Better Shelter in the Venezuela crisis — dignified spaces along the way to stability
Our promise

We are a social enterprise committed to increasing the safety and dignity of forcibly displaced persons, by making it easier and more cost effective for humanitarian organizations to provide durable and reliable shelters to people of their concern.
Better Shelter is a social enterprise based in Stockholm, Sweden. We supply temporary infrastructure from Gdansk, Poland, and Mersin, Turkey and shortly from Panama.

We provide temporary shelter solutions, training and technical support to partner organisations worldwide.

Founded in partnership with the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, and the IKEA Foundation.

We have delivered >65,000 shelters to 73 countries. Middle East, Africa, Europe, South East Asia and Americas. >5,500 shelters delivered to Latin America and the Caribbean.
6 consecutive years of economic contraction and political, social and institutional tensions.

Latin America is experiencing the biggest displacement in its recent history.

More than 5.4 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela are outside their home country, an estimated 4.6 million of which reside within the region.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further aggravated the already dire living conditions of refugees and migrants from Venezuela. In addition to the grave health risks that mobile populations, including those in vulnerable situations, have been exposed to, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused widespread economic disruptions and exacerbated protection concerns.

“In this shelter complex, we are all like a family, we are all a family because we all came with the same objective: to look for an improvement for our families.”

Yanaira, Pacaraima shelter, Brazil
A more dignified space along the way

The path that many Venezuelans have to walk to reach stability and a better life is not an easy one.

More than 5.4 million Venezuelans, have left their country. On their way out towards neighbouring countries, they rely on the services provided by ETAs and PASIs.

Once they cross to Colombia, Peru, Brazil or any of the 17 countries in the region hosting Venezuelan migrants and refugees, they are received in transit centers in some cases to be relocated somewhere else to continue with their search of a better life.

Some return to Venezuela after seeing that the path in other countries proving even harder than anticipated.

Along this way, they find health, protection and education challenges, especially vulnerable groups such as women, children or indigenous populations. Humanitarian organizations accompany them along this way providing live-saving care.

The Better Shelter units are deployed along this way to provide more dignified spaces for Venezuelans and host populations to be able to receive adequate shelter, health care or even education.
A more dignified space along the way
Why Better Shelter?
A versatile solution widely-proven in Latin America and the Caribbean

**Proven solution in LAC**
- > 5,500 units deployed in more than 15 countries in LAC
- Different usages:
  - Temporary shelter
  - Extension of PASIs shelter space
  - COVID-19 quarantine and triage units
  - Medical consultation rooms
  - COVID-19 testing spaces
  - Patient waiting rooms
  - Infrastructure for psychosocial support activities
  - Information spaces
  - Storage of medical equipment
  - Classrooms
  - Child-friendly spaces

**Wide-ranging support**
- Upcoming warehouse in Panama from where we will be able to deliver in a short time to the LAC region.
- Support with design and planning, capacity building and quality assurance.

**Why the Better Shelter?**
- **Scale**
  Quick deployment and implementation – one partner built 140 units per day.
- **Durability & adaptability**
  Protection against wind and rain. Adaptable to different heating and cooling options.
- **Locally upgradable**
  Upgradable with locally available materials.
- **Safer and more dignified**
  Forcibly displaced persons have a safer and more dignified place to stay.
The Better Shelter

We provide dignified, safe, all-in-a-box shelters that can be deployed quickly without the need to rely on local materials or supply chains. The Better Shelter is modular and can be upgraded, repaired, reused or recycled.

Key features

- 17.5 m²
- Lockable door
- 4 windows & 4 ventilations
- Semi-hard and opaque plastic panels.
- 36 months lifespan
- 160 kg
- Solar powered, portable lamp.
- Assembly by a team of 4 in 5–6 hours without additional tools.

Performance

- Wind: Up to 28 m/s or 101 km/h gust speed.
- Rain: Passes artificial rain test – no leakage.
- Snow: 10.5 kg/m²*
- Fire: Fire and flammability protection: Fire retardant materials allows for minimum 2-minute escape time.

Applications

- Shelter
- Education
- Health
- Protection
- Communal Infrastructure

* Eurocode 1 - EN 1991 – calculations, 20 kg/m² Internal test.
How do we operate?
Support before, during and after implementation

**Design and planning**
- Project resource and time planning
- Design and 3D visualization
- Fire safety and risk mitigation
- Ground preparation and anchoring
- Climatic adaptation
- Wind resistance and risk mitigation
- Maintenance

**Capacity building**
- Training
- Installation support
- Technical troubleshooting
- Local material upgrade

**Assurance**
- Quality control
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Project communications
Modularity that suits different needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modularity – design alterations that suit different needs</th>
<th>Support with design &amp; 3d visualization to suit project needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 unit</td>
<td>2 BETTER SHELTER UNITS JOINED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 units</td>
<td>1 BETTER SHELTER UNIT + 1 STRUCTURE UNIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 units</td>
<td>1 BETTER SHELTER UNIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 units</td>
<td>Health infrastructure with space for five beds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shelter + shower and toilet area + cooking space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shelter + veranda + toilet and shower area.</td>
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A space to live, not just to survive

Everyday life shapes a big part of our identity and creates a sense of meaning. The habits steer the direction of the days without unpredictable or dramatic events – you drink coffee in the morning while listening to the radio; laugh at cartoons on the telly; argue with your spouse about the cleaning; have dinner with the friends; help your children brush their teeth. When your everyday life is taken away from you, it leaves you vulnerable and uncertain of the future.

We know that living as a refugee is far from how life used to be. And it’s far from what you wish it to be. And we hope for everyone to get the opportunity to create the everyday life that they desire. Until then, we create spaces where you can feel safe and dignified – and get the possibility to create habits that give a sense of meaning even if they are temporary.
Improved and more dignified temporary living space

Usages
• Temporary shelter in transit centers
• Extra dormitory space to facilitate decongestion
• Extension of PASI’s shelter space
• Temporary shelter to people affected by natural disasters

Locations
• Brazil
• Colombia
• Venezuela
• Honduras
• Guatemala

Info

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Good health is an essential requirement for refugees and migrants to be able to rebuild their lives. Yet displacement can take a significant toll on an individual’s health and wellbeing.

Millions of Venezuelans have emigrated as the health system faces shortages in medications, health supplies, interruptions of basic utilities at health-care facilities, and the emigration of health-care workers for years.

Yet, mobile populations are exposed to grave health risks on their search for a better life.

Adding to the challenges that existed prior to the pandemic, lockdown and movement restrictions have aggravated the difficulties in accessing health care and have contributed to increased needs both for Venezuelans and their host communities.

The wide loss of and the need to share accommodations, have left refugees and migrants unable to follow physical distancing measures, which resulted in mental distress and increased exposure to infectious diseases.
Modular infrastructure easily adapted to health response needs

**Usages**
- Isolation areas
- Health rooms
- Triage units
- Medical consultation rooms
- COVID-19 testing spaces
- Patient waiting rooms
- Information and orientation spaces
- Support to intensive care units
- Storage of medical equipment
- Changing rooms for medical staff

**Locations**
- Brazil
- Colombia
- Ecuador
- Peru
- Aruba
- Venezuela
- Costa Rica
- Mexico
- Argentina
- Panama
- Honduras
- Dominican Republic
- Guatemala
- Guyana
In the context of COVID-19, many countries in LAC have closed borders and banned non-resident foreigners to enter their territories. Movement restrictions have limited Venezuelan refugees’ and migrants’ access to livelihoods opportunities and have impacted their coping and survival mechanisms. The loss of jobs and incomes is leading to serious protection challenges and increased debts.

Forced evictions have left refugees and migrants and vulnerable groups living on the streets and facing instances of discrimination and xenophobia. This dire situation has forced some to consider returning to Venezuela. Spontaneous returns through irregular entry/exit points increase the risks of exposure to gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation, human trafficking and abuse particularly for women and other vulnerable groups. GBV has reported significant increases in the region during the pandemic.
Modular spaces for protection activities

**Info**

**Application**
Protecting

**Usages**
- Child Protection activities
- Spaces for psychosocial support for GBV survivors
- Spaces for psychosocial support for natural catastrophe survivors
- Shelter and communal infrastructure for indigenous populations

**Locations**
- Brazil
- Colombia
- Ecuador
- Peru

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The large flows of migrants and refugees from Venezuela include a high proportion of school-age children who have interrupted their education process due to migration decision.

The extent to which the local public schools can absorb these children is key for the ability of migrants — as well as locals — to accumulate skills and human capital.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and according to UNESCO, 100% of the Venezuelan children and adolescents who were enrolled in their host countries are currently out of school and without a certain return. The interruption of learning has also spread among children and adolescents who had already had their studies interrupted when they started their displacement. There are also those who, despite being enrolled in educational centers in their host countries, due to confinement have not been able to begin their school year, losing contact with their educational communities.

“In a humanitarian crisis, education is the launch pad for reconstructing lives.”

Fátima Gonçalves Cavalcante, Focal Point for Education in Emergencies, Fraternidade – Humanitária (FFHI)
Room for education and child-friendly spaces

**Usages**
- Classrooms
- Learning centers
- Child-friendly spaces

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THANK YOU TO THE HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATIONS THAT SERVE VENEZUELANs ALONG THE WAY TO STABILITY.
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