

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT
MULTI-COUNTRY OVERVIEW
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
2025-2028



STRATEGIC FORESIGHT MULTI-COUNTRY OVERVIEW

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

This Foresight report has been prepared by the Lighthouse Programme Team, in coordination with and the support of the Foresight Global Team and the Regional Emergency Preparedness Team.

Aim: This Multi-Country Overview seeks to provide the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and its partners with a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the shifting migration and displacement dynamics across the countries where Foresight exercises were conducted, within the increasingly complex regional context of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Use: This report serves as a strategic tool for IOM and its partners, offering an understanding of evolving migration and displacement dynamics across Latin America and the Caribbean. While not intended as a comprehensive regional analysis, the report provides a forward-looking framework to identify key trends and challenges likely to shape future mobility. Its findings are designed to inform decision-making, policy development, and programmatic planning, and should be used to complement specific assessments and strategic processes.

Limitations: The report is not a predictive analysis and does not draw causal inferences. Given the inherent uncertainty of future projections, the findings presented in this report should be interpreted as plausible scenarios rather than precise predictions. These scenarios require ongoing monitoring and periodic reassessment to ensure continued relevance and accuracy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. METHODOLOGY	5
3. FORESIGHTS (2025-2028)	6
3.1 Current Regional Migration Dynamics	6
3.2 Signals Overview	7
3.2.1 Escalating Organized Crime Violence and Security Deterioration	7
3.2.2 New Economic Realities	8
3.2.3 Shifts in Migration Policies	9
3.2.4 Increasing Reverse Migration, Return and Deportations	10
3.2.5 Increasing Exposure to Weather Hazards	11
3.3 Implications for IOM and its partners	12
4. THE WAY FORWARD	13
REFERENCES	14

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In an era marked by increasingly complex and unpredictable migration dynamics, IOM sees investment in Foresight as a vital tool for anticipating and preparing future challenges related to migration and displacement. This strategic approach aligns with the United Nations' UN 2.0 transformation agenda, which seeks to modernize the UN system to more effectively address the multifaceted challenges of the 21st century. IOM is actively embedding Foresight into its strategy to better navigate the evolving landscape of human mobility.

As part of this effort, IOM launched a comprehensive Foresight approach in Latin America through the Lighthouse Programme to support proactive and adaptive migration governance. Foresight exercises were conducted in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela between May and September 2025 to explore future migration scenarios and support strategic planning and evidence-based decision-making.

Future migration and displacement dynamics across the Americas are expected to shift significantly. To effectively address the changing landscape of migration and displacement in Latin America, stakeholders should adopt an integrated, forward-looking strategy:

TRENDS IDENTIFIED	SUGGESTED PRIORITY
1. Escalating Organized Crime Violence and Security Deterioration	Strengthening legal and institutional systems. Protection of vulnerable groups through coordinated services. Capacity development and public awareness.
2. New Economic Realities	Labour policies improving access to services, job markets and re-integration support. Boosting of local development.
3. Shifts in Migration Policies	Promoting national and regional migration policies upholding migrants' right.
4. Increasing Reverse Migration, Return and Deportations	Focus on reintegration programs for returnees. Boosting of transit countries' ability to support settlement. Promotion of international collaboration for migration management. Awareness campaigns to reduce stigma.
5. Increasing Exposure to Climate hazards	Environmental resilience included into migration plans. Formal recognition of migrants displaced by extreme weather events. Early warning systems. Safeguarding of indigenous and rural communities. Build local emergency preparedness and disaster response capacity.

1. INTRODUCTION

We are navigating an era marked by profound transformation and disruption - where challenges once deemed improbable are now shaping our daily realities. In this context of accelerating change and uncertainty, Foresight has become an essential tool. It offers a structured, forward-looking approach to identifying emerging trends, anticipating potential shifts, and preparing for a range of plausible futures. By embracing uncertainty and cultivating a future-oriented mindset, foresight empowers individuals and organizations to enhance adaptability, uncover innovative opportunities, mitigate risks, and build the resilience needed to shape more effective and sustainable outcomes.

Foresight is a cornerstone of the UN 2.0 transformation agenda, which seeks to modernize the United Nations system to better respond to 21st-century challenges. As a key pillar of the Quintet of Change, Foresight contributes to making the UN more agile, responsive, and future-ready. By embedding Foresight into planning and decision-making processes, the UN strengthens its ability to support Member States in navigating uncertainty and co-creating resilient, prosperous futures.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has placed foresight at the heart of its strategic vision. The IOM 2024–2028 Strategic Plan reflects this commitment, leveraging data, innovation, and Foresight to better understand and respond to the evolving landscape of human mobility. Through this approach, IOM aims to ensure safe, orderly, and humane migration for the benefit of all.

Foresight is also a central workstream of the Lighthouse Programme, an IOM initiative focused on enhancing migration data collection, analysis, and application for evidence-based decision-making in the Americas.

Under this programme, five pilot country Foresight exercises have been launched in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, and Mexico, to explore future migration scenarios, strengthening strategic planning, and enhancing preparedness for emerging trends. The approach was also extended beyond national contexts through a pilot binational Foresight exercise between Colombia and Venezuela, examining future risks and opportunities related to migration and displacement within and between the two countries. The exercise aimed to strengthen the missions' ability to anticipate and respond to migration challenges in a coordinated, strategic, and impactful way.

This report highlights the key insights from foresight exercises conducted across Latin America and the Caribbean between May and September 2025, with a focus on the most relevant signals, trends, and emerging issues identified throughout the process. It begins by outlining the methodology and tools used, followed by a synthesis of regional insights. Finally, it explores how these findings will inform IOM's strategic planning, decision-making, and operational responses. The report serves as a vital resource for IOM and its partners to better understand and prepare for the future of migration and displacement in a rapidly changing world.

2. METHODOLOGY

IOM Foresight process unfolds in three key phases:

SCAN	INTERPRET	INTEGRATE
<p>The first phase of the Foresight process is a desk-based data collection exercise that aims at identifying signals of change in the environment that could influence migration drivers in the future.</p>	<p>The second phase of the Foresight process consists of analyzing signals identified through the scan phase by understanding future possible scenarios and related implications.</p>	<p>The final phase of the Foresight process uses the analysis of the interpret phase to inform strategic planning, decision-making, contingency planning, preparedness action, evidence-based policies and practices and resources allocation.</p>

This Foresight approach was systematically applied across a series of participatory, country-led exercises, tailored to the unique contexts of Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia. In particular, the Foresight exercises began with each country office defining key parameters framing the foresight analysis - including thematic focus, timeframe, and participant profiles. Exercises then proceeded with the Horizon Scanning identifying emerging trends, risks, and opportunities likely to affect migration dynamics within the selected time horizon. From this scan, the most relevant signals were selected for deeper examination through a multi-faceted and participatory approach that included an online impact/

likelihood survey and consultations with the country offices. The most relevant signals were explored in greater depth during a foresight workshop, where participants developed future scenarios, assessed their implications, and identified strategic actions to address the risks and opportunities arising from the future scenarios. Monitoring systems were also established to track the evolution of key signals. The insights and analyses from each exercise were compiled into comprehensive country reports, serving as strategic resources for IOM missions and their partners, supporting long-term planning and enabling more informed, anticipatory decision-making.

While IOM staff were the primary participants in the Foresight exercises, several also included representatives from government institutions, academia, and other UN agencies, enriching the process with diverse perspectives. The time horizon and the thematic focus varied by country, reflecting national priorities and contexts:



3. FORESIGHTS (2025-2028)

3.1 Current Regional Migration Dynamics

Migration dynamics in the Americas are constantly evolving. The region includes countries that are part of all stages of the migration cycle: origin, transit, destination, and return, a dynamic particularly evident in 2025. An estimated 78.7 million international migrants currently reside in the Americas, with the United States remaining the primary destination both regionally and globally (UNDESA, 2025). Historically, migration flows in the region have been predominantly northbound; however, these patterns are influenced by factors such as policy changes, socioeconomic conditions, disasters and extreme weather events, and contexts of conflict and insecurity.

Developments in these influencing factors have contributed to notable changes in migration patterns in 2025. In 2024–2025, more than 1.2 million people transited the Darién Gap in Panama, with Venezuelans as the main nationality, followed by Colombians, Ecuadorians, and smaller numbers of Chinese, Haitian, and Nepalese migrants. This highlights Panama's central role as a major transit corridor for South American, Caribbean, and extracontinental migrants. The recent U.S. migration policy changes in January 2025 contributed to an increase in reverse migration, with movements shifting from north to south. According to administrative data released by the Panamanian government, 13,425 migrants were registered exiting Panama toward Colombia between 1 February and 1 July 2025. The demographic profile consisted primarily of adults (approximately 80%, mostly men) and 20 per cent minors (SNM, 2025).

Other relevant dynamics in the region include internal displacement and intraregional migration. In 2024, an estimated 14.5 million internal displacements were recorded in the Americas. Hurricanes accounted for more than 80% of disaster-related displacements, while conflict and violence-related displacements doubled, reaching nearly 1.5 million. More than 60 per cent of these occurred in Haiti, where escalating gang violence drove an urban displacement from Port-au-Prince (IDMC, 2025).

Regarding intraregional migration, the most notable trend continues to be the movement of refugees and migrants from Venezuela. Approximately 6.87 million Venezuelans reside across Latin America and the Caribbean countries, with Colombia (2.8 million), Peru (1.6 million), Brazil (680.100), Chile (669.400), and Ecuador (440.500) as the main host countries (R4V, 2025).

3.2 Signals Overview

Foresight exercises explored signals of change (emerging risks, opportunities, trends and wild cards) likely to shape migration and displacement within each country's context. Synthesizing findings across the exercises, revealed overarching regional trends, including return migration, shifts in the global economy, evolving migration policies, extreme weather events, deteriorating security conditions, the rise of organized crime and illegal mining, and reductions in international cooperation funding. The following sections highlight these Latin American trends alongside their key country-level signals, their anticipated impact on migration and displacement and priority interventions to enhance preparedness, strengthen resilience, and guide strategic action across the region.



3.2.1 Escalating Organized Crime Violence and Security Deterioration

Latin America and the Caribbean is grappling with a profound security crisis driven by organized crime. Homicide rates are eight times the global average, and victimization rates are three times higher (IBRD-IDA, 2025).

This surge in violence is fueled by sophisticated criminal networks that have infiltrated state institutions, corrupted economies, and displaced vulnerable communities. Organized crime groups have become a major destabilizing force, utilizing complex networks and illicit economies to expand their power (CrisisGroup, 2025). Illegal mining is emerging as a lucrative revenue stream for criminal organizations, fueled by the recent surge in global gold prices (The Economist, 2025).

Country Spotlights:

- Ecuador is experiencing an alarming surge in violence, with a 47 per cent increase in intentional homicides in the first half of 2025 (OECD/PADF, 2025). This rise is attributed to the growing influence of drug trafficking, illegal mining, and widespread corruption within security forces.
- Mexico faces escalating cartel violence, with political assassinations rising significantly in 2025 (DW, 2025). The intensifying conflict among organized armed groups is displacing communities and challenging government authority.
- Colombia is seeing armed groups expand their territorial control, particularly in rural and border regions. Levels of armed violence have quadrupled in the first half of 2025 than in the same period in 2024, with a high concentration of incidents along the northeastern border with Venezuela (OCHA, 2025). The convergence of political violence and institutional instability suggests the potential for a regional spillover of violence and displacement.
- The Triple Amazonian Border (Colombia, Peru, and Brazil) is becoming a major hub for trafficking drugs, gold, and mercury, leading to the displacement of the indigenous communities in the region (El Pais, 2025).

Likely Impact: The proliferation of organized crime across Latin America presents an escalating threat to social stability, human security, and long-term environmental resilience. The intensification of forced recruitment, disappearances, extortion, and human trafficking is expected to disproportionately impact vulnerable populations who face elevated risks of exploitation and abuse, sexual violence and forced child marriage, particularly in areas under criminal influence. Attacks on civil society actors, community leaders, and activists are expected to rise, further eroding shared social resilience. Educational disruption, including increased school dropouts linked to criminal activity, is likely to fuel intergenerational cycles of violence and migration. Moreover, the occupation of mineral-rich territories by armed groups will amplify protection risks – such as violence against women and girls (VAWG), harmful practices and exploitation - and displacement, especially in rural and Indigenous communities. Illegal mining is associated with severe environmental degradation, public health crises, and violent repression of local resistance. The

normalization of violence and control by these groups and growing perception of insecurity will foster an atmosphere of fear and distrust, erode unity and tolerance toward migrants and displaced people. Violence, prolonged family fragmentation and instability driven by organized crime are likely to exacerbate mental health challenges across affected populations. These trends suggest a future marked by deepening insecurity, weakened governance, and growing challenges to development and human mobility.

Recommended Priority Interventions:

- Strengthen legal frameworks and enhance the criminal justice system to effectively address protection challenges, ensure accountability, and uphold the rights of vulnerable populations.
- Enhance prevention of protections risks through multi-sectoral strategies, including awareness campaigns, capacity-building for law enforcement, and inter-agency coordination.
- Train frontline workers, including healthcare providers, educators, and law enforcement, to identify and respond to protection cases sensitively and effectively.
- Conduct public awareness campaigns to shift social norms and attitudes that tolerate violence against women and girls (VAWG) and child marriage.
- Establish community-based surveillance systems and referral mechanisms that are accessible, confidential, and culturally appropriate to ensure VAWG, child marriage and human trafficking survivors and at-risk individuals can access timely and high-quality medical, legal, emergency mental health services, and shelter services.
- Tackle economic insecurity, lack of access to services and opportunities, and social exclusion through comprehensive, rights-based interventions to prevent migrant and displaced individuals from adopting harmful coping mechanisms – such as survival sex, child marriage, engagement with organized crime.
- Ensure education for all displaced and migrant children, especially girls in rural and marginalized communities.
- Protect civil society actors and human rights defenders, particularly in areas affected by organized crime and illegal resource extraction.
- Scale up emergency mental health services.



3.2.2 New Economic Realities

Latin America's economic outlook is being reshaped by global and regional forces, presenting both emerging opportunities and growing risks. While GDP growth is projected to remain steady at 2.3 per cent in 2025 and 2.4 per cent in 2026 ([World Bank, 2025](#)), this masks widening disparities and structural vulnerabilities across countries.

Global shifts are altering migration patterns and supply chains. New tariffs are accelerating nearshoring trends, positioning Latin America as a potential hub for relocated operations ([The Economist, 2025](#)). Potential tax reforms and sanction policies could restrict the flow of remittances, posing risks to communities vulnerable to displacement or heavily reliant on this income source.

Internally, economic instability and policy shifts are driving mobility and deepening social vulnerability. In response, innovative economic models and adaptive strategies are emerging across the region, signaling both resilience and the need for targeted support.

The global humanitarian aid framework is facing an unprecedented crisis due to significant funding cuts from major donors, including the U.S. government - with the suspension of USAID activities ([Amnesty International, 2025](#)) - and several European governments ([NRC, 2025](#)).

Country Spotlights:

- Colombia is poised for accelerated growth, driven by strong consumption and investment ([World Bank, 2025](#)).
- Ecuador is grappling with high youth unemployment and labor informality. The lack of stable, formal jobs contributes to frustration and social exclusion, pushing young people to seek opportunities abroad, in the informal sector or with organized crime ([Lexis, 2025](#); [Primicias, 2025](#); [Infobae, 2025](#)).
- Panama is experiencing socio-economic shifts due to recent migration trends. The sharp decrease in migrant arrivals has led to a loss of livelihood for communities that had adapted to a migrant-driven economy. This, combined with existing socio-economic disparities, is expected to drive further internal migration and rapid urbanization towards Panama City.

- Costa Rica's strong trade relationship with the U.S. makes its economy vulnerable to new tariffs and market uncertainty, which could lead to shifts in the exchange rate and broader economic instability ([CNN, 2025](#)). Moreover, vulnerable women and children in remote areas are losing access to essential services like mental health care, and child protection due to funding cuts ([UN, 2025](#)).
- Venezuela faces a severe economic contraction and hyperinflation. That is why, Venezuelan companies are increasingly leveraging digital platforms and cryptocurrencies as alternative means to preserve value and sustain operations ([World Bank, 2025](#)).
- Colombia and Venezuela have taken strategic steps to deepen economic cooperation through the establishment of binational economic zones, fostering cross-border trade and regional integration ([El País, 2025](#)).

Likely Impact: Economic pressures and institutional weakening will likely deepen vulnerabilities across Latin America. Widespread economic contraction and declining remittance flows are expected to erode household resilience and destabilize communities that rely heavily on these financial lifelines. As public institutions struggle to respond, their retreat is creating a vacuum increasingly filled by organized crime, which exacerbates insecurity and undermines governance. Meanwhile, public budgets may be disproportionately focused on security measures, leaving preventative and restorative services underfunded. This imbalance not only limits long-term recovery but also perpetuates cycles of violence, exclusion, and instability. The reduction in humanitarian funding is threatening to escalate emergencies across Latin America, leaving millions without critical support. Financial strain will further deplete household resilience. Lacking any viable economic alternatives, people may be compelled toward harmful coping strategies - such as survival sex or child marriage, which heightens the risk of STIs including HIV/AIDS - or they may be forced to seek safety or opportunities elsewhere through internal displacement or cross-border migration.

Recommended Priority Interventions:

- Promote labor market policies targeting vulnerability to reduce informality.
- Expand access to healthcare, education, housing, and other social protection services for migrants and displaced populations.
- Support local development in high-outmigration areas to address root causes of displacement.
- Partner with governments and the private sector to create formal, decent work opportunities and scale labor migration programs.
- Track key labor market indicators and develop contingency plans for economic shocks and large-scale movements.
- Improve access to sexual and reproductive health services, including HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment.



3.2.3 Shifts in Migration Policies

Countries in the region are adopting more restrictive policies, driven primarily by a significant change in U.S. immigration policy. These changes are creating a ripple effect across the region, straining reception capacities and prompting new strategies for managing human mobility.

Country Spotlights:

- In January 2025, the U.S. issued executive orders reshaping immigration policy. These measures have, among others, restricted entry at the U.S.-Mexico border ([The White House, 2025](#)), canceled the CBP One app used for scheduling asylum appointments, reinstated the ‘Remain in Mexico’ policy ([The White House, 2025](#)) and expanded expedited deportations ([ACAPS, 2025](#)).
- Although Colombia has been a leader in migrant integration, a significant increase in arrivals could trigger public backlash (Ibidem).

Likely Impact: Stricter border controls and evolving migration policies across the Americas are expected to drive a surge in irregular and high-risk migration. As traditional pathways become increasingly restricted, more individuals are likely to resort to dangerous routes – particularly

between Colombia and Mexico – where migrants face elevated risks of extortion, sexual violence, kidnapping, and abuse, including from state actors. Transit countries are increasingly functioning as return hubs, placing additional strain on local systems and overstressing protection capacities. These developments signal a future in which safe and legal migration options continue to shrink, exposing vulnerable populations to heightened protection risks and complicating regional efforts to manage mobility in a humane and coordinated manner.

Recommended Priority Interventions:

- Reinforce existing regional coordination platforms to harmonize migration policies and promote sharing of best practices through various fora.
- Support safe and legal migration pathways to reduce reliance on irregular routes and improve protection outcomes.
- Strengthen state capacity in border management and migration oversight, with particular attention to the cross-border movement of Indigenous communities whose territorial and cultural worldviews may not align with officially recognized borders. Responses must be designed in close coordination with key stakeholders, ensuring consultation with Indigenous political and community representatives for effective oversight.
- Invest in the technical, operational, and financial capacities on migration governance of local actors, including municipal governments and grassroots organizations.
- Support regularization processes for irregular migrants.



3.2.4 Increasing Reverse Migration, Return and Deportations

The shift in immigration policies, particularly in the U.S., is fundamentally altering migration flows in Latin America. Previously a dominant trend, northward irregular migration is now being met with an increasingly complex dynamic of return migration, as individuals abandon their journeys and seek new opportunities closer to home. Moreover, deportations from the U.S. are already having a tangible impact across Latin America, placing a significant burden on countries with limited resources.

Country Spotlights:

- Guatemala has launched a “Return Home Plan” to reintegrate its returning citizens, with support from the private sector to help find them employment (**Gobierno de Guatemala**).
- Ecuador has received 2,000 deportees coming from the U.S. alone between January and March 2025 (**Primicias, 2025**).
- As of mid-2025, over 10,000 Venezuelans have returned from the United States via repatriation flights, following a deportation agreement between Caracas and Washington – despite the absence of formal diplomatic relations since 2019. Recent flights included 183 Venezuelans (163 men and 20 women) with a stopover in Honduras, and another flight on August 8 carrying 194 deportees, including six children (**SwissInfo, 2025**).
- Panama’s role is evolving from a transit country to a complex nexus of return and destination. As northward journeys become more difficult, and with the recent influx of facilitated returns from the U.S., Panama is facing a sustained influx of individuals who may arrive with limited resources, creating new humanitarian and integration challenges (**HRW, 2025**).

Likely Impact: The return of migrants across Latin America is placing significantly more pressure on already strained social services, with growing demand for housing, healthcare, and education. Many returnees face precarious living conditions, compounded by severe stigma and limited reintegration support, which fosters cultural disconnection and social exclusion. Limited employment opportunities – especially for the older population – are driving people into informal work, poverty, and debt. Women, especially, experience heightened violence against women and girls, and stigma for defying traditional roles, making their reintegration more difficult. As a result, many of the returned population, especially youth, opt to re-migrate, often through increasingly dangerous and irregular routes and become vulnerable to recruitment by criminal groups. The competition for jobs and resources is also fueling xenophobia, discrimination, and rising social tensions within host communities.

Recommended Priority Interventions:

- Strengthen comprehensive return and reintegration frameworks that support the sustainable reintegration of returnees.
- Launch awareness campaigns to reduce stigma against returnees and strengthen unity at the community level.
- Conduct market skills profiling, in-depth research on barriers to decent work and labor market integration and labor demand research to guide reintegration and employment strategies.
- Leverage the skills and experiences of returnees through employment programs that connect them to national development efforts.
- Strengthen health systems to respond to growing needs in urban and transit areas.



3.2.5 Increasing Exposure to Weather Hazards

The region is facing an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, from megafires and droughts to floods and hurricanes. These climate shocks are a primary driver of internal displacement and a significant factor in future migration patterns.

Country Spotlights:

- Since January 2025, above-average rainfall amounts have caused severe floodings and landslides in Ecuador, damaging infrastructures and livelihoods (**Secretaria Nacional de Gestión de Riesgos, 2025**). Ecuador is also vulnerable to drought periods risking forest fires, food insecurity, and widespread water shortages (**WWF, 2024**).
- In Panama, recurrent droughts are already threatening the operational stability of the Panama Canal, with significant economic and social consequences (**CNBC, 2025**). Rising sea levels and increased flooding have forced the relocation of Indigenous Guna communities from low-lying islands like Gardi Sugdub (**BBC, 2025**). Increased hurricane activity and severe rainfall are placing the country at heightened risk (**WMO, 2025**).

- In June 2025, tropical waves triggered severe floods and landslides in Colombia and Venezuela, affecting over 100,000 people ([ReliefWeb, 2025](#); [OCHA, 2025](#)).
- Mexico is increasingly vulnerable to natural hazards such as heatwaves, droughts, fires, floods and hurricanes, particularly in its coastal regions, which threatens key economic sectors ([CMCC](#)).
- Latin America experienced its worst wildfire season in decades in 2024, with Brazil losing a record amount of old-growth forest. These fires, fueled by drought and human activity, are not only destroying critical ecosystems but also displacing rural and Indigenous communities, worsening public health, and threatening food security ([DW, 2025](#)).

Likely Impact: Extreme weather-related disruptions are projected to become a major driver of displacement and instability across Latin America. Increasingly frequent and severe disasters – such as droughts, floods, rising sea levels and extreme weather events – are forcing communities to abandon their homes and placing mounting pressure on urban centers ill-equipped to absorb new arrivals. The loss of farmland and biodiversity is accelerating food insecurity, prompting migration and displacement in search of more sustainable livelihoods, the separation of families, human losses, spread of informal settlements and health issues, including disease, malnutrition, and mental health challenges. At the same time, resource scarcity is fueling the expansion of illegal mining and illicit crop cultivation, escalating violence and intensifying threats against civil society and community leaders. Indigenous communities and rural farmers are disproportionately affected, facing compounded risks from extreme weather events, criminal activity, and systemic neglect. Climate-related disruptions to production, transport, and logistics will increase operational costs across sectors, potentially slowing economic growth. Reaching affected areas becomes increasingly difficult, often due to criminal control, further complicating humanitarian response and recovery efforts. These trends suggest a future in which extreme weather not only reshapes mobility patterns but also deepens protection challenges and undermines social resilience across the region.

Recommended Priority Interventions:

- Integrate natural disaster resilience into migration planning, including early warning systems and relocation strategies.
- Engage in coordinated dialogue with Indigenous councils and representatives to ensure all key partners are consulted.
- Advocate for formal recognition of migrants displaced by extreme weather events within national and regional policy frameworks.
- Protect Indigenous and rural communities through land rights enforcement and sustainable resource management.
- Strengthen natural resource governance to combat illegal mining, deforestation, and displacement-linked degradation.
- Review and update response protocols to reflect evolving disaster risks.
- Raise public awareness on disaster risks and build local emergency preparedness and disaster response capacity.

3.3 Implications for IOM and its Partners

Looking ahead, promoting humane and orderly migration by providing support to migrants across the world, developing effective responses to the shifting dynamics and providing advice on migration policy and practice and humanitarian coordination, is being increasingly challenged by operational constraints. IOM and its partners operate within limited institutional capacity, financial instability, and highly conditioned funding, which restricts its ability to respond flexibly to emerging needs. With significant changes in U.S. cooperation with the UN system, growing engagement with private sector partnerships could enhance migrant support frameworks. In areas with a significant presence and control of organized crime, escalating security threats are expected to hinder staff mobility and field operations. Additionally, fragile legal governance and currency instability will complicate financial transactions and project compliance, posing risks to program delivery and accountability. These trends suggest a future in which IOM and its partners must adapt its operational model, diversify funding sources, and strengthen field resilience to maintain its leadership role in a rapidly evolving regional landscape.

4. THE WAY FORWARD

Thanks to the successful implementation of the comprehensive Foresight approach, IOM missions and partners across Latin America and the Caribbean have significantly advanced their capacity for strategic thinking and proactive engagement with future challenges. Foresight has been effectively integrated into contingency planning, resource mobilization, and policy alignment.

Looking ahead, addressing complex mobility challenges in Latin America requires a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach. Governments will play a critical role in policy reform, institutional coordination, and the development of early warning systems and planned resettlement strategies. Civil society organizations are key actors in delivering localized protection services, advocating for rights-based approaches, and maintaining direct engagement with vulnerable communities. Their role in monitoring, accountability, and community mobilization will be increasingly vital. Academia will contribute through research, Foresight analysis, and policy innovation, helping to generate evidence-based solutions and track long-term trends. Indigenous councils and grassroots organizations must be actively involved in decision-making processes to ensure responses promote community solidarity and safeguard territorial integrity. Lastly, the private sector will be instrumental in supporting migrant populations through innovative financing models, employment initiatives, and partnerships that expand service delivery and economic opportunity.

In response to anticipated risks, opportunities, and trends in migration and displacement, a set of strategic interventions are recommended to enhance regional Foresight, resilience, and preparedness. Strategic planning should be guided by Foresight insights to reinforce contingency frameworks and emergency readiness. Funding and resource mobilization must proactively engage a diverse range of actors - including governments, embassies, private sector stakeholders, and philanthropic organizations - while promoting innovative financing models and multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable support. Monitoring and early warning systems depend heavily on reliable and regular data collection. Access to improved data on migrant and displaced populations, and mapping of mobility patterns, is essential to ensure timely, evidence-based responses. Crucially, all interventions must ensure effective, resilient, and context-responsive outcomes.

IOM seeks to scale Foresight integration across the region through more regular country-level Foresight exercises and analytical products informing preparedness and policy making. Foresight capabilities will be embedded into DTM operations in priority countries, enabling governments and partners to anticipate migration shifts and respond proactively.

IOM will work closely with governments to build Foresight capabilities through targeted workshops and trainings, empowering national stakeholders to conduct their own Foresight exercises and leverage insights on early signals and trends via the regional platform connected to IOMs Global Foresight and Preparedness Platform and apply them to policy and operational planning.

REFERENCES

Amnesty International (2025). Lives at risk. Chaotic and abrupt cuts to foreign aid put millions of lives at risk. URL: <https://www.amnesty.ch/de/laender/amerikas/usa/dok/2025/kuerzungen-der-us-auslandshilfe-moegliche-verheerende-folgen/amr5194082025english.pdf>.

BBC (2025). We left pieces of our life behind: Indigenous group flees drowning island. URL: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cz0lg9pedz1o>.

CMCC (2025). G20 CLIMATE RISK ATLAS, Impacts, policy, economics. Mexico. URL: <https://files.cmcc.it/g20climaterisks/Mexico.pdf>.

CNN (2025). Persiste la incertidumbre en Costa Rica por los aranceles de EE.UU. URL: <https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2025/04/16/latinoamerica/incertidumbre-costa-rica-aranceles-estados-unidos-orix>.

CrisisGroup (2025). Curbing Violence in Latin America's Drug Trafficking Hotspots. URL: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/colombia-ecuador-guatemala-honduras-mexico/108-curbing-violence-latin-america-drug-trafficking-hotspots>.

DW (2025). México: asesinan a alcaldesa y a su marido fuera de su casa. URL: <https://www.dw.com/es/m%C3%A9xico-asesinan-a-alcaldesa-y-a-su-marido-fuera-de-su-casa/a-72955951>.

DW (2025). Extensive wildfires fueled record forest loss in 2024. URL: <https://www.dw.com/en/drivers-of-tree-cover-loss-fire-fueled-by-climate-change-latin-america-hardest-hit/a-72606863>.

El Pais (2025). Drug traffickers, illegal miners and dissidents: The triple alliance devastating the Amazon. URL: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2025-01-05/drug-traffickers-illegal-miners-and-dissidents-the-triple-alliance-devastating-the-amazon.html>.

El Pais (2025). El acuerdo para una zona binacional firmado por Petro y Maduro hace oídos sordos a los habitantes en la frontera. URL: https://elpais.com/america-colombia/2025-07-31/el-acuerdo-para-una-zona-binacional-firmado-por-petro-y-maduro-hace-oidos-sordos-a-los-habitantes-en-la-frontera.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

Gobierno de la Republica de Guatemala (n.d.). Plan Retorno al Hogar. URL: <https://guatemala.gob.gt/plan-retorno-al-hogar/>

Human Rights Watch (2025). "Nobody Cared, Nobody Listened". The US Expulsion of Third-Country Nationals to Panama. URL: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2025/04/24/nobody-cared-nobody-listened/the-us-expulsion-of-third-country-nationals-to>.

IBRD-IDA/World Bank (2025). Organized crime and violence in Latin America and the Caribbean. URL: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/3b53fe47-e238-40e9-97dc-7be3d3624053/content>.

IDMC (2025). Global report on internal displacement. URL: https://api.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/idmc-grid-2025-global-report-on-internal-displacement.pdf?_gl=1*1wi0xub*_ga*MTUzMTk3ODQ4Ni4xNzQ2OD-k1MDg3*_ga_PKVS5L6N8V*czE3NTgxMTg1OTMkbzgzE-kdDE3NTgxMTg2MjUkajl4JGwwJGgw.

Infobae (2025). Ocho de cada diez jóvenes en Ecuador están desempleados, según estudio. URL: <https://www.infobae.com/america/america-latina/2025/02/13/ocho-de-cada-diez-jovenes-en-ecuador-estan-desempleados-segun-estudio/>.

Lexis (2025). La informalidad laboral en Ecuador alcanza el 56% en enero de 2025. URL: <https://www.lexis.com.ec/noticias/la-informalidad-laboral-en-ecuador-alcanza-el-56-en-enero-de-2025>.

Servicio Nacional de Migración, Panama (2025). Informes semanales. URL: <https://www.migracion.gob.pa/informes-semanales/>.

NRC (2025). Aid cuts leaving millions without support. URL: <https://www.nrc.no/news/2025/july/aid-cuts-leaving-millions-without-support>.

Primicias (2024). Menos trabajo pleno y más desempleo: Las cifras laborales de marzo de 2024. URL: <https://www.primicias.ec/noticias/economia/empleo-desempleo-ecuador-trabajo-inec-referendum-informalidad/>.

Primicias (2025). Más de 32.000 ecuatorianos han sido deportados desde Estados Unidos en dos años, cifra récord. URL: <https://www.primicias.ec/sociedad/migrantes-ecuatorianos-deportados-estados-unidos-balance-cifras-cancilleria-93028/>.

OECD (2025). Boletín semestral de homicidios intencionales en Ecuador: enero-junio 2025. URL: <https://oecd.pdff.org/boletin-semestral-de-homicidios-intencionales-en-ecuador-semestre-2025/>.

OCHA (2025). Humanitarian Trends and Impact Report 2025 | Data compiled between January and June 2025. URL: https://reliefweb.int/report/colombia/humanitarian-trends-and-impact-report-2025-data-compiled-between-january-and-june-2025-publication-date-august-5-2025?_gl=1*1sycluz*_ga*NDg0NDI4NjlxLjE3MzE1NTAwNjg.*_ga_E60ZNX2F68*czE3NTU2MDIwODMkbzE-0NCRnMSR0MTc1NTYwNDAwOSRqNjAkBDAkaDA.

OCHA (2025). Latin America & The Caribbean Weekly Situation Update as of 30 June 2025. URL: <https://reliefweb.int/report/mexico/latin-america-caribbean-weekly-situation-update-30-june-2025>.

R4V (2025). Personas refugiadas y migrantes en Venezuela. URL: <https://www.r4v.info/es/refugiadosymigrantes>.

Secretaría Nacional de Gestión de Riesgos (2025). Afectaciones por lluvias en el Ecuador. URL: <https://www.gestionderiesgos.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Infografia-Nacional-Lluvias-01012025-22042025-SitRep-100.pdf>.

SwissInfo (2025). Un grupo de 183 migrantes venezolanos regresa a su país desde Estados Unidos. URL: <https://www.swissinfo.ch/spa/un-grupo-de-183-migrantes-venezolanos-regresa-a-su-pa%C3%ADs-desde-estados-unidos/89831179>.

Reliefweb (2025). Venezuela: Floods and Landslides - Jun 2025. URL: <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/fl-2025-000110-ven>.

The Economist (2025). The gold bull-market has a dirty secret. URL: <https://www.economist.com/the-america/2025/06/26/the-gold-bull-market-has-a-dirty-secret>.

The Economist (2025). Tom Standage's ten trends to watch in 2025. URL: <https://www.economist.com/the-world-ahead/2024/11/18/tom-standages-ten-trends-to-watch-in-2025>.

The Economist (2025). Pressure to migrate is increasing—but so is the backlash. URL: <https://www.economist.com/the-world-ahead/2024/11/20/pressure-to-migrate-is-increasing-but-so-is-the-backlash>.

The White House. Border and Immigration- Achievements. URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/border-immigration/>.

The White House. Guaranteeing the States protection against invasion. URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/guaranteeing-the-states-protection-against-invasion/>.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) (2025). <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock>.

United Nations (2025). Costa Rica's refugee lifeline at breaking point amid funding crisis. URL: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/05/1163081>.

WMO (2025). WCM Global Scale Hydromet Infographics. URL: <https://community.wmo.int/en/wcm-global-scale-hydromet-infographics>.

World Bank (2025). Global Economic Prospects - Latin America and the Caribbean. URL: <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/8bf0b62ec6bcb-886d97295ad930059e9-0050012025/related/GEP-June-2025-Regional-Highlights-LAC.pdf>.

WWF (2024). WWF-Ecuador ante los incendios y la grave sequía que afecta al país. URL: <https://www.wwf.org.ec/?391254/WWF-Ecuador-ante-los-incendios-y-la-grave-sequia-que-afecta-al-pais>.



© IOM/Geina CORTEZ
© IOM/Richard AGANA



LIGHTHOUSE
PROGRAMME