Education in Emergencies Data Challenges in Latin America: Venezuelan Migration and Refugee Crisis

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Table of Contents

Table of Figures

Abstract

The Latin American region is currently experiencing the second largest refugee crisis in the world, the Venezuelan Migrant and Refugee Crisis, with approximately 4.6 million people displaced. In the midst of this crisis, host countries in the region have had to adapt their national education systems to address the needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees. Since a lack of rigorous data and evidence generally characterizes Education in Emergencies contexts, it became relevant to analyse the development and use of education data on the Venezuelan Crisis. Building on the assumption that data is not objective nor neutral, but a result of choices made by actors, this study explored the social construction of this data through a critical discourse analysis of key documents, and a series of semi-structured interviews with representatives from the three host countries with the highest number of Venezuelan migrants and refugees (Chile, Colombia and Peru), international organizations, and INGOs. This also allowed for the identification of policy assemblages—coexistent discourses, practices, and institutions—that through their interactions shape and/or transform the development and use of data in this context.

As a result, three main findings were identified: (a) regionally framed response to the Crisis; (b) limited scope of data to identify educational needs; and (c) narrow participation in the development and use of official educational data. The leading role in the development and operationalization of a response plan to the Crisis taken by international institutions through regional mechanisms such as R4V, has resulted in a regional approach that causes actions to be taken mainly at national and regional levels. The patterns of migration existent in the Crisis—in-transit and pendular—and the prioritization of access to education in the development of data on migrants and refugees bring up limitations preventing current data to be representative of all migrants and refugees, especially of those with irregular status. Finally, the existence of limited actors in the development of what is considered to be 'official' educational data on the crisis, overlooks other sources of information available such as those generated by NGOs that are operating at local levels. This is exacerbated by high levels of competition for funding between NGOs which results in an ineffective use of the developed data, since not all of it is shared within regional coordination

mechanisms. In this regard, the democratization of educational data becomes a necessary step forward in the framework of the Crisis.

Since previous research on Education in Emergencies data in the region mainly focuses on what data is being developed and through which processes, this study provides an initial attempt to move beyond an analysis of educational data in abstract terms to a more comprehensive one that interrogates what, where, for what purpose, and by whom this data is being developed and used.

Acronyms

EiE – Education in Emergencies

EMIS – Education Management Information Systems

INEE - Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies

INGOs – International Non-Governmental Organizations

IOM – International Organization for Migration

MoEs – Ministries of Education

OCHA – United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

PISA - Program for International Student Assessment

R4V - Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants of Venezuela

REDLAC – Regional Group on Risks, Emergencies and Disasters for Latin America and the Caribbean

RMRP – Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan

UNHCR - The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Chapter 1: Introduction

The need for rigorous research and evidence in Education in Emergencies (EiE) is generally unmet (INEE et al., 2019). Accessing reliable, accurate, and consistent EiE data is a challenge for policymakers and practitioners around the globe (INEE, 2020). Since EiE data plays a key role in the production of knowledge, the lack of it obstructs the ability of policymakers and practitioners to develop evidence-based policies and interventions that adequately respond to the priorities and needs of affected communities (Anselme et al., 2019; Sanderson, 2002). The Latin American region is no exception.

Over the last decade, Latin American countries have been facing concurrent humanitarian crises resulting from socio-economic and political instability, violence, natural hazards, internal displacement, and migration flows (UNICEF, 2020c, 2021). COVID-19 has exacerbated many of these crises. These crises have both negatively impacted the ability of affected communities to access education and limited the capacity of stakeholders to generate relevant evidence in a fast-changing context where education is one of the most underfunded components within humanitarian responses (INEE, 2020).

Considering the importance of evidence in the decision-making process in leading to the informed development of educational policies and programming in emergency contexts and its limitations in the region, this study will contribute to the generation of evidence in the field by analysing challenges associated with EiE data in the framework of the biggest humanitarian crisis the region is experiencing: the Venezuelan Migration and Refugee Crisis (hereafter 'the Crisis').

Venezuela has become the second country in the world, after Syria, with the highest number of people displaced or seeking refuge in other countries (Dooley & Bahar, 2019). According to the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants of Venezuela (R4V), as of August 2021, approximately 4.6 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants were living across Latin America and the Caribbean. Even though the terms 'refugee' and 'migrant' are often used interchangeably, overlooking their differences negatively impacts the ability of the affected population to have their needs adequately addressed. By recognizing a

person as a refugee—an individual that fled her/his country of nationality due to fear of persecution or death, host countries ought to provide protection according to refugee international and regional legal instruments to guarantee refugees' freedom and safety; while if a person is recognized as a migrant—an individual that chose to move for a variety of non-life-threatening reasons such as education, family, or employment—national immigration regulations will be applicable instead, which could limit the capacity of certain external actors (e.g. international organizations) to provide technical and financial support (IOM, 2019a; UNHCR, 2016; UNHCR, 2019).

Approximately three million Venezuelan migrant and refugee children and youth in host countries are currently in need of access to education (R4V, 2021b). The scarcity of funds requires host countries and other actors (such as international organizations and INGOs) aiming to address this issue to carry out effective and efficient educational planning (Dooley & Bahar, 2019). Therefore, it is crucial for these actors to understand the actual conditions around the Crisis, and the objectives and contexts in which educational systems of host countries operate to create feasible solutions to overcome current educational challenges (Anselme et al., 2019; INEE, 2019a).

Since data limitations lead to challenges addressing the actual needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees, it becomes necessary to understand what kind of data is being developed around this issue, how, and by whom. Consequently, this report will analyse how educational data is being developed and used in the framework of the Crisis and what the decision-making structures behind this data are that translate into the prioritization of certain interventions over others.

Aim and Research Questions

This study aims to build a better understanding of the social construction of data that sustains policies and interventions to address educational needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in host countries and how the data is being used by different stakeholders. In this regard, this report addresses two overarching research questions, each with a collection of sub-questions:

1. How and by whom are educational issues associated with Venezuelan migrant and refugee children in host countries being framed and with what data?

   a. What kind of data is currently being collected? How is it collected? How does it get processed?

   b. Who are the intersecting actors in relation to the collected data?

   c. What are the discourses behind the decisions taken by these actors?

   d. What are the gaps in terms of data?

   e. What factors are contributing to these limitations in terms of data collection?

2. How is the data being used by different stakeholders working on the educational issue of Venezuelan migrant and refugee children in host countries?

   a. Are there any contradictions among stakeholders in the use of the same data? How are these being managed?

   b. Why are certain solutions proposed over others?

To answer these questions, a critical discourse analysis of key available documents from both host countries and international institutions will be adopted in combination with semi-structured interviews of representatives from host countries' Ministries of Education, international organizations, and INGOs, with the objective of identifying key elements that respond to these interrogations.

This report begins with an overview of the theoretical foundations, ideas and definitions sustaining the study followed by a summary of the Crisis, its key elements, and the approach, especially in terms of education, adopted by host countries. This helps to introduce the Crisis and the issue of migrant and refugee education in host countries while emphasizing the importance of EiE data and planning, as well as to sustain the theoretical tools that will be used in this study, namely governance by numbers and policy assemblage. Based on the information presented and the research questions mentioned above, this report highlights three main findings related to data collection and its use in the framework of the Crisis, which will be organized as follows: (a) regionally framed response to the Crisis; (b) limited scope of data to identify educational needs; and (c) narrow participation in the development and use of official

educational data. This will then lead to a discussion about possible implications of this study to further the understanding of EiE data challenges in the region.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

This study draws on the concepts of governance by numbers and policy assemblage, interrogating the social construction of the data used to guide the development of interventions to address the educational needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in host countries.

Governance by numbers entails reducing "complex processes to simple numerical indicators and rankings for purposes of management and control" (Shore & Wright, 2015, p. 22). As a theoretical framework, it explores how numerical data is created and used to guide policy-making decisions, shape institutions, and develop interventions (Paananen, 2020). Under this umbrella, it is assumed data is not objective and neutral, but a result of choices made by different actors (both national and international) based on a series of ideological assumptions and values, as well as a reflection of power relations (Piattoeva & Boden, 2020; Prinsloo, 2020). This concept has its roots in Foucault's understanding of government, governance, and governmentality not only in terms of political structures but also the ways in which institutions, techniques and procedures are used to direct human behaviour (Paananen, 2020, p.158). Building on Foucault's work, Miller and Rose (1990) state these institutions, techniques and procedures are shaped in particular ways to achieve clear objectives, allowing human behaviour to be steered from a distance to not jeopardize individuals' autonomy (Paananen, 2020; Piattoeva & Boden, 2020). Even though the use of data for governing purposes can have positive outcomes, such as knowledge production, identification of inequalities and educational challenges, and policy instruments, it is important to note that data can also be used to perpetuate inequalities and frame situations in a beneficial way to certain actors over others (Bolea, 2020; Piattoeva & Boden, 2020). In this regard, the 'democratization' of data — both its development and use — through the involvement of a variety of actors during these processes becomes not only relevant but necessary, since data can have unintended effects on social justice (Bolea, 2020; Scott, 2020).

In terms of education, the concept of governance by numbers is usually linked with standardized tests, such as Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), and the role they play in assessing quality of education around the globe (Paananen, 2020). However, the scope of governing by numbers in education goes beyond this

set of data. Williamson (2017) states there has been a 'datafication' process in which educational processes and elements were transformed into data, which resulted in data playing a key role in how educational practices, policies and institutions are managed, made, and performed (p. 4). This has directly impacted evidence-based policies and planning, since educational issues have started to be perceived as measurable (Williamson, 2017). In this framework, some complex educational issues could be oversimplified. In EiE contexts, timeliness is a fundamental factor in effectively responding to educational needs; consequently, policymakers and practitioners should aim to reduce these risks. Understanding how governance by numbers occurs at the local, national, and regional/international level allows for a differentiation between the act of measurement and the act of intervention or governance and its effects in the approach and conceptualization of educational issues (Piattoeva & Boden, 2020). For the purpose of this study, an understanding of data in these terms helps to inform how the Crisis in the field of education is being framed, what are the discourses behind intersecting actors and decision-making processes, and why some approaches and/or issues are being prioritized in relation to others.

This interpretation of data also leads to the concept of policy assemblage, which refers to multiple heterogenic elements, such as objects, practices and institutions, that coexist to comprise and shape the development of policies, constantly transforming the relationship between actors and the issue being addressed (Mellaard & van Meijl, 2017). Assemblages are transformed by actors and their agencies, interactions, and exchanges in the framework of policy enactment (Mellaard & van Meijl, 2017; Paananen, 2020). However, "policy, and by extension policy actors, institutions and networks only work to the extent that they can be shown to influence behaviour" (Thompson et al., 2021, p. 5). In this regard, to understand how policy assemblages work, the emphasis not only needs to be on the elements that comprise decision-making dynamics but also on the nature and type of relations sustained between these actors (Thompson et al., 2021). By using the concept of policy assemblage around educational data developed for the Crisis, it is possible to identify the underlying dynamics between actors and practices that exist during the development and use of this data.

These theoretical tools — governance by numbers and policy assemblage — unveil new questions around the development and use of educational data in the Crisis that could also be used in other EiE contexts, switching the focus from analysing data collection and its findings to understanding the institutions, discourses, and interactions behind these processes. In this regard, the examination of the data under a governance by numbers lens allows for the identification and analysis of the social elements that comprise it. The analysis of these elements will be complemented by using the concept of policy assemblage, making particular emphasis on the intervening actors' role and positionality in the development and the use of data.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

This chapter presents relevant concepts, background information, and previous studies related to EiE planning and data that will allow a better understanding of the context in which the analysis of the development and use of EiE data will be embedded by applying the concepts of governance by numbers and policy assemblage.

Data Challenges in Education in Emergencies Planning

EiE refers to the different actions taking place in situations of crisis — including but not limited to long-term instability, disasters, protracted crises, and forced displacement — with the objective of providing learning opportunities to affected-populations (INEE, 2019b). Effective and adequate educational planning, which requires reliable data to help policymakers and program designers make pertinent decisions, contributes to ensuring the success and sustainability of responses (INEE, 2010). The fluid characteristics of emergency contexts not only require evidence-based and flexible planning grounded in reliable data, but also ongoing needs assessments and situational analyses that account for possible changes in circumstances (IIEP, 2006).

Having access to reliable, accurate, consistent, and comprehensive EiE data is not only key for effective educational planning, policy, and decision-making but also for the efficient allocation of limited resources (Anselme et al., 2019). Mendenhall (2019) highlights the lack of quality data and evidence in EiE contexts and defines it as a pressing issue that negatively impacts the ability of relevant actors (both national and international) to adequately address the educational needs of affected communities. Timeliness and gaps in existing data are among the main issues facing the development of relevant EiE knowledge which is exacerbated by challenges associated with "collecting and harmonizing existing data from multiple actors…often produced under severe time and resource constraints" (Montjouridès & Liu, 2019, p.18).

Additionally, the research of Buckner et al. (2019) aimed to assess EiE data collection and use. The authors found five main uses of data: sector coordination,

guiding program design, evaluating effectiveness, guiding policy and decision-making, and advocacy. They also highlighted the importance of "moving away from talking about data in EiE in the abstract to specifying data for what, where, and for what purpose" (p. 21). This study builds on the findings and approach used in Buckner et al.'s (2019) research to understand the collection and use of EiE data, however in this case in Latin America rather than the Middle East, and adds another interrogation in this regard —*by whom.*

Educational Response to the Venezuelan Migration and Refugee Crisis

The Venezuelan exodus has been caused by ongoing political and economic turmoil, which have exacerbated poverty, human rights violations, and impeded access to basic necessities (food, education, and health; IOM, 2019b; Van Praag, 2019). The financial default experienced by the country in November 2017 deepened the humanitarian crisis, increasing migratory flows and displacement of Venezuelans especially at the end of that year and in 2018 (Muñoz-Pogossian, 2018; OAS, 2021).

According to R4V, as of August 2021, there were approximately 4.6 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants living across Latin America and the Caribbean — the highest number of people displaced being in Colombia (1.7 million), Peru (1 million), and Chile (457,300). This makes Venezuela the second country in the world, after Syria, with the highest number of people displaced or seeking refuge in other countries (Dooley & Bahar, 2019). However, the support of the international community has been limited, translating into approximately $125 spent on each Venezuelan refugee. To put this number in perspective, it is estimated that approximately $1,500 has been spent on each Syrian refugee by the international community (Dooley & Bahar, 2019).

The magnitude and complexity of the Crisis was unprecedented for the region. The existence of a consolidated coordination platform called 'Regional Group on Risks, Emergencies and Disasters for Latin America and the Caribbean — REDLAC', created in 2003, facilitated the ability of host countries and relevant stakeholders to coordinate

efforts to respond to the Crisis (REDLAC, 2019). In 2011 a Regional Education Group (hereby 'Education Cluster') was created within REDLAC to provide support on EiE to relevant stakeholders in the region, especially Ministries of Education — MoEs (Humanitarian Response, n.d.). This group is co-lead by UNICEF and Save The Children, and is comprised of UNHCR, INEE, IOM, Plan International, UNESCO, among others (Humanitarian Response, n.d.).

Following a decision from the General Secretariat of the United Nations in April 2018 in the midst of a significant increase in Venezuelan outflows, UNHCR and IOM were instructed to lead and coordinate a regional response to the Crisis (R4V, n.d.-a). Consequently, R4V was created to respond to the increasing migratory and displacement needs; unlike REDLAC, R4V's focuses exclusively on the Venezuelan Crisis. Even though the creation of two separated coordination mechanisms in the region was not ideal, in practice some compromises among stakeholders were made to ensure coherency and avoid overlaps, such as the Education Cluster responding to both R4V and REDLAC (R4V, n.d.-a; REDLAC, 2019). R4V also plays a key role through the publication of up-to-date statistics as well as country-level and regional-level reports in its platform. Available data and reports are shared by host countries and partner organizations to be disseminated through R4V, which serves as an official repository of information on the Crisis (R4V, n.d.-b, 2021b).

Moreover, in September 2018 an inter-governmental technical mechanism to coordinate efforts among Latin American and Caribbean countries to address the needs of Venezuelan refugees and migrants was created through the signing of the Declaration of Quito on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Citizens in the Region (IOM, 2020). This mechanism is known as 'The Quito Process' and it currently has 13 members. UNHCR and IOM co-coordinate the Technical Secretariat of the Quito Process (Proceso de Quito, n.d.). Education is one of the thematic areas of focus lead by Argentina with the technical support of UNESCO (Proceso de Quito, n.d.). Initially, the Quito Process set general objectives associated with ensuring that migrants and refugees in the region can regularize their migratory status in host countries as well as guaranteeing their access to basic services. During subsequent meetings held in this framework in 2020 and 2021, declarations started to include specific educational commitments. For instance, the 'Joint Declaration from the VI Technical International

Meeting on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Citizens in the Region' (2020) highlights the commitment to ensure access to education and continue working to strengthen at a regional level the articulation of public policies and processes to develop data and evidence to be able track the educational history of refugees and migrants across countries. The clear recognition of the importance of education and the next steps that should be taken to ensure evidence-based policy making and educational planning put the development of EiE data in the framework of the Venezuelan Crisis in the spotlight.
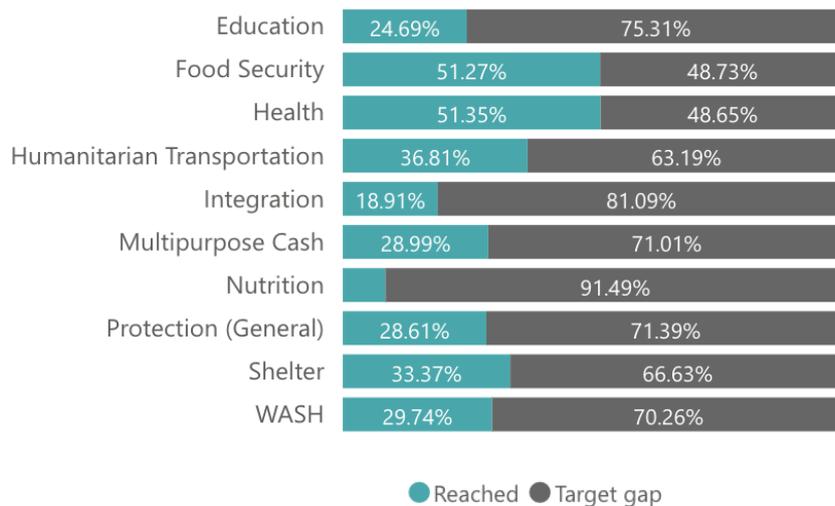
The creation of these mechanisms for EiE was also aligned with INEE's Minimum Standards in terms of coordination, since they promote exchange of information, joint assessments, development of strategic partnerships for the implementation of interventions, and resource mobilization (INEE, 2010). Consequently, the prioritization of the educational issues to be addressed takes place through the development of a *Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan* (RMRP) for each year where MoEs of the region take the lead. The RMRP is embedded in the regional coordination mechanisms and agreements previously mentioned (R4V and the Quito Process).

Approximately three million Venezuelan migrant and refugee school-aged children and youth are currently in need of access to education across the region (R4V, 2021b). The 2012-2016 UNHCR Global Education Strategy brought along a new approach in the education of refugees, the importance of their inclusion in national education systems (Dryden-Peterson, 2018). Unlike the creation of parallel schools run by international actors, this approach aimed to increase their possibilities to have sustainable access to quality education (Dryden-Peterson, 2018). However, some factors such as having an irregular migratory status in the host country and lack of relevant documentation (certificates from previous schools, birth certificates, etc.) can make this inclusion more challenging (UNESCO, 2018). Throughout the Venezuelan Crisis, host countries have been following this approach, making efforts to adapt the provision of their educational-related services and processes for the inclusion of Venezuelan migrants and refugees into national education systems. However, it is important to note that most of these countries were already experiencing difficulties to ensure access to

education prior to incoming Venezuelan migration flows, not only because of limited resources but also due to the limited capacity of their educational systems.

As of June 2021, as seen in Figure 1, only 24.69% of the targeted population has been reached by the responses developed by host countries, civil society organizations, and the international community (R4V, n.d.-c).

Figure 1: Progress on Population Reached by Sector (June 2021)

Sector	Reached	Target gap
Education	24.69%	75.31%
Food Security	51.27%	48.73%
Health	51.35%	48.65%
Humanitarian Transportation	36.81%	63.19%
Integration	18.91%	81.09%
Multipurpose Cash	28.99%	71.01%
Nutrition		91.49%
Protection (General)	28.61%	71.39%
Shelter	33.37%	66.63%
WASH	29.74%	70.26%

● Reached ● Target gap

Source: (R4V, n.d.-c)

Some of the challenges associated with reaching the affected population are directly linked with the funding gap reflected in the following graph. Even though education is now formally recognized within humanitarian response efforts and it has become more visible to donors, Figure 2 shows the education sector has a financial gap of 91.40% to be able to cover the educational needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in the region (INEE, 2020).

Figure 2: Funding Status by Sector (June 2021)
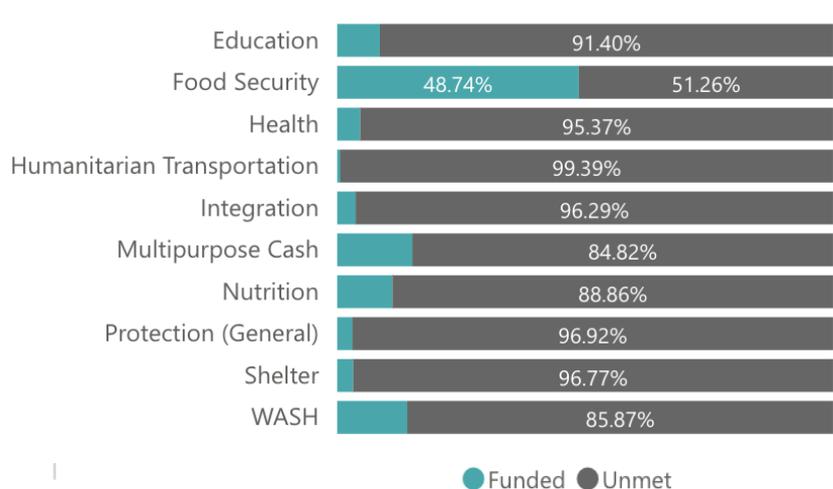
Source: (R4V, n.d.-c)

In a context of limited resources, such as the one present in the Crisis, there is an urgent need for effective and efficient planning based on reliable data and evidence. Response priorities set by R4V for 2021 include evidence generation and good programming in education (R4V, 2021b).

Educational Data Limitations

UNESCO's regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean carried out a rapid assessment on the availability of data about students' mobility within the MoEs of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Guatemala (UNESCO, 2020a). The methodology for the assessment was aligned with the Education Data Quality Assessment Framework, a tool created by UNESCO Institute for Statistics with the objective of identifying good practices and areas of improvement within education statistical systems (UNESCO, 2020a). Four dimensions were created to analyse the quality of the data generated in the countries of focus: (a) Prerequisites (legal framework, resources, and confidentiality); (b) Definition, statistical processes, and data storage; (c) Consistency, relevance, and opportunity; and d) Accessibility and use (UNESCO, 2020, p. 9). The analysis was done based on questionnaires and interviews with representatives from the MoEs and a review of a series of documents (legal frameworks, policies, official publications, websites, and databases from the MoEs). Overall, the assessment offers a positive outlook of the development and use

of educational data for students' mobility by the MoEs. Finally, UNESCO (2020) identifies four common challenges/areas of improvement: (a) data accessibility; (b) typification of students in a situation of mobility; (c) validation of students in an irregular situation; and (d) strengthening of human resources for data development and analysis.

This section demonstrates how the successful inclusion of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in national education systems is contingent on the ability of host countries to adequately respond to their educational needs. In a regional context in which financial resources and technical capacities are limited, evidence-based educational planning and policymaking based on reliable and accurate data can ensure appropriate and sustainable responses to address these needs. After almost four years of the Crisis and to overcome challenges associated with development of EiE data in the region, stakeholders need to move beyond its abstract understanding and start focusing on what, where, for what purpose, and by whom data is developed. This would also allow a clear understanding of the context in which this data is embedded and the actors, processes, and dynamics that can impact its development and use.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This section provides an overview of the methodological approaches used throughout this study to achieve its objectives. It starts by delineating the research approach and design used, moving to an in-depth description of the methods applied to carrying out the interviews and the critical discourse analysis that led to the main findings of this study. Finally, this section highlights the main ethical issues and limitations encountered during the research.

Research Approach

This study starts with the assumption that data is socially constructed. Such a starting point leads to interrogations around the actors, processes, and dynamics that exist and interact behind the development and use of this data. How and by whom are educational issues associated with Venezuelan migrants and refugees being framed in host countries and with what data? How is the data being used by different stakeholders working on addressing these educational issues in host countries?

Under the assumption that socially produced ideas and objects cannot be understood without taking context into account, this approach allowed for the analysis of the developed data, the context in which it is embedded, and the three dimensions that produce the discourse associated with the object of study: actors, relationships, and practices that characterize the surrounding context (Robson & McCartan, 2016). As a result, it was possible to unpack the intervening elements in the development and use of EiE data associated with the Venezuelan crisis.

Research Design

This study is comprised of two main components: (a) semi-structured interviews with representatives from both host countries, and international actors and INGOs working on Venezuelan refugee educational issues; and (b) discourse analysis of key documents from host countries and relevant actors working on educational interventions for Venezuelan migrants and refugees in the field. Figure 3 below shows

how these components were organized and implemented in practice to ensure comprehensive results throughout this study.

Figure 3: Steps in Implementation of Research

Literature Review

First Round of Interviews: International Organizations & INGOs

Critical Discourse Analysis on Key Documents

Second Round of Interviews: Governmental Entities

It is important to note that for the purpose of this study, the three host countries with the highest number of Venezuelan migrants and refugees were selected: Colombia, Chile, and Peru. This selection was reflected in the selection of the key documents for the discourse analysis as well as in the selection of participants for the interviews.

Methods for the Interviews

While the literature review and the discourse analysis of the identified literature fed into understanding the challenges associated with EiE data and the main elements behind how it is being framed in the Crisis, the interviews provided key information about the context and actors surrounding the development and use of this data. As is reflected in Figure 3, the literature review informed the questions made as part of the interviews. Some of the key ideas from the literature review that guided the questions were: (a) what, where, and for what purpose data is being collected; (b) access to information; (c) data collection processes; and (d) validation of the information.

Sampling

The study used a non-probability sample: purposeful sampling (Daniel, 2012; Miles et al., 2014). This means the site, settings, and relevant actors were selected based on their fit in relation to the objectives of the study. In this regard, the geographical area was Latin America because the study is exploring how EiE data is collected in the region; considering the Crisis that was selected, the focus was host countries of Venezuelan refugees and migrants from the region (Chile, Colombia, and Peru), and international organizations and INGOs operating in the field to address the educational issues associated with this crisis. Likewise, an expert sampling was carried out to identify and select potential participants with demonstrable experience in data collection and/or development of interventions aiming to address Venezuelan refugees' educational needs in host countries (Daniel, 2012). This sampling was selected from a list of organizations that have been identified as part of the research proposal development process as having presence in the abovementioned field (Appendix 1). Following this, a snowball sampling approach took place through which additional potential participants were identified because of recommendations made by the initial participants (Parker et al., 2019). This ensured other people with demonstrable and relevant experience in the subject could participate in the study.

Data Collection

Information was collected through semi-structured interviews via Zoom. The interviews aimed to encourage participants to share relevant information to the object of study that helped to confirm or disconfirm findings from the discourse analysis process (Wyse et al., 2017).

Since the information gathered from the interviews was going to complement the discourse analysis findings, a first round of interviews was conducted before the discourse analysis and a second round after it concluded. This sequence ensured that each component of the study complemented the other, and validated that they continued to be relevant in relation to the object of study (Wengraf, 2001). Also, by targeting international organizations and INGOs during the first round of interviews

and governmental officials from Venezuelan refugees' host countries during the second round, it was possible to adopt a multi-perspective interviewing process in which participants working in different contexts and organizations were able to bring differences and similarities in relationship to the analysed topic (Beitin, 2012). Following these methods, nine interviews were carried out — six in the first round of interviews and three in the second round. The nine people interviewed represented a range of organizations at a regional or national level as follows:

Participant A	INGO
Participant B	INGO
Participant C	International Organization
Participant D	International Organization
Participant E	International Organization
Participant F	International Organization
Participant G	Government Official from MoE
Participant H	Government Official from MoE
Participant I	Government Official from MoE

It is important to note that when the selected participants were interviewed, they held relevant positions related to educational data development, management and use, project management, or Educational Management Systems within their ministry or organizations.

Data Analysis

Once the interviews were finalized, transcripts were developed for each of them. Themes were also identified from the interviews using as a reference the key ideas from the literature review previously mentioned and the themes that resulted from the discourse analysis of key documents (Harding, 2015). Based on these themes (Appendix 3 and 4), particular attention was put on the language and common elements presented during the interviews, as well as on identifying elements that would provide context to the findings of the discourse analysis (Corbetta, 2003;

Harding, 2015). Consequently, each theme was described and complemented with the findings from the discourse analysis to draw on tendencies, contradictions, and general conclusions.

Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis

Literature Search

Considering the aim of this study as well as its underlying theoretical framework, literature was identified and selected in relation to the following categories:

a. Data Collection instruments from Venezuelan refugees' host countries
b. Key documents (please see Appendix 2) from relevant actors working on educational interventions for Venezuelan refugees in the field.

Priority was given to peer-reviewed documents, official publications from international organizations and host countries, and grey literature to ensure the information gathered was previously validated. It is important to note that due to the coordination mechanisms in place, most of the documents analysed were accessed through the R4V platform; however, both regional-level and country-level documents were analysed.

Literature Analysis

As it was mentioned above, the literature gathered was analysed with the objective of carrying out a discourse analysis of the documents to build on the interrogation of the social construction of Venezuelan refugees' education data. Discourse analysis focuses on understanding the different processes involved in the construction of social realities, how they interact and contribute to this end (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). There are different approaches to discourse analysis, such as ethnography of communication, interactional sociolinguistic, conversation analysis, and critical discourse analysis (Siegel, 2018). The first three approaches are focused on assessing communicative patterns, interactional, and conversational patterns

respectively, which allow a fine-grained examination of processes. However, the research questions guiding this study required a broad exploration of the context in which the development and use of EiE data in relation to the Crisis is embedded, including dynamics of power (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). In this regard, the type of discourse analysis carried out was a critical discourse analysis, which emphasizes the predominance of some discourses over others and how this could contribute to creating or sustaining unequal power relationships between actors (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). In order to do so, Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model was applied, focusing on analysing the text (in the case of this study the documents reflecting the developed data), the discursive practice (referring to the processes that produce and promote the ways in which the data is being developed and/or used), and the social practice (the relationship between the created discourses and the context in which they operate) (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

Literature Synthesis

A synthesis matrix was developed with the objective of identifying patterns and themes that were present across the analysed documents (Efron & Ravid, 2018). After reading each document the matrix was filled out with the following information: (a) purpose of study; (b) methodology used; (c) analysis made; and (d) summary of findings/main conclusions. The matrix was filled in a tentative and iterative way which resulted in it changing throughout the literature reviews and discourse analysis process to facilitate comparisons, contrasts, and analyses (Efron & Ravid, 2018).

Limitations of the Study

It is important to note the critical discourse analysis was carried out based only on official documents from international organizations, INGOs and host countries, and grey literature in the public domain. For the most part, the following documents were not of public access: EMIS databases, project documents/proposals and progress reports from main interventions in the field, sets of indicators and databases, and needs assessments. An analysis of these documents could have provided additional

or different insights on EiE data associated with the Crisis, especially in terms of its development and use. Also, an expansion of the scope to other host countries of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in the region could have contributed to the verification of the relevance of these findings for those contexts.

Likewise, funding and travel restrictions related with COVID-19 prevented the ability of the researcher to carry out the interviews on-site, which could have allowed for observing more details about the studied contexts, having access to additional relevant documents, or interviewing representatives of organizations and MoEs working at national and local levels respectively.

Additionally, the researcher's previous experience working in an international organization with a focus on Latin America provided a pre-determined understanding of the existent dynamics between these kinds of organizations and member states, and how they could impact the planning and decision-making processes in the framework of the Crisis.

Chapter 5: Findings and Discussion

This section presents the main findings from the critical discourse analysis of key documents and the interviews made with representatives of international organizations, INGOs, and MoEs. Since this study aimed to use both methods complementarily to answer to its research questions, the following three findings reflect elements identified using Fairclough's three-dimensional model (analysis of text, discursive practice, and social practice) supported by relevant information from the interviews. Altogether, this provides insights on the actors, relationships, and practices associated with EiE data development and use in the framework of the Crisis.

Regionally Framed Response to the Crisis

Findings

The response to the educational needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees is embedded in the regional coordination mechanisms and agreements previously described. According to R4V (2018), "given the magnitude of the outflow of Venezuelans, only a region-wide coordinated and comprehensive approach between governments—with the support of the international community—will enable the region to cope with the scale of the influx" (p.11). This text shows a discourse in which the international community is being presented as a key actor in response to the Crisis. Participant C emphasized that the nature of the migratory flows that characterized this crisis, which entails a high-level of in-transit Venezuelan migrants and refugees, has also called for a coordinated regional response, including both host countries and non-state actors.

While Beltrand (2019) stated the R4V platform is "aligned with, and complementary to, government-led initiatives" (p.12), in practice, international institutions have a lead role in the operationalization of existing regional mechanisms created for the promotion of a coordinated response (R4V, REDLAC and the Quito Process), predominantly UN agencies. The abovementioned discourse has not only translated into the involvement

of these actors in relation to the crisis but also into them adopting a discursive practice of guidance.

R4V and its RMRP allowed for the development of "common figures, messages and advocacy amongst more than 180 implementing partners" and the creation of a "common identity (R4V) across the continent" (Beltrand, 2019, p.7). The analysis of the text of country-level and regional-level reports identified through this study reflected similar approaches in terms of structure, language used, and presented themes. Again, this discourse of a regional response of a crisis is reflected in the language used throughout these reports, such as 'coherence', 'coordination', and 'integrated responses'. Similarly, country-level reports show the logo of R4V and its working groups at national levels—where the MoEs participate—even though the information provided comes from governmental sources. This makes R4V seem like the official source of the published information on the Crisis instead of the host countries. This is particularly relevant when considering that access to educational data on Venezuelan migrants and refugees is limited via the websites of the host countries' MoEs (UNESCO, 2020a).

Also, participants A, B, and D highlighted that in terms of financial resources UN agencies tend to be the 'grantees' of incoming funding instead of local organizations. As such, grantees can select the implementation partners for educational projects in the framework of the RMRP. This also reflects the discursive practice of international institutions adopting a role of guidance and leadership. While participants A and B referred to the high level of competition that arise for funding among INGOs and local organizations, participant D made emphasis on "how after so many years of working together as part of the Education Cluster, there is a common understanding/recognition of who can carry out what kind of activities based on their strengths and weaknesses". Participant D also stated this helps to ensure there is an effective implementation of the educational interventions being proposed and financed by donors. Although there is a regional approach to the Crisis in place, the relationships between discourses and the context have resulted in a social practice where there are differences between the roles played by stakeholders—some being more influential than others. This is also reflected in the assessments carried out by organizations such as UNESCO (2020) and Plan International (2021) where

recommendations are issued by each actor (e.g. civil society, donor countries, local governments, international organisations).

Discussion

This finding directly responds to the first research question of this study, providing insights on how the Crisis is being framed. The existence of an underlying discourse that brought about a legitimized regional coordination mechanism—R4V—supported by regional agreements in the framework of the Quito Process to respond to the Crisis, has resulted in a unified regional approach with common parameters and processes, including for data development and use. This approach, according to Participant C, calls to increase comparability between countries to facilitate the monitoring process of affected populations, especially those who are in-transit between many countries of the region. However, this requires MoEs to invest financial resources and technical capacity—already limited—to keep developing tools at the regional and national levels instead of, for instance, strengthening actions at the local level.

While having a regional approach to respond to the Crisis facilitates coordination and helps avoid overlap among the work done by diverse stakeholders, a high regional standardization of the Crisis can affect the ability of developing context-relevant responses for each country. Participant E stated that over time it has become more evident that there is a "disconnection between the responses given at a national level and the ones given at a local level". Considering that affected communities require direct local responses, it is important to also reinforce this area of focus for the effective enactment of educational policies and proposed interventions at a local level.

Limited Scope of Data to Identify Educational Needs

Findings

To respond to the educational needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees, host countries adapted their information systems to include new relevant data categories. All participants agreed that the educational data gathered and presented so far reflects a prioritization of access to education for Venezuelan migrants and refugees. "The

emphasis during this first phase was mainly focus on access […] not intentionally but because in that moment there were other priorities" (Participant C). The 2019 RMRP (R4V, 2018) defined these more critical needs for Venezuelan migrants and refugees—at that time—as "access to a predictable regular status and documentation framework, which will allow them to effectively enjoy their rights, access social services, and the labour market" (p.17). Access to education became then a priority within the educational response to the Crisis.

To answer this study's research question on what kind of educational data has been collected in the framework of the Crisis, MoEs' institutional websites and reports, as well as R4V and international institutions' reports and published data were analysed. However, accessibility challenges, to be discussed in the final finding, obstructed the ability of the researcher to develop an exhaustive list of the kind of data being gathered—a general overview of what data was found in public sources is provided for both national and regional actors. At a national level, host countries collect the following information from students—this was corroborated with Participants F, G, and H: name, date of birth, sex, ethnicity, identification card number, nationality, address, phone, level of education, type of school, discontinuation of studies, and grade repetition. This information is gathered from all students when they enrolled in the host countries' national education systems, and it reflects a focus on access to education—enrolment and attendance. It is important to note the only identified category that could account for Venezuelan refugees and migrants is 'nationality'; for this reason, UNESCO (2020) in its rapid assessment highlights the need for countries to expand the scope of the conceptualization of the migrants and refugees in this system through the incorporation of information on country of origin, amount of time in the country, and purpose of migration. Similarly, Participant C highlighted that "host countries only identify if they are migrants or not, but they do not distinguish what type of migrants they are (e.g. refugees)". This would allow for the identification of the type of migration occurring, as well as other intersecting factors that could affect the students' wellbeing and/or their educational experience, such as their household's financial constraints, and previous countries of schooling.

The educational data on the Crisis available through regional mechanisms, such as R4V, also presents a similar approach. However, it is important to note R4V is not an

exclusive educational platform, it also includes information on other humanitarian sectorial efforts such as health and food security (R4V, n.d.-a). Consequently, data published on the educational response to the Crisis is limited to reporting: number of people in need and people targeted, both disaggregated by age and sex; total amount of financial requirements; number of partner organizations and actors supporting these efforts; and the name of the sector leads (R4V, 2021b). This information is presented at a regional level but also by country; for some host countries they also include the percentage or number of Venezuelan refugees and migrants enrolled in schools.

The educational data on Venezuelan refugees and migrants made available by both the MoEs and R4V does not include the percentage/number of the Venezuelan population living in host countries with an irregular migratory status. The identification of the latter group has become a challenge for MoEs, NGOs, and international institutions, since it limits their ability to clearly identify the needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees. This is particularly concerning since this group also happens to be the most vulnerable for not being able to access basic services provided by host countries.

> "For the education sector it is very complex—almost impossible—to identify those Venezuelans that are in the country with irregular status and not requesting access to the national education system. Why? Because they are invisible, they are not in any administrative system that allows us to identify them" (Participant I).

> "There is a considerable number of Venezuelans with irregular status that are not currently in the education system, which we are not able to reach" (Participant I).

The lack of data on Venezuelans with irregular status does not allow for the accounting of Venezuelan children not enrolled in school, which becomes an obstacle in their right to access education. While the legal framework and processes to regularize migrants and refugees are being put in place, host countries have also developed mechanisms to enrol Venezuelan children with irregular status without needing documentation, relying on the self-validation of data (Participant F). Likewise, international institutions,

MoEs, and NGOs have been carrying out informational campaigns and initiatives to increase awareness of the rights that Venezuelan migrants and refugees have to access basic services. "In many countries, children have the right to access to education regardless of their migratory status" (Participant F). These campaigns contribute to reducing the gap of Venezuelan children with irregular status that are out-of-school.

International institutions such as UNHCR and IOM have been carrying out significant efforts to come up with tools that could help calculate the number of Venezuelan migrants and refugees with irregular status. However, the existence of pendular (moving back and forward between countries) and in-transit (being temporarily in one or more countries until reaching intended destination) migratory patterns in this crisis adds another layer of difficulty to these efforts (Participant F). The continuous movement of Venezuelan migrants and refugees within and among countries also makes the validation process carried out by MoEs more challenging (Participant C). This situation would require additional validation efforts that entail additional technical and financial resources that might not be available either at the local or the national levels.

Discussion

Amid a crisis with a wide range of urgent needs, improving access to education of Venezuelan migrants and refugees became the main objective of the first phase of the educational response—both at a national and a regional level. This is also reflected in the kind of educational data being collected, which mainly accounts for the number of students with Venezuelan nationality enrolled or that abandoned their studies (after being enrolled at some instance). This data is consequently used by host countries to guide their decisions on educational responses and to develop interventions to this Crisis. However, within such a complex situation characterized by high levels of xenophobia, discrimination, reduced financial resources, and lack of documentation, this data is not representative of the educational needs, especially of those migrants and refugees in irregular status (R4V, 2021b). Following the Governance by Numbers concepts, this shows how the information that supports the decision-making process

in relation to the Crisis might not be accurately reflecting the needs of the affected population—by reducing a complex situation to non-representative data.

The successful inclusion of refugees and migrants to national education systems requires additional data that can allow a typification of their migration, while accounting for the quality of education these students are receiving as well as their intersectionality. In terms of Venezuelan children with irregular status, local informational campaigns are key to contribute to reducing this gap while regularization mechanisms are put in place at the national level. The technical and financial limitations of host countries, which have been exacerbated by COVID-19, call for progressive and comprehensive sustainable changes in this direction.

Narrow Participation in the Development and Use of Official Educational Data

Findings

Development of EiE Data. The development of educational data in the region is highly concentrated in the MoEs.

> "In this region, Ministries of Education are very strong, so all our work is always done in coordination with them. The Ministries tell us when they need support with X, Y, or Z and that is when we get in" (Participant D).

> "In this region, nothing can be done without involving the Ministries of Education. These institutions are very strong" (Participant B).

Likewise, EiE data predominantly developed by the MoEs is considered official for planning purposes. Moving away from these sources for educational planning can "…jeopardize the relationship with the MoEs, negatively impacting the ability of external organizations to carry out interventions" (Participant A). This role played by the MoEs has generated a discursive practice in which they are in control of the information that is collected, including how and to which extent it is presented. Thus, there are limitations in the educational data currently being developed by host countries—especially in terms of availability and accessibility.

Participants C and D stated countries were not prepared to receive such a high number of migrants, which explains why there is very limited information on educational systems in relation to Venezuelan migrants and refugees. "When we were first developing educational interventions for the Crisis it was very difficult because we did not have enough data. We knew what the needs were, but we did not have all the necessary data to confirm them" (Participant D). To overcome these constraints and "…adequately respond to the demands of the Crisis, MoEs adapted their processes and currently almost all host countries develop data on students in situations of mobility" (Participant C).

Additionally, access to educational data was identified as a challenge in UNESCO's rapid assessment (2020), which recommended host countries to "review policies and processes to access data, information and reports about students in situations of mobility" (p.53). UNESCO emphasizes the importance of strengthening or establishing mechanisms to facilitate the accessibility of this information to external actors. Even though each of the analysed countries have national information systems in place[1], most of these systems are for internal use only (UNESCO, 2020a). Some of the data contained in these systems is eventually made available through the MoEs' open data initiatives, however, most participants interviewed claimed the official educational data open to the public is not published in real time and in most of the cases data on students' nationality is not disclosed.

> "Our public information system allows you to see how many students are enrolled per level of education and type of educational institution. It does not disaggregate by nationality. The only way of accessing this information is by submitting us a request" (Participant I).

> "Some information is published on an on-going basis but only very broad and anonymous data" (Participant I).

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[1] Chile – Sistema de Informacion General de Estudiantes (SIGE); Colombia – Sistema de Matricula Estudiantil de Educación Básica y Media (SIMAT); Perú – Sistema de Informacion de Apoyo a la Gestión de la Institución Educativa (SIAGIE).

Hence, to access up-to-date and relevant educational data about Venezuelan migrants and refugees in host countries: (a) formal requests need to be issued to the MoEs; or (b) regional coordination mechanisms such as R4V, which receive official reports from host countries on the situation, need to be consulted. Participant I emphasized that this "…makes monitoring and accountability efforts from non-state actors more difficult" and explained even in those cases where educational data is shared with external actors, context information from the MoE on the data collection processes utilized is necessary to adequately comprehend the real information reflected in that data.

Another actor identified in relation to EiE data development in the region is UNESCO—recognized in the Education 2030 Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2015) as the "official source of cross-nationally comparable data on education" (p.63) through the production of international monitoring indicators. In this regard, UNESCO plays a key role in supporting host countries to strengthen their Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) to effectively respond to the Crisis. Participants from INGOs and international organizations stated UNESCO's databases are also considered as official data sources for educational planning purposes in the region, which are also fed by the reports provided by the MoEs.

> "At a regional level UNESCO is very strong in terms of data, we would not work with other partners in data related interventions when we know this is UNESCO's strength" (Participant D).

> "We are establishing our own information management system but it is UNESCO who officially collects the information from primary sources [MoEs]" (Participant A).

Since 2018/2019 UNESCO has been actively working jointly with MoEs to establish the next steps to respond to EiE data needs while building on the findings of its rapid assessment (2020). Consequently, in coordination with existent regional mechanisms, UNESCO will be working on the development of a regional monitoring framework for children in situations of mobility-–in this case access to quality education of Venezuelan migrants and refugees. All the participants highlighted the importance of

this medium-term initiative requested by MoEs, since it will not only allow for a better understanding of the issue but would also strengthen host countries' capabilities for data development and, hence, inform their policymaking decisions. The indicators that would comprise this monitoring framework will be jointly developed between UNESCO and the MoEs. Participant C explained "the framework will not be fed with all available information on the Crisis. It will only be fed with official information or information resulting from specific data collection processes carried out by UNESCO in coordination with host countries' MoEs". Even though this shows the existence of a collaborative process between the MoEs and UNESCO, it is not clear which specific mechanisms would take place to involve in the data development process other non-state actors working to respond to the Crisis, as well as beneficiaries.

Finally, Participant A explained "every organization working in the field develops their own information too", especially since "before intervening in an area needs assessments are carried out by collecting and analysing data from primary and secondary sources, as well as from our own research". This information could be helpful to better understand in more depth the inequalities and educational challenges of affected communities.

Use of EiE Data. Similarly to Buckner et al.'s (2019) findings, educational data developed in the framework of the Crisis is primarily used for sector coordination, and program design and evaluation.

R4V plays a key role in disseminating data for coordination, since it serves as a platform to exchange data and evidence that can avoid duplications among organizations working to address the Crisis, and to inform their educational planning and promote the development of evidence-based interventions (R4V, n.d.-a). In this framework, "some R4V partner organizations are more focused on gathering and creating relevant educational data from the field to share it through the platform, while others are more focused on developing interventions based on this data—this also being related to each organization having their own strong points" (Participant A). However, the discursive practices that define the sources of information considered official—as previously shown—have an impact on how much information these partner organizations can share through the platform.

There is another key element that plays a role in defining the use of the data developed by organizations: competition for funding. In this regard, even though, most organizations operating in the field have their own reservoir of self-produced data that allows them to develop relevant interventions to respond to the Crisis, not all this information is shared with R4V or other organizations. Participants A and B claimed the data gathered directly from the field, especially in terms of beneficiaries needs, is highly valuable to develop evidence-based proposals and could increase the likelihood of their proposals being selected by a donor or grantee looking for implementing partners. Consequently, there is some of the developed data that is not shared with anyone and is for internal use, some that is only shared with co-implementing partners in those cases in which they presented interventions jointly, and some information that they consider 'critical' that needs to be shared with the regional coordination mechanisms for the impact that it could have on the regional responses or because it is part the information that feeds the progress report on the RMRP. "It is a structural problem because all the information should be available to enrich the coordination process and strengthen the response" (Participant B).

The existent dynamics and assemblage among actors operating in the field negatively impact the efficient use of the educational data being developed, either because not all the information being developed is considered to guide educational planning or because there are competitive dynamics within ongoing coordination efforts. Given that NGOs have wider territorial presence and direct contact with beneficiaries, the data developed by them should have a greater level of relevance in the framework of the Crisis.

Discussion

This finding allowed for the identification of the actors involved in the development of educational data associated with Venezuelan migrant and refugee school-aged children in host countries as well as how this data is being used. Under the assumption that EiE data is not objective nor neutral, it is possible to affirm that the choices made by MoEs based on their capacities, guiding policies, and assumptions have shaped and defined the characteristics of the data being developed. The identified challenges

associated with access to educational data on migrants and refugees generated by the MoEs, for instance, have negatively impacted accountability efforts from non-state actors and beneficiaries. This is particularly important to determine the extent to which this information reflects the educational needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees.

The powerful presence of the MoEs in the region also plays a key role in defining the existent practices and dynamics with non-state actors around the development and use of relevant data. This assemblage between multiple heterogenic elements is—to an extent—being transformed by UNESCO and its lead role in educational data in the region. In this regard, UNESCO can actively work with the MoEs to strengthen their capacities and continue improving their educational data to respond to the Crisis. However, it is important to note UNESCO's mission is to support member states by responding directly to their demands and requests, and its databases are mainly fed by information shared by MoEs. Consequently, the nature of their relationship can limit the ability of UNESCO to move beyond official datasets coming from host countries for data-related efforts, such as the regional monitoring framework initiative previously mentioned.

Since the educational data used by other non-state actors to carry out interventions in the field comes from MoEs (directly or through UNESCO or R4V), it becomes necessary to strengthen the practices around the development of the data to also ensure the effective use of data. Otherwise, these practices can obstruct the role that coordination mechanisms can play for this crisis. The democratization of this EiE data through the involvement of a variety of relevant actors (e.g., civil society organizations and beneficiaries) would contribute to ensuring that all the efforts made to respond to the Crisis are directly addressing the needs of the affected population—since the information from the MoEs would be complemented with information provided by other sources.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This study provided an initial overview of the social construction of EiE data in the framework of the Venezuelan Migrant and Refugee Crisis, including discourses, practices, and actors present around its development and use. Through its main findings, a comprehensive answer was provided to how, with what data and by whom educational needs in the Crisis are being framed, while identifying the main ways in which the developed data is being used. A critical discourse analysis of key national and regional level documents as well as semi-structured interviews with representatives of the Ministries of Education of the host countries with the highest number of Venezuelan migrants and refugees (Chile, Colombia, and Peru), international organizations, and INGOs were carried out to this end.

First, it was possible to determine there is a regional approach to the educational response to Venezuelan migrants and refugees, where international institutions have had a leading role that has resulted in the creation of coordination mechanisms, action plans, and standards to be applied across countries. Since these efforts tend to have a more direct effect at national and regional levels it is important to reinforce local efforts to address educational needs of migrants and refugees. Second, the current kind of data being collected and its limitations in terms of scope (access to education) and migration patterns, have led to educational data not being representative of the educational needs of all migrants and refugees, especially of those with irregular status. The lack of identification of certain groups as well as the intersectionality of the affected population can make their needs invisible. Finally, there is a narrow participation in the development of official educational data, which is mainly centred in the Ministries of Education of host countries, that allows for an exercise of control over the data—what data to develop, how frequently, and what is presented to whom and when. This not only makes accountability efforts from non-state organizations more challenging but also negatively impacts the effective use of data developed by other sources, such as NGOs. The flexibilization and democratization of these dynamics and practices associated with the development of data to respond to the educational needs through the involvement of a variety of stakeholders, including civil society organizations and beneficiaries, could be beneficial to ensure an accurate and more objective representation of these needs.

The use of the concepts of governance by numbers and policy assemblage as a theorical framework allowed for the identification of these underlying elements based on the assumption that data is not objective nor neutral, but instead a result of choices made by a variety of actors, that in coexistence with other objects, practices, and institutions transform and shape the development of policies and interventions. This is particularly significant since previous studies of EiE data in the Venezuelan Crisis are focused on understanding data in more abstract terms, while this study brings about the importance of understanding the existent actors, relationships, practices, and discourses around the development and use of the data for a comprehensive identification of challenges that could be obstructing the ability of policymakers and practitioners to respond to the educational needs of migrants and refugees. In this regard, interrogating who is involved and what kind of dynamics and relationships exist in the contexts where data is embedded when analysing EiE data can add valuable information on how to improve current approaches to respond more effectively to educational needs.

The findings from this study also point to particular directions in future research, and some of these include: assessing the local enactment of educational policies to respond to the Crisis as well as the internal processes to coordinate data collection—between ministries but also with local actors (governments, schools), and how having a regional response to the Crisis is impacting the ability of policymakers and practitioners to address the educational needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees.

While areas of improvement have been identified throughout this study, it is important to recognize the complexity of the Crisis, and how unprecedented it was for the region. To provide time sensitive responses to the needs of Venezuelan migrants and refugees, host countries had to adapt their legal frameworks and practices and strengthen their capacities while entering into a learning process in terms of human mobility. In a context with limited technical and economic resources, that has also been impacted by COVID-19, it is necessary to ensure the decisions taken in the following years are strong, evidence-based, and comprehensive to minimize risks and increase the levels of preparedness of countries in the region for future crises.

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Appendices

**List of International Organizations and International Non-Governmental Organizations**

The following organizations have been identified as a result of the research proposal development process. It is important to note that this list was used as a guidance during the study to identify the potential participants for the first round of interviews. Not all these organizations participated in the study.

1. United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
2. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
3. Save the Children
4. Plan International
5. OXFAM
6. Refugee Education Trust (RET)
7. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR)
8. The World Bank

Documents Selected for Critical Discourse Analysis

Type of document	# of documents
Action Plan	1
Appeal	1
Assessment	6
Concept Note	3
Declaration	5
Framework of Action	1
Report	5
Presentation	1
Response Plan	2
Situational Report	1
Strategic Plan	1
Total	**27**
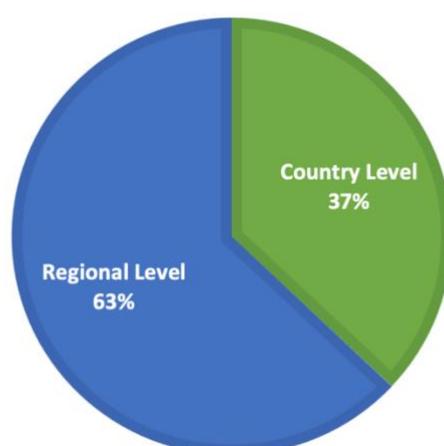
Main Themes Identified in Interviews

The following common themes were identified in the interviews carried out in the framework of this study:

1. Capacity building
2. Coordination
3. Regularization and validation of migrants and refugees' previous studies
4. Inclusion of migrants and refugees in national education systems
5. Negative impacts of COVID-19
6. Strong Regional Education Cluster
7. Strong Ministries of Education in the region
8. Information gap between local and national level
9. Needs assessment
10. Complexity and magnitude of current needs
11. Xenophobia
12. Political and economic cost of educational response
13. Focus on access to education
14. Timeliness of changes made
15. Regular versus irregular status

Main Themes Identified in Discourse Analysis

The following common themes were identified during the discourse analysis of 27 documents carried out in the framework of this study:

1. Integrated response
2. Evidence generation
3. Coherence
4. Coordination
5. Multi-sector assistance
6. Preparedness and response
7. Joint assessments
8. Capacity building
9. Social cohesion
10. Data limitations to respond to needs
11. Regional cooperation
12. Recognition of vulnerabilities
13. Inclusion
14. Financial gap
15. Xenophobia
16. Priorities