI	National Indian Foundation
FUNASA	National Health Foundation
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IMDH	Institute of Migration and Human Rights
IOM	International Organization for Migration
Jesuíta	Jesuit Service for Migrants and Refugees
MC	Ministry of Citizenship
MD	Ministry of Defense

MDH	Ministry of Women, Family, and Human Rights
MDS	Ministry of Social Development
ME	Ministry of Economy
MEd	Ministry of Education
MERCOSUL	Southern Common Market
MJ	Ministry of Justice
MPT	Ministry of Work
MRE	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MS	Ministry of Health
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières/ Doctors Without Borders
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PF	Federal Police
PIN	National Integration Plan
PTRIG	Screening Centers
PUC- Rio	Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro
RR	State of Roraima
SETRABES	Secretary of Labor and Social Well-Being
SPI	Indian Protection Service
TI	Indigenous Territories
TSF	Télécoms Sans Frontières
UFRR	Federal University of Roraima
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities

UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNI	Union of Indigenous Nations
UNICEF	United Nation's Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAF	Vulnerability Assessment Framework

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hope to visit one day when the pandemic calms down. I am ever grateful to Dalia McGill who connected me to the region and kept me updated during these remote times. To all the Venezuelan refugees entering this region, I am inspired by your resilience and wish you the best on your journeys. Let us keep fighting towards mobility being a human right.

INTRODUCTION

Political and economic turmoil in Venezuela has led to the second largest historical displacement of populations worldwide after Syria. An estimated more than 5 million Venezuelans have left their country with approximately 4 million resettling in Latin America and the Caribbean (Chaves-González and Echeverria-Estrada, 2020). While the bulk of research has focused on larger Venezuelan migration flows to Colombia and other Spanish-speaking Latin American countries (Gandini et al., 2019; Vicent, 2021; Bravo, 2021; Masullo & Idler, 2021; Wentzel et al., 2021), very little emphasis has been given to migration flows into Brazil. Over 320,000 Venezuelans have entered Brazil since January 2015, primarily through the northern border crossing of Pacaraima in the state of Roraima, Brazil (see **Figure 1** for map; UNHCR *Refugee Data Finder*). Most of these Venezuelans are migrating from the Venezuelan states of Anzoategui, Monagas, and Bolívar, with the majority of the population being working age (25-49), with a secondary education (i.e. completed high school), and primarily mixed-race or afro-descendent (IOM, 2021). While the majority of Venezuelan refugees are criollo (non-Indigenous descent), approximately 5,000 Indigenous Venezuelans have been legally registered in Brazil (Rosa et al., 2021). These Indigenous Venezuelans are primarily of Warao, E'ñepá, and Pemon ethnicity, primarily speak Indigenous languages rather than Spanish, and tend to have lower levels of formal (Western) education. Thus, while there are overarching demographic characteristics of this migration flow, there is also a range of racial and cultural diversity within this incoming population.

Qualitative humanitarian aid and development literature have highlighted the role of aid workers in maintaining national sovereignty and the overlapping roles of emergency relief and

border enforcement (Malkki, 2015; Smirl, 2015). Aid organizations at times reproduce colonial power relations by maintaining and internalizing border practices within their operations (Walia, 2013). Studies have demonstrated that the concept of aid organizations as being apolitical is a neoliberal discourse that disregards both the spatial-temporal context and the fact that *mobility is always political* (Hyndman, 2000; Ticktin, 2011). The centrality of politics and spatial-temporal context comes to the forefront in Lischer's (2005:4) work where she argues that, "both governments and humanitarian organizations pay little attention to the politics of the refugee crisis or the conflict that created the displacement." Comparing Afghan, Bosnian and Rwandan refugees, Lischer demonstrates that aid in refugee crises can exacerbate conflict and potentially lead to the spread of civil wars across borders. My research connects Lischer's call for the importance of political context with Malkki and Smirl's focus on the central role of humanitarian aid workers to understand how politics *within and between* aid organizations and governmental actors can have larger mobility implications for refugee populations.

This thesis examines the scalar politics within spaces of refugee governance in Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil. The primary Venezuelan migration flow into Brazil comprises of a route that has served as a borderlands of exchange and mobility between the two nation-states since the 1940s surge in mining in the region (Crocia de Barros, 1996). Mobility in the region was further fortified by the construction of the BR-174 highway in the 1990s that connected Boa Vista to the Pacaraima border crossing and Troncal 10 highway in Venezuela in the north and the city of Manaus in the south (see **Figure 1** for map; Oliveira, 2007). Since February 2015, this has primarily shifted towards a one-directional[1] flow of Venezuelans entering Brazil at the Pacaraima border crossing and then traveling another 220 km south to Boa Vista. Boa Vista is

[1] There is an itinerant flow of Venezuelans who cross over to buy food and resources in Brazil (Toledo, 2017).

the capital and most populated city in the state of Roraima, yet it is also a relatively isolated city in comparison to other cities in Brazil. Boa Vista has overburdened social services and an economy that is highly reliant on public sector jobs. At its peak, an average of 500 Venezuelans were crossing daily into Brazil along this route, increasing the population of Boa Vista by 10% (UNHCR, 2019; Ramsey & Sánchez-Garzoli, 2018). The closest large city to Boa Vista is Manaus which is a 12-hour bus ride away. Additionally, Roraima is the only state that is not connected to the Brazilian national power grid but rather buys most of its electricity from Venezuela. Thus, in some senses, this region is more dependent and connected to Venezuela than the rest of Brazil. As a result, many of the challenges of providing aid to this migration flow are rooted in the spatial characteristics of this region: the relatively isolated location of this city, the limited job market and possibilities to expand the economy, as well as the underfunded public services in the state.

In February 2018, the Brazilian government launched Operação Acolhida (Operation Shelter/ Welcome) in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Brazilian Armed Forces, local government, and NGOs to respond to this emerging migration flow. The Operation is led by the Brazilian Army who heavily relies on the UNHCR and IOM to provide key international aid infrastructure for intaking, documenting, sheltering, and relocating this new migration flow. Since the emergence of COVID-19, the Brazilian Army advocated and has now slowly stepped down from its central role in the Operation decentralizing its responsibilities on to different Ministries of the Brazilian government. This Operation is also unique due to its co-management by the UNHCR and IOM who have historically worked independently rather than collaboratively with each other. With regards to Indigenous Venezuelan refugees, the Brazilian federal

Indigenous affairs agency, Fundação Nacional do Índio (FUNAI), has gradually accepted partial responsibility for aiding this incoming population. Nonetheless, civil society actors have played a key role in providing on-the-ground support for these refugees. Overall, the management of Operação Acolhida has been mired by confusion over the responsibilities and authority of local and federal government, the military, the UNHCR, and IOM.

My research explores these challenges by conceptualizing the dynamic spaces of refugee governance in Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil. The concept of dynamic spaces of refugee governance aims to exemplify Brenner's (2004) new state spaces in which neo-liberalization has reorganized governance structures often leading to decentralization, devolution, and upscaling of responsibilities between and within state and non-state actors. I conceptualize decentralization as the overarching transfer of tasks or responsibilities from one central actor to a multiplicity of actors. The form of decentralization that I will focus on primarily is devolution- a practice that captures both the horizontal and vertical shifting of responsibilities. Global trends of political devolution demonstrate that the federal government's work is increasingly being carried out by indirect administrative approaches that in part is a "conscious strategy to avoid increasing the size of the federal government while expanding its programs" (Kettl, 2000: 492; Asthana, 2013; Hooghe et al., 2016). At the same time, studies have demonstrated an increase in upscaling efforts. I conceptualize upscaling within Boa Vista's dynamic spaces of refugee governance as a combination of Watchsmuth's (2020) competitive upscaling with Chung's (2015) fostering of global-local alliances. Watchsmuth (2020: 355) defines competitive upscaling as a relational process in which local and regional political actors attempt to "resolve local competitive pressures by restructuring state space to position the locality as the component of a larger, and hopefully more vital and competitive entity." Meanwhile within the context of urban

development, Chung (2015) disaggregates upscaling into three forms with one form being the fostering of global-local alliances. Expanding on de Jong's (2013) work, Chung describes upscaling via global-local alliances as the governmental rescaling through transnational alliances as well as the rapid adoption of new ideas through the "direct involvement of overseas institutions" (Chung 2015: 182). I combine both these concepts to understand upscaling in Operação Acolhida as a relational negotiation restructuring strategy by local actors both with state governance as well as with transnational cooperation alliances. *Overall, the dynamic spaces of refugee governance capture both the shifting political interrelations in humanitarian operations while highlighting how the ever-changing spatial-temporal context play a role within mobility regimes.*

In order to examine the dynamic spaces of refugee governance in Operação Acolhida (within the constraints of COVID-19), this thesis asks the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between the different actors involved in Operação Acolhida? Why are certain actors making Operation decisions and others are not? What are the implications of these decisions?
2. How do the main actors in the Operation identify vulnerable populations? To what extent are these institutional definitions and frameworks adopted at a smaller scale in Brazil?
3. What are the implications of inter-agency Operation relations and providing specialized treatment for Indigenous Venezuelans in Brazil?

<u>Key Findings</u>

My findings highlight the unintentional limitations on Venezuelan refugee mobility due to shifting responsibilities and institutional standards in the dynamic spaces of refugee governance in Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil. By mapping the roles of Operação Acolhida's key actors, my research demonstrates how Brazilian governmental actors and international NGO's

practice scalar shifting of responsibilities both internally and extra-locally on to other actors. Shifting responsibilities within dynamic spaces of refugee governance is a result of the complexity of how local and international politics play out in different spatial-temporal contexts. By tracing the politics *within* and *between* aid organizations and governmental actors, I reveal how the shifting of responsibilities has larger mobility implications for refugee populations in Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil.

Scalar negotiations are at the heart of shifting responsibilities. Firstly, the tensions between federal and local governmental practices have contributed to a range of challenges. The Brazilian Army has resisted its central role in the Operation and decentralized the majority of tasks onto aid organizations and other governmental branches while requesting to be removed from its post. The shifting of responsibilities also emerges at the local governmental scale. Roraima is one of the most conservative states in Brazil with 78.61% of Boa Vista voting in favor of Jair Bolsonaro in the 2018 Brazilian presidential election (Cunha et al., 2018). In April 2018, the governor of Roraima began pursuing legal action to close the border, escalating into a 17-hour temporary border closure until the case was ruled down by the Supreme Court (Alvim, 2018). Nonetheless, the demands to close the border were partially fulfilled through the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in the closure of the border from approximately March 2020 to June 2021. Roraima's unwelcoming stance towards this migration flow has resulted in upscaling responsibilities on to international NGOs.

Second, as Chapter One details, scale also matters *within* specific international aid organizations resulting in discrepancies and tensions in how aid organizations operate on the ground. I demonstrate how chains of command even within the same organization privilege those workers with international experience and competency in global standards over the expertise of

local workers. Furthermore, I demonstrate how the lack of local coordination between different aid organizations leads to confusion over responsibilities, often resulting in vertical and horizontal devolution and upscaling practices.

Thirdly, I analyze how the UNHCR and IOM negotiate between their usage of broad universal institutional vulnerability models and their implementation on-the-ground. The differences in the two institutional models highlights the strengths in conceptualizing vulnerability factors as interdependent rather than quantifying independent individual factors. My analysis demonstrates that the adoption of universal vulnerability metrics largely obscures the vulnerability specificities of the remote state of Roraima.

Lastly, I demonstrate how devolution and upscaling manifest specifically in the case of Indigenous Venezuelan refugees in Brazil. By tracing the historical legacy of the Fundação Nacional do Índio (FUNAI) – the Brazilian federal agency tasked with protecting Indigenous populations – I connect the historical-political trajectory of this organization to its current attempts to avoid responsibility for the incoming Indigenous Venezuelan population. I identify that this evasion of responsibilities centers primarily on the competing political interests between federal and local mandates regarding Indigenous rights to land claims. Due to FUNAI's avoidant behavior, Indigenous Venezuelans receive the bulk of their aid from international aid organizations and civil society actors. I argue that this aid infrastructure contributes to the institutional stewardship experienced by Indigenous Venezuelans whereby international aid organizations and civil society actors primarily represent these populations at the bureaucratic level resulting in limited agency and mobility for Indigenous Venezuelan refugees. I conclude by considering how the current spatial-temporal context of COVID-19 has both modified and challenged this dynamic space of refugee governance in Brazil.

Methodology

I employed a mixed-methods approach to this study modified for COVID-19 pandemic constraints. My research topic emerged from my initial interest in the spatial divisions within the UNHCR sheltering process (see Migration Process subsection for more details) that at times spatially divided the refugee population by family status, sexuality, and Indigeneity (see **Figures 2-5** for images of UNHCR shelters). This filtering of the incoming Venezuelan refugee population drew me to analyze the implications of refugee governance. In February 2019, I conducted preliminary research in Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil through funding from the Dartmouth College's James B. Reynold's Scholarship for Foreign Study (see **Figures 6-9** for images of my preliminary visit). During my one month stay in Boa Vista, I served as a part-time volunteer for the Jesuit's (Serviço Jesuíta a Migrantes e Refugiados) afterschool/ day care program called Fé y Alegria. This volunteer position allowed me to get involved with one of the main aid organizations that collaborates with Operação Acolhida through supporting educational programming for Venezuelan children aged 5-10 years old. My volunteering provided an avenue to converse with both local teachers from the region as well as Venezuelan children and parents. Living with aid workers working at the Brazilian Red Cross and UNHCR allowed me to familiarize myself with a range of perspectives on the migration situation and responses to the Operation. Since many aid workers were unfamiliar with what other organizations were doing, I began compiling information on each aid organization and meeting with aid coordinators to map out the NGO landscape in Boa Vista.

I intended to conduct ethnographic research in Boa Vista during the summer of 2020 through funding from the UCLA Department of Geography Travel Grant. Due to COVID-19

pandemic restrictions, I adapted my research methods and topic to be completely remote. I received IRB approval and conducted four remote semi-structed interviews with key international aid workers in the region. I initially sought out to interview a more diverse and numerous set of actors through reaching out to my own contacts as well as potential participants via email/ LinkedIn/ academia.edu. However, I experienced many difficulties receiving bureaucratic permission to interview aid workers as well as general virtual burnout which led to many incomplete and unanswered emails and texts. Funding from the Conference of Latin American Geography Master's Field Study Award and the American Association of Geographer's Latin American Specialty Group Master's Field Award aided in covering the costs of virtual platform subscriptions as well as Trint transcribing services. After conducting each interview, I used Trint to transcribe the interviews and then I reviewed, edited, and translated the transcriptions. I included key quotes from these interviews in my thesis that I felt represented both my own personal observations as well as themes that were emerging within published texts.

I supplemented this interview data and personal observations with extensive textual analysis of academic publications, international aid grey literature, and news articles. Besides background literature, I limited my textual analysis to articles written between January 1, 2015 and July 30, 2021. I identified articles through search engines, Google Scholar Alerts, and Google News Alerts. The key words used in these searches include: *Venezuelan migration, Operação Acolhida, Boa Vista, Roraima, and migração Venezuela.* The texts I analyzed are written in English, Portuguese, and Spanish. Having received my B.A. in Geography, Hispanic Studies, and Portuguese and had the opportunity to study abroad and do research in Brazil, Argentina, and Bolivia, I consider myself fluent and able to navigate sources in all three languages. As a student studying at a United States university whose heritage is not Brazilian nor

Venezuelan and has learned Spanish and Portuguese through courses, my work aims to be cognizant of the power dynamics and potential linguistic limitations embedded in my research and interactions. I have included the original Portuguese quotes along with my translations to both capture the differences and difficulty of translation while attempting to provide some agency to those intimately working in the region and on this topic.

Migration Process: Intake, Documentation, and Interiorization

Before outlining the rest of this thesis, I will provide a brief contextual explanation of the general migration process for Venezuelan refugees entering Brazil. The Brazilian federal governmental response to Venezuelan migration has been characterized as one of the most inclusive and welcoming policies in both Latin America and the world. CONARE (Comitê Nacional para os Refugiados), the bureau of the Brazilian government in charge of refugee affairs, has recognized *all people coming from Venezuela as refugees prima facie* (UNHCR, 2019). As a result, Brazil has received the third most Venezuelan asylum cases worldwide (Romero, 2021). I will stay consistent with the Brazilian governmental categorization and refer to all Venezuelans as *refugees* rather than *migrant*s, despite many people falling into both categories. While CONARE has expanded the definition of a refugee in response to Venezuelan migration, there are two separate documentation processes for Venezuelans entering Brazil.

Upon arriving in Brazil, Venezuelans undergo a reception intake process where their information is collected, they receive emergency health service,[2] and are provided with information regarding the two documentation processes: temporary residency or asylum. Applying for temporary residency requires that you have a government-issued ID (but not

[2] If unable to show proof of vaccination, many Venezuelans are also vaccinated during reception in order to limit the spread of diseases in both shelters and in the host communities.

necessarily a passport) which is not required for those seeking asylum. The benefits of temporary residency are primarily that one can travel freely which allows Venezuelans to return to Venezuela and still be able to re-enter Brazil. In comparison, receiving asylum limits one from traveling to their home country but provides them with robust refugee aid infrastructure. Both processes allow Venezuelans to work legally in Brazil. Generally, there is a lot of confusion between these two processes where some Venezuelan family members apply to different processes believing it could increase their chance at getting a work permit. Many Venezuelans are also limited to seeking asylum due to not having acceptable forms of government issued identification. While CONARE and the Polícia Federal are the Brazilian governmental branches in charge of these documentation processes, in Boa Vista, UNHCR aids with the asylum documentation process and the IOM aids with the temporary residency process. Thus, the documentation process consists of guiding Venezuelans through one of these two migratory processes that allow them to legally work in Brazil.

After undergoing the intake process and receiving temporary documentation, Venezuelans remaining in the area then undergo the sheltering process. In Boa Vista, the UNHCR is working in conjunction with various NGOs to manage 13+ shelters for Venezuelan refugees (see **Figure 10** for map of Boa Vista with shelters). Some of these shelters are designated for specific populations: Indigenous Venezuelans, vulnerable women, women with children, families, and at times an LGBTQ shelter as well (Rabi Misle & Hugueney, 2020). Prior to the COVID border closure, many shelters were over capacity and Venezuelan refugees began living in "spontaneous occupations."[3] Nonetheless with the 15-month closure of the border,

[3] This is a direct translation from Portuguese. Many Venezuelans began living informally both in the streets as well as occupying abandoned buildings in Boa Vista. The largest spontaneous occupation, Ka'Ubanoko, housed approximately 900 people and was only disbanded in January 2021 (Montel, 2021).

Operação Acolhida has been able to focus on the relocation process which has freed up sheltering for more Venezuelans in Boa Vista.

After receiving proper documentation, Venezuelans qualify for a second process known as interiorization. The interiorization process was developed by the Brazilian government as a solution to the fact that the state of Roraima, and more specifically Boa Vista, has a very limited job market and the sudden influx in population has significantly strained social services in the region. Thus, the concept of interiorizing consists of providing transportation and support for Venezuelans to be relocated to other parts of Brazil. The main interiorization processes are: job placement, shelter-to-shelter, and family/ social reunification. In all of these interiorization processes, Venezuelans are required to have some form of support (i.e. job offer, shelter confirmation, family/friend financial guarantee of support) in order to qualify to be relocated. The UNHCR administers the shelter-to-shelter process and the IOM administers the family and social reunification processes. Since April 2018, 54,430 Venezuelans have been formally interiorized to other parts of Brazil (UNHCR, 2021). This quick overview seeks to clearly break-down the multi-step Venezuelan migratory process in Brazil yet it overlooks the messiness within this process which will be discussed further in Chapter 1.

Thesis Outline

This thesis is divided into three chapters. In Chapter 1, I provide an overview of the main actors involved in Operação Acolhida before delving into the inter-organizational relations and coordination between actors. Through analyzing these interrelations, I explore the range of scalar shifting of responsibilities and the heavy reliance on the infrastructure of international aid organizations within Boa Vista's dynamic spaces of refugee governance. Chapter 2 is a

comparative textual analysis between the IOM and UNHCR's approaches to assessing migrant vulnerability. Through comparing the IOM's Determinant of Migrant Vulnerability Model and the UNHCR's Vulnerability Assessment Framework, I demonstrate the scalar differences between how their models are conceived institutionally and their implementation on-the-ground in Brazil. In Chapter 3, I bring together the messy interrelations of Operação Acolhida with the concept of vulnerability to explore how this network specifically impacts the vulnerable Indigenous Venezuelan refugees entering Brazil. Finally, in the conclusion, I offer my final considerations regarding the inter-organizational relations of Operação Acolhida within the current context of COVID-19 and its larger implications for the mobility of Venezuelan refugees in Brazil.

FIGURES

Figure 1: Map of Region: State of Roraima in relation to surrounding nation-states and the main highway that leads from the border entry to the capital of Boa Vista. (Louzada et al., 2020: 2)



Figures 2-5: Left-hand column depicts selected photos of Venezuelan families living in the UNHCR shot-gun shelters. Right-hand column depicts selected photos of Indigenous Venezuelans living in the designated Indigenous shelters. All photos were taken by photojournalist Chico Max. (Max, 2018)





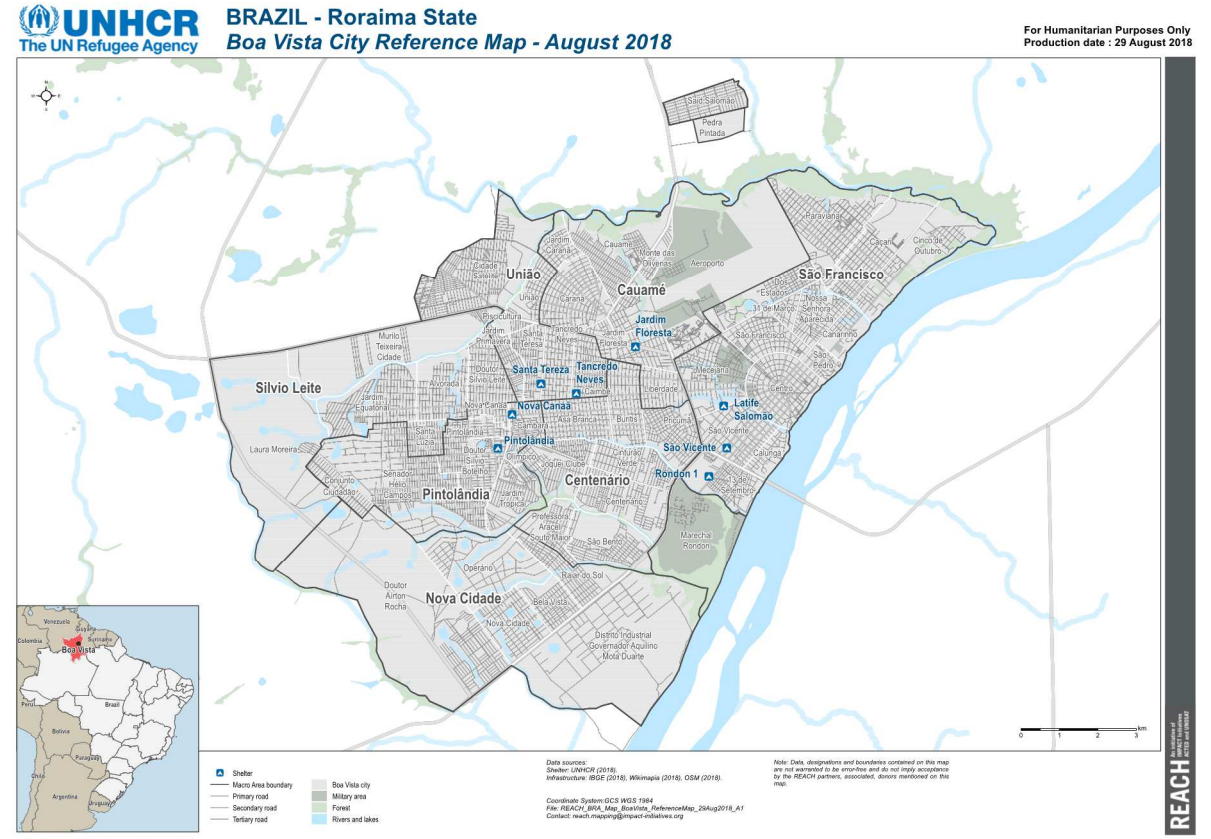




Figures 6-9: Clockwise from left upper corner: The first image depicts the northern Brazilian-Venezuelan border crossing where most Venezuelans are entering Brazil. The second image is of the Trocal-10 highway in Venezuela (that connects to the BR-174 highway in Brazil) and highlights the landscape in the borderlands. The third image is from a grocery store in the borderlands of Venezuela with a quick guide to the exchange rate between Venezuelan bolivars and Brazilian reais. Within the Venezuelan borderlands, it is common practice to use either currency interchangeably. The last image depicts me at Fé y Alegria where I assisted with an afterschool program for Venezuelan children in Boa Vista. All photos were taken by me in February 2019 during my preliminary stay in Boa Vista.



Figure 10: Map of Boa Vista with UNHCR shelters in August 2018. Since then, several more shelters have opened in the city. (REACH & UNHCR, 2018)



CHAPTER ONE: THE INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONS IN OPERAÇÃO ACOLHIDA

Introduction

In this chapter I will delineate the various governmental, international, and civil society actors that comprise Operação Acolhida and the inter-organizational relations between these actors. In order to contextualize my study, I will begin by reviewing some of the humanitarian supply chain management literature that explores humanitarian operations and coordination from a range of the methodologies, perspectives, and approaches. Taking into account this literature, this chapter will first unpack the role of the main actors involved in the sheltering and interiorization processes of Operação Acolhida. It will then delve into the inter-organizational relations and coordination efforts between these actors. *Through analyzing the inter-organizational relations of Operação Acolhida's network, I argue that a range of scalar relationships emerge in the Operation that elucidate the dynamic power relations in Boa Vista's spaces of refugee governance.* I define my network as all the actors working in some capacity with the UNHCR shelters in Boa Vista. I conceptualize spaces of refugee governance as an example of Brenner's (2004) new state spaces in which neo-liberalization has re-organized governance structures. This re-organization has resulted in upscaling certain responsibilities on to supra-national entities which has facilitated the neo-colonization of refugee management by global players. At the same time, there is a downscaling of national authority and responsibilities to the sub-national scale yet without providing sufficient resources to fulfill these new responsibilities. Lastly, since 1970s, there has also been an increase in devolution of governmental authority and responsibilities on to non-state entities with civil society actors providing the backbone of refugee governance in Boa Vista. *I thus conceptualize dynamic spaces*

of refugee governance as the various horizontal and vertical relations within and between actors in time and space that results in devolution and upscaling of responsibilities within Operação Acolhida.

Background Literature

The literature that theorizes aid networks emerges primarily from the human supply chain management literature and the disaster management literature. The study of human supply chain management is unique due to an "absence of a strict chain of command, actors operating as loosely coupled systems, life and death vs. profit and loss as operating philosophy, lack of coherence and congeniality among the supply chain actors, independent donor behavior with varied mandates, high levels of uncertainty, shifting overall priorities etc." (John, 2018: 639). The disaster management literature ranges from the blurred division between the humanitarian logistics and humanitarian supply chains literatures, studies on intra- and inter-organizational practices, and an assortment of methodologies and framework that are used to study the actors, phases and logistical processes in disaster relief (Kovács and Tatham, 2010; Kovács and Spens, 2007). The bulk of this literature is found in practitioner rather than academic journals and is centered more on the temporally defined (pre vs. post) disaster relief rather than the continuous developmental aid work associated with migration management (Seifert, Kunz & Gold, 2018). Holguín-Veras et al. (2012) argue that the temporal factors of disaster response result in extremely different operation environments and short vs. long-term humanitarian assistance should be studied as separate operations. Nonetheless, due to the limited number of studies on inter-organization of humanitarian aid operations, literature on both short and long-term assistance will be considered.

I will begin by briefly reviewing some of the quantitative studies that have explored the role of actors and inter-organizational cooperation within the humanitarian aid context. Within the short-term disaster relief literature, Moore, Eng & Daniel (2003) use network analysis methods to evaluate the inter-organization coordination of the post-2000 Mozambique flood. They found that international NGOs played a central role within the coordination process with civil society actors playing a peripheral role and being primarily dependent on international NGOs. In the context of the 2015 Chennai floods, John et al. (2018) identify the diversity of actors and poor information sharing between agencies as the main impediments of disaster relief coordination. At a broader scale, Maghsoudi et al.'s (2018) comprehensive modeling of the performance of 101 humanitarian organizations finds that resource scarcity and duplication efforts significantly weaken coordination efforts, meanwhile, standardized frameworks and information systems significantly improve operational efficiency. While quantitative studies highlight the central role of international NGOs and can model the factors that impact or improve organizational coordination, qualitative case studies contextualize and complicate these trends.

Qualitative studies have explored inter-organizational cooperation and the role of actors within a range of case studies. Within the context of the post-2004 tsunami in Thailand, Tan-Mullins et al. (2007) study the changing politics of aid distribution and highlight the key role of NGOs as well as private groups and individuals in activating different types of networks that provided quicker, more direct aid to communities. This study argues that informal and non-state actors present a potentially more effective alternative to more centrally coordinated models of aid response. From a more bottom-up approach that centers on the political interrelations, Suleiman (1999) demonstrates the competition over authority within Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon where principal political and religious actors consolidate their positions within the

camps in order to negotiate with the Lebanese state to gain more power. From a comparative approach, Seybolt (2009) applies the business management literature to compare the 1994 humanitarian aid system in Rwanda with 2001 aid system in Afghanistan. The study found that while there is an increasing emergence of NGO consortiums and coordination, both case studies demonstrated distrust between humanitarian and military organizations as well as the active withholding of information between similar NGOs due to competing interests from the main large donors. Narang (2016) similarly notes that the strategic role and political interests of donors can largely determine both humanitarian assistance allocation and concerns. Overall, qualitative studies center the political within inter-organizational relations and highlight a range of actors (including donors) within coordination efforts.

Beyond the quantitative and qualitative studies, a range of theoretical frameworks have emerged in International Relations and the international organization literature for conceptualizing inter-organizational relations. Raustiala and Victor (2004) define the concept of *regime complex* as an "array of partially overlapping and non-hierarchical institutions governing a particular issue-area" (Raustiala and Victor, 2004: 279). Keohane and Victor (2011) broaden this definition by conceptualizing the regime complex as a loose set of specific regimes that falls in between integrated and fragmented institutional arrangements (Lipson, 2017: 70). Within principal agent theory, the concept of *delegation relationships* where a principal grants conditional authority to an agent has been applied to conceptualize the UN Security Council as a delegation by a collective principal (Hawkins et al., 2006; Nielson and Tierney, 2003). Hawkins et al. (2006) also notes the idea of multiple principles delegating to an agent as seen in the case of donor states funding projects that are implemented by development agencies. Organizational ecology conceives of inter-organizational cooperation as a response to resource competition

within an organizational environment of scarcity (Lipson, 2017; Abbott, 2016). It also explains that changes in the organizations that are involved is correlated to resource availability, legitimacy, and competition due to institutional density. Meanwhile, contingency theory argues that an organization's structure must be suited for its environment and the type of interdependence between organizations (pooled, sequential, reciprocal) can predict the type of coordination mechanisms adopted by the network (standardization, planning, mutual adjustment) (Donaldson, 199; Thompson, 1967). Lastly, networks serve as a less hierarchical manner of approaching inter-organizational cooperation by conceiving of organizational relations as less transactional and administrative, but rather engaging in relational, "reciprocal, preferential, mutually supportive actions" (Powell, 1990: 303). These networks shape power dynamics where one's centrality in the network along with one's relative dependence on resources shapes one's role within inter-organizational power relations (Hafner-Burton et al., 2009; Biermann, 2008). Ruggie (2014) adopts networks in his conceptualization of *transnational new governance,* which notes that the state cannot meet all societal challenges alone and thus engages with a range of actors in decentralized, less-hierarchical manners than previously theorized. Overall, inter-organizational cooperation theories have emerged from a range of disciplines and conceptualize the structure and dependency of these relations very differently.

Main Actors and their Roles in Operação Acolhida

Operação Acolhida consists of a variety of governmental actors, international and global agencies as well as civil society actors. This section aims to clarify some of the key actors' roles while also demonstrating the intricacies, partnerships and overlap within this network. In order to provide an overarching picture of the primary actors in each sector, please see **Tables 1-3** and

Figure 11 for a breakdown of the variety of actors and their roles. These tables demonstrate not only the wide range of secular and religious actors participating in this Operation but also the considerable levels of overlap between their roles. It is important to note that due to the structure of some international organizations that have somewhat separate branches of organizations, there is a certain level of overlap between the international and civil society sectors. This section will first explore the primary role of the Brazilian Armed Forces before highlighting the Operation's main international partners – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration. It will follow by highlighting one secular and one religious civil society organizations that play key roles within the management of the Operation's shelters. Lastly, an example will be given of a key religious organization that works closely with the Operation yet whose role is primarily outside of the shelters in order to provide a broader picture of the various efforts being undertaken within Boa Vista.

In February 2018, the Brazilian Federal Government officially announced Decree 9.285/2018 which recognized the need for humanitarian assistance due to the increasing Venezuelan migration flows to the State of Roraima. It also announced Decree 9.286/2018 which established the Federal Committee for Emergency Assistance comprising of 12 different ministries[4] and coordinated by the Presidential Civil House (Brazilian Federal Government). Following these decrees, a variety of measures, laws, ordinances and resolutions were passed to help establish the logistics of Operação Acolhida (see **Figure 12** for detailed outline of this process). The Federal Government designated the Armed Forces (Navy, Army, and Air Force) to provide the logistical support of infrastructure, transport, health, and administration for the Operation. This resulted in allocating an initial R$190 million to the Ministry of Defense in order

[4] These ministries include: Defense, Economy, Regional Development, Justice, Education, Health, Woman, Family and Human Rights, Citizenship, and the Institutional Security Office.

to administer the logistics of the Operation as well as multiple large lumpsums since then (see **Figure 12**). Beginning in January 2019, Decree 9.970/2019 formalized the second phase of Operação Acolhida which shifted the focus from emergency assistance to socioeconomic inclusion through increased prioritization of access to documentation and internalization of migrants and asylum seekers (Ibid). While the Brazilian Federal Government has provided the official guidelines and significant funds to the Operation, UN agencies and civil societies have provided a substantial amount of support for the Operation as well. Due to the Ministry of Defense/ Armed Forces central role in the Operation, I will begin by looking at this governmental actor's role before highlighting the roles of key international aid and civil society organizations.

The Ministry of Defense coordinates the logistical operations and distributing funds for Operação Acolhida within the State of Roraima. On March 1st, 2018 the Armed Forces Joint Chief of Staff assigned the Brazilian Army to establish the Humanitarian Logistical Task Force for the state of Roraima (Kanaan et al., 2018: 68). The overarching objectives of the Task Force are border management, sheltering, and relocation of refugees. At a local scale, the Brazilian Army is tasked with: supporting transportation logistics, the preparation and distribution of food, health logistics, immunization, construction/recuperation/expansion of shelters, and supporting the process of relocation and identification of refugees (Ibid). All these tasks have been coordinated and implemented in cooperation with the UNHCR, various humanitarian aid organizations, and social service agencies. In the border town of Pacaraima, the Army established posts to receive and sort refugees as well as provide temporary medical and social support. In Boa Vista, the Army established a second Posto de Triagem (Screening Post) that hosts a variety of services for refugees including: documentation services (CPF, applying for

temporary residency and asylum), vaccination, free international calls, childcare, protective services for women, and professionalization opportunities (Ibid). The Army has also aided in expanding and improving shelters as well as services at the international airport and bus terminal. Most notably, Brazilian Army engineers remodeled and helped build 13 shelters to house these incoming refugees (Kanaan et al., 2018). Overall, the Armed Forces has been tasked with organizing the logistics of Operação Acolhida as well as hosting and supporting international aid agencies in addressing this humanitarian emergency.

The **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** opened offices in Pacaraima and Boa Vista in June 2018 and September 2018 respectively in response to the influx of Venezuelan refugees entering the north of Brazil. Both offices are based at the Posto de Triagem (PTRIG- Screening Centers) which are owned and run by the Brazilian government. In Boa Vista's PTRIG, the UNHCR has three different rooms: the protection room, the registration room, and the sheltering room. In the protection room, people receive help filling out asylum application forms as well as have the opportunity to speak with personnel if they have a more sensitive or vulnerable case. In the registration room, refugees provide their personal information to be inputted into UNHCR's database system known as Progress. While the protocol has shifted over time, the UNHCR primarily registers people who were either being sheltered by UNHCR and/or who were going to be interiorized to somewhere else in Brazil. Lastly, the sheltering room is where they would issue shelter ID cards and fill out paperwork to share with implementing partners that worked directly at the shelters. Beyond the more administrative roles, the UNHCR also operates 13 shelters in Boa Vista in conjunction with its implementing partners that can accommodate over 6,000 people (Egas, 2018: 33). Nonetheless, this has not been sufficient space and the UNHCR has also played a key role in administering the logistics for relocating refugees

to other cities and jobs in Brazil. Within the interiorization process, UNHCR is responsible for the shelter-to-shelter program that relocates refugees to other UNHCR-affiliated shelters throughout Brazil (Interview 2). Overall, UNHCR's primary tasks include: monitoring the border, legal assistance, registration, protecting, emergency sheltering, and interiorizing refugees.

The **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** is another key actor in Operação Acolhida that is tasked with the reception and documentation of refugees for temporary residency, aiding in the interiorization process as well as in initiatives for human trafficking prevention. IOM's national Brazilian office is located in Brasília. In August 2017, a field office was established in Boa Vista with an attending post in the border town of Pacaraima. Within the entire State of Roraima, IOM has a team of over 100 workers and collaborators that aid in regularizing the incoming Venezuelans' status at the border as well as coordinating and documenting these refugees upon arrival in Boa Vista (IOM UN Migration, 2021). While the UNHCR administers those seeking asylum, the IOM is tasked with administering those applying for temporary residency. The primary differences between these two regulatory processes are that one needs a form of identification to apply for temporary residency. Temporary residency lasts two years with the possibility to renew and allows for flexibility to move around and return to Venezuela. Meanwhile, those seeking asylum do not need any form of identification, and if accepted, are not allowed to return to Venezuela. While there is overlap between the roles of IOM and UNHCR, the organizations appeared to be working primarily separately rather than collaboratively (Interview 2). Within the interiorization process, while the UNHCR administers the shelter-to-shelter process, IOM administers the family and social reunification process (Ibid). This process consists of verifying the documentation and capacity to host of beneficiaries,

coordinating flights, ensuring sufficient resources for those relocating to more remote areas, and coordinating access to resources during the move and upon arrival (such as enrolling children into school systems). At a smaller scale, the IOM also participates in a variety of local initiatives including: supporting social and civil services, creating a network to prevent human trafficking, and providing professionalization courses for refugees (Otero et al., 2018: 42). Overall, IOM plays a key role as a counterpart to the UNHCR in aiding in the technical, logistical, and financial aspects of receiving refugees in Roraima and relocating them to other parts of Brazil. I will now turn to two of the major supporting civil society organizations that aid in managing the UNHCR shelters.

The **International Humanitarian Federation Fraternidade (FFHI**) is a partner organization of the UNHCR and has played a crucial supporting role in Operação Acolhida. FFHI is a Christian (The Grace Mercy Order) non-profit civil association that is active in 18 countries with its world headquarters located in Carmo da Cachoeira, Minas Gerais, Brazil. According to their website, they established their permanent mission in Roraima in November 2016 which has centered on managing 5 shelters (1 in Pacaraima and 4 in Boa Vista) (FFHI, 2021). FFHI manages the two Indigenous shelters (Janokoida in Pacaraima and Pintolândia in Boa Vista), the family Nova Canãa shelter, the Tancredo Neves shelter (single individuals, couples without children, LGBTQ), and lastly, the non-UNHCR House of Sheltering (single women with or without children, vulnerable LGBTQ). Since July 2018, FFHI has partnered with UNICEF to implement intercultural education in the Indigenous shelters (Ibid). This project has since been expanded to include access to education for all Venezuelan children in shelters with the aim of preparing these children to enter the Brazilian public education system. FFHI's website primarily centers on showcasing in multiple languages the organization's successes

through images of events while targeting potential donors. Most notably, the site specifically identifies the impact that donations will have on the mission. Overall, FFHI has played a key role in managing and maintaining different logistical operations within UNHCR and state shelters as well as expanding access to education for refugee children.

The **Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI)** is a secular non-profit organization that focuses on development and humanitarian aid projects. This NGO was recognized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1973 and since has expanded to 33 countries (AVSI Brasil, 2020). AVSI Brasil, the Brazilian chapter of the organization, is headquartered in Salvador, Bahia with current offices and projects being developed in seven different cities and states in Brazil. AVSI has been partnered with the UNHCR and Operação Acolhida since June 2018. Their primary role has been managing shelters in Boa Vista (São Vicente, Rondon 1, Rondon 3) with a staff of 32 professionals and 12 interns and currently aid approximately 2800 Venezuelan refugees (AVSI Brasil, 2021b). Since September 2019, AVSI Brasil has partnered with IMDH, AVSI Foundation and AVSI-USA to aid and increase access to formal jobs for refugees both in Roraima as well as through the interiorization process (AVSI Brasil, 2021a). More specifically, AVSI has aided in negotiating contracts with companies to hire Venezuelans as well as provided initial help with locating apartments, accessing food and hygiene products to ease the move to their new cities. In conjunction with this process, they have been offering professionalization courses such as Portuguese language course and work specialization and certification programs in order to boost these refugees resumes. Overall, AVSI plays a crucial role managing a significant portion of the UNHCR shelters as well as working in partnership with various other actors to aid in the work interiorization initiatives.

Cáritas has played an integral role as a civil society actor within Operação Acolhida. Caritas Internationalis is the overarching Catholic confederation that has over 160 members throughout the world aimed at coordinating emergency operations and long-term development policies. The organization was originally founded in Germany in 1897 and its current headquarters is in Rome. Cáritas Brasileira, the Brazilian member of this international organization, was founded in 1956 with 18 current projects throughout the country. Within the context of Boa Vista, the emergency initiatives began in June 2018 with an emphasis on providing food assistance cards to more vulnerable Venezuelans living on the street. In December 2018, they expanded to provide sheltering services through their Church network as well as initiated Project Pana to aid with the interiorization process. Project Pana is an initiative developed in conjunction with the Swiss Caritas with financial support from the United States that provides a network of houses in 100 cities to aid in the relocation process (Cáritas Brasileira, 2021). Beyond this project, Caritas has worked with religious partnerships to aid in relocating refugees to the network of over 200 dioceses throughout the country. The Caritas Center in Boa Vista offers a variety of health and psychosocial services as well as legal and administrative information for refugees. Cáritas general role within the situation in Boa Vista is aiding and providing services for refugees that are primarily unhoused and living in precarious situations. Their press releases highlight initiatives such as building bathrooms for the unhoused, sheltering and relocating Indigenous refugees that were camping outside the bus station as well as distributing hygiene kits (Melo, 2021). Thus, while Caritas coordinates and works in partnership with a variety of actors, their efforts have been targeting those who are not receiving the standard shelter aid of Operação Acolhida and are primarily living on the street.

This section delineated some of the key actors involved in Operação Acolhida. While the Armed Forces are logistically in charge of running the Operation, UNHCR and IOM are the main actors operating the sheltering and interiorization processes. Within the shelters, FFHI and AVSI are key operational actors, meanwhile, Cáritas provides a similar role for those not in the UNHCR shelters. While each actor has a general field that they focus on, they all play a role in the sheltering and interiorization processes. Nonetheless, not all these actors are actively in charge of making decisions. The next section will explore the scales of operation and chains of command within Operação Acolhida.

The Shifting Responsibilities in Operação Acolhida

Aid workers and academics have expressed a range of critiques and analyses on the management and coordination of Operação Acolhida. These critiques center around two main questions: (1) **Who should be in charge of Operação Acolhida? (2) Why are certain actors making Operation decisions and others are not?**

In order to explore these questions, I will first look at the Brazilian Armed Forces central role in the Operation and the implications and inner contentions of this militarized approach to migration management. I will follow by delving into the intricacies surrounding at what scale decisions are being made both within the UNHCR and IOM as well as the overlap between actors. This section aims to highlight the international and national decision-making dynamics that all contribute to the dynamic spaces of refugee governance.

In February of 2018, the Temer government (Aug. 2016- Dec 2018, succeeded Dilma Rousseff's impeachment) created the Federal Committee for Emergency Responses to lead the response to the increased migration of Venezuelans to Brazil and assigned the Ministry of

Defense to oversee this response. Various organizations and academics criticized the decision to make the Ministry of Defense the gatekeepers of the Operation. Juana Kweitel, the executive director of the Brazilian non-profit human rights organization Conectas Direitos Humanos wrote an exposé along with her colleague Pablo Ceriani arguing for a shift in which branch of the government is in charge of the Operation:

> *Militarizar a resposta humanitária à chegada de migrantes e refugiados vai na contramão do que a Nova Lei de Migração (Lei 13.445/17) preconiza. Nada nas normas anteriores dá as bases para que seja o Ministério da Defesa quem assuma a liderança na gestão da resposta humanitária que tem mais relação com as funções dos ministérios de Justiça, Desenvolvimento Social e Saúde. (Kweitel and Ceriani, 2018)*
> "Militarizing the humanitarian response to the arrival of migrants and refugees goes against the grain of the New Migration Law (Law 13.445 / 17). Nothing in the previous rules provides the basis for the Ministry of Defense to take the lead in managing the humanitarian response that is most related to the functions of the Ministries of Justice, Social Development and Health."

Kweitel and Ceriani object to the Ministry of Defense's central role and support decentralizing this militarized approach through suggesting that other Ministries and civil public agencies are better suited for the role. They argue that a militarized humanitarian response does not provide sufficient accountability due to the lack of both independent supervision and mechanisms to denounce human rights abuses. Similarly, Dr. Daniel Francisco Nagao Menezes, a law professor at Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie, and Dr. Vania Bogado de Souza di Raimo, a Mercosul lawyer, analyze the implication of this militarized humanitarian response. They highlight the lesser degree of responsibility and accountability taken by military personnel:

> *Em muitos casos, os abusos são tratados como questões disciplinares e os infratores enfrentam tribunais militares em vez de tribunais civis. De fato, uma nova lei assinada em dezembro de 2017 permite que militares sejam julgados por um tribunal militar (que não tem independência judicial), mesmo que graves violações dos direitos humanos, como execuções extrajudiciais. Considerando o já vulnerável status dos migrantes venezuelanos, as Forças Armadas encarregadas de responder à crise poderiam criar um ambiente de impunidade para quaisquer violações dos direitos desses migrantes. (Menezes and di Raimo, 2018: 238-239)*

> "In many cases, abuses are treated as disciplinary issues and offenders face military courts instead of civil courts. In fact, a new law signed in December 2017 allows military personnel to be tried by a military court (which does not have judicial independence), even if concerns serious human rights violations, such as extrajudicial executions. Considering the already vulnerable status of Venezuelan migrants, the Armed Forces being charged with responding to the crisis could create an environment of impunity for any violations of the rights of these migrants."

As Menezes and di Raimo explain, similar to the United States' courts-martial, Brazil has separate military courts that govern cases related to military personnel. Due to these extra-judicial privileges, military personnel do not necessarily face the level of consequences as civilians in Brazil. Menezes and di Raimo argue that these special privileges could be a concern for the military treatment and/or immunity to take advantage of vulnerable Venezuelan refugees. Due to the transitory nature of both the Venezuelan refugees as well as the Armed Forces in Boa Vista (military personnel are stationed in Boa Vista for three-month periods before being rotated out), this could potentially dissuade officials from dealing with any infractions or issues in relation to the treatment of refugees by military personnel. Despite this pushback, military-humanitarian cooperation is a standard relationship within the humanitarian management supply chain.

Academics have theorized regarding the relationship between the military and humanitarian assistance. Barber (2013) notes that military humanitarian assistance is typically an integrated part of the tasks and training undertaken by military personnel. She identifies security, protection, distribution and engineering as some of the main roles of the military in relief supply chains. From a legal perspective, Baarda (2001) adopts the UNHCR three-rung ladder of soft (local law enforcement) to hard (military deployment) cooperation and enforcement to theorize on military-humanitarian cooperation. Within his matrix, Baarda argues that the military has positive coordination with the United Nations system although UNHCR endeavors tend to fall

under the concerted action category. He categorizes concerted action as when "a common policy and programme take the place of the individual policies and programmes of the individual organizations" with a formalized position and command of authority for the leading organization (Baarda, 2011: 109). In this case, it could be argued that the common program of Operação Acolhida replaces the typical duties of the military and serves as the common policy for the Brazilian Army. Nonetheless, this concerted action structure is replicated once more where the UNHCR and IOM adopt the common program of Operação Acolhida as established by the Army and then serve as the formal leading organizations within the realms of intaking, sheltering and interiorizing refugees. Thus, the assigned tasks of the Brazilian Army, the UNHCR, and IOM could be conceived of as positive cooperation through concerted action within Baarda's framework. Other academics have characterized the UN coordination within humanitarian civil military coordination as a situation of coexistence where the minimum necessary information (such as security, aid movement and shared resources) is shared between actors (De Conning, 2007; Rietjens et al., 2007). While the literature delineates the historical presence and range of coordination within military-humanitarian cooperation, a variety of coordination challenges have been identified.

Studies have identified some barriers and factors that impact military-humanitarian cooperation. Philosophically, NGOs tend to be uncomfortable with the military yet still work effectively with these actors (Listou, 2011; Rutner et al., 2012). At the same time, relief organizations tend to rely on the military for security operations (Cross, 2012). Structurally, military logistics operations tend to be well-defined with clear leadership. Nonetheless, this structure has been recently re-evaluated within humanitarian operations with a shift towards a flattening structure with a more decentralized process (Akhtar et al, 2012). This decentralizing

structure has demonstrated more flexibility for organizations to adapt to the ever-changing environment (Bjornstad, 2011; Rutner et al., 2012). This flattening and decentralizing of military coordination emerge within the context of Operação Acolhida.

The debate regarding the militarization of Operação Acolhida is further complicated by the Ministry of Defense's recent successful attempt to withdraw the Armed Forces and diminish their responsibilities within Operação Acolhida. In December 2020, O Estado de São Paulo, one of the largest Brazilian newspapers, published an article highlighting that the General Officers of the Armed Forces and Ministry of Defense have been internally protesting to reduce the number of troops involved in the Operation while also expressing the desire to withdraw completely from their duties in the Operation (Frazão 2020). The Armed Forces' discontent with their role further increased during the COVID-19 pandemic partially due to the Pacaraima border closure from March 2020- June 2021. As O Estado de São Paulo reports:

> *"Nos bastidores, militares afirmam que a operação deve se concentrar mais na interiorização dos imigrantes para desafogar a região Norte, menos estruturada – e que o Ministério da Cidadania, que cuida dessa estratégia e tenta encontrar empregos e elos familiares bem como abrigo no destino aos venezuelanos por todo o País, deveria assumir mais protagonismo. (Frazão 2020)"*
> "Behind the scenes, military officials say the operation should focus more on internalizing immigrants to relieve the less structured North region - and that the Ministry of Citizenship, which takes care of this strategy and tries to find jobs and family links as well as shelter for Venezuelans throughout the country should take on more prominence."

The military's attempts to decentralize responsibilities on to other branches of the Brazilian government exemplifies how some actors attempt to redefine the parameters of their role in the Operation. Through emphasizing the shifts in needs since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Armed Forces use this temporal change as justification to shift responsibilities on to the Ministry of Citizenship (and by default, more tasks are delegated to the UNHCR and IOM as well). Attempts to reduce responsibilities by setting parameters to one's

assigned tasks emerges as a key trend of Brazilian governmental actors (as will be discussed further in Chapter 3).

Shifting accountability and responsibilities have led to the overarching question: who should be in charge and be making decisions within Operação Acolhida? The rest of this section will explore the vertical and horizontal devolution of responsibilities within the Operation. International Relations professors Dr. Gustavo da Frota Simões and Dr. Rafael Rocha from the Universidade Federal de Roraima (UFRR) expand on this question of scale by arguing that:

> *"A hipótese levantada é que as ações e políticas da governança migratória em Roraima seguem um movimento top-down, no qual atores globais influenciaram as ações de agentes locais, governamentais e da sociedade civil (Simões and Rocha, 2018: 79)."*
> "The hypothesis raised is that the actions and policies of migratory governance in Roraima follow *a top-down* movement, in which global actors influenced the actions of local, governmental and civil society agents."

These academics suggest that the UN and international aid organizations play a vertical hierarchical role within Operação Acolhida. Nonetheless I argue that the UNHCR embodies both vertical and horizontal scalar relationships. The Ministry of Defense has attempted to horizontally shift the bulk of their duties on to both the Ministry of Citizenship as well as the UNHCR. At the same time, as Simões and Rocha identify, vertical hierarchies emerge *within* the structures of UN organizations. An aid worker in Boa Vista expands on this dynamic in greater detail:

> "Generally, in UN organizations, international people usually have higher positions because once you become an international, you've worked in a bunch of different settings, and you just have more experience so you can better make decisions. I think sometimes it's kind of rough when you have a bunch of national staff who know the context much better, have been there for many years, but then an international person arrives, and then they're the ones making decisions… But then in general, all the decisions are being made by the representative in Brasília."

This aid worker highlights the top-down dynamics within the UN in Brazil. This vertical hierarchy is highly determined by one's scale of experience which prioritizes international experience over local expertise. In Boa Vista, both international staff and the representative in Brasília command the operations despite their lack of knowledge of the local context reaffirming this vertical hierarchy. Drs. Simões and Rocha emphasize this statement by describing the impact that UNHCR had after they installed a permanent base at UFRR in 2017 (since then they have moved out of the university to the government building of SETRABRES).

> *A ideia é de que as políticas de gestão de crise são elaboradas pelas agências internacionais em suas sedes (notadamente o ACNUR, em Genebra) e implementadas não só pelos escritórios locais, mas também por atores governamentais e pela sociedade civil (Simões and Rocha, 2018: 85)."*
> "The idea is that crisis management policies are developed by international agencies at their headquarters (notably UNHCR in Geneva) and implemented not only by local offices, but also by government actors and civil society."

This statement highlights and critiques the UNHCR's political clout as well as the vertical hierarchy that privileges international expertise from Western headquarters above on-the-ground local expertise. This dynamic exemplifies Paris' (2003:443) concept of *global culture* where, "the design and conduct of peacekeeping mission reflect not only the interest of key parties and perceived lessons of previous operations, but also the prevailing norms of global culture, which legitimize certain kinds of peacekeeping policies and delegitimize others." Although Paris theorizes within the context of peacekeeping missions, the legitimizing of a global culture with certain normative policies and hierarchies emerges as a structural strategy of the UN rather than a specific attribute of the UNHCR's role in Boa Vista. The extent of this international normative environment that Simões and Rocha identify can be seen in the tasks and involvement of the Brazilian Federal Public Defender (DPU- Defensoria Pública da União, for more information on DPU's role see **Table 1**). Roberta Pires Alvim, a Brazilian Federal Public

Defender, explains that DPU has been involved in interagency communication through events like this one:

> *"...a Defensoria Pública da União (DPU) participou do painel "Os direitos humanos dos migrantes e refugiados em Roraima, Brasil", realizado em Genebra, na Suíça. O evento ocorreu em paralelo à 35 Sessão do Conselho de Direitos Humanos da Organização das Nações Unidas (ONU) (Alvim, 2018: 88)."*
> "...the Federal Public Defender's Office (DPU) participated in the panel "The Human Rights of Migrants and Refugees in Roraima, Brazil", held in Geneva, Switzerland. The event took place in parallel to the 35th Session of the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council."

DPU's participation in the UN conference in Geneva legitimizes this global culture while reaffirming the authority of both the UN as well as the Global North within Operação Acolhida. Their participation evokes critiques of whether Brazilian governmental actors should be participating in panels abroad rather than channeling those resources towards the on-the-ground situation. While at the federal level the Brazilian government conforms to the global culture of the UN's mandate, at the local level, the Brazilian government attempts to upscale responsibilities. Drs. Simões and Rocha highlight the relationship between Brazilian governmental actors' roles in Roraima:

> *"Os atores governamentais locais têm participado de forma bastante diferenciada e pouco assertiva em relação aos processos de governança da crise migratória. De forma geral, o governo do Estado de Roraima, desde o início da crise, tem buscado judicializar a questão, na tentativa de transferir a responsabilidade ao Governo Federal. Já o poder municipal, especialmente da capital Boa Vista, tem se mostrado antagônico aos imigrantes e muito ausente das discussões e das respostas (Simões and Rocha, 2018: 80)."*
> "Local governmental actors have participated in a highly indifferent and minimally assertive way in relation to the governance processes of the migration crisis. In general, the government of the State of Roraima, since the beginning of the crisis, has sought to judicialize the issue, in an attempt to transfer the responsibility to the Federal Government. Municipal power, especially in the capital Boa Vista, has shown itself to be antagonistic to immigrants and very absent from discussions and responses."

This quote demonstrates how the local governmental actors in Boa Vista have attempted upscale responsibilities on to the federal government. This dynamic underscore a struggle of ever-shifting responsibility between federal and local governmental actors. Neo-institutional organizational sociology conceptualizes this dynamic as the material and social pressures of organizations which can lead to conflict (Lipson, 2017). This theory explains the formation of modern organizations as driven by social expectations rather than efficient operation. When "the standards of organizational legitimacy to which an organization must conform are inconsistent with its requirements for operational efficiency or performance of technical tasks, the organization will tend to 'decouple' symbolism (rhetoric or, often, structure) from operational conduct" (Lipson, 2017: 78). Thus, in this context, the local Roraimense governmental actors decouple the coordination responsibilities imposed on them by prioritizing the social pressures of representing their local non-refugee constituents. Nevertheless, one can also argue that the Brazilian federal governmental actors are similarly decoupling their responsibilities which has resulted in failed governmental inter-organization coordination.

Immigration in Brazil is primarily dealt with at the federal scale where the Polícia Federal oversees all im/migration control and documentation. Roraima's local governmental actors' minimal interest and intervention within Operação Acolhida could be attributed to this among a variety of other factors including: the State of Roraima's right-leaning government that is anti-immigration and has been fighting to shut the border, lack of funding historically as well as currently in relation to the increase in population in the region, and Roraima's weak social infrastructure- especially in relation to schools and health care services that cannot handle the current (and increasing) population. The flipside of shifting all responsibility to the federal governmental actors results in this top-down *global culture* approach to migration governance

where most of the decisions are being made internationally rather than in Boa Vista itself. Thus, the struggles between devolution and upscaling results in the shifting of responsibilities to non-state entities who adopt top-down global standards. In this case, the local Roraimense government rejects the devolution of responsibilities from federal branches due to both the local socio-political climate and the lack of resources resulting in an upscaling of responsibilities by international NGOs. In turn, these international NGOs implement international standards rather than participating in more on-the-ground inclusive measures creating a transnational hierarchical relationship within Boa Vista's dynamic spaces of refugee governance. The scalar disconnects between those that are making the Operation's decisions and the on-the-ground implementation will be revisited in following chapter through analyzing vulnerability metrics. While the Brazilian military has attempted to decentralize and horizontalize coordination, the UNHCR has played a transnational hierarchical role within Operação Acolhida. Beyond the governmental-humanitarian cooperation, NGO-NGO relations further complicates these dynamic spaces of refugee governance due to the lack of communication.

Lack of Communication and Overlap of Roles

The previous section demonstrated the hierarchical decision-making role of international aid organizations and the devolution of responsibilities between governmental actors within Operação Acolhida. This section now turns to the dynamics between international aid and civil society actors to demonstrate how devolution of responsibilities can be due to the lack of coordination and communication between these actors. As mentioned previously, **Table 2-4** provide an in-depth breakdown of the variety of international and civil society actors and their roles within the Operation. According to a UNHCR-funded study done in July 2019, most

Venezuelans were receiving aid primarily from NGOs followed by support from the UN and Church groups (for a more in-depth breakdown see **Figure 13**). Thus, NGO initiatives play a key role in supporting the Operation. Generally, aid workers were unable to clearly delineate their roles from other organizations and many times were not well versed in what other organizations did. Many civil society actors work somewhat independently from Operação Acolhida but will occasionally partner with or reach out to UNHCR/IOM when they need support or are donating items. Nonetheless, inter-organizational overlap and lack of coordination emerges between the two main international aid organizations. As one aid worker describes,

> "So with interiorization it kind of feels like both organizations [UNHCR and IOM] are trying to be in control of how it's going. But in the end, the communication isn't that great between the two. I'm not sure exactly what they would do at the IOM table but I feel like they would be collecting some of the same information that we would be collecting. But then they were responsible for certain things such as giving people the information about the city that they were going to and then we would just be responsible for the registration in our system. So in interiorization, there's a big overlap in a way… IOM deals with family reunification and social reunification... the shelter to shelter is UNHCR's responsibility." (Interview 2)

Despite working in proximity, this aid worker admits to not always understanding the divisions of labor between the IOM and UNHCR. The aid worker later shares that whenever a UN aid worker does not know the answer to a refugees' question, they simply send them to the IOM in hopes that the other organization can answer it. Thus, devolution can occur in circumstances where an actor relies on the unknown of other organizations' roles to fill in the gaps. Notably, despite the overlap and lack of full knowledge of different actors' roles, this aid worker demonstrates a certain level of understanding and cooperation between the UNHCR and IOM. Each organization oversees a specific application procedure (asylum for UNHCR and temporary residency for IOM) as well as specific types of interiorization (shelter-to-shelter for UNHCR and family/social reunification for IOM). In sum, there is both uncertainty and a level

of organization within the UNHCR and IOM relations. Another aid worker further elucidates this negotiating coordination:

> "Donors put aid agencies in a competitive mode and given the fact that this is a non-traditional scenario in terms of coordination, the fact that the Secretary General has allocated both [UNCHR and IOM] as the lead agencies provides difficulty sometimes in coordination. Now we are coordinating quite well. At times we have different positions, but we try to reach consensus most of the time. I think in the beginning this was a big task because UNHCR should have the coordination role. The Secretary General decided to have a joint coordination and you need to accommodate for that. So… this is not a typical coordination model." (Interview 3)

This quote captures both the scalar negotiations of abiding by hierarchical chains of command while noting the external pressures of funding. Thus, while aid organizations compete for donors and funding opportunities, this unusual coordination between the IOM and UNHCR challenges typical models and relationships. Nonetheless, this adapted cooperation model does not necessarily exist between other actors. The lack of coordination between actors is highlighted in the situation between Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the IOM:

> "When we started doing these mobile clinics, IOM came in and was also doing these mobile clinics. So then MSF backed away because they were like if IOM is doing it, let's let them do it. MSF was like we're not going to spend our funding on something that there's another organization doing. It was weird, because that was such a big failure. How are these organizations so not in communication that you have different organizations doing the same thing?! MSF didn't know that IOM was going to start doing these mobile clinics and then also started doing them. So yes, they're in communication, but also not that much." (Interview 2)

This situation demonstrates the lack of communication and the resulting overlap in programming that also exists within Operação Acolhida. Overlap occurs when "the functional scope of one regime protrudes into the functional scope of others" (Rosendal, 2001: 96). In this case, it resulted in MSF shifting from providing mobile clinics to simply providing resources so that unhoused Venezuelans knew where they can access public health services. Thus, the lack of communication between actors at times results in unintentional devolution and adaptation of

tasks within the Operation. These ever-rotating roles are also reinforced in **Table 4** which observes the changes in actors' roles within the logistical operation of some of UNHCR's shelters in Boa Vista. These charts highlight the temporality of shelter logistics and operations where one can observe monthly transitions in leadership of different shelter logistics. Overall, the limited coordination and communication between international aid and civil society actors results in both intentional and unintentional devolution of responsibilities that reflects the uncertainty and transitory nature of this humanitarian crisis.

Conclusion

This chapter provided context on the shifting scalar relationships that comprise the dynamic spaces of refugee governance within Operação Acolhida. I first provided context on the humanitarian supply chain management literature as well as theoretical frameworks on inter-organizational relations. I then delineated the key actors working within the sheltering and interiorization processes in Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil. Through exploring the question of decision-making within Operação Acolhida, I demonstrate the manners in which Brazilian governmental actors have vertically and horizontally decentralized responsibilities onto other branches and/or actors. At the same time, I explore the transnational vertical relations within the UNHCR that promotes a global culture of adopting standards from the Global North (which will be further explored in Chapter 2). Lastly, I highlight the intentional and unintentional devolution of responsibilities that occurs between international aid organizations and civil society actors due to limited coordination and communication. The range of horizontal and vertical relations within this network highlights the role of temporality, politics, and constant adaptation that characterizes the transitory state of both the Venezuelan refugees and the Operation itself.

TABLES

Table 1: Governmental Actors in Operação Acolhida

Name of Actor	Translation of Actor's Name	Role of Actor	Acronym of Actor
Ministério da Justiça	Ministry of Justice	Responsible for control and migratory regularization through the Federal Police, responsible for assessment of refugee applications with CONARE (National Committee for Refugees)	MJ
Polícia Federal	Federal Police	Migration control and documentation	PF
Ministério da Defesa	Ministry of Defense	Coordinates all logistical action of Operation in RR state: ordering, reception and internalization	MD
Forças Armadas/ Exército Brasileiro	Armed Forces/ Brazilian Military	Provides all logistical support, infrastructure, transport, health, and administration for the Operation (Chaves, 2018)	FA
Ministério da Educação	Ministry of Education	Coordinates and promotes educational initiatives at the border and in shelters, works in coordination with UNICEF	MEd
Ministério da Cidadania	Ministry of Citizenship	Manages refugee shelters in RR in coordination with UNHCR, coordinates internalization process and provides professionalization support for refugees	MC
Ministério das Relações Exteriores	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Assists in all affairs related to relations with Venezuelan refugees and their regularization process, responsible for relationship with all int'l bodies involved in OA	MRE
Ministério da Economia	Ministry of Economy	Promotes access to work, works in conjunction with the Ministry of Citizenship to aid in providing work authorization card to refugees	ME
Ministério da Saúde	Ministry of Health	Health promotion, control of outbreaks and epidemics, works w/ Federal gov to ensure adequate response to health care	MS
Ministério Público do Trabalho	Ministry of Work	Combating xenophobia, work discrimination, human trafficking and eliminating slave labor/ precarious work situations (Zuben et al., 2018)	MPT
Ministério da Mulher, Família e Direitos Humanos	Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights	Helps protect human rights for families and children, aids in interiorization process in conjunction with religious and civil society organizations	MDH

Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social	Ministry of Social Development	Technical support and social assistance to the Federal Public Defender's Office, in conjunction with UNHCR provides technical support for the planning and management of locations that are being converted into shelters (Mattos, 2018), analyzes vulnerability	MDS
Defensoria Pública da União	Federal Public Defender's Office	Legal representation/ protection and analysis of separated, unaccompanied and undocumented children and adolescents; monitoring migratory control to prevent rejection/repatriation/ inadmissibility; legal guidance on visa options; guaranteeing access to basic rights in Pacaraima, general legal support and interagency communication (Chaves, 2018)	DPU
Agência Nacional de Vigilância Sanitária	Brazilian National Health Surveillance Agency	sanitary control	ANVISA

Table 2: International Agencies in Operação Acolhida

Name of Actor	Translation of Actor's Name	Role of Actor	Acronym of Actor
Organização Internacional para as Migrações (OIM)	International Organization for Migration	Intake, registration, and documentation for temporary residency), human trafficking prevention, family and social reunification interiorization process	IOM
Agência dos Estados Unidos para o Desenvolvimento Internacional/ Escritorio de Assistencia a Desastres no Exterior dos EUA	United States Agency for International Development/ Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance	Partnered with ADRA to provide food vouchers to Venezuelans in 6 Brazilian states including RR, provides funding for vaccination/ hygiene/ sanitation/ emergency health care and medical supplies (USAID, 2020)	USAID/ OFDA
Fundo de População das Nações Unidas (UNFPA)	United Nations Fund for Population Activities	Management of vulnerable flows (HIV +, LGBTQ and others)	UNFPA
Fundo das Nações Unidas para a Infância (UNICEF)	United Nations Children's Fund	Partnered support for children and adolescences in areas of health, nutrition,	UNICEF

		WASH, education, protection and communication (UNICEF)	

Table 3: Civil Society Actors in Operação Acolhida

Name of Actor	Translation of Actor's Name	Role of Actor	Acronym of Actor
Centro de Migração e Direitos Humanos (Diocese de Roraima)	Center for Migration and Human Rights of the Diocese of Roraima	Religious, reference center that is hosted by UFRR, provides aid for work permits, asylum and temp residency apps, offers translation/Port language, capoeira courses, hosts Télécoms Sans Frontières (G1 RR, 2018)	CMDH
Serviço Jesuíta para Migrantes e Refugiados	Jesuit Service for Migrants and Refugees	Religious, Aids in regularization of papers, through their network shelters and interiorizes refugees, professionalization and languages courses, direct food/ resource aid in BV	Jesuíta
Fraternidade-Federação Humanitária Internacional	International Humanitarian Federation	Religious, manage 5 shelters (4 UNHCR, 1 state), created and expanded interculture education programs both in Indigenous and non-Indigenous shelters for Venezuelan children	FFHI
Fraternidade Sem Fronteiras	Fraternity Without Borders	Religious, Brazil Project- created their own shelter that provides food, educational and health resources, port classes, aids in interiorizing through their network	Fraternidade
Associação de Voluntários para o Serviço Internacional-Itália (AVSI)	Association of Volunteers in International Service	Secular, manages 4 of the UNHCR shelters in Boa Vista, aids in interiorization process- negotiates contracts w/ companies, professionalization courses	AVSI
Comitê Internacional da Cruz Vermelha	International Committee of the Red Cross	Secular, access to internet and free calls, aids in locating separated/lost/ endangered loved ones, confidential support, donated key hygiene products during COVID, works w/ gov actors to increase access to water and basic health (Pinto, 2020)	ICRC
Cruz Vermelha Brasileira	Brazilian Red Cross	Secular, donated food, medication and hygiene supplies (Melo, 2020)	CVB
Médicos Sem Fronteiras	Doctors Without Borders/ Médecins	Secular, initially a mental health project, expanded to mobile clinics that visited squats run by MSF doctors and nurses, shifted to providing info to integrate ppl into BV's	MSF

	Sans Frontières	public health system, awareness campaigns and distribution of hygiene kits during COVID	
Universidade Federal de Roraima	Federal University of Roraima	Hosts/hosted the offices for agencies (UNHCR, IOM, UNFPA, UNICEF); hosts CMDH; created a research group w/ UN agencies and IOM in conjunction w/ IR and Sociology students to study the situation in BV/RR	UFRR
Agência Adventista de Desenvolvimento e Recursos Assistenciais	Adventist Development and Relief Agency	Religious- 7th Day Adventists, works with USAID to provide food vouchers, provides hot meals and hosts local community kitchens in RR, provides nutrition courses and pamphlets in BV[5]	ADRA
Visão Mundial	World Vision	Religious, cash transfers and food aid (Reid, 2020); during COVID distribution tenderness boxes, hygiene kits and educational COVID materials (Lopes, 2020)	VM
Instituto de Migrações e Direitos Humanos	Institute of Migration and Human Rights	Secular, Works w/ all actors to guarantee shelter, identifies issues and provides legal representation, initially provided financial/ technical/ juridical support for other orgs, expanded to create CBI for vulnerable (Milesi and Coury, 2018)	IMDH

Table 4: Shelter Breakdown[6]

Rondon 1	Aug 2018	Sep 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2018
Management	SETRABES, FFHI	AVSI	AVSI	AVSI
Safety and Security	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces
WASH	Armed Forces, CAERR	Armed Forces, UNHCR	Armed Forces	Armed Forces
Shelter	Civil Defense	UNHCR	UNHCR	UNHCR
Protection	FFHI, SETRABES, UNHCR	AVSI, UNFPA, UNHCR	AVSI	AVSI, UNHCR
Education			FFHI	AVSI, UNICEF

[5] For more information see: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/FFP_Fact_Sheet_-_Brazil.pdf

[6] For more extensive data, please see the UNHCR's Operational Data Portal: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/search?country=598&text=boa+vista&type%5B%5D=document&partner=&working_group=&sector=&date_from=&date_to=&uploader=&country_json=%7B%220%22%3A%22598%22%7D&sector_json=%7B%220%22%3A%22%22%7D&apply=

Food Assistance	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces
Nutrition	None	None	None	Armed Forces
Health	Armed Forces, EBSERH, FFHI, Municipality	Armed Forces, Municipality	Armed Forces, AVSI	Armed Forces, Health Ministry
ITC	TSF	AVSI, TSF	TSF	TSF

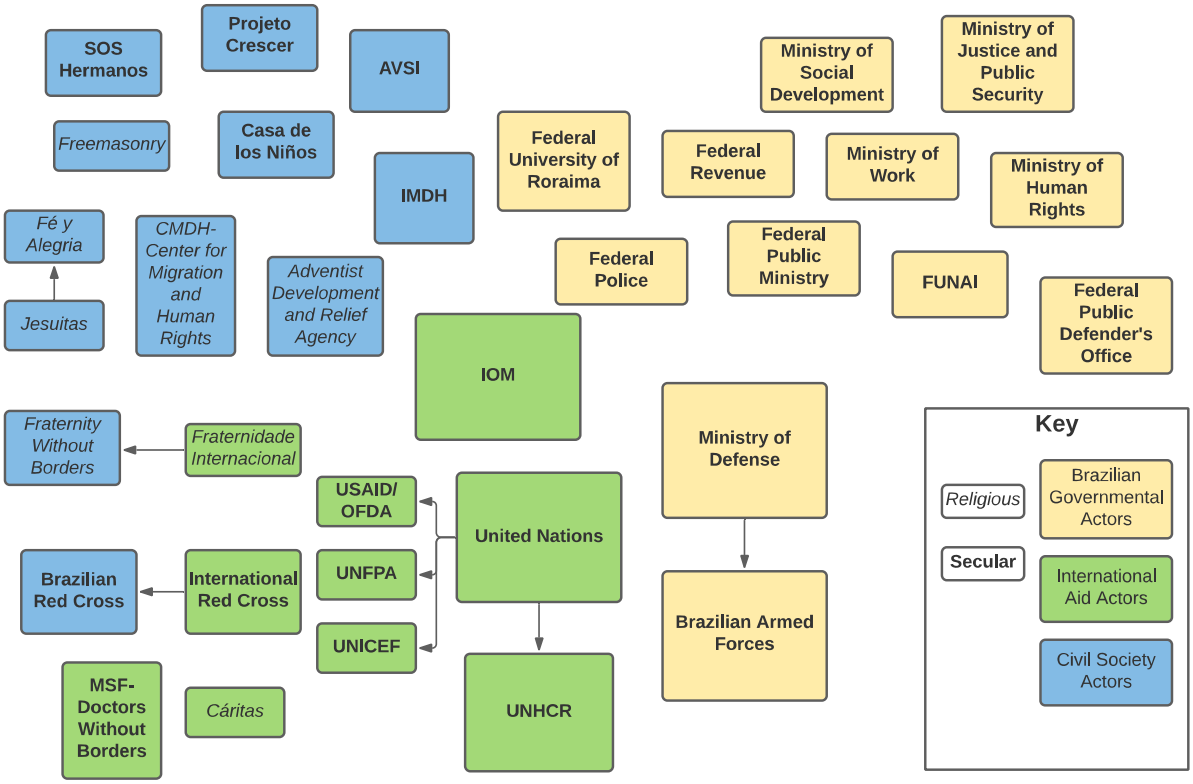
Tancredo Neves	**Aug 2018**	**Sep 2018**	**Oct 2018**	**Nov 2018**
Management	SETRABES, FFHI	AVSI	AVSI	AVSI
Safety and Security	FFHI	FFHI	FFHI	FFHI
WASH	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces
Shelter	Armed Forces, FFHI	FFHI	Armed Forces	Armed Forces, UNHCR
Protection	FFHI, UNFPA, UNHCR	FFHI, UNFPA	FFHI, UNFPA, UNHCR	Armed Forces
Education			FFHI	FFHI
Food Assistance	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces
Nutrition	None	None	None	Armed Forces
Health	Armed Forces, EBSERH, FFHI	Armed Forces, FFHI	Armed Forces, FFHI	Armed Forces, FFHI
ITC	TSF	Armed Forces, TSF	TSF	Armed Forces, TSF

São Vicente	**Aug 2018**	**Sep 2018**	**Oct 2018**	**Nov 2018**
Management	AVSI	AVSI	AVSI	AVSI
Safety and Security	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces
WASH	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces	Armed Forces, UNHCR
Shelter	UNHCR	UNHCR	UNHCR	UNHCR
Protection	AVSI, UNFPA, UNHCR	AVSI, UNFPA, UNHCR	AVSI, UNFPA, UNICEF	AVSI, UNHCR, UNICEF
Education			Consolata Church, UNICEF	AVSI, FFHI, UNICEF, World Vision
Food Assistance	Armed Forces	Armed Forces, Consolata Church	Armed Forces, Consolata Church	Armed Forces, Consolata Church
Nutrition	None	None	None	Armed Forces, UNICEF
Health	Armed Forces, EBSERH	Armed Forces, Ministry of Health	Armed Forces	Armed Forces

ITC	TSF	Armed Forces, AVSI	AVSI, TSF	TSF

FIGURES

Figure 11: Visual Chart of Actors Involved in Operação Acolhida



This figure provides a rough visual overview of the actors involved in Operação Acolhida. Please note that this visual chart is not comprehensive but rather aims to visually represent the range of actors participating in this Operation. Central to this Operation are the UN (primarily UNCHR), IOM and Ministry of Defense which I have placed in a more central location in this chart. By arranging the actors in an undifferentiated non-hierarchical fashion, this chart attempts to capture the intra-scalar network of Operação Acolhida visually. The organizations connected with arrows highlight intra-scalar relations and represents the larger umbrella organization along with its smaller branches and/or local chapter. The umbrella organization and the local chapter tend to both be present and have different (and sometimes overlapping) roles within the Operation. For details on these differing and overlapping roles, please see **Tables 1-3**. It is important to note that civil society actors may receive funding from governmental actors and/or larger NGOs but I have attempted to classify them as primarily functioning separately from these other actors. Nonetheless, it must be emphasized that this visual chart is a highly simplified representation of the messiness, overlap and intra-scalar relations within this Operation.

Figure 12: Brazilian Gov Timeline of the Establishment of Operação Acolhida (Brazilian Federal Government)

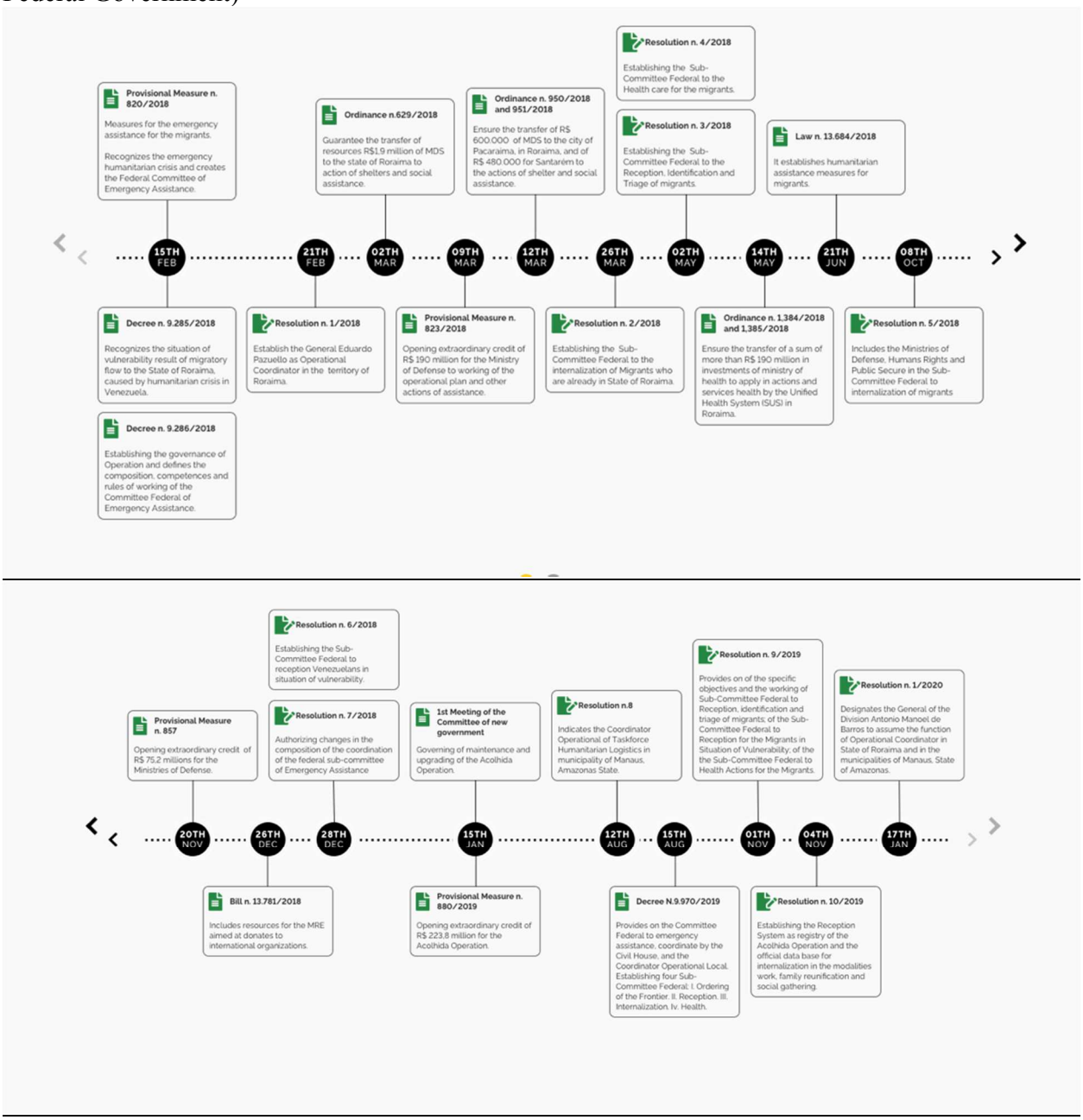
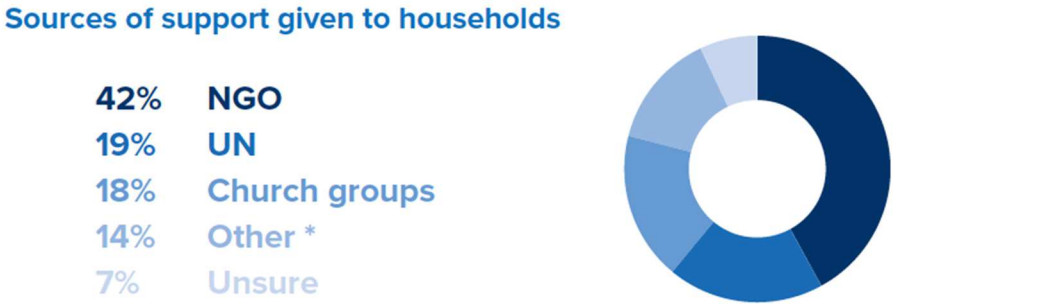


Figure 13: Breakdown of where Venezuelan refugees received support from (REACH, 2019b)



* "Other" sources given included Brazilian members of the community (63%) and fellow Venezuelan community members (11%), with the remainder left unspecified.

Within shelters 76% of households cited the UN and NGO partners as the source of aid they received. Whereas across the city neighbourhoods, church groups dominate as the primary source of charitable donations (67%).

CHAPTER TWO: SCALAR CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Introduction

This chapter will use the UNHCR and IOM grey literature to analyze how both organizations define and identify vulnerable populations at the institutional and local scales. The concept of vulnerability is extremely key in the aid and development realms as it helps identify the inequities and relative vulnerabilities within populations receiving aid. Vulnerability assessments and management impacts the aid recipients receive and can have long-term impacts on both their mobility and well-being. This chapter aims to address the following questions: *What are the definitions and frameworks proposed by the UNHCR and IOM to identify vulnerable populations? How are these global institutional definitions and frameworks adopted at a smaller scale in Brazil and/or in Operação Acolhida?* I focus solely on the UNHCR and IOM as these are the main aid organizations in charge of intaking, documenting, sheltering, and relocating Venezuelan refugees within Operação Acolhida. This chapter is divided into two parts: it will first explore the concept of vulnerability within the UNHCR and then explore it within the context of the IOM. In the first section, I will introduce the UNHCR's Vulnerability Assessment Framework and explore to what extent it has been adopted within Operação Acolhida. In the second section, I will present IOM's Determinant of Migrant Vulnerability Model and analyze to what extent it has been applied within IOM's projects in Brazil. *Through examining UNHCR and IOM's institutional models for vulnerability, I highlight the differences between UNHCR's more individualistic approach in comparison to IOM's more interdependent approach. Within the context of Brazil, I argue that institutional standards for vulnerability lack sensitivity to the local context, yet IOM's interdependent model allows for more flexibility to adapt to local vulnerability specificities in practice.*

Background Literature

Vulnerability emerges as a concept across a range of disciplines from engineering to psychology and economics. For the scope of this paper, I will highlight how vulnerability emerges primarily within the development literature, and more specifically, within the disaster management literature. I have limited my focus to these literatures as they are most relevant for understanding vulnerability assessment within refugee governance. Vulnerability assessments popularized in 1999 when governments, NGOs, and UN agencies began harmonizing and improving vulnerability assessments with a focus on improving food aid (Moret, 2014). Vulnerability assessment methodologies emerge at a range of scales: from the macro level (i.e. country level with regional/ international applications), the meso level (i.e. subnational more quantitative measurements such as censuses), to the micro level (i.e. individual/ household level measured through qualitative assessments). Many of these assessment frameworks are designed as broad universal indicators and may have differing implications on-the-ground.

Studies have identified and refined the general principles of vulnerability assessment over time. The basic formula that emerges throughout the literature is: Risk + Response = Vulnerability or as Holzmann et al. (2008) expand on: Baseline + Hazard + Response = Outcome (Moret, 2014). Academics have refined this model with Naudé et al. (2009) arguing that vulnerability assessments should have a predictive function and Frankenberger et al. (2005) suggest that data should easily be disaggregated by scale (household to regional) when using quantitative measurements. Scholars have provided a range of guiding questions (Hoddinott and Quisumbing, 2003; Chaudhuri and Christiaensen, 2002) as well as emphasized the strengths of participatory methods (Kalibala et al., 2012; Banerjee et al., 2007).

Vulnerability assessment frameworks have emerged at a range of scales and use both quantitative and qualitative methods. At the multi-national scale, the South Africa Vulnerability Initiative (SAVI) Framework utilizes research questions to understand the multiplicity of interconnected stressors (such as HIV/AIDS) that contribute to vulnerabilities in the South African region (O'Brien et al., 2009). [7] The Household Economy Approach (HEA), developed by Save the Children UK in the early 90s, is an analytical framework that aims to predict the impact of national-scale shocks and disasters in access to food and cash across different socio-economic groups (Lawrence et al., 2008). This framework, similar to SAVI, aims to address predictive research questions (although using mixed methods rather than solely qualitative research) rather than serve as an on-the ground field tool. At the international institutional scale, UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) quantitatively measures levels of vulnerability in relation to health, education, child protection and HIV/AIDS (UNICEF, 2012). The World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) surveys pricing and consumption at community and household levels to provide information on living standards (Moret, 2014). At the more local individual scale, the 2004 Household Vulnerability Index (HVI), developed by the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network measures household vulnerability through questionnaires and semi-structured household interviews that develop indexes and quantify vulnerability of farming households to HIV/AIDS (primarily in southern Africa) (FANRPAN, 2011; Masuku & Sithole, 2009). Lastly, the 2000 Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA), developed by Action Aid, uses a participatory rights-based

[7] This framework was adopted in a collaborative study conducted by the International Food Policy Research Institute (in collaboration with the University of Cape Town, University of KwaZulu-Natal, and the Institute for Policy Research and Social Empowerment) to qualitatively assess vulnerabilities of parents and their children in two sites in South Africa and one in Malawi in order to identify hidden, context-specific vulnerabilities (Casale et al., 2010).

approach to understand how vulnerability is being experienced locally and incorporates individuals in creating a long-term community action-based plan (Chiwaka & Yates, 2004). Overall, a range of vulnerability frameworks have been developed at multiple scales with larger-scale projects using primarily quantitative or mixed-methods, meanwhile, local scale frameworks rely more heavily on qualitative methods.

Vulnerability assessments have seldom been developed, analyzed, and critiqued within the context of migration studies. One notable exception is Kaya and Kıraç (2016) who conducted a comprehensive mixed-methods study to identify vulnerability indicators of Syrian refugees in Istanbul. Through household questionnaires, focus groups and individual in-depth interviews in six regions of Istanbul, the authors synthesized qualitative data while also integrating quantitative methods such as the World Food Programme's Food Consumption Score and the Livelihood Depleting Coping Strategy Index. The study identified a need for more data collection and sharing, greater Arabic language support, and a need for increase in mental health infrastructure yet did not clearly identify specific vulnerable subpopulations. This study demonstrates a more local on-the-ground approach that is less focused on broader institutional indicators. Academics have also critiqued and adapted the existing UN's Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) to develop more context-specific approaches. Busetta et al. (2021) conduct a comparative analysis of two vulnerability measurement approaches[8] to assess the vulnerability of refugees and migrants living in informal settlements in Italy. The authors adopt aspects of the VAF but employ locally specific vulnerability indicators. Their analysis suggests that vulnerability has a geographical dimension whereby migrants from Asia are more

[8] The first measurement combines all indicators of vulnerability into a composite index where all indicators are weighted equally. Since this approach assumes individual indicators are independent and not correlated, the authors conducted a second measurement using latent trait analysis that captures combinations and correlations of indicators.

vulnerable than those from Africa and this vulnerability also differs by regions within Italy. Lastly, Mendola, Parroco & Donni (2020: 2) argue that the VAF is not applicable in high income countries where "the dimensions of vulnerability go beyond that of basic needs" and that the VAF treats vulnerability indicators as independent rather than interdependent. Utilizing data conducted with refugees in Germany, the authors propose an alternate vulnerability scale that interdependently looks at social isolation, economic deprivation, and bad health in order to provide a definition and measurement of migrant/ refugee vulnerability in high income countries. Considering these modifications and critiques, the rest of this chapter will comparatively analyze how the UNHCR and IOM conceptualize vulnerability both institutionally and in practice within migration management in Brazil.

UNHCR's Approach to Vulnerability

The UNHCR differentiates between situational and individual forms of vulnerability. The organization identifies situational vulnerability as, "circumstances *en-route* or in countries of destination that render migrants at risk" such as undocumented migration, traveling on irregular or risky routes, or arriving in a country that is struggling with conflict, disaster, or crisis (*'Migrants in vulnerable situations' UNHCR's perspective,* 2017). Comparably, individual vulnerability is defined as, "individual characteristics or circumstances which place a person at particular risk" which ranges from older people, those with disabilities, chronic illnesses to unaccompanied minors and survivors of torture (Ibid). While these two types of vulnerabilities are deeply intertwined, the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (see following paragraph) centers primarily on relative individual vulnerabilities through assessing different individual factors (as opposed to interdependent factors). I identify two reasons for the focus on relative

individual vulnerabilities: firstly, the UNHCR is primarily focused on vulnerable situations *on site* (i.e. refugee camps or areas with high populations of refugees) rather than their migratory history; secondly, individual indicators of vulnerability are easier to quantify than considering interdependent socio-historical factors. Thus, I will focus primarily on how the UNHCR conceptualizes individual vulnerability to understand who is included/not included under this umbrella term.

In order to identify relative individual vulnerability, the UNHCR's has been developing the Vulnerability Assessment Framework to standardize vulnerability criteria. The Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) project began in late 2013 as an inter-agency project[9] to establish procedures for assessing vulnerability of Syrian refugees in Jordan (*Introducing the Vulnerability Assessment Framework,* 2014). This framework is a mixed methods approach that compiles refugee questionnaires with quantitative data on the refugee population in order to develop statistical models with thresholds that identify households and individuals that are facing relative economic and non-monetary vulnerabilities in comparison to their peers. Temporally, the VAF is aimed at managing the delivery of assistance after early stages of crisis with the assumption that all newly arriving refugees have received resources. Conceptually, the creation of a standardized assessment tool allows for actors to discuss "relative vulnerabilities in equivalent terms," track and respond to vulnerabilities across refugee populations, as well as create a common platform for data collection and collaboration between agencies (Ibid). Nonetheless, these standardized tools can obscure local vulnerabilities as observed in Mendola et al.'s (2020) work in Germany as well as within my own analysis of VAF's application within Operação Acolhida. While the

[9] Members of the inter-agency steering committee include: UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women, World Food Program, World Health Organization, REACH, Danish Refugee Council, CARE, ECHO, PU-AMI, the U.S. BPRM, and Handicap International among other actors.

VAF has been ongoing modifications since its inception in 2013, the comprehensive Population Study 2019 provides robust information on the VAF indicators that have stayed consistent since its inception.

The 2019 VAF report identifies and differentiates between **key universal** and **sector indicators** of vulnerabilities. The universal indicators are the three predefined VAF indicators: **welfare, coping strategies, and dependency ratio**. With regards to **welfare**, most refugees are identified as being in debt with expenditures exceeding income. The VAF identifies that household structure and gender are major determinants of threshold expenditure levels and one's overall welfare rating (Brown, Giordano, Maughan, & Wadeson, 2019: 7). Within the context of **coping strategies**, a Weighted Livelihoods Coping Strategy Index was created that accounts for a variety of factors including: reduction of meals/food, borrowing money/food, withdrawing children from school, child labor, begging and early marriage of children (Brown et al., 2019: 32). Lastly, **dependency ratios** are determined by thresholds of the number of economically active to economically inactive people within a household (Brown et al., 2019: 7). Overall, the universal indicators look more comprehensively at household dynamics to assess comparative vulnerability.

The VAF also identifies a range of **specific sector indicators** which provide a more in-depth descriptive analysis of the dimensions of vulnerabilities. These include: **basic needs, education, food security, health, shelter, and WASH** (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene). The VAF defines vulnerability of **basic needs** as "unable to independently maintain the financial and non-financial standards necessary for a dignified life" which is measured through the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) threshold (Brown et al., 2019: 8). With regards to **education**, a range of factors comprehensively account for this indicator including: education costs, formal

education attendance, out-of-school youth and missed years of education (Brown et al., 2019: 43-44). VAF's **Food Security Score** is based on the global tools of the World Food Program's CARI (Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security) methodology in conjunction with social vulnerability measurements (Brown et al., 2019: 48).[10] In relation to **health indicators**, households with disabilities, medical conditions, and health issues are identified as more vulnerable due to increased medical costs and/or debt (Brown et al., 2019: 8-9). **Shelter ratings** incorporate the quality/ condition of shelter (un/finished building), informal settlements, rent costs, and whether the tenant has a formal written rental contract (Brown et al., 2019: 9). Lastly, **WASH** vulnerability levels are determined by expenditure on water and hygiene products as well as accessibility to safe drinking water, sanitation, and latrines (Brown et al., 2019: 72-77). Overall, the VAF indicators consider a complex range of accessibilities and vulnerabilities to create thresholds that determine which refugees are experiencing more extreme burdens and vulnerabilities in comparison to their peers. Taking into account VAF's conception within the context of Syria, I will now explore to what extent this model has been incorporated into identifying vulnerability within Operação Acolhida in Brazil.

In July 2019, the UNHCR published a report on the "Socio-economic and vulnerability profiling of Persons of Concern in Pacaraima, Boa Vista and Manaus" in conjunction with the UNFPA, the European Union, and the humanitarian aid consulting firm REACH. While the bulk of this study details the socio-economic and demographic profiles of Venezuelan refugees in each city, the final findings sections highlighted the factors contributing to increased vulnerability. The study was a compilation of both qualitative and quantitative primary data collection through household interviews, focus group discussions, interviews with key

[10] Social vulnerability is measured by the dependency ratio as well as presence of single-headed households.

community informants, service providers and community promoters (REACH, 2019a: 7). With regards to vulnerability indicators, the report vaguely explained that, "this section uses vulnerability indicators that are based on UNHCR's guidelines and previous UNHCR assessments" (REACH, 2019a: 26). This description does not clarify whether these guidelines and assessments are larger international institutional standards or more local standards. Thus, "previous UNHCR assessments" could refer to assessments done at other UNHCR sites or could be referring to previous studies specifically done in Boa Vista, Manaus and Pacaraima. Despite the vague wording surrounding how and where these vulnerability indicators were developed, my following analysis demonstrates that the vulnerabilities identified in this report are largely adopted from the Vulnerability Assessment Framework. The similarities between the two reports vulnerability indicators demonstrates the saliency of institutional standards within UNHCR's practices.

The UNHCR 2019 Report on "Vulnerabilities within Venezuelan migration to Brazil" primarily adopted the VAF's universal indicators in order to assess vulnerability (REACH, 2019a). The report centers their vulnerability findings on: **dependency ratio, debt/ poverty line (i.e. welfare),** and **coping strategies**. These clearly resonate with the VAF's universal indicators of dependency ratio, welfare, and coping strategies. Nonetheless, while the **dependency ratio** in this report is quantified similarly to the VAF in Syria (where the ratio is determined by the number of working to non-working household members), two major differences in implications are observed within the Brazilian context. Firstly, this report includes those *"seeking employment"* within the category of working household members, thus, not accounting for unemployment or disability within the ratio. Although not explicitly stated in the Syrian report, this generalization appears to be standard across both cases. This is an important proxy that could

skew the ratio substantially depending on the availability of jobs in relation to those seeking employment. In the Syrian case, this ratio provides more information on relative vulnerability since refugees live in a range of locations across Jordan and some regions tend to house families with larger numbers of dependent children. Comparatively, in the context of Brazil, Venezuelans are primarily concentrated in the northern more isolated region of the country, families tend to be more split/ have less children, and Boa Vista has a limited job market due to its isolated location. As a result, including those seeking employment as "employed" could significantly misrepresent the dependency ratio and lack of economic opportunities in the region. Secondly, the ratio does not account for transnational dependents that are not in Brazil. The Brazilian report provides a breakdown that disaggregates by households who are sending remittances and supporting other members in Venezuela (see **Table 5** for more details). In the context of Boa Vista, at least 1 in 4 households are sending remittances home with the percentage increasing to ~ 1 in 2 for those who live independently from the UNHCR shelters. These statistics indicate that many Venezuelan refugees have family members still in Venezuela that are highly dependent on the remittances they receive. While remittances are not mentioned in the Syrian context, due to the high inflation push factor of Venezuelan migration to Brazil, *transnational dependency* is a key characteristic of this population. Overall, in the Brazilian context, the lack of disaggregation of those that are unemployed or have transnational dependents has the potential to significantly misrepresent the dependency ratio of Venezuelans in Brazil.

Similarly, the vulnerability indicator of **debt** appears to be a standard adoption from the original VAF framework that does not capture local specificities. In Boa Vista, due to strong aid infrastructure, only 8% of those living in the shelters reported having debt with the percentage increasing to 32% for those living independently in the community (REACH, 2019a: 27). In

comparison, 62% of Syrian refugees were identified as experiencing high levels of debt (Brown et al., 2019: 40). Additionally, the **poverty line** indicators were adapted from the World Bank's 2015 international poverty line and converted into Brazilian reals to compare average monthly incomes of Venezuelan household members in Brazil (REACH, 2019a: 28). This adoption of international standards and metrics does not provide much insight into vulnerability since all households in Boa Vista fell below this poverty line and no weight was given to the role of humanitarian assistance. Thus, the poverty line and debt metrics lacked local modifications and did not provide substantial information on relative financial vulnerability within the context of Boa Vista.

Lastly, **coping strategies** have been qualitatively disaggregated into analyses of different strategies rather than being assessed through the comprehensive Livelihood Coping Strategies weighted model used in the Syrian context. This difference in methods makes the two reports incomparable while also not providing a more in-depth understanding of the Brazilian context. The coping strategies identified in the report ranged from: child labor and bringing children to work, to prostitution, lack of food, and limited access to WASH facilities. The coping indicator that was most thoroughly assessed was labor exploitation. In Boa Vista, labor exploitation issues primarily centered around working more than 6 days or 48 hours per week with these incidences being higher in those living independently in the host community (for more details, see **Table 6**). Nonetheless, labor exploitation rates were generally low in Boa Vista and thus perhaps do not capture the actual coping strategies of these refugees. The end of the report identifies that lack of documentation was the main barrier to accessing services yet did not actually consider coping strategies. My own research has demonstrated that Venezuelans cope with documentation challenges by having family members apply to the different migratory processes as a means of

expanding their documentation possibilities. WhatsApp and Facebook chat groups serve as a key tool for refugees to keep in contact and get a sense of how long the different documentation processes have taken for other Venezuelan refugees. Thus, while Venezuelans have experienced documentation challenges, social media platforms have served as a key coping strategy for communicating information with other refugees. Overall, despite not using the original quantitative approached to coping strategies, the Brazilian report still primarily adopts the VAF's indicators and does not fully explore local coping strategies.

Despite the organizational benefits of the standardized VAF, the application of these indicators in Boa Vista lacked contextual sensitivity and did not provide significant information on relative vulnerabilities. The umbrella concept of working-age household members and the omission of transnational dependency results in a dependency ratio that neglects some of the main stresses experienced by Venezuelans in Brazil. Similarly, financial vulnerability indicators did not account for the role of aid infrastructure as well as the significantly lower wages and cost of living in Boa Vista. Lastly, the report centered on VAF coping strategy indicators rather than exploring the issues and coping mechanisms occurring on-the-ground with regards to documentation. As a result, using the standardized VAF indicators provides an erroneous overview whereby it appears that Venezuelans are experiencing low levels of vulnerability in Boa Vista. Overall, UNHCR's increasing attempts to standardize vulnerability assessments is resulting in the institutionalization of vulnerability metrics without accounting for context-specific approaches to the Vulnerability Assessment Framework.

IOM's Approach to Vulnerability

The IOM defines migrants in vulnerable situations as, "migrants who are unable effectively to enjoy their human rights, are at increased risk of violations and abuse and who, accordingly, are entitled to call on a duty bearer's heightened duty of care" (Komenda et al., 2019: 4). IOM's Assistance to Vulnerable Migrants Unit is specifically concerned with those **vulnerable to violence, exploitation,** and **abuse**. This section will explore IOM's "Determinants of Migrant Vulnerability" Model (DoMV) as featured in IOM's "Handbook on Protection and Assistance For Migrants Vulnerable to Violence, Exploitation and Abuse" in order to understand how the IOM conceptualizes and designates who is considered relatively more vulnerable within the organization's practices (Komenda et al., 2019). I will then analyze the 2018 Protocol for Assistance of Migrants in Situations of Vulnerability (*Protocolo de Assistência em Situação de Vulnerabilidade*) in Foz de Iguaçu, Brazil to explore the extent to which IOM's DoMV is applied within the context of Brazil (Rostiaux, Ruiz, Kaefer, & Terra, 2018).[11] While this report is not specifically on my field site, it provides insight on how IOM has approached vulnerable migrant populations in the borderlands of Brazil.

The Determinant of Migrant Vulnerability Model (DoMV) is aimed at assessing different factors of migrant vulnerability and developing appropriate interventions at different levels. This model consists of a variety of questionnaires and assessment tools as well as guidance for application and adaptation of these tools. Temporally, unlike the VAF that focuses on assessing relative vulnerability between established refugees, the DoMV can be applied before, during or after migration (Komenda et al., 2019: 16). The temporal flexibility of this model provides a more comprehensive measurement for the shifting vulnerabilities across the entire migration

[11] Iguazu Falls region that borders Paraguay and Argentina.

experience. This model conceptualizes vulnerability as intertwined with resilience and thus considers the interaction between risk and protective factors as both contributing to shifting contextual vulnerabilities at multiple scales[12] (see **Figure 14** for visual representation). Thus, while the VAF studies individual coping strategies as primarily separate from protection risks (see REACH 2019: 30), the DoMV emphasizes the scalar interconnections between risks, protections, and coping strategies. For the scope of this chapter, I will only focus on the DoMV in the context of after migration at the individual level as this is most comparable to the VAF approach.

The DoMV model is conceptualized as the intersection of four different scales: **individual**, **household/ family**, **community**, and **structural factors**. **Individual factors** are the physical and biological characteristics that can be protective or risk factors depending on the context (Komenda et al., 2019: 6). These characteristics include: age, sex, racial/ethnic identity, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental and emotional health as well as access to resources. **Household and family factors** captures the family circumstances, support system, and positionality of individuals within the family including family size, socioeconomic status, household structure, migration history, gender dynamics and educational level (Komenda et al., 2019: 7). These different household characteristics are divided into risk factors (i.e. interpersonal violence, single-parent household etc.) and protective factors (i.e. supportive home environment, equal access to resources for all genders etc.). While individual characteristics shift from risk to protective factors depending on context, these factors remain primarily fixed at the family level. This means that a risk factor such as interpersonal violence would never become a protective factor at the household scale. At the **community** scale, support networks and resources can

[12] These scales are: individual, household/family, community, and structural

provide protection or increase risk (in cases of exclusion) for individuals and families through quality of educational opportunities, health care and social services, job opportunities, and social norms (Ibid). Similar to the household level, community factors are clearly divided between risk factors (i.e. forced marriage, exclusion of certain members, poor public infrastructure etc.) and protective factors (i.e. strong welfare system, good education and health systems etc.). Lastly, the **structural** factors are conceptualized as the "political, economic, social and environmental conditions and institutions at national, regional and international levels that influence the overall environment in which individuals, families and communities are situated" (Komenda et al., 2019: 7). These structural factors include: colonialism, systematic discrimination, conflict, political systems, migration policies, and the rule of law. Overall, the DoMV compiles the risk and protective factors within these four scales in order to comprehensively weigh migrants' risk and resilience from violence, exploitation and abuse (see **Figure 15** for visual representation). I will now expand on how DoMV manifests at the individual level which focuses on providing direct assistance to vulnerable migrants.

The DoMV's individual factors have been identified through previous IOM research and should be understood as context specific factors assessed through adaptable questionnaires. The individual factors identified by IOM are: *country of origin/ citizenship, age, communication abilities, migration status, history of migration, human trafficking, reasons for migration, clarity of migration plans, physical and psychosocial situation, networks, education, financial situation, health/education/financial services, shelter, race/ ethnicity/ religion, biological sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation* (Komenda et al., 2019: 101-103). IOM provides suggestions of the risk and protective factors within each of these individual characteristics. For example, with regards to age, individuals between 20-50 tend to have age as a protective factor, meanwhile,

those younger and older are relatively more vulnerable and dependent and thus their age is seen as a risk factor (Komenda et al., 2019: 10). The Handbook also provides questionnaires for assessing individual-level factors influence on individual's vulnerability as well as guidance on how to adapt the questionnaire based on stage of migration of the individual and the sociocultural context. Overall, the DoMV identifies a large range of adaptable factors that impact vulnerability at the individual level which will now be explored within the context of IOM's presence in borderlands of Brazil.

The IOM's 2018 Protocol for Assistance of Migrants in Situations of Vulnerability in Foz de Iguaçu, Brazil demonstrates the manners in which IOM has adopted the DoMV within the context of the borderlands of Brazil. Most notably, this protocol report uses the verbatim definition of migrants in vulnerable situations[13] as presented both on IOM's website as well as in the introduction of the previously analyzed IOM handbook. With regards to the section on determinants of vulnerability, the protocol adopted in Brazil is identical to the four scalar factors identified in the DoMV: individual, family/household, community and structural. Similarly, this protocol emphasizes the interrelated overlap between these four scales as well as the concept of risk and protective factors within each scale and characteristic. At the individual level, the report highlights practically identical characteristics to those mentioned in the Handbook such as: physical and biological characteristics, past experiences, beliefs, emotional characteristics, physical, mental, psychological, and cognitive health (Rostiaux et al., 2018: 17). At a smaller scale, some of the individual factors identified include: age, sex, race/ ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity (Ibid). While the report does not go into depth surrounding these individual vulnerability characteristics, the appendix provides a brief list of indicators that

[13] For the definition, please refer to the beginning of the section.

increases an individual's vulnerability including: *undocumented/ irregular migration status, migration history, family structure, history of prostitution, history of substance abuse, history of violence, houselessness, does not speak or read local language, migrated in search of basic needs, and lacks necessary resources* (Rostiaux et al., 2018: 56). This appendix identifies more Brazilian context-specific factors where documentation issues, the differences between Spanish and Portuguese, and the more limited housing and job markets in more remote regions of Brazil are some of the prominent challenges that migrants and refugees face in Brazil. Other Brazilian-context specific modifications includes the MERCOSUL resident option under the migratory status question of the sample appendix questionnaire (Rostiaux et al., 2018: 63). Overall, in comparing the Foz de Iguaçu Protocol with the DoMV model, the Protocol provides a more context-specific approach to analyzing migrant vulnerability in Brazil where the modifications provided are largely applicable to the case of Boa Vista as well. The flexibility of the DoMV model is significant in that it brings to the forefront local vulnerabilities thus resulting in more locally specific aid initiatives.

Conclusion

Both the UNHCR and IOM have developed standardized frameworks and protocols to identify vulnerable migrant populations. Despite this similarity, the organizations' models conceive of vulnerability in different manners. The UNHCR's VAF looks at sector indicators primarily *independently from each other* with little emphasis on the scalar and temporal dimensions of these factors. In comparison, the IOM's DoMV is strongly centered on the *interdependent relationship* between scalar factors as well as the temporal aspects of risk and protection. Within the context of Brazil, the organizations differ in their approach to assessing

vulnerability on the ground. While the VAF was developed in the context of Amman, Jordan, the Framework's emphasis on standardizing vulnerability indicators is clearly reflected in UNHCR's reports on vulnerability in Boa Vista, Brazil. The Brazilian report demonstrates a clear adoption of institutional standards with minimal adaptations at the local scale. This is clearly seen in the analysis of coping strategies, where the report centers on minimal issues such child labor and labor exploitation rather than discussing the coping mechanisms surrounding documentation issues. In comparison, IOM's more holistic approach to vulnerability translates to a more culturally sensitive approach within the Foz de Iguaçu Protocol. Sample questionnaires demonstrate a focus on Brazilian migratory challenges including linguistic differences, documentation irregularities, and considerations of the MERCOSUL migratory status. In conclusion, the UNHCR's more institutionalized approach to vulnerability results in a framework that does not capture local Brazilian specificities, meanwhile, the IOM's interconnected approach results in a more flexible, locally- modified questionnaire. Taking into account these differing approaches to vulnerability assessment, the following chapter will explore how the scalar shifting of responsibilities in Operação Acolhida manifests within the case study of the vulnerable Indigenous Venezuelan population in Boa Vista, Roraima, Brazil.

FIGURES

Figure 14: (Komenda et al., 2019: 6) Visual Representation of the DoMV



Figure 1.1
The determinants of migrant vulnerability (DoMV) model[7]

Figure 15: (Komenda et al., 2019: 9) Visual Representation of the 4 Interconnected Scales of the DoMV

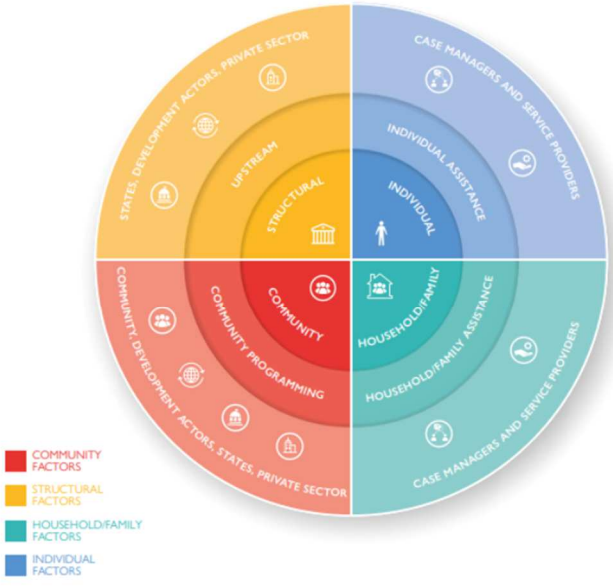


Figure 1.2
Programmatic responses and relevant players at each level

TABLES

Table 5: (REACH, 2019a: 27)

Table 9: Dependency ratio vs. proportion of households with a working-age seeking employment vs. sending remittances

		Dependency ratio	Households with a working age household member seeking employment	Households sending remittances
Boa Vista	Abrigo	50/100	38%	25%
	HC	42/100	50%	47%
Manaus	Abrigo	56/100	41%	19%
	HC	33/100	46%	65%
Pacaraima	Abrigo	51/100	33%	8%
	HC	44/100	48%	57%

Table 6: (REACH, 2019a: 29)

Table 11: Proportion of households with at least one working-age household member experiencing labour exploitation or work-related injury

	Proportion of households with at least one working-age household member who:				
	works more than 6 days per week	works more than 48 hours per week	did not receive all the owed salaries	has sustained work-related injuries	has experienced any other* issues at work
Boa Vista					
Abrigo	12%	9%	22%	9%	13%
HC	16%	23%	6%	9%	7%
Manaus					
Abrigo	24%	47%	18%	6%	12%
HC	39%	58%	32%	21%	20%
Pacaraima					
Abrigo	15%	21%	12%	0%	0%
HC	38%	19%	10%	17%	4%

* Other issues included perceived discrimination and harassment on the work floor, abuse and sexual assault

CHAPTER THREE: SCALAR POLITICS OF INDIGENOUS VENEZUELAN RECEPTION

Introduction

Spaces of refugee governance become even more political within the context of Indigenous refugees in Brazil. Indigenous Venezuelans are identified as a vulnerable subpopulation within the incoming Venezuelan refugee population. The Warao, E'ñepá and Pemon are the largest identified ethnic groups that have entered Brazil through the northern border.[14] The Warao are the second largest Indigenous ethnic group in Venezuela comprising of approximately 49,000 individuals with a history of displacement due to missionaries, environmental degradation, and agricultural encroachment (Rosa et al., 2021: 13). As of August 2020, 5,000 Indigenous refugees have been legally registered in Brazil with 65% of those being of Warao ethnicity (Ibid). It is important to note that while I will be identifying Indigenous groups as originating from Brazil or Venezuela for clarity's sake, many of these Indigenous populations have historically lived within the borderlands of these two countries (as well as other bordering countries) and may not necessarily attribute themselves to either nation-state. Many Indigenous groups were historically nomadic and academics have illustrated the long-term patterns of cultural exchange in borderland regions (Berrojalbiz, 2012; Bonfiglioli and Olavarría, 2006). As Radding (2017:11) emphasizes, "the layered meanings of indigeneity in the context of changing natural environments are constitutive of the geographical placement of borders and the contested power relations they signify." Thus, when identifying ethnic groups in the borderlands, it is important to be cognizant of how ecological, cultural, and historical processes intersect with imperial frontiers to shape the borderlands and ethnic identities.

[14] Other identified Indigenous ethnic Venezuelan groups in Brazil include Kariña and Wayúu (Rosa et al, 2021: 23)

In Boa Vista, there are currently two Indigenous shelters (Pintolândia and Jardim Floresta) with another two more shelters aiming to open this year. A large portion of these Indigenous Venezuelans have low levels of formal education (enrollment in Western schools) and primarily earn through selling crafts in the street or participating in agricultural or fishing practices. Due to irregularities in documentation status, differences in lifestyles, and labor productivity, Indigenous Venezuelans have experienced limitations and differences in their intake processes. Most notably, the Brazilian government does not allow Indigenous Venezuelans to interiorize which has substantially limited the mobility of these groups. In this chapter I first situate my research within the range of studies that explore Indigenous history and development in Brazil. I discuss the key governmental actor tasked with Brazilian Indigenous affairs- the Fundação Nacional do Índio (FUNAI) - and the manners in which this organization both historically and currently has shifted responsibilities on to other governmental actors and international NGOs. FUNAI's evasion of responsibilities draws attention to larger debates surrounding rural versus urban Indigenous populations as well as whether Indigenous Venezuelans should be considered first and foremost as migrants or Indigenous. I will then discuss the UNHCR and IOM's initiatives in relation to Venezuelan Indigenous refugee populations in Brazil. Lastly, I will highlight the substantial infrastructure provided for Indigenous refugees by international NGOs and civil society actors. *I argue that due to FUNAI's avoidance of responsibilities within Operação Acolhida, international aid organizations and civil society actors serve as institutional stewards for Indigenous Venezuelans in Brazil. This institutional stewardship refers to the historical and current aid infrastructure that provides key bureaucratic representation for Indigenous Venezuelans yet at the same time limits their agency and decision-making abilities within their migratory process.*

Background Literature

Brazil has a rich Indigenous history with the state of Roraima historically being predominantly Indigenous territories. Bonilla and Capiberibe (2021:116) describe Brazilian Indigenous history as, "These polluted waters always converged on the same recipe: eliminating indigenous peoples to allow the appropriation and exploitation of the land and its resources." Brazilian Indigenous lands have historically been threatened by health epidemics (including COVID-19), illegal small-scale mining, land-grabbing, governmental excavation, and development (i.e., building dams and highways). These threats have decimated Indigenous populations, polluted their rivers and water sources, and forced them to move in search of resources (Ibid). Studies have demonstrated the shifting landscape of Roraima from governmental extractive mining initiatives in the 1940s to the colonial development of the BR-174 highway in the 1990s (Crocia de Barros, 1996; Oliveira, 2007). Scholars have suggested that the changing socio-spatial dynamics of the region has increased Roraima's connection to the rest of Brazil (via paved highways) while decreasing mobility for Indigenous populations (through cutting across Indigenous lands) (Waters, 2021; Cabral and de Morais, 2020). According to the 2010 Brazilian census, Brazil has approximately 896,000 Indigenous peoples with 57.5% living on federally recognized Indigenous lands (Funai, *O Brasil Indígena*). The northern part of Brazil hosts the most Indigenous populations and 55,922 live in the state of Roraima (see **Figure 16** for distribution map of Indigenous populations in Brazil). Most notably, Roraima is the Brazilian state with the most Indigenous people living on federally recognized Indigenous lands (83.2% of Indigenous population) (Funai, *Distribuição Espacial da População Indígena*). Roraima is also predominantly Indigenous territories, and its socio-spatial history is greatly shaped by the historical legacy of Indigenous policy in Brazil.

Indigenous policy in Brazil can be characterized as an ever-shifting struggle to acknowledge and negotiate Indigenous rights. In 1910, o Serviço de Proteção aos Índios e Localização dos Trabalhadores Nacionais (SPILTN- Indian Protection Service and Localization of National Workers) was founded to assist Indigenous populations in Brazil. This organization was renamed Serviço de Proteção aos Índios (SPI- Indian Protection Service) in 1918 and was linked to the Ministry of Agriculture. While SPI was responsible for protecting Indigenous populations, the agency was more focused on distancing itself from the Catholic Church and integrating Indigenous populations by "civilizing" them into productive rural and national workers (Cabral and de Morais, 2020). SPI's legacy is one of general corruption with internal crises and a range of violent acts towards Indigenous populations including: assassinations, appropriation of resources, and leasing Indigenous territories (to see full list of offenses see Cabral and de Morais, 2020: 110-111). In light of all of these offenses, the SPI was dissolved under the Brazilian military dictatorship and was replaced with the Fundação Nacional do Índio (FUNAI- National Indian Foundation).

Since its inception, FUNAI has continued the legacies of mistreatment towards Indigenous populations due in part initially to the Brazilian dictatorship's focus on development. FUNAI was founded in 1967 to be the principal coordinator of Indigenous policy for the Brazilian Federal government. The agency shifted affiliation to the Ministry of Justice and Public Security as opposed to SPI's link to the Ministry of Agriculture. This shift can be understood as a move towards associating Indigenous federal representation with justice and accountability rather than land and encroachment. Despite this shift in affiliation, Trinidad (2016) argues that FUNAI pretended to defend Indigenous rights while functioning as the executive branch of the military government that legitimized the secular "sacrificing" of Indigenous populations and

lands. The military dictatorship's focus on the economic and infrastructural development of the country bled into their indigenist policies. Most notably, the 1970 Plano de Integração Nacional (PIN) opened the heart of the Amazon to colonial development projects through the extensive construction of the BR-230 Trans-Amazonia highway that cuts horizontally across both the Amazon Forest as well as the Brazilian states of Paraíba, Ceará, Piaui, Maranhão, Tocantins, Pará, and Amazonas (Cabral and de Morais, 2020). The PIN legitimized the occupation of Amazônia by claiming these lands as empty and ignoring the existence of Indigenous populations in the area. This colonial development was one of many legal and bureaucratic plans that greatly impacted Indigenous populations under the Brazilian military dictatorship.

The end of the dictatorship and establishment of the 1988 Brazilian Constitution served as both a legal turning point with continued struggles for Indigenous populations. Articles 231 and 232 in the 1988 Constitution legitimized self-determination through legally recognizing the concept of federally demarcated and protected Indigenous territories (TI- *Terras Indígenas* in Portuguese). These Acts served as a political tool that both strengthened the emerging Brazilian national Indigenous movement, Union of Indigenous Nations (UNI), while bringing international recognition to the Indigenous communities struggles to "access the constitutionally guaranteed right to demarcation" (Bonilla and Capiberibe, 2021: 106). Smaller scale organizations began emerging including the Indigenous Council of Roraima that was founded in 1990 to advocate for the autonomy of Indigenous populations in the state (Tenente, 2019). The period of 1990-2003 can be characterized as both the "time of demarcation" as well as the "time of projects" with the notable ratification of the Yanonami Indigenous Land (Bonilla and Capiberibe, 2021). FUNAI began redefining itself through decentralizing Indigenous public policies to support self-determination. This is exemplified by the 1999 federal administrative transfer of Indigenous

health resources from FUNAI to the National Health Foundation (Funasa) creating 34 Indigenous healthcare districts across Brazil. As a result of these shifts, local and regional Indigenous associations emerged with support from NGOs to foster Indigenous action both inside and outside the state (Barretto Filho and Ramos, 2019). I identify these collaborations as the emergence of institutionalized stewardship of Indigenous populations in Brazil (see Civil Society Initiatives for more details). Overall, the post-dictatorship period can be characterized by an emphasis on participatory methods and structural shifts in Indigenous federal representation.

The rise of the Worker's Party (PT, 2002-2016) brought a resurgence of clashing interests between Indigenous rights and economic development projects. This period saw a reduction in demarcation of Indigenous lands as well as legal disputes such as the Federal Supreme Court case concerning Raposa Serra do Sol (details discussed later). Along with land disputes, President Lula began launching major infrastructure projects such as the Belo Monte hydropower plant on the Xingu River and the Canadian Belo Sun Mining project that became "the largest open-cast gold mine in Brazil" (Bonilla and Capiberibe, 2021:114). These construction projects led to the displacement of Indigenous populations as well as drastic environmental impacts such as a reduction in flooding, toxic metals in rivers, and the contamination of flora and fauna. The long-term effects of these projects are unknown, yet the exploitation of Indigenous territories is further threatened by the new right-wing presidency of Jair Bolsonaro (these current shifts will be discussed later). In conclusion, Indigenous federal agencies in Brazil have historically mistreated Indigenous territories and populations rather than protect them, meanwhile, using SPI and FUNAI to legitimize their own political agendas.

The Brazilian Government's Relationship to Indigenous Venezuelan Populations

The historical mistreatment of Indigenous populations and hidden agendas of FUNAI along with Indigenous populations and NGOs distrust of the organization have been foregrounded further in their response to Operação Acolhida. During the earlier conceptions of the Operation circa February 2018, General Franklimberg Ribeiro de Freitas was the leader of FUNAI. General Franklimberg was a source of controversy due to his position as a General and the increasing militarization of the government more generally as well as in Indigenous affairs specifically (Kweitel and Ceriani, 2018). Those in the agribusiness industry criticized him for being "too supportive to indigenous tribes' land claims" because he participated in several Amazonian operations to evict illegal miners and loggers (Jamasmie, 2019). Franklimberg resigned from his position in June 2019 due to conflicts of interest with the new right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro who prioritizes farmers and mining over Indigenous protective measures. Franklimberg explains:

> *"Quem assessora o senhor presidente não tem conhecimento de como funciona o arcabouço jurídico que envolve a Fundação Nacional do Índio. O presidente está muito mal assessorado a respeito da condução da política indigenista no país. E quem assessora o senhor presidente da República é o senhor Nabhan. Que, quando fala sobre indígena, saliva ódio aos indígenas" (Valente, 2019).*
> "Whoever advises the President is not aware of how the legal framework that involves the National Indian Foundation works. The president is very poorly advised on the conduct of Indigenous policy in the country. And who advises the President of the Republic is Mr. Nabhan. Which, when he talks about Indigenous people, sparks hatred towards Indigenous people."

General Franklimberg's statement illustrates his apprehension and critiques of the new direction FUNAI is taking under the presidency of Bolsonaro. In this same interview, Franklimberg notes that the government sees FUNAI as "an obstacle to national development" and that generally FUNAI's limited resources (financial, size of staff) made it already difficult to

meet Indigenous needs and demands (Valente, 2019). In fact, on the first day of Bolsonaro's presidency, his government put in a proposal to transfer the demarcation of Indigenous territories from FUNAI to the Ministry of Agriculture. Beyond this proposal's clear semblance to the structure of Indigenous policy under SPI, the Bolsonaro government "has been gradually starving FUNAI of funds" and replacing civil servants with loyalists, "military, evangelicals and political associates with no expertise whatsoever" (Bonilla and Capiberibe, 2021: 117). Franklimberg was replaced by the federal police officer Marcelo Xavier da Silva who has strong ties to the agribusiness and is politically aligned with current President Jair Bolsonaro's plans to develop Indigenous lands contradicting FUNAI's fundamental principles. Indigenous leaders and specialists were extremely concerned by his confirmation due to his lack of expertise in Indigenous affairs, his previous controversial 2017 Congress inquiry that attacked the FUNAI, as well as an attempt in 2017 to have the federal police take measures against Indigenous groups over a series of land disputes in Mato Grosso do Sul (Phillips, 2019a). According to Dinamam Tuxá, executive-coordinator of the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil, Marcelo Xavier da Silva "has a long history campaigning and working against indigenous people- he was always in favor of farmers" (Ibid). Overall, the general direction of the leadership of FUNAI under Bolsonaro has been shifting away from protecting the rights of Indigenous populations to an emphasis on farming, mining, and developing these protected lands.

Beyond the shifting leadership within FUNAI, governmental actors and academics have critiqued FUNAI's minimal role in Operação Acolhida and its evasion from participating in issues surrounding the incoming Indigenous refugees from Venezuela. As summarized in a statement by the Federal Public Ministry:

> *"A atuação da Funai tem sido insuficiente: buscou apoio junto ao consulado da Venezuela, mas obteve para o grupo somente mais uma deportação: tentou colocá-*

> *los na CASAI (Casa de Apoio à Saúde Indígena), sem sucesso; procurou articular a inserção dos Warao em aldeias de Roraima proposta que não foi aceita pelas lideranças indígenas locais; e houve tentativas de acionar o governo da Venezuela por meio da Diretoria Internacional da Funai, mas também sem éxito." (Magalhães, 2018: 131)*
> "Funai's performance has been insufficient: it sought support from the Venezuelan consulate, but obtained only one more deportation for the group: they tried to put them in CASAI (Casa de Apoio à Saúde Indígena), without success; sought to articulate the insertion of the Warao in villages in Roraima, a proposal that was not accepted by the local Indigenous leaders; and there were attempts to incorporate the Venezuelan government through the International Directorate of Funai, but also without success."

FUNAI's limited initiatives with regards to Operação Acolhida have been unsuccessful as well as insensitive to the Indigenous populations. Notably, there have been several efforts to simply integrate the Venezuelan Indigenous Warao and É'ñepá into both the existing administrative structures as well as into "Brazilian" Indigenous communities. Thus, the initial response to Indigenous Venezuelans was simply to categorize them as **Indigenous** irrespective of their ethnic identity and their differences from Brazilian Indigenous groups. Nonetheless, FUNAI quickly shifted its stance on its overarching Indigenous categorization of Indigenous Venezuelans. Bruno Magalhães, an International Relations postdoctoral research at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, explains FUNAI's reasoning for avoiding responsibility towards Indigenous Venezuelans,

> *"Ao que parece, aos olhos da Funai, os Warao e E'ñepá são primeiro migrantes e só depois índios. 'De acordo com a Funai, o fato de serem estrangeiros ou imigrantes exigiria a atuação de outros órgãos e ministérios', explica o relatório comissionado pela OIM* (OIM: 2018, pg 54)[15]."... Segundo a Funai, não há nada na legislação que assegure amparo adequado e específico a sua atuação com indígenas venezuelanos *(Magalhães, 2018: 131)."*
> "Apparently, in the eyes of Funai, the Warao and E'ñepá **are first migrants and only later Indians**. 'According to Funai, the fact that they are foreigners or immigrants would require the action of other agencies and ministries', explains the report commissioned by IOM… According to Funai, there is nothing in the legislation that ensures adequate and specific support for its work with Venezuelan Indigenous people."

[15] (IOM, 2018)

Thus, here we observe FUNAI's justification for not assuming a larger role in intaking and sheltering Indigenous Venezuelan refugees and shifting responsibility to other governmental entities. Since there is nothing legally stated within both the Constitution as well as FUNAI's legislation, this governmental branch has selectively decided that Indigenous Venezuelans are beyond the assigned tasks of their organization. This decision provokes the question regarding whether Indigeneity or immigration status should be seen as the overarching categorization for these populations. As previously mentioned, borderland Indigenous groups may conceptualize their homeland as being beyond the borders of the nation-state. Sharma (2020) argues that conceptualizing native and migrant as separate and/or at odds contradicts the intertwined nature of these categories for many Indigenous populations. Thus, one is left with the question of: *who should FUNAI protect considering that Indigenous population may transcend the divisions of the nation-state?*

Academics and the IOM have stated their disapproval of FUNAI's stance by stating:

> *"De fato, não há na legislação brasileira nenhuma determinação expressa de que indígenas migrantes não devem ser tratados como indígenas aos olhos da Funai... Entre outras consequências, a 'atuação modesta" da Funai tem afetado os direitos de migrantes indígenas Warao à nacionalidade e à documentação indígena (Da Silva et al., 2018; OIM 2018)." (Magalhães, 2018: 132)*
> "In fact, in Brazilian law, there is no determination expressed that Indigenous migrants should not be treated as Indigenous in the eyes of Funai ... Among other consequences, Funai's 'modest performance' has affected the rights of Warao Indigenous migrants from nationality to Indigenous documentation."

FUNAI's initial minimal participation in Operação Acolhida has had significant repercussions for Indigenous refugees with regards to documentation. The IOM notes that it is common for older Indigenous people to not have the name of any country listed on their documents (IOM, 2018). Typically, FUNAI signs off on paperwork for these irregular cases. Because they have primarily been absent in the case of Indigenous Venezuelan refugees, the

local government of Roraima has had to create its own protocol for dealing with these documentation irregularities (Magalhães, 2018: 132). Thus, at least initially, we observe the devolution of federal Indigenous responsibilities onto local governmental actors. Due to the lack of proper documentation, many Indigenous refugees have been pigeonholed into applying for asylum rather than temporary residency since the latter requires an acceptable form of identification. Receiving asylum prohibits one from moving freely between Brazil and Venezuelan thus significantly limiting Indigenous Venezuelans' opportunities and mobility. Indigenous Venezuelan documentation difficulties have also been attributed to a lack of technical and digital knowledge, illiteracy and language barriers (Rosa et al., 2021: 36). These factors have also contributed to documentation issues surrounding Indigenous children born in Brazil. The UNHCR and academics have been calling for more comprehensive translations and communication regarding documentation in order to prevent undocumented newly born Indigenous Venezuelans in Brazil (Ibid). Thus, while FUNAI has served as an obstacle within the documentation process for Indigenous Venezuelans, there are a range of factors that have also contributed to this issue. Nonetheless, while FUNAI initially avoided any responsibility surrounding this incoming population, they have begun to play a role in aiding specific subsections of this population.

Through advocacy from the UNHCR, FUNAI has begun to aid rural Indigenous Venezuelans but continues to not recognize urban Indigenous populations. As one aid worker explained to me, there are Indigenous populations in urban areas and Indigenous populations within Indigenous territories. Currently, FUNAI recognizes the Indigenous populations in the former category and questions the necessity to aid Indigenous populations who have "selected"

to leave their Indigenous territories. As Dr. Rosa, an anthropologist at Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, in collaboration with UN officials summarize:

> *"Aqueles que residem fora dessas áreas são tratados como "desaldeados", ficando desassistidos pelas políticas públicas específicas para povos indígenas. Há um entendimento equivocado de que o lugar dos povos indígenas é a floresta, e não a cidade, o que, em muitos aspectos, reverbera no atendimento oferecido aos Warao em nosso país." (Rosa et al., 2021: 31)*
> "Those who live outside of these areas [Indigenous territories] are treated as 'unsettled,' causing them to be unassisted by the specific public policies for Indigenous peoples. There is a mistaken understanding that the place of Indigenous peoples is in the forest, not the city, which, in many ways, reverberates in the service offered to the Warao in our country."

Thus, aid organizations and academics have attempted to highlight the many histories of displacement of these populations (especially the Warao) in order to both bring attention to the range factors that cause Indigenous populations to migrate as well as to advocate that all Indigenous populations be protected regardless of location (Rosa et al, 2021; IOM, 2018). Beyond this urban/ rural debate, FUNAI is still reluctant to get involved in Indigenous affairs in the state of Roraima. As one international aid worker explains,

> "We are advocating more and more that FUNAI gets involved, especially in the abrigos [shelters], because they're quite involved outside of the abrigos but also inside. FUNAI though, because of this composition, is a bit reluctant to get full-on because of the dispute of land in Roraima state. This is a very political issue so that they're a bit reluctant to address especially the issue of lands." (Interview 3)

This aid worker highlights one of the historical contentions that contributes to FUNAI's shifting role in Operação Acolhida. The land dispute mentioned refers to Raposa Serra do Sol, a million-hectare Indigenous territory in Roraima that took over three decades (1993-2009) to demarcate and be federally recognized as Indigenous Land (Bonilla and Capiberibe, 2021). Raposa Serra do Sol is home to approximately 25,000 Indigenous people from four tribes and is the largest Indigenous territory in Brazil (see **Figure 17** for map; Elizondo, 2008; Phillips,

2019b).[16] Rice farmers and miners in the region have consistently refused to leave these demarcated territories and claim they have a right to the land. While a 2009 Supreme Court case decision finally expelled rice farmers from the region, the Bolsonaro government has been lenient with mining due to the regions' potential rich reserves of gold, copper, molybdenum, bauxite, and diamonds (Phillips, 2019b). Raposa Serra do Sol also borders Venezuela and Guyana and these mining issues bleed into bordering countries causing it to be an issue of claiming sovereignty over resources and strengthening borders as well. Thus, due to ongoing violence and political tensions in the region, FUNAI has been reserved in its participation within affairs in the state of Roraima.

Despite FUNAI's growing yet minimal participation with Indigenous Venezuelans in Brazil, other governmental actors have played a role in protecting this vulnerable population. The judicial branch of the Brazilian government, more specifically the Federal Public Defender's Office (DPU) and the Federal Public Ministry (MPF)[17], have played a key role in advocating and putting pressure on local governments to increase protections for Indigenous Venezuelan refugees. Beyond the judicial branch, the Ministry of Citizenship (MC) handles the financial distribution of aid. Municipal governments can propose emergency plans for intaking Indigenous populations and request funding from the Ministry of Citizenship (Interview 4). Lastly, the Ministry of Human Rights has also played a role in ensuring that Indigenous Venezuelans rights are respected and protected. Overall, while FUNAI has slowly increased its recognition and participation in aiding Indigenous Venezuelan refugees, the organization has also evaded documentation and protection responsibilities causing the judicial branch to get involved while also decentralizing responsibilities on to the UNHCR and IOM.

[16] This territory was federally recognized in 2005 under Lula da Silva. See **Figure 17** for a map of the region.
[17] The Federal Public Ministry deals with crimes judged by federal courts and federal civil activities.

UNHCR's Initiatives with Indigenous Venezuelan Populations

The UNHCR has served as an advocate as well as specialized their services for Indigenous Venezuelans in Brazil. The organization has a point person for Indigenous affairs in the Pacaraima, Boa Vista, Manaus and Belem offices. The UNHCR Indigenous point person works with the local networks of the public executor's office, the public defenders, the prefecture and state to develop solutions and protective policies for these vulnerable populations (Interview 4). Currently, the organization is working with a range of actors to publish texts surrounding the Indigenous Venezuelan population. In order to help facilitate intercultural differences, the UNHCR published a multilingual guide about Indigenous health and how to serve Indigenous populations who use spiritual practices to heal. In April 2021, the UNHCR published a historical and contextual text on the Warao in Brazil in conjunction with Brazilian anthropologists and researchers (Rosa et al., 2021). The UNHCR plans to publish two more pieces this year: one in conjunction with the Ministry of Citizenship that will serve as a national guidance for sheltering and social assistance of Indigenous populations, and a second one with Ministry of Women, Families and Human Rights surrounding community protection for Indigenous populations (Interview 4). While the UNHCR has participated in some advocacy with local governmental actors, their primarily role is working directly with Indigenous refugees that are entering Brazil.

In the border state of Roraima, UNHCR's initiatives have focused primarily on the emergency sheltering of Indigenous populations. Currently, there is one UNHCR Indigenous shelter in the border town of Pacaraima and two more in Boa Vista (with several more shelters planning to open this year). The Indigenous shelters in Boa Vista are run by the Catholic missionary institution Fraternidade Federação Humanitária Internacional. This partnership is a

source of contention due to the Warao's historical legacy with missionaries causing academics to question the central role that this religious organization has in relation to Indigenous populations. As Dr. Magalhães from the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio) argues,

> *"É importante ter claro, porém, que a permanência da população indígena sob a gestão cotidiana do grupo missionário parece menos ocasional (FFHI, 2018)... Se há margem para que acolhida e evangelização se misturem, é porque faz falta a atuação de um órgão capacitado a lidar com migrantes que são também indígenas. No caso brasileiro, a organização que hoje peca por omissão é- para que se dê nome aos bois- a Fundação Nacional do Índio (FUNAI) (Magalhães, 2018: 129-130)."*
> "It is important to be clear, however, that the permanence of the Indigenous population under the daily management of the missionary group seems less occasional… If there is room for immigration reception and evangelization to mix, it is because the need for a body capable of dealing with migrants who are also Indigenous is needed. In the Brazilian case, the organization that today sins for their lack of presence is - to give the oxen a name - the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI)."

Magalhães highlights another repercussion of the FUNAI not assuming a central role in intaking Indigenous refugees in cities. Academics have demonstrated both the colonial roots as well as present-day repercussions of the evangelization of Indigenous populations in Brazil (Crocia de Barros, 1996; Bonilla and Capiberibe, 2021; Cabral and de Morais, 2020). Arguments that support Fraternidade's central role in overseeing Pintolândia and Jardim Floresta highlight the organization's experience working with Indigenous populations as well as their culturally-sensitive infrastructure that caters to these populations through outdoor stoves and crafting areas (Magalhães, 2018: 130). Magalhães argues that there is a greater need to separate religion from aid to protect Indigenous populations' freedom of thought and religion (Ibid). Thus, as a result of FUNAI setting parameters to their role with regards to urban Indigenous Venezuelans, the majority of emergency intake is overseen by the UNHCR, yet implementation is primarily filled in by local NGOs such as Fraternidade Internacional. The robust religious aid infrastructure of

Operação Acolhida continues to be a source of contention due to historical evangelization of Indigenous populations. While the UNHCR has provided the primary initial support for Indigenous Venezuelans, the IOM has played a critical role in advocating politically for this population.

IOM's Initiatives with Indigenous Venezuelan Populations

The IOM has focused primarily on public policy and academic publications to help defend the legal rights of Indigenous Venezuelans in Brazil. The IOM has published two extensive reports surrounding Indigenous Venezuelans in Brazil: the first, in partnership with the UN and members of FUNAI analyzes the role of a range of actors in assisting with the legal rights of this population (IOM, 2019); the second, is a participatory study with Indigenous Venezuelans in Boa Vista, Pacaraima, and Manaus that provides recommendations and solutions for aiding the Indigenous populations (IOM, 2020). According to the IOM field coordinator in Boa Vista, these publications aim to fill the gap of the lack of qualitative research on/ with the Indigenous Venezuelan populations in Brazil (IOM, 2019: 59). In the rest of this section, I will highlight how IOM's advocacy has centered around demands for increased leadership and responsibility from Brazilian governmental actors.

The 2019 publication *Legal Aspects of Assisting Venezuelan Indigenous Migrants in Brazil* studies Indigenous refugee rights, identifies issues, and proposes recommendations at multiple scales for the current situation in Brazil. While the recommendations range from structural to health and education, I will highlight selected recommendations addressed at main actors of Operação Acolhida:

> *"3. The leadership of Funai in coordinating actions to be implemented in view of indigenous particularities should be encouraged in the roles of harmonizing, in the three federative levels, the agencies responsible for implementing social and migration policies; of offering*

> *indigenous guidelines to the federal government; and of acting as consultant and monitor to the Brazilian State and to indigenous peoples, so as to ensure non-discrimination and promote a culture of peace in Brazilian society regarding indigenous migrants…*
> *10. The federal government, in a dialogue with states and municipalities and in consultation with the indigenist agency (Funai), should clarify responsibilities and give directives of action for and between federative entities, considering that the topic of migration falls within the federal competence but the performance of the resulting public policies is at least a coresponsibility of states and municipalities…*
> *33. Funai and MPF should offer indigenist guidance to the social assistance network at state and municipal levels so as to ensure appropriate and specific assistance for indigenous migrants, understanding and explaining the notion of social risk from an intercultural point of view" (IOM, 2019: 129-132).*

IOM's policy recommendations call for the Brazilian federal government and FUNAI to step up leadership and responsibilities in relation to migration management. More specifically, they target FUNAI as the organization that should play a central role in coordinating federal, state, and municipality governments and provide indigenist guidance at multiple scales. Thus, the IOM plays an advocacy role for Indigenous Venezuelan refugees while also calling for upscaling of the federal government and FUNAI's role in aiding Indigenous refugee populations in Brazil. While the IOM and UNHCR have undertaken critical roles in providing protection, guidance and defense for Indigenous Venezuelan refugees, a large portion of the on-the-ground initiatives and programs are run by civil society actors.

Civil Society Initiatives with Indigenous Venezuelan Populations

Civil society actors have played a key role in developing educational initiatives for the Indigenous populations. Indigenous populations require different educational programs due to their ethnic backgrounds and linguistic differences. Statistics on the Indigenous populations in the Pintolândia indicate that many of these refugees have low levels of formal education, thus, local NGOs are advocating and supporting projects to develop integrative and inclusive methods of providing education for these populations (REACH, 2018). Jacqueline da Rocha Silva and Graziela Felisbino de Camargo César, leaders of the Montessori socio-educational project "Casa

de los Niños" (Home of the Children), highlight the complexities of providing education for Indigenous children:

> *"O sistema de educação é um dos palcos que apresenta tais inadequações no atendimento da população migrante, sobretudo a indígena, sendo objeto de problematização tanto não inserção desse público na rede pública de ensino, o que ocorre em quase sua totalidade quanto a inserção que não considera suas especificidades culturais (Silva & César, 2018: 218)."*
> "The education system is one of the stages that presents such inadequacies in the service of the migrant population, especially the Indigenous population, being the object of questioning both the non-insertion of this public in the public school system, which occurs in almost its totality and the insertion that it does not consider their cultural specificities."

Here Silva and César note the inadequacy of placing (or not-placing) Indigenous refugee children within the traditional public school system. They note that the trends have been to primarily omit this population from attaining a formal education. Nonetheless, if they were to be placed in a traditional public-school setting, this would also be inadequate as it would be insensitive to their cultural (especially linguistic) differences. While the UNHCR has acknowledged the specificities of the Indigenous populations by providing raw material for indigenous crafts, the federal government has designated this population as not qualifying to be interiorized to other parts of Brazil (Mattos, 2018). As a result, this population has been stagnantly located in Pintolândia as well as in growing informal housing settlements throughout Boa Vista. Local NGOs along with aid from the UN have helped implement some programming within the Pintolândia shelter:

> *"A gerencia das atividades fica por conta da ONG Fraternidade Federação Humanitária Internacional que incentiva a produção de artesanato entre os indígenas, além de realizar outras atividades educacionais e culturais, com o apoio do UNICEF. Nesse caso, vale notar que o ensino da língua Warao é feita por professores da mesma etnia no próprio abrigo, os quais são subvencionados pela referida organização das Nações Unidas. Já em relação a produção do artesanato, um dos limites apontados por eles é o não acesso à palha do buriti no Brasil, matéria prima essencial para a produção de cestaria, redes entre outros objetos." (Silva, 2018: 215)*

> "The activities are managed by the NGO Fraternidade Humanitarian Federation International, which encourages the production of handicrafts among the indigenous people, in addition to carrying out other educational and cultural activities, with the support of UNICEF. In this case, it is worth noting that the teaching of the Warao language is done by teachers of the same ethnicity in the shelter itself, who are subsidized by the aforementioned United Nations organization. Regarding the production of handicrafts, one of the limits pointed out by them is the lack of access to buriti straw in Brazil, an essential raw material for the production of basketry, nets and other objects."

The UNHCR, UNICEF and Fraternidade have collaborated within the Indigenous shelters to provide Indigenous educational and crafts support. Most recently, Fraternidade has founded an educational center to provide a more structure centralized education system for Indigenous Venezuelan children (Interview 4). This collaboration has centered on supporting Warao members to create their own educational programs. Beyond the initiatives within Pintolândia, Casa de los Niños, a Montessori school in Boa Vista, has been working to develop a robust Indigenous educational environment that is accessible to Indigenous refugees both in Pintolândia as well as those living outside shelters and in informal housing throughout the city. Silva and César explain the program they have founded in collaboration with Indigenous educators:

> *"Um dos focos tem sido o empoderamento social, necessário para que se capacite os indivíduos para a vida em suas comunidades, de maneira que eles contribuam para o desenvolvimento e a manutenção de sua cultura no ambiente comunitário. Assim, o projeto oferece espaço e ferramentas para que os professores indígenas, também imigrantes e residentes do CRI, alfabetizem as crianças em sua língua materna e passem suas histórias e costumes por meio das aulas culturais. Dada a importância do artesanato para essas comunidades, os artesãos e artesãs foram convidados a participarem do cronograma semanal de atividades com aulas de arte tradicional de seu povo para as crianças e adolescentes... Todas as decisões são tomadas em conjunto pela equipe pedagógica do projeto e os lideres e professores indígenas, visando a garantia do direito assegurado a eles de consulta prévia, livre e informada sobre as ações que afetam a comunidade (Silva & César, 2018: 220)."*
> One of the focuses has been social empowerment, which is needed to empower individuals for life in their communities, so that they contribute to the development and maintenance of their culture in the community environment. Thus, the project offers space and tools for Indigenous teachers, also immigrants and residents of CRI,

> to teach children to read and write in their mother tongue and pass on their stories and customs through cultural classes. Given the importance of handicrafts for these communities, artisans were invited to participate in the weekly schedule of activities with traditional art classes from their people for children and adolescents… All decisions are taken jointly by the project's pedagogical team and Indigenous leaders and teachers, aiming at guaranteeing the right assured to them of prior, free and informed consultation about the actions that affect the community.

Most notably, this explanation emphasizes collaboration and working jointly with a variety of leaders and educators. While handicrafts are incorporated into the educational curriculum, it is not necessarily the central form of teaching as was the case at least initially in the UN/Fraternidade initiatives in Pintolândia. Rather, there is an emphasis on critical and collaborative pedagogy by passing down knowledge through a variety of mediums and ensuring that the Indigenous community has agency in the decision-making process. They note the importance of maintaining continuity of cultural practices as a manner of easing the migratory process for Indigenous children (which could apply to all Venezuelan children) which also allows the community to build their own Indigenous educational epistemology. The thoughtful, culturally sensitive and bottom-up approach of Casa de los Niños contrasts and fills the gaps from the avoidance and subsequent devolution of responsibilities within Operação Acolhida. These contrasting approaches demonstrate larger questions of scale, decision-making and agency within the Operation. In the context of Indigenous populations, local smaller-scale organizations such as Fraternidade and Casa de los Niños have provided the most hands-on, inclusive programming, meanwhile, international NGOs have provided the critical infrastructure to support these vulnerable populations. As a result, I argue these international aid organizations and civil society actors serve as institutional stewards for Indigenous Venezuelan refugees. While Indigenous Venezuelans are provided space and agency within some local educational initiatives, civil society actors and international NGOs primarily represent these populations

when confronting governmental limitations. This institutional stewardship is not unique to Operação Acolhida but rather emerged in the 1980s and 90s through the idea of "diversity-based development, favouring the accommodation of the collectives and their organizations and demands to the global neoliberal agenda endorsed by multilateral agencies" (Bonilla and Capiberibe, 2021: 108). The institutionalized Indigenous movement that emerged post 1988 Constitution adopted concepts such as sustainable development and self-determination to form NGO partnerships and promote funding and projects. Barretto Filho and Ramos (2019) identify this period with professionalized and bureaucratic Indigenous political participation while attributing this institutional stewardship to the aggressive capitalist Brazilian society that emerged post-military dictatorship. Bonilla and Capiberibe (2021) note that this shift in Indigenous development and representation led to fragmentation within Indigenous movements. Thus, the current institutional stewardship for Indigenous Venezuelans emerges from the historical legacy of Articles 231 and 232 (which legitimized demarcation and protection of Indigenous Lands) that led to a regime of institutionalized Indigenous projects and representation in Brazil. Overall, while civil society actors have played a key role in centering Indigenous voices, the unequal treatment of vulnerable populations will continue as long as the Brazilian governmental actors, more specifically FUNAI, refuses to take initiative.

Conclusion

This chapter explored how devolution and upscaling emerges in the context of intaking Indigenous Venezuelan refugees in Operação Acolhida. Through foregrounding FUNAI's evasive role within the Operation, I have highlighted the debates regarding whether one is a migrant or Indigenous first and foremost, as well as contentions surrounding rural vs. urban

Indigenous populations. Due to FUNAI primarily avoiding responsibility towards these populations, Indigenous refugees face limited mobility and have primarily received aid from international aid organizations and civil society actors. The UNHCR has served as the main on-the-ground infrastructure for Indigenous populations through providing specific Indigenous shelters in conjunction with Fraternidade. Meanwhile, IOM has primarily taken on an advocacy role through collaborations and publications that state key demands and recommendations to further support and defend Indigenous Venezuelan refugees' rights. Lastly, I explored how local NGOs have proven to be the most sensitive to these populations' needs through integrating a more bottom-up approach to programming that centers on collaboration and developing Indigenous epistemologies within educational initiatives. As a result of FUNAI's avoidance and subsequent decentralization of responsibilities, I argue that Indigenous Venezuelans experience institutionalized stewardship whereby international aid organizations and civil society actors provides a certain level of support and representation yet continue to limit their day-to-day mobility. I demonstrate that this institutionalized representation is not unique to Operação Acolhida but rather emerged as common practice following the enactment of Articles 231 and 232 of the 1988 Constitution. Overall, while Operação Acolhida has primarily designated the UNHCR and IOM as the main coordinators, both these organizations continue to advocate for the upscaling of the Brazilian governments' (federal, state, and municipal) responsibilities both in relation to Indigenous Venezuelans as well as the Operation more broadly.

FIGURES

Figure 16: Map that delineates the distribution of Indigenous populations in Brazil according to the 2010 Brazilian census (Funai, *Distribuição Espacial da População Indígena*).

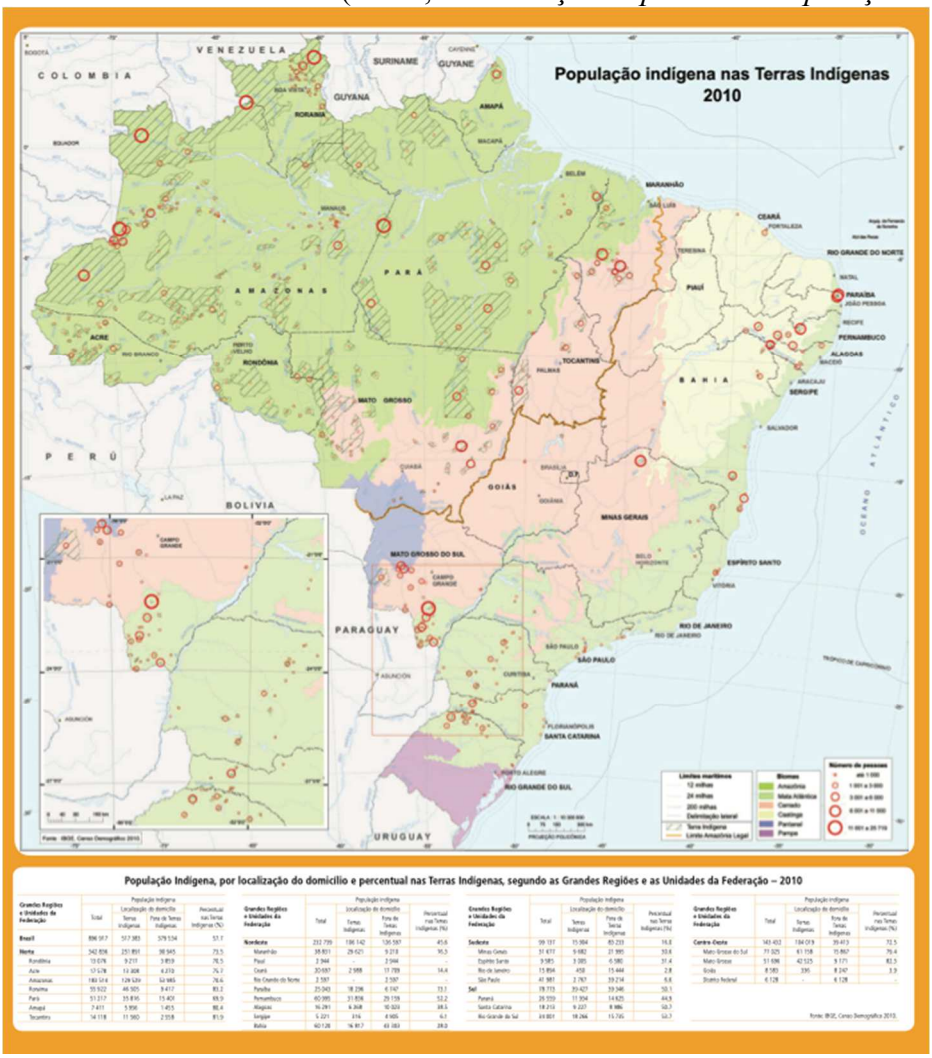


Figure 17: Map that delineates the contested region of Raposa Serra do Sol- (Phillips, 2019b)



CONCLUSION

Refugee governance is a challenging field due to the unpredictable movement of people. *My research demonstrates the importance of sensitivity to the spatial-temporal context as well as the politics between and within actors in studying the dynamic spaces of refugee governance.* By mapping the overlapping, adapting, and shifting relationships of key actors in Operação Acolhida, I demonstrated how actors and refugees are constantly in movement. The Brazilian migratory process in some ways immobilizes Venezuelan refugees: from the lengthy bureaucratic documentation, sheltering, and interiorization processes to not allowing Indigenous Venezuelans to qualify for relocation. Operação Acolhida emerged when Boa Vista was experiencing a large increase in Venezuelan refugees, but these migration flows have changed significantly since the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent Brazilian border closure (March 2020- June 2021).[18] During the 15-month border closure, the Operation shifted focus from intake and documentation to increasing and strengthening the sheltering and relocation processes. The Brazilian Army utilized this spatial-temporal context to decentralize their responsibilities on to other actors. Spontaneous occupations were disbanded and refugees living in informal housing were sheltered in formal UNHCR shelters. Thus, this border-closure period can be seen as both a time where the Operation was adapting to a new context while also attempting to strengthen and re-organize its refugee governance procedure.

The pandemic further exemplified the scalar negotiations and complications that emerged between institutional standards and local context. In Chapter 2 I demonstrated the large disconnect between institutional frameworks and its practical application. The UNHCR's VAF

[18] While migration flows from Venezuela technically stopped, some Venezuelans continued to migrate to Brazil via unofficial routes during the border closure.

was developed within the context of Syrian refugees in Jordan but formulated into a universal metric system. My analysis demonstrates that this framework obscures the actual vulnerabilities Venezuelan refugees face in Brazil as the independent metrics of VAF do not account for the rural, racial, and geopolitical specificities of Roraima. The gap between international mandates and local context has become further evident during the implementation of COVID-19 health standards and regulations in Boa Vista. Health practitioners have stressed the importance of social distancing as a means of slowing the transmission of COVID-19. *However, how can Venezuelan refugees practice social distancing when living in tight informal quarters and highly concentrated UNHCR shelters?* Social distancing recommendations were difficult to implement despite aid organizations providing Venezuelan refugees with information sessions and personal protective equipment. The Operation adapted by providing more access to sanitation and creating a new hospital and isolation shelters in preparation for potential COVID-19 outbreaks in the shelters (Vilela, 2020). Boa Vista has unfortunately still faced very high numbers of COVID-19 cases and deaths partially due to its weak health infrastructure (G1 RR, 2021). Overall, the pandemic has challenged aid organizations in Boa Vista to adapt international and institutional health recommendations to the local context.

The pandemic has not only modified Operação Acolhida's structure and adaptation strategies but has also shifted Venezuelan refugees' migratory decisions. In Chapter 3, I demonstrated how the historical and current avoidance of FUNAI's responsibilities has resulted in aid organizations serving as institutional stewards for Indigenous Venezuelan refugees in Brazil. This institutional stewardship has provided robust legal representation and the development of specialized educational programming. At the same time, Indigenous Venezuelans have been developing their *own practices* to navigate the migratory process in

Brazil. Most notably, some have begun to present themselves as *non-Indigenous* for the documentation process in order to qualify for interiorization. Through the Brazilian COVID-19 relief stimulus checks, documented Indigenous and criollo Venezuelans were provided with direct cash that allowed many refugees to *independently leave Roraima*. In response, the UNHCR has opened small offices throughout Brazil to provide support for Indigenous Venezuelans entering new regions (especially southern Brazil). The mobility provided by COVID-19 direct cash supplements poses larger questions as to whether robust aid infrastructure is the best approach to refugee governance. Research has suggested that humanitarian cash-based initiatives have promising results world-wide, have been successful in UNHCR programs in Jordan, meanwhile, practitioner journals are developing assessments for determining successful cash-based initiative models in refugee camps (Doocy and Tappis, 2017; Schimmel, 2015; Harpring and Franco, 2019; Kian et al., 2021). Recent publications have brought to light a range of issues concerning Operação Acolhida including: job placement in indentured servitude-like conditions, not aiding Venezuelans who crossed illegally during the border closure, and challenges to the reception and integration of unaccompanied Venezuelan minors in Brazil (Teixeira and Costa, 2021; Campos Lima, 2021; de Moura, 2021). Thus, as more studies critically analyze the strengths and weaknesses of Operação Acolhida, future research should consider other alternatives to robust aid infrastructure in Boa Vista as well as how the spatial-temporal context of COVID-19 continues to impact mobility and the dynamic spaces of refugee governance.

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