

Case study #1

Lady is a 21-year-old Venezuelan, who emigrated from her country due to the difficult political-economic situation she faced, forcing her to leave the city of Valencia where she lived with her mother, her sick husband and her two children.

When she arrived in Colombia, she sold sweets in the streets to survive, exposing herself to contempt, abuse and even sexual harassment from people who did not understand her situation and took advantage of her need. In addition, she suffered with the agony of knowing that in Venezuela her children fell ill due to the poor diet they had; her diabetic mother did not have her medications; and her husband, died slowly without any kind of attention. *"I felt drowned. I cried every day, I was desperate"* said Lady.

One day she arrived at a church in Barranquilla where she felt loved, received and supported to heal the pain she felt. Lady learned to be grateful and her perspective began to change. She benefitted from a Tearfund aid program for Venezuelan families, which had been funded by the Scottish Government, and received food vouchers which allowed her to buy enough food to feed her family, a personal hygiene kit, kitchen implement items such as a cooking pot and utensils and she also received medical attention.



Currently, Lady lives happily with her mother, her mother-in-law and her two children in Barranquilla. She discovered that she has a lot to give to others and serves in a dining room where Venezuelan children are fed daily and also educated. *"When I'm with the children, they call me 'teacher' and that makes me feel fulfilled because I feel like I'm a real teacher and that makes me happy. I feel like I am discovering my calling, my vocation"*

Lady and her family are one of the 800 families of Venezuelans in Colombia, identified by Tearfund and its partner CORSOC, to receive help in the midst of this humanitarian crisis.

The project, lasting approximately three months, offered food to families, hygiene kits, and medical attention, as well as support groups.

Case study #2

Diana¹ has 3 children and she and her family were forced to leave Venezuela due to the troubling time her country is facing, where the money they earned, was not even enough to buy something to eat.

They emigrated to Barranquilla, Colombia. Without money to pay large rents, they settled in "Villa Caracas", an informal settlement, where a large number of Venezuelan families have settled. It is on the slope of a hill and is in a high risk zone because there are landslides. The community has neither water nor electricity of its own, so they have to collect water from other neighborhoods and bring it back to where they are living.

Children have been particularly affected by the living conditions and have developed respiratory and skin diseases as well as allergies, due to the bad conditions where they are living. Their houses are made of planks of wood that cover them from the sun but not from the rain and they live among garbage and drug addicts.

Tearfund partnered with local organization, CORSOC, to respond to this need and conducted a census to identify the number of Venezuelan families that were in this situation, from this sector and from other three locations, and identified more than 800 families that were in need.

They were provided with food vouchers, hygiene kits, and medical care. Children attended a local dining room where lunch was provided for them each day. Diana explained the difference it made to her family: *"The food voucher came when I needed it most, I did not have anything left to feed my family. In addition, I had the satisfaction of taking my children to a huge supermarket, something I had not been able to do before"*. She continued: *"I will always be grateful for what they have done for me and my family. Especially for giving food to my children in the dining room, because they do something that I as a mother must do but cannot"*.



¹ Name has been changed