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How do Venezuelan Migrants Share Information with Their Networks About SISBEN in Colombia?

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**Timeline**

2022

**Study Status**

Results

**Study Type**

Other

**Sample Size**

2,769 Venezuelan Migrants

**Research Implemented by IPA**

Yes

# How do Venezuelan Migrants Share Information with Their Networks About SISBEN in Colombia?

Colombia remains the primary destination for displaced Venezuelan migrants, accepting more than 2.5 million migrants since 2017. The Colombian government regularized the migrants' immigration status through the Temporary Protection Statute for Venezuelans (ETPV) beginning in 2021, which 1.6 million migrants have completed registration. The government also seeks to register them to SISBEN, an information system containing data about a population's economic and social status that is used to inform implementation of social protection programs. However, migrant registration is slow due to misconceptions, lack of awareness about the system, and mistrust in sharing personal information with a new program.

Researchers measured how information about SISBEN is spread among Venezuelan migrant social networks. To do this, they sent WhatsApp messages to eligible migrants who had previously requested SISBEN registration, inviting them to refer other migrants to participate in the study and learn about SISBEN. These referrals sent researchers a unique code via

WhatsApp to register for the study. Upon eligibility, referrals received WhatsApp messages encouraging them to refer migrants in their networks to participate.

The researchers gathered two more waves of referrals to identify the diffusion of information (e.g., myths and knowledge about SISBEN) and key agents in the social network. Endline surveys concerned migrants' attempts to refer other migrants to the study. All migrants completed baseline surveys; the initial migrants and their referrals completed endline surveys.

With the information collected from these surveys, and the networks mapped in the referral dynamics, the researchers characterized the transmission of correct and incorrect information about the SISBEN through sub-networks, the main channels of contact and transmission of information for the migrant population, the geographic expansion of migrant networks throughout the country, and the supernodes that serve as leaders within the communities that are fundamental to understanding the dynamics of the network. All of the above characterizations are crucial to strengthen communication and policy implementation strategies that seek to increase the SISBEN registration rates of the migrant population and its effective access to social assistance programs of the Colombian government.

Results of this project will be available later in 2023.