

**NOR  
CAP**

OPERATED BY NRC



# CashCap

**Case Study: Regional  
deployment to Latin America**

# CashCap case study:

## Regional deployment to Latin America

Humanitarian emergencies across the world continually change, and the humanitarian system adapts accordingly to respond effectively to the people affected by these crises. CashCap was set up in light of one of the largest changes in the humanitarian landscape - the increase of cash and voucher assistance as a form of aid.

Another major change in recent decades is how humanitarian action has evolved to respond to the spread of crises across multiple countries, such as Typhoons in Asia-Pacific or the Syrian refugee crisis. Technical working groups saw the need for regional coordination and humanitarian organisations started opening up regional hubs in key locations. This rise of regional infrastructure coupled with the growth of cash and voucher assistance meant there was a need for CashCap's independent, operational and technical cash and voucher support at the regional level.

### Building a regional approach

The Covid-19 pandemic brought many different challenges for actors delivering cash and voucher assistance, and they needed to quickly adapt for new ways of working. [Response for Venezuela's \(R4V\) Regional Cash Working Group](#), which provides support to the cash and voucher response for Venezuelan refugees and migrants across 17 countries in Latin America, acknowledged they needed to strengthen their services given the scale and disruption of the pandemic.

"Cash coordination requires a distinctive set of skills and ways of working, which CashCap is uniquely placed to provide," says Jimena Peroni, CashCap's regional expert for Latin America. A CashCap expert since 2016, Jimena has a lot of experience providing humanitarian and development agencies with a diverse range of technical, coordination, and capacity development support - and was deployed to support to the R4V Cash Working Group.

She helped them develop a clear strategy, including how to adjust to the different challenges of the pandemic. Staying true to CashCap's inter-agency mandate, she supported opportunities for shared learning, inclusive coordination and open information for all members, including embedding CVA into strategic planning, supporting co-leadership election process, and co-creating the [information dashboard](#) with the R4V information management team. "This is the CashCap logic: you build trust and ensure keeping yourself true to your partners in what you do at all times."

In May 2021, she led the highly successful [Regional Learning Event: Linking Cash Transfers with Social Protection Systems](#), which helped provide critical learning to all organisations working on cash and vouchers in Latin America. The online event hosted more than 450 participants and included panellists from governments of the Dominican Republic, Peru, Guatemala, Dominica and El Salvador, as well as UN, Red Cross and INGO partners.

Following Jimena’s deployment, the group is now strong, visible and highly valued by its members in the region, providing a critical, inclusive inter-agency space for national and subregional platforms, sectors and organisations implementing CVA in R4V. As of June 2021, the Regional Cash Working Group supported 82 partners across 17 countries to deliver cash and voucher assistance amounting to \$219 million to almost 684,000 Venezuelan refugees, migrants, and host communities.

“The regional working group has made progress that was unimaginable before [Jimena’s] arrival. Her solid technical knowledge, enormous experience in coordination, knowledge of the region and flexibility and working capacity have made her deployment a great success.” Lucia Steinberg, Regional CVA Delegate, IFRC Americas

### Closer to the crisis

With the amount of cash and voucher assistance increasing, the demand for CashCaps’ experts and services have grown too. Having a CashCap expert at the regional level not only provides the crucial independent and inter-agency support requested by regional cash working groups and other inter agency platforms – but also ensures the team are one step closer to the crisis and a growth in demand doesn’t compromise the quality of service.

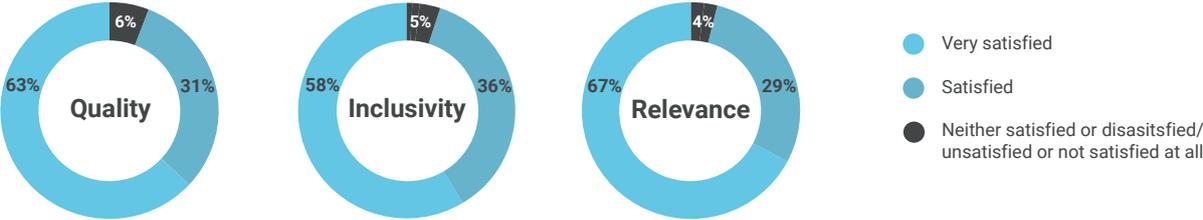
Jimena’s deployment to Latin America is a good example of how having an ear closer to the ground can be beneficial. “Latin America is complex,” she says. Humanitarian organisations are not only responding to a long-term humanitarian situation in Venezuela and the subsequent migration and refugee crisis across the whole region, but also to regular rapid-onset disasters, among many others. “It is also one of the least understood and underfunded regions and doesn’t have a large footprint of international humanitarian actors,” she adds.



Photo: Jimena Peroni in Arauca, Colombia in a workshop with Venezuelan migrants (December 2019)

As a regional expert, Jimena can see the wider Latin America context beyond only one country, yet isn't too far removed at the global level. "We are able to increase our effectiveness and provide a more context-based and tailored CashCap service," she says. For partners, the knowledge of a context is turned into a higher quality of service - 96% of stakeholders said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the relevance of CashCap's service in Latin America. The quality and inclusivity of CashCap's work in the regions also scored over 90%. Over 80% of stakeholders highly valued its contribution to interagency ways of working and multi-sector strategies.

**Stakeholder satisfaction of the service of CashCap's Latin America team**



**Right place right person, right time**

What that means in practice is that a regional expert can identify the type of expertise that is needed for a specific crisis. "Our mantra has been that we were the right people, at the right place, at the right time - the more we understand the context and the stakeholders, we can better understand what is the right time and what is the right profile that they need," says Jimena.

Celia Gonzalez, who was deployed for CashCap to support WFP in the Dominican Republic in September 2020, agrees: "The priorities for each response might be different so I think it really helps to have Jimena nearer the ground speaking to these different countries and know what's going on."



Photo: Celia in a focus group discussion in Dominican Republic. Credit: WFP/Celia Gonzalez.

It's not the same working on anticipatory actions in the Caribbean as working to respond to a migrant crisis in Colombia." As part of the CashCap expert team, Celia was the right fit to support World Food Programme (WFP) with their first emergency cash-based interventions in the Dominican Republic, a country that faces many natural hazards. Her mission was to test how Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) programming would work and the best delivery mechanisms for this specific context. She also tested a [Forecast Based Financing](#) pilot which aimed to provide cash before the event of a natural disaster and [developed a learning paper](#) to ensure the lessons are available for everyone.

But as Jimena points out, it's more than understanding which profile fits: "It's also understanding the coordination dynamics; why you need a certain area of speciality, for example, a social protection specialist; why you need a short deployment; why you need an advocacy specialist in Caracas. It's harder to understand all these things unless you are embedded in the region."

### Inter-agency profile

In addition to identifying the best profile for the mission, Jimena's regional position means she can provide critical support to a CashCap country expert, identify their needs and upskill them quickly. This is no more true than with the skills involved in ensuring the expert's guidance is independent of agency-specific agendas.

Celia Gonzalez found this support from Jimena was particularly critical: " We are all used to working for specific agency mandates and not working in an inter-agency way. It was really useful to have Jimena there to help me to switch my mindset and understand what can I give to the interagency level."

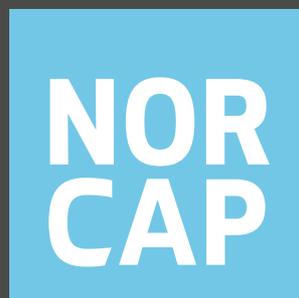
"You have to work with the experts to make sure they are truly fulfilling their inter-agency mandate," says Jimena. "Somebody asked me 'How do we do it?' We invest in our experts, a lot of capacity building around building those soft skills involved with being truly inter-agency. People are not born with an inter-agency profile."

---

**"[The CashCap expert] had a high commitment to inter-institutional coordination and positioning of issues of relevance to the Cash Working Group." Feedback survey participant on Central American expert's mission**

CashCap's in-built mission to provide an inter-agency service means we are looking at a crisis from all angles - not from one agency's perspective. By integrating a regional approach into the CashCap model, our support won't be from one agency's perspective, nor one country's viewpoint, resulting in more coordinated, effective, and harmonised support to people in need.

*Front cover photo: Jimena talking to Annery Zambrano, a Venezuelan migrant and her family who had received cash assistance.  
Photo credit: Fernanda Baumhard*



OPERATED BY NRC

Learn more about CashCap at  
[nrc.no/norcap/cashcap](https://nrc.no/norcap/cashcap)