



Situated between the municipalities of Bello and Medellín, Colombia, Granizal is hosting the second largest community of Internally Displaced People (IDP's).

This picture depicts a project called The Graduation Approach currently being carried out. Through this model, vulnerable families are accompanied by UNHCR and a partner for a period of 6 months where they receive a multi-sector intervention and coaching, which helps them to achieve a sustained income and provide a more stable condition to their families. This is possible through seed capital, employment opportunities or skills training. This project will benefit 116 families, and 105 of them have been chosen already.

Pictured in this article is a mother and child, both from Venezuela, who are two of the 75.000 Venezuelans in Medellín. Almost 1.408.055 million people have left Venezuela and migrated to Colombia in order to find better living conditions. Bureaucratic conditions have made life difficult for this family and their 4-year old daughter has not been able to access school. Her father is the only one with Special Stay Permit, making the situation even harder for other family members to find a formal job. Moreover, they live in a neighborhood that does not have potable water, making daily life more difficult for basic things, such as drinking water or cooking. The mother has lost a lot of weight in the last few months due to the food shortage back in Venezuela. Now, they are participants of the Graduation Approach.

Before being deployed as an EUAV deployee, I went through an induction training in May in Denmark that better prepared me for my arrival in Colombia to work as a Livelihoods Officer. What I liked the most during the training was gaining specific information and knowledge about what would I go through in Colombia, both in terms of cultural and professional skills. It was particularly useful and interesting to learn from one of the economic

recovery staff from Danish Refugee Council with many years of experience. During this technical session, I learned about the Graduation Approach for the first time. This was a good way to arrive at UNHCR's office ready to be part of the project.

Being part of the EU Aid Volunteer initiative has been a way to put in practice the prior knowledge I have gained, and assist one of the largest displaced populations from Venezuela. It has not been easy to see families such as this one going through hard circumstances. However, through the partnership between UNHCR and DRC, my colleagues in Colombia and I are able to act in a tangible way in order to improve the results.

Sectors:

- Livelihoods
- Protection

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