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LIVES AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE.**

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**Independent International Assessment  
Contemporary Conditions in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela  
Impact of the June 24, 2026 Earthquake on the Humanitarian Crisis, Institutional  
Capacity, and Human Rights**

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### **Impact of the June 24, 2026 Earthquake on the Humanitarian, Institutional, and Human Rights Situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **Background**

Prior to the June 24, 2026 earthquake, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was already experiencing one of the most severe and protracted humanitarian, institutional, and human rights crises in the Western Hemisphere. Over the past several years, international human rights mechanisms, humanitarian agencies, and multilateral organizations have documented the progressive erosion of the rule of law, structural corruption, the deterioration of public institutions, the collapse of essential public services, restrictions on access to information, and persistent limitations on the effective enjoyment of fundamental rights.

These pre-existing conditions had significantly reduced the Venezuelan State's capacity to protect its population, maintain critical infrastructure, ensure access to healthcare and other essential public services, respond effectively to emergencies, and provide adequate assistance to vulnerable communities. As a result, the June 24, 2026 earthquake did not strike a resilient State but rather one already facing profound institutional fragility, prolonged governance challenges, and a complex humanitarian emergency.

The available scientific, humanitarian, and institutional evidence indicates that the earthquake substantially intensified pre-existing vulnerabilities, further weakened the country's response capacity, and increased humanitarian needs across multiple sectors. Consequently, the disaster should be understood not only as a major natural event but also as a significant development affecting Venezuela's contemporary humanitarian, institutional, and human rights conditions.

#### **Earthquake Overview**

On June 24, 2026, a powerful earthquake struck the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, causing extensive destruction across multiple regions of the country. According to scientific assessments conducted by the United States Geological Survey (USGS), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and the European Union's Copernicus Emergency Management Service, the earthquake generated widespread structural damage affecting residential communities, public infrastructure, healthcare facilities, transportation networks, and essential public services.

Satellite-based damage assessments indicate that approximately 58,870 buildings sustained severe damage or were likely destroyed, making this one of the most destructive natural disasters recorded in Venezuela in recent decades. The disaster immediately triggered a

large-scale humanitarian emergency, placing extraordinary pressure on institutions that were already operating under significant structural limitations.

### **Humanitarian Impact**

The earthquake substantially increased humanitarian needs throughout the affected regions. Millions of people have been impacted by the destruction of homes, disruption of essential services, reduced access to healthcare, shortages of potable water, sanitation challenges, food insecurity, and interruptions in education.

United Nations humanitarian agencies estimate that approximately 6.8 million people may require humanitarian assistance, including nearly 680,000 children in urgent need of protection and essential services. The disaster has also increased the risks associated with internal displacement, family separation, communicable diseases, gender-based violence, child protection concerns, and psychosocial trauma among affected populations.

### **Institutional Impact**

The earthquake occurred within a context of prolonged institutional deterioration that significantly limited the Venezuelan State's capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a disaster of this magnitude. Years of declining public investment, deterioration of critical infrastructure, shortages of specialized personnel, systemic corruption, and weakened governance reduced the effectiveness of emergency response mechanisms.

These structural deficiencies affected the operation of hospitals, transportation systems, electrical networks, water distribution systems, telecommunications infrastructure, and disaster management institutions, thereby amplifying the humanitarian consequences of the earthquake and delaying recovery efforts.

### **Human Rights Impact**

The humanitarian consequences of the earthquake extend beyond physical destruction. The disaster has intensified pre-existing obstacles to the enjoyment of fundamental human rights, including the rights to life, health, adequate housing, food, water, sanitation, education, family unity, and effective State protection.

Particularly vulnerable populations—including children, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, individuals with chronic medical conditions, internally displaced persons, and those already facing heightened protection risks—have experienced increased exposure to serious human rights concerns. The earthquake has further reduced the Venezuelan State's capacity to fulfill its obligations under International Human Rights Law to protect and assist affected populations.

## Implications for United States Public Policymakers

The findings presented in this assessment indicate that the earthquake of **June 24, 2026**, substantially altered the humanitarian, institutional, and human rights landscape in the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**. The disaster exacerbated pre-existing structural vulnerabilities and further diminished the State's capacity to provide effective protection and to ensure the enjoyment of fundamental rights.

These circumstances constitute objective and contemporary country conditions that may assist Members of the **United States Congress**, their legislative staff, Executive Branch agencies, and other public policymakers in evaluating matters related to humanitarian assistance, regional stability, immigration policy, **Temporary Protected Status (TPS)**, international protection, and broader United States policy toward Venezuela.

This report provides an objective, independent, and evidence-based assessment grounded in scientific, humanitarian, and institutional sources. Its purpose is to contribute to public policy discussions concerning the evolving humanitarian and human rights situation in the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**.

**ABBREVIATIONS**

| <b>Acronym</b> | <b>Meaning</b>                                                   |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OHCHR          | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  |
| OCHA           | Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs              |
| UNHCR          | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees                    |
| UNICEF         | United Nations Children's Fund                                   |
| PAHO           | Pan American Health Organization                                 |
| WHO            | World Health Organization                                        |
| UNDRR          | United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction                |
| IOM            | International Organization for Migration                         |
| IFRC           | International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies |
| ICRC           | International Committee of the Red Cross                         |
| USGS           | United States Geological Survey                                  |
| NASA           | National Aeronautics and Space Administration                    |
| EMS            | Emergency Management Service                                     |
| TPS            | Temporary Protected Status                                       |
| JICA           | Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)                    |

## KEY FINDINGS

The principal findings of this assessment are summarized below:

| Topic                    | Key Finding                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Earthquake               | The June 24, 2026 earthquake is among the most destructive natural disasters recorded in Venezuela in recent decades.                                                                                      |
| Scientific Assessment    | Independent satellite analyses conducted by NASA, USGS, and the Copernicus Emergency Management Service indicate damage substantially greater than initially reported.                                     |
| Humanitarian Situation   | Millions of people have been affected, with urgent needs for shelter, healthcare, food, water, sanitation, and protection.                                                                                 |
| Children                 | Approximately 680,000 children require immediate humanitarian assistance and protection.                                                                                                                   |
| Critical Infrastructure  | Hospitals, transportation systems, public utilities, and essential infrastructure sustained significant damage while already operating under severe structural limitations.                                |
| Institutional Capacity   | The earthquake occurred within a context of prolonged institutional deterioration, reducing the State's capacity to respond effectively to the emergency.                                                  |
| Human Rights             | The disaster intensified pre-existing obstacles to the enjoyment of fundamental human rights, including the rights to health, housing, food, water, education, and effective State protection.             |
| Country Conditions       | The earthquake materially altered Venezuela's contemporary country conditions by aggravating the existing humanitarian and institutional crisis.                                                           |
| International Protection | The earthquake constitutes a relevant supervening event that should be considered, together with individual circumstances, in contemporary assessments of country conditions and international protection. |

## I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE REPORT

This **International Human Rights and Humanitarian Assessment** has been prepared for the purpose of evaluating the humanitarian, institutional, and human rights consequences resulting from the earthquake that struck the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** on **June 24, 2026**, and of analyzing the extent to which this event has affected the country's contemporary conditions from the perspective of international human rights law and humanitarian protection standards.

This report examines the interaction between the earthquake and the structural conditions that existed in Venezuela prior to the disaster, including prolonged institutional deterioration, systemic corruption, weakened governance, deficiencies in the provision of essential public services, and the persistent humanitarian crisis that has been documented by international organizations over recent years. Accordingly, the earthquake is not analyzed as an isolated natural event, but rather as a catastrophic occurrence whose consequences must be understood within the broader context of pre-existing structural vulnerabilities and their implications for the effective protection of fundamental human rights.

This assessment is based upon a comprehensive review of scientific evidence, satellite imagery, humanitarian situation reports, international human rights documentation, official publications, and other reliable sources produced by United Nations entities, international organizations, scientific institutions, and specialized research centers. The analysis has been conducted in accordance with internationally recognized standards governing **country conditions assessments** and humanitarian reporting, applying an interdisciplinary methodology designed to ensure objectivity, technical rigor, analytical independence, and evidentiary reliability.

The purpose of this report is to provide **Members of the United States Congress**, congressional staff, Executive Branch agencies, public policymakers, and other interested stakeholders with an objective, evidence-based assessment of the humanitarian and institutional situation in the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** following the **June 24, 2026 earthquake**. In addition, the report seeks to contribute to an informed understanding of the disaster's impact on governance, the delivery of essential public services, humanitarian needs, and the Venezuelan State's capacity to ensure the effective protection of fundamental rights.

This report neither advocates for nor endorses any particular legislative, administrative, or public policy outcome. Rather, its purpose is to present objective findings and technical analysis that may assist in the evaluation of Venezuela's contemporary country conditions in matters relating to humanitarian assistance, regional stability, immigration policy, **Temporary Protected Status (TPS)**, international protection, and other issues relevant to United States policy toward Venezuela.

This assessment reflects the verified information available as of the date of publication and recognizes that humanitarian emergencies constitute dynamic and continuously evolving

situations. Accordingly, as additional verified information becomes available, the understanding of the full humanitarian and institutional consequences of the disaster may continue to evolve. This report should therefore be understood as an evidence-based assessment of the conditions documented at the time of publication, while acknowledging that subsequent developments may warrant future updates and supplementary analyses.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This assessment was prepared using a multidisciplinary research methodology based on documentary analysis, source triangulation, and the application of internationally recognized standards for country conditions reporting, humanitarian assessments, and human rights investigations.

The analysis incorporates information from independent scientific institutions, United Nations agencies, international humanitarian organizations, multilateral institutions, official government publications, academic research, and other reliable sources available as of the date of publication. Scientific findings concerning the earthquake are supported by data produced by the **United States Geological Survey (USGS)**, the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)**, the **Copernicus Emergency Management Service (EMS)**, and other internationally recognized Earth observation systems.

Humanitarian conditions were assessed using situation reports, emergency assessments, and operational updates published by the **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**, the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**, the **Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)**, the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**, the **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, and the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)**.

The assessment of institutional conditions and human rights was based on reports issued by the **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**, the **Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**, the **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)**, the **World Bank**, **Transparency International**, the **World Justice Project**, and other specialized institutions.

Rather than relying on any single source, this report applies a source-triangulation methodology that compares scientific evidence, humanitarian reporting, institutional assessments, and international legal standards to ensure the highest possible level of objectivity, reliability, and analytical consistency. Every effort has been made to verify information through multiple independent sources whenever possible.

### III. COUNTRY CONDITIONS PRIOR TO THE JUNE 24, 2026 EARTHQUAKE

This chapter examines the institutional, governance, and humanitarian conditions that existed in Venezuela prior to the June 24, 2026 earthquake. Understanding these pre-existing structural conditions is essential for assessing the magnitude of the disaster's humanitarian consequences and the State's capacity to respond effectively.

Venezuela's Pre-Existing Institutional and Humanitarian context the humanitarian consequences of the June 24, 2026 earthquake cannot be properly understood without considering the institutional, economic, and human rights conditions that existed in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela prior to the disaster. The earthquake struck a country that had already experienced more than two decades of progressive institutional deterioration, weakening of the rule of law, systemic corruption, declining public investment, and the degradation of essential public services.

Over recent years, numerous international organizations—including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)<sup>1</sup>, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela<sup>2</sup>, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)<sup>3</sup>, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)<sup>4</sup>, the World Bank<sup>5</sup>, and other multilateral institutions<sup>6</sup>—have documented persistent structural deficiencies affecting governance, judicial independence, public administration, healthcare, education, critical infrastructure, and the delivery of essential services.

These reports consistently conclude that Venezuela's prolonged institutional deterioration significantly reduced the State's capacity to prevent foreseeable risks, maintain resilient infrastructure, coordinate emergency operations, and ensure the effective protection of fundamental rights. The deterioration of hospitals, public utilities, transportation systems, water distribution networks, electrical infrastructure, and emergency management institutions created conditions of heightened vulnerability long before the earthquake occurred.

International disaster risk reduction standards recognize that the consequences of natural hazards are determined not only by the intensity of the physical event but also by the resilience of public institutions and the capacity of governments to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Consequently, countries experiencing prolonged

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<sup>1</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2025). *Situation of Human Rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council. (2024). *Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (A/HRC/57/58)*

<sup>3</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. (2024). *Annual Report 2024: Venezuela*

<sup>4</sup> Pan American Health Organization. (2025). *Health in the Americas: Venezuela*.

<sup>5</sup> World Bank. (2025). *Worldwide Governance Indicators*.

<sup>6</sup> World Justice Project. (2025). *Rule of Law Index*., United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. (2022). *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2022*

institutional fragility are considerably more likely to suffer greater humanitarian losses when major natural hazards occur.

Accordingly, the June 24, 2026 earthquake should not be viewed solely as an isolated geological event. Rather, it must be understood within the broader context of Venezuela's pre-existing humanitarian emergency and institutional decline, circumstances that significantly amplified the disaster's human, social, economic, and institutional consequences.

### **3.1. The Distinction Between a Natural Disaster and an Institutional Catastrophe**

Earthquakes are natural geological phenomena whose occurrence lies beyond human control. However, the magnitude of their consequences is not determined solely by the intensity of the seismic event. Scientific evidence and international experience consistently demonstrate that human, economic, and social losses resulting from natural hazards are largely influenced by the institutional capacity of the affected State, the resilience of its critical infrastructure, the quality of governance, the effectiveness of disaster risk management policies, and the government's ability to protect its population before, during, and after an emergency.

For this reason, international disaster risk reduction literature distinguishes between a **natural hazard** and an **institutional catastrophe**. While the former refers to the physical event itself, the latter describes the consequences produced when a natural hazard interacts with pre-existing structural vulnerabilities within a society. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)<sup>7</sup> has consistently emphasized that disasters are not inevitable; rather, they are the result of accumulated vulnerabilities created by inadequate governance, insufficient investment in resilience, weak institutions, poor urban planning, and limited disaster preparedness.<sup>8</sup>

Applied to Venezuela, this distinction is particularly significant. The earthquake of June 24, 2026, cannot be understood solely as a geological event. Its humanitarian consequences must be analyzed within the context of more than two decades of progressive institutional deterioration, declining public investment, weakening of the rule of law, systemic corruption, degradation of critical infrastructure, and the erosion of the State's capacity to provide essential public services and effective protection to the population.

Prior to the earthquake, numerous international organizations had documented persistent structural deficiencies affecting healthcare, transportation, water and sanitation systems, electrical infrastructure, public administration, emergency preparedness, and institutional governance. These conditions substantially reduced the country's resilience and significantly increased the population's vulnerability to the effects of a major natural disaster.

From a technical perspective, this assessment does not attribute responsibility to the Venezuelan State for the occurrence of the earthquake itself. Rather, it evaluates the extent to

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<sup>7</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). (2022). *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2022*.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations. (2015). *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030*.

which pre-existing institutional conditions amplified the humanitarian consequences of the disaster and limited the State's ability to prevent avoidable harm, coordinate an effective emergency response, protect fundamental rights, and support recovery efforts.

Accordingly, the June 24, 2026 earthquake should be understood not only as a major natural disaster but also as an event whose devastating consequences were significantly intensified by long-standing structural weaknesses. The interaction between the natural hazard and Venezuela's pre-existing institutional fragility transformed a severe seismic event into a broader humanitarian and institutional catastrophe with profound implications for human rights, governance, and the country's contemporary conditions.<sup>9</sup>

### 3.2. Structural Corruption as a Driver of Increased Collective Risk

Corruption is widely recognized as one of the principal factors that undermine a State's capacity to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters. Its effects extend far beyond the misappropriation of public funds, producing systemic failures that weaken land-use planning, compromise the quality of public infrastructure, reduce investment in maintenance, impair the delivery of essential public services, and diminish institutional preparedness for emergencies.

International organizations have consistently concluded that corruption contributes directly to higher mortality rates, greater economic losses, and more severe humanitarian consequences following natural disasters. When resources allocated to hospitals, schools, transportation networks, water systems, electrical infrastructure, public housing, and civil protection programs are diverted, mismanaged, or inadequately supervised, the resilience of public infrastructure progressively deteriorates, increasing the exposure of communities to avoidable risks.

In Venezuela, numerous national and international investigations conducted over the past two decades have documented persistent deficiencies in public procurement, infrastructure development, public financial management, and institutional oversight. These structural governance challenges have affected the implementation of major public projects and reduced the effectiveness of mechanisms intended to ensure transparency and accountability in the management of public resources.<sup>10</sup>

The situation of **Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A. (PDVSA)** illustrates the broader institutional impact of systemic corruption. Reports issued by Transparency Venezuela, Transparency International<sup>11</sup>, and other specialized organizations have documented large-scale corruption schemes that significantly affected the country's principal source of public revenue. The

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<sup>9</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). (2022). *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2022*.

<sup>10</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). (2025). *Situation of Human Rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*.

<sup>11</sup> Transparency Venezuela. (2022). *Cómo se fraguó la corrupción en PDVSA*. Transparency International. (2024). *Corruption Perceptions Index 2024*. Transparency Venezuela. (2022). *Un historial de casos de corrupción en PDVSA*.

resulting loss of financial resources reduced the State's capacity to invest in critical infrastructure, healthcare, public services, disaster preparedness, and long-term resilience.

These challenges have been compounded by the progressive weakening of oversight institutions. Limitations affecting independent auditing, legislative oversight, administrative accountability, and the investigation of public corruption have reduced the State's ability to identify structural deficiencies and implement corrective measures before the occurrence of major emergencies.<sup>12</sup>

Accordingly, this assessment concludes that structural corruption should be understood as a significant **risk multiplier rather** than solely an economic or governance concern. By weakening institutional capacity, reducing infrastructure resilience, and limiting effective disaster preparedness, systemic corruption objectively increases collective vulnerability and significantly amplifies the humanitarian consequences of large-scale natural disasters.

### **3.3. The Erosion of the Rule of Law and Its Impact on the Humanitarian Response**

An effective humanitarian response depends not only on the availability of financial and material resources but also on the existence of strong public institutions capable of acting transparently, efficiently, and in accordance with the rule of law. Judicial independence, administrative accountability, public oversight, institutional coordination, and respect for legal norms constitute essential components of disaster preparedness and emergency management.

Over the past decade, multiple international human rights mechanisms have documented a sustained deterioration of the rule of law in Venezuela. Reports issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)<sup>13</sup>, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)<sup>14</sup> have identified the concentration of political power, weakening of independent institutions, restrictions on civic space, and reduced institutional oversight as structural factors affecting governance and the protection of fundamental rights.

These institutional challenges acquire even greater significance during large-scale humanitarian emergencies. The effective management of disaster response requires transparent procurement systems, coordinated emergency operations, reliable public information, equitable distribution of humanitarian assistance, and effective oversight of public resources. Where these institutional safeguards are weakened, the risks of administrative delays, inefficient resource allocation, unequal access to humanitarian assistance, and diminished public accountability increase substantially.

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<sup>12</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council. (2024). *Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (A/HRC/57/58)*.

<sup>13</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). (2025). *Situation of Human Rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*

<sup>14</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). (2024). *Annual Report 2024 – Chapter IV.B: Venezuela*.

Following the June 24, 2026 earthquake, the Venezuelan authorities faced the simultaneous challenge of conducting search-and-rescue operations, restoring essential public services, assessing infrastructure damage, coordinating humanitarian assistance, and supporting displaced communities. The effectiveness of these efforts depended not only on available resources but also on the institutional capacity to coordinate multiple governmental agencies, humanitarian organizations, and international partners under rapidly evolving emergency conditions.

From the perspective of International Human Rights Law, States have a positive obligation to organize their institutions in a manner that enables them to protect life, personal integrity, and other fundamental rights during emergencies. When institutional weaknesses significantly impair that capacity, the humanitarian consequences of natural disasters become considerably more severe, particularly for populations already experiencing conditions of heightened vulnerability.

Accordingly, the available evidence indicates that the progressive erosion of the rule of law and institutional governance in Venezuela constituted an important structural factor that reduced the State's capacity to respond effectively to the June 24, 2026 earthquake. These pre-existing institutional conditions materially influenced the scale of the humanitarian emergency and remain relevant in assessing the country's contemporary institutional capacity and overall humanitarian situation.<sup>15</sup>

### **3.4. Deterioration of Public Infrastructure and the Loss of National Resilience**

A State's ability to withstand, absorb, respond to, and recover from a major natural disaster depends, to a significant extent, on the strength, maintenance, and resilience of its critical infrastructure. Hospitals, healthcare facilities, potable water systems, electrical power networks, transportation systems, telecommunications, ports, airports, and other strategic infrastructure constitute the operational foundation upon which the effective protection of the population during emergencies depends. The resilience of such infrastructure is an essential component of the State's obligation to protect life, safeguard personal integrity, and ensure the continuity of essential public services.

International disaster risk reduction standards recognize that prevention is a continuous and ongoing obligation of the State. This obligation encompasses development planning, the adequate allocation of public resources, the maintenance of critical infrastructure, the implementation and enforcement of technical construction standards, institutional preparedness, and the adoption of measures aimed at reducing the population's vulnerability to foreseeable hazards. Accordingly, a State's capacity to respond effectively to a disaster is determined not only by the actions undertaken during the emergency itself, but also by the public investment decisions, territorial planning policies, and institutional strengthening measures implemented over many years.

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<sup>15</sup> Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). (2026). *Venezuela Earthquake Situation Reports*. 450 SOUTH ORANGE AVE, 3RD FLOOR, ORLANDO FLORIDA 32801

Prior to the **June 24, 2026 earthquake**, numerous international organizations had documented the progressive deterioration of public infrastructure in the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**. The **Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)**<sup>16</sup>, the **World Health Organization (WHO)**<sup>17</sup>, the **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**<sup>18</sup>, the **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)**<sup>19</sup>, the **Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**<sup>20</sup>, and other international organizations had, over the course of several years, documented serious deficiencies affecting hospitals, electrical power networks, potable water systems, sanitation infrastructure, transportation services, and other strategic sectors essential to ensuring an effective response to emergencies.

Years of economic contraction, sustained reductions in public investment, inadequate preventive maintenance, the loss of specialized technical personnel, institutional deterioration, and deficiencies in planning mechanisms progressively diminished the operational capacity of the State to respond effectively to a large-scale disaster. These circumstances limited the ability of public services to provide a timely response to a complex emergency and directly undermined the country's overall resilience.

The health system represents one of the clearest examples of this structural deterioration. Numerous international organizations documented the persistent shortage of essential medicines, the deterioration of hospital infrastructure, recurrent interruptions in electricity and potable water supply, the insufficient availability of medical equipment, the large-scale migration of healthcare professionals, and the operational limitations affecting numerous healthcare facilities. These conditions significantly reduced hospital capacity to simultaneously treat a large number of injured persons during a major seismic emergency.

Similar deficiencies affected other critical sectors. Recurrent failures within the National Electric System, prolonged interruptions in potable water supply, the deterioration of roads and bridges, operational limitations at ports and airports, and the fragility of telecommunications networks substantially reduced the State's capacity to coordinate search and rescue operations, mobilize resources, distribute humanitarian assistance, and rapidly restore essential services in the affected areas.

This situation had already been identified through technical studies developed with the participation of the Venezuelan State itself. Of particular significance is the *Basic Disaster Prevention Plan for the Metropolitan District of Caracas*, prepared by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)<sup>21</sup> in coordination with Venezuelan institutions and published in

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<sup>16</sup> Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). (2025). *Health in the Americas: Venezuela*.

<sup>17</sup> World Bank. (2025). *World Development Indicators*.

<sup>18</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). (2025). *Situation of Human Rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*.

<sup>19</sup> Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)

<sup>20</sup> **United Nations Human Rights Council. Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**. (2024). *A/HRC/57/57: Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*. United Nations.

<sup>21</sup> The *Basic Disaster Prevention Plan for the Metropolitan District of Caracas*, prepared by the **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)** in 2005, identified significant institutional weaknesses in disaster risk planning and management.

2005. The study concluded that reducing seismic risk required prioritizing the strengthening of critical infrastructure through the structural reinforcement of public and private buildings, hospitals, bridges, transportation networks, early warning systems, and other facilities essential to ensuring the continuity of core governmental functions during a disaster.

The study further warned that a substantial number of existing buildings had been constructed before the adoption of modern earthquake-resistant design standards or without adequate engineering criteria. It therefore recommended their systematic evaluation, progressive structural reinforcement, and continuous maintenance as among the most effective measures to reduce human casualties and material losses. It also emphasized the need to preserve strategic evacuation routes, strengthen transportation infrastructure, and ensure the uninterrupted operation of hospitals and other essential services during major earthquake scenarios.

From a legal perspective, these recommendations are particularly significant because they demonstrate that, at least since 2005, the Venezuelan State possessed sufficient technical information to identify the principal vulnerabilities affecting its critical infrastructure and to adopt reasonable preventive measures. Accordingly, the assessment of the impact of the 2026 earthquake cannot be limited solely to the intensity of the natural event itself but must also consider the extent to which public policies aimed at strengthening national resilience were implemented over the preceding two decades.

The duty of prevention does not constitute an obligation to guarantee a specific result but rather an obligation of means grounded in the principle of due diligence. This requires States to employ available public resources reasonably in order to reduce foreseeable risks, strengthen essential infrastructure, and protect the population against known threats. Within this framework, the efficient allocation of national budgetary resources, sustained investment in critical infrastructure, and the effective implementation of maintenance policies constitute integral components of the State's obligations arising from the rights to life, health, personal integrity, adequate housing, and access to essential public services.

From the perspective of international human rights law, the use of public resources must be directed toward the progressive realization of economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as the adoption of reasonable measures to prevent risks capable of affecting large segments of the population. Where the prolonged deterioration of critical infrastructure limits the State's capacity to respond effectively to foreseeable disasters, such circumstances constitute a relevant factor in assessing compliance with the State's international obligations to respect, protect, and guarantee human rights.

Accordingly, the earthquake of June 24, 2026, exposed structural vulnerabilities that had accumulated over years of institutional weakening, insufficient public investment, and the progressive erosion of national resilience. From both a technical and legal perspective, the humanitarian consequences of the disaster cannot be analyzed exclusively as the result of a natural phenomenon but must also be understood in light of the pre-existing structural

conditions that constrained the State's ability to prevent, mitigate, and respond effectively to an emergency of this magnitude, with direct implications for the effective enjoyment of the human rights of the affected population.

### **3.5. The Weakening of the National Disaster Risk Management System and the Limited Emergency Response Capacity**

Disaster risk management is a fundamental responsibility of every State and encompasses the public policies, institutions, technical capacities, financial resources, and coordination mechanisms necessary to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters of natural origin or caused by human action. Effective disaster risk management is essential to safeguard human life, protect critical infrastructure, and ensure the continuity of essential public services during emergency situations.<sup>22</sup>

The **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030**<sup>23</sup> recognizes that strengthening disaster risk management is an essential responsibility of States and emphasizes the need to develop robust institutions, effective early warning systems, resilient infrastructure, adequate coordination mechanisms, and sufficient capacities to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters.

The earthquake revealed many of these structural limitations. Initial situation reports issued by United Nations humanitarian agencies described significant challenges related to the rapid assessment of damages, the identification of isolated communities, the coordination of search and rescue operations, humanitarian logistics, the provision of emergency health services, the restoration of essential public services, and assistance to displaced populations. Although such challenges are common following large-scale disasters, their severity was aggravated by the country's pre-existing institutional vulnerabilities.

Particular concern arose from the damage affecting infrastructure essential for emergency operations. Interruptions in electricity supply, telecommunications, transportation networks, potable water distribution systems, healthcare facilities, and supply logistics chains significantly reduced the State's capacity to deploy personnel, distribute humanitarian assistance, coordinate search and rescue operations, and restore essential services during the critical hours immediately following the earthquake.

From the perspective of international human rights law, the obligation to protect life and personal integrity extends beyond the provision of post-disaster assistance. States also have a duty to develop and maintain reasonable institutional capacities that allow for adequate preparedness and effective response to emergencies and disasters. Where such capacities have been progressively weakened by structural factors—such as prolonged underinvestment in public infrastructure, institutional deterioration, corruption, and the loss of specialized personnel—the humanitarian consequences of natural disasters are significantly aggravated.

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<sup>22</sup> United Nations. (2015). *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030*

<sup>23</sup> United Nations. (2015). *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030*

Accordingly, the available evidence indicates that the Venezuelan State faced the emergency of June 24, 2026, with significantly reduced institutional capacity and resilience. The earthquake therefore occurred in a context in which effective response capacity was already compromised, a circumstance that contributed to the scale and prolongation of the humanitarian emergency that followed.

One of the most relevant technical precedents for assessing the institutional capacity of the Venezuelan State in disaster risk management is the *Study on the Basic Disaster Prevention Plan for the Metropolitan District of Caracas*, prepared by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)<sup>24</sup> in coordination with Venezuelan institutions and published in March 2005. The study was developed at the request of the Venezuelan State itself with the objective of assessing the seismic vulnerability of Caracas, identifying the main risk factors, and formulating a Master Plan aimed at strengthening prevention, mitigation, and response to future earthquakes and other natural disasters.

The report begins by recognizing that Caracas has a well-documented history of destructive earthquakes and disasters associated with mass movements, expressly citing the earthquakes of 1812 and 1967, as well as the events that occurred in 1951 and 1999. On this basis, it concluded that the occurrence of new events of similar magnitude had to be considered a foreseeable scenario requiring permanent public policies for risk reduction and institutional strengthening.

Of particular importance is the fact that the study itself identified institutional deficiencies within the national disaster prevention system. Although Venezuelan legislation assigned specific responsibilities to Civil Protection authorities to develop national and regional prevention plans, the report found that these fundamental instruments had not yet been developed, revealing a significant gap between the obligations established in the legal framework and their effective implementation.

In response to these deficiencies, the Master Plan formulated concrete recommendations aimed at strengthening the State's capacity to reduce the impact of future disasters. These included the seismic reinforcement of public and private buildings, the protection of critical infrastructure, the relocation of communities situated in high-risk areas, the implementation of early warning systems, the establishment of emergency command centers, and the strengthening of community organization for risk management. The study further concluded that the adoption of these measures would significantly reduce the number of casualties, material losses, and costs associated with post-disaster response and reconstruction.

The recommendations formulated by JICA in 2005 are consistent with the principles later consolidated in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, particularly with regard to understanding risk, strengthening governance, investing in resilience, developing early warning systems, institutional preparedness, and community participation.

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<sup>24</sup> **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).** (2005). *Study on the Basic Disaster Prevention Plan for the Metropolitan District of Caracas in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela: Final Report (Summary)*. Japan International Cooperation Agency.

This convergence demonstrates that the proposed actions were not merely technical recommendations, but measures consistent with contemporary international standards on disaster risk reduction.

Accordingly, the study demonstrates that, at least since 2005, the Venezuelan State possessed sufficient scientific and technical information to identify the seismic threat, understand the principal institutional vulnerabilities, and adopt measures aimed at strengthening its prevention and response capacity. In light of the facts documented in this report, the progressive deterioration of public institutions responsible for risk management, the insufficient implementation of preventive policies, and the weakening of critical infrastructure constitute relevant factors for understanding why the earthquake of June 24, 2026, produced a humanitarian impact of such magnitude. In this regard, the analysis of the consequences of the disaster cannot be separated from the pre-existing institutional conditions or from the State's effective capacity to fulfill its duty to protect the population against foreseeable risks.

### **3.6. Transparency, Access to Information, and Accountability During the Emergency**

The availability of timely, accurate, verifiable, and publicly accessible information constitutes one of the fundamental pillars of an effective humanitarian response and an indispensable condition for the protection of human rights during disaster situations. International disaster risk reduction standards recognize that the collection, systematization, and dissemination of information concerning fatalities, injuries, missing persons, displaced populations, rescued individuals, damage to critical infrastructure, humanitarian needs, and the distribution of emergency assistance are essential for guiding decision-making, coordinating response operations, facilitating international cooperation, and protecting affected populations.

From the perspective of Venezuelan administrative law, transparency constitutes a guiding principle of public administration. Article 141 of the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela establishes that the Public Administration is at the service of citizens and must base its actions on the principles of honesty, participation, promptness, effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, accountability, and responsibility, in full compliance with the Constitution and the legal order. These principles acquire even greater significance during large-scale emergencies, when administrative decisions directly affect the protection of life, personal integrity, health, and the population's access to humanitarian assistance.

Transparency during an emergency is not merely an obligation of good governance but also an indispensable safeguard for the effective exercise of multiple human rights. The availability of reliable public information makes it possible to identify affected persons promptly, organize search and rescue operations, coordinate national and international assistance, protect vulnerable groups, facilitate family reunification, and ensure victims' access to protection and remedies. Conversely, the absence of sufficient or verifiable information increases uncertainty, hinders humanitarian response planning, obstructs

independent oversight of State actions, and heightens the risk of further human rights violations.

At the international level, the right of access to public information constitutes an expression of the right to freedom of expression recognized under Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Article 13 of the American Convention on Human Rights. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has held that access to information held by the State is governed by the principle of maximum disclosure, according to which all public information must be presumed accessible, except for exceptional limitations established by law and compatible with a democratic society. This principle becomes particularly significant during humanitarian emergencies, when the availability of timely information is indispensable for protecting life, facilitating international cooperation, and ensuring public oversight of governmental actions.

Prior to the earthquake of June 24, 2026, numerous international organizations had expressed concern regarding limitations affecting access to public information, the availability of reliable official statistics, transparency in the administration of public resources, and restrictions on the independent monitoring of State policies in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and various international organizations repeatedly documented the difficulties in obtaining complete, timely, and verifiable official information concerning social, economic, health, and humanitarian indicators. These circumstances limited the capacity for independent assessment of the country's situation and hindered the formulation of evidence-based public policies.

These institutional limitations became even more significant following the earthquake of June 24, 2026. The magnitude of the emergency made it indispensable to maintain updated and verifiable records concerning fatalities, injuries, missing persons, displaced populations, destroyed homes, damaged critical infrastructure, and urgent humanitarian needs. The collection of such information constitutes an essential element for guiding search and rescue operations, planning medical assistance, coordinating food distribution, ensuring access to potable water, organizing temporary shelters, and prioritizing assistance for populations in situations of heightened vulnerability.

United Nations humanitarian agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UNICEF, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and other specialized organizations have emphasized that the timely documentation of fatalities, injuries, missing persons, displaced populations, and separated or unaccompanied children constitutes an essential obligation for ensuring the protection of human rights during disaster situations. The existence of complete and verifiable records facilitates family reunification, protects the identity of victims, prevents disappearances and

human trafficking, ensures continuity of medical care, and supports the planning of recovery and reconstruction efforts.

Following the earthquake, United Nations humanitarian agencies and international relief organizations emphasized the need to strengthen mechanisms for collecting, verifying, and disseminating information concerning the affected population, infrastructure damage, humanitarian needs, and emergency response activities. In this context, the use of independent satellite imagery generated by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)<sup>25</sup>, the Copernicus Emergency Management Service (Copernicus EMS)<sup>26</sup>, and other scientific institutions became an essential tool for independently assessing the extent of the destruction and complementing the information available through official channels.

Accountability constitutes another essential component of the State's response to disasters. This principle encompasses the obligation to document decisions taken, properly record the use of public resources allocated to the emergency, maintain verifiable information concerning the distribution of humanitarian assistance, and permit scrutiny by oversight bodies, international organizations, and civil society. Transparency in the administration of resources allocated for emergency response contributes to preventing corruption, diversion of humanitarian assistance, discrimination in the distribution of essential goods, and other practices incompatible with the State's international human rights obligations.

From the perspective of international human rights law, the State's obligation to provide information, maintain documentation, and ensure accountability forms part of the general duty to guarantee rights established under the principal international human rights instruments. The absence of sufficient public information may compromise the effective enjoyment of the right to life, the right to personal integrity, the right to health, the right to family unity, the right of access to information, and the right of victims to know the truth regarding the circumstances of the disaster and the actions undertaken by public authorities.

The institutional, administrative, and governance conditions analyzed in this chapter provide the necessary context for understanding the circumstances under which the earthquake of June 24, 2026, occurred. On this basis, the following chapter examines the humanitarian consequences and human rights impacts resulting from the disaster, taking into account the State's pre-existing capacities to respond effectively to a large-scale emergency.

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<sup>25</sup> National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). (2026). *Disaster Response Coordination System – Venezuela Earthquake Assessment*.

<sup>26</sup> Servicio de Gestión de Emergencias de Copernicus (EMS). (2026). *Activación de Cartografía Rápida – Terremoto en Venezuela*.

## **IV. HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT OF THE JUNE 24, 2026 EARTHQUAKE**

This chapter examines the principal humanitarian and human rights consequences arising from the earthquake, with particular attention to the healthcare system, persons in situations of vulnerability, victim registration, and the protection needs documented by international organizations.

### **4.1. Collapse of the Healthcare System and the Aggravation of Risks to the Right to Health**

The right to health is one of the fundamental rights most severely affected during large-scale humanitarian emergencies. Pursuant to Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)<sup>27</sup>, States have the obligation to ensure the availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality of healthcare services, including during disasters and other large-scale emergencies. This obligation becomes particularly significant when affected populations require emergency medical care, treatment for traumatic injuries, continuity of care for chronic diseases, disease prevention, mental health services, and access to essential medicines.

The earthquake that struck the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on June 24, 2026, occurred at a time when the national healthcare system had already experienced years of progressive deterioration. Prior to the disaster, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)<sup>28</sup>, the World Health Organization (WHO)<sup>29</sup>, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had documented the persistent shortage of essential medicines, the deterioration of hospital infrastructure, interruptions in electricity and water supply, insufficient medical equipment, shortages of healthcare professionals, and limitations in access to specialized medical treatment.

These pre-existing structural deficiencies substantially limited the capacity of the healthcare system to absorb the extraordinary demand generated by the earthquake. The simultaneous treatment of thousands of injured individuals required operating rooms, emergency departments, blood banks, diagnostic imaging equipment, intensive care units, ambulances, medicines, and specialized medical personnel—resources that were already operating under significant constraints before the disaster occurred.

Humanitarian assessments conducted after the earthquake identified damage to hospitals, primary healthcare centers, and other medical facilities located in the regions most severely affected. Interruptions in electricity supply, shortages of potable water, damage to transportation infrastructure, and logistical constraints further hindered the delivery of

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<sup>27</sup> Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

<sup>28</sup> Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). (2025). *Health in the Americas: Venezuela*. Pan American Health Organization.

<sup>29</sup> World Health Organization (WHO). (2025). *Framework for Health Emergency Preparedness and Response*. World Health Organization.

emergency medical services during the critical hours and days following the earthquake, a period during which timely medical care is essential to prevent avoidable deaths and permanent disabilities.

The disaster also disrupted the continuity of medical care for individuals with chronic illnesses, including patients requiring dialysis, cancer treatment, HIV therapy, insulin-dependent diabetes management, cardiovascular care, and other specialized medical services<sup>30</sup>. In humanitarian emergency settings, interruptions in access to essential medicines and ongoing treatment may result in life-threatening consequences comparable to those caused directly by the disaster itself.

From a public health perspective, the earthquake also increased the risk of communicable disease outbreaks associated with interruptions in water supply, deficiencies in sanitation, the accumulation of solid waste, overcrowding in temporary shelters, and limitations affecting epidemiological surveillance and disease prevention programs. These conditions disproportionately affect children and adolescents, older persons, pregnant women, immunocompromised individuals, and other groups with heightened medical vulnerability.

The psychological consequences of the disaster likewise constitute a major public health concern. Scientific evidence demonstrates that major earthquakes frequently lead to increased prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, prolonged grief, and other mental health disorders requiring sustained psychosocial support and specialized treatment. In healthcare systems already operating with limited mental health resources, the capacity to respond adequately to these long-term needs becomes considerably constrained.

Accordingly, the impact of the June 24, 2026 earthquake on the Venezuelan healthcare system must be understood as the convergence of a large-scale natural disaster and a healthcare system already experiencing prolonged institutional deterioration. This interaction objectively increased the vulnerability of the affected population and further reduced the State's capacity to ensure the effective enjoyment of the right to health during one of the most significant humanitarian emergencies in the country's recent history.

This scenario had been anticipated through technical studies prepared more than two decades earlier. The *Study on the Basic Disaster Prevention Plan for the Metropolitan District of Caracas*, developed by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)<sup>31</sup> in coordination with Venezuelan institutions and published in 2005, expressly identified the need to preserve the operational capacity of hospitals and other critical infrastructure during major earthquakes. The study recommended the structural reinforcement of hospitals, the protection of strategic healthcare facilities, the continuity of potable water and electricity supplies, the strengthening of access routes to medical facilities, and the development of mechanisms to ensure the continuity of healthcare services during emergencies. These measures were

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<sup>30</sup> United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). (2025). *Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Emergencies*. United Nations Population Fund.

<sup>31</sup> **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)**. (2005). *Study on the Basic Disaster Prevention Plan for the Metropolitan District of Caracas in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela: Final Report (Summary)*. Japan International Cooperation Agency.

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considered essential for reducing mortality and preserving the operational capacity of the healthcare system in the event of future seismic disasters.

The recommendations formulated by JICA are fully consistent with the principles subsequently established by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, which recognizes hospitals and other healthcare facilities as critical infrastructure whose protection constitutes a priority for disaster risk reduction. Likewise, the World Health Organization has consistently maintained that healthcare facilities must remain safe and fully operational during emergencies, as their functioning is indispensable for guaranteeing the right to health and reducing disaster-related mortality.

From the perspective of international human rights law, preserving healthcare infrastructure is not merely a matter of public policy but a concrete manifestation of the State's duty to adopt reasonable measures to protect the lives and health of the population against foreseeable risks. The preparedness of the hospital system, the maintenance of critical infrastructure, the availability of adequate human and material resources, and the continuity of medical services all form part of the essential content of the State's obligations arising from the right to health.

Accordingly, the impact of the earthquake on the Venezuelan healthcare system cannot be analyzed exclusively as the immediate consequence of the seismic event. The evidence examined demonstrates that the structural limitations existing prior to the emergency significantly reduced the healthcare system's response capacity and increased the vulnerability of the affected population. From both a technical and legal perspective, this constitutes a relevant factor in assessing the extent to which the State fulfilled its obligations of prevention, preparedness, and protection of the right to health during disaster situations, particularly where prior technical assessments had specifically warned of the need to preserve the operational capacity of hospitals and other essential healthcare infrastructure in the event of major seismic activity.

#### **4.2. Heightened Risks Affecting Children, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, and Other Vulnerable Populations**

Humanitarian emergencies do not affect all members of society equally. International human rights law recognizes that certain groups face disproportionate risks during disasters and therefore require enhanced protection measures. These groups include children, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, individuals with chronic medical conditions, internally displaced persons, and others whose circumstances increase their vulnerability during humanitarian crises.

The **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** has emphasized that large-scale emergencies significantly increase the risks of family separation, interruption of education, child exploitation, trafficking, neglect, and psychosocial trauma affecting children and adolescents.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2017). *Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action*. 450 SOUTH ORANGE AVE, 3RD FLOOR, ORLANDO FLORIDA 32801  
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Similarly, the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**<sup>33</sup> has documented that disasters frequently trigger internal displacement, creating additional protection challenges related to shelter, access to basic services, documentation, and family reunification.

The **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**<sup>34</sup> has further reported that women and girls face increased exposure to gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, and protection risks during humanitarian emergencies, particularly where displacement, overcrowded shelters, and weakened institutional protection mechanisms are present.<sup>3</sup>

The **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**<sup>35</sup> has also warned that situations involving mass displacement and institutional disruption may increase the risk of human trafficking and other forms of organized exploitation, particularly affecting children and vulnerable populations.

The humanitarian consequences of the earthquake also disproportionately affected older persons and persons with disabilities. Damage to transportation infrastructure, interruptions in healthcare services, failures in electricity and potable water supply, as well as difficulties in accessing essential medicines, significantly increased the risks faced by individuals requiring continuous medical care or specialized assistance.

Taken together, these circumstances demonstrate that the humanitarian consequences of the earthquake extend far beyond the physical destruction caused by the natural event. The disaster significantly increased the protection needs of populations in situations of vulnerability while simultaneously reducing the institutional capacity available to respond effectively to those needs.

From a human rights perspective, these developments underscore the importance of ensuring that humanitarian response and recovery efforts incorporate differentiated protection measures in accordance with applicable international standards. They also provide important contextual elements for understanding the humanitarian conditions faced by the Venezuelan population following the earthquake.

Following the earthquake of June 24, 2026, United Nations humanitarian agencies estimated that approximately 680,000 children and adolescents required immediate humanitarian assistance. UNICEF<sup>36</sup> also identified urgent needs related to child protection, access to education, psychosocial support, healthcare, nutrition, and safe shelter.

The humanitarian consequences of the earthquake also disproportionately affected older persons and persons with disabilities. Damage to transportation infrastructure, interruptions in healthcare services, failures in electricity and potable water supply, as well as difficulties in

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<sup>33</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2021). *Displacement Tracking Matrix: Methodological Framework*.

<sup>34</sup> United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). (2025). *Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Emergencies*.

<sup>35</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2024). *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*.

<sup>36</sup> **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**. (2026). *Venezuela Earthquake Humanitarian Situation Report*. United Nations Children's Fund.

accessing essential medicines, significantly increased the risks faced by individuals requiring continuous medical care or specialized assistance.

Taken together, these circumstances demonstrate that the humanitarian consequences of the earthquake extend far beyond the physical destruction caused by the natural event. The disaster significantly increased the protection needs of populations in situations of vulnerability while simultaneously reducing the institutional capacity available to respond effectively to those needs.

From a human rights perspective, these developments underscore the importance of ensuring that humanitarian response and recovery efforts incorporate differentiated protection measures in accordance with applicable international standards. They also provide important contextual elements for understanding the humanitarian conditions faced by the Venezuelan population following the earthquake.

#### **4.3. The Importance of Victim Registration, Missing Persons, and Family Reunification**

The timely identification and registration of individuals affected by a disaster constitute essential components of an effective humanitarian response. The availability of accurate information regarding fatalities, injured persons, missing persons, displaced populations, rescued survivors, and unaccompanied or separated children enables governments and humanitarian organizations to coordinate emergency operations, facilitate family reunification, distribute humanitarian assistance, and protect the rights of affected populations.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)<sup>37</sup> has emphasized that the proper management and identification of deceased and missing persons constitute a fundamental humanitarian obligation. Accurate registration procedures contribute to preserving human dignity, providing legal certainty to families, supporting forensic identification processes, and reducing the risk of disappearances during humanitarian emergencies.

Likewise, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)<sup>38</sup> has established that the identification and registration of children separated from their families or unaccompanied constitute a priority during humanitarian emergencies. Early registration enables humanitarian agencies to facilitate family tracing and reunification, prevent situations of exploitation, and ensure that children receive adequate protection, healthcare, access to education, and psychosocial support.

Similarly, the International Organization for Migration (IOM)<sup>39</sup> recognizes that effective registration systems are essential for monitoring population displacement, identifying

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<sup>37</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). (2021). *Management of Dead Bodies After Disasters: Field Manual*.

<sup>38</sup> Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF). (2017). *Compromisos Básicos para la Infancia en la Acción Humanitaria*.

<sup>39</sup> **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**. (2021). *Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM): Methodological Framework*. International Organization for Migration.

humanitarian needs, and coordinating assistance for internally displaced persons and other affected communities.

Following the earthquake of June 24, 2026, the scale of the destruction, damage to communications infrastructure, and the displacement of affected populations created significant operational challenges for the rapid identification of victims and the registration of displaced families. International humanitarian organizations emphasized the need to strengthen information management systems capable of providing timely, accurate, and verifiable data concerning the affected population.

Reliable registration systems also play a fundamental role in protecting groups in situations of heightened vulnerability. Children separated from their families, older persons living alone, persons with disabilities, and individuals requiring continuous medical care face increased protection risks when identification and tracking mechanisms are insufficient or delayed.

From a humanitarian perspective, effective registration systems contribute directly to the protection of fundamental rights by facilitating access to emergency assistance, promoting family reunification, reducing protection risks, and improving coordination among national authorities, humanitarian organizations, and international partners.

The analysis presented in this chapter documents the principal humanitarian and human rights consequences arising from the earthquake of June 24, 2026, with particular emphasis on its impact on the healthcare system, persons in situations of vulnerability, and protection mechanisms during the emergency. These findings provide the necessary factual basis for examining, in the following chapter, the impact of the disaster on the contemporary conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its significance from the perspective of international protection.

## **V. IMPACT OF THE EARTHQUAKE ON THE COUNTRY'S CONTEMPORARY CONDITIONS AND INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION**

This chapter examines how the earthquake altered the contemporary conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and analyzes the significance of these developments from the perspective of international protection and humanitarian policies.

### **5.1. The Obligation to Consider Subsequent Events in the Assessment of the Country's Contemporary Conditions**

Assessments relating to international protection are, by their nature, dynamic. International legal standards recognize that country conditions must be evaluated on the basis of the objective circumstances existing at the time a decision is made, rather than solely on the conditions that existed when an individual left his or her country of origin. This prospective approach reflects the recognition that humanitarian, political, institutional, and security conditions may undergo substantial changes over time.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)<sup>40</sup> has consistently maintained that decision-makers must take into account all relevant and up-to-date information concerning the country of origin when assessing contemporary protection conditions. Likewise, UNHCR guidelines recognize that significant events occurring after an individual has departed from his or her country—including armed conflicts, institutional deterioration, humanitarian emergencies, natural disasters, and other large-scale events—may substantially alter the existing protection environment.

Similarly, international human rights protection bodies have emphasized that assessments of country conditions must reflect the most recent objective information available, particularly when new developments have significantly affected the State's capacity to guarantee the effective enjoyment of fundamental rights or to provide adequate protection to its population.

The earthquake that struck the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on June 24, 2026, constitutes one such event of particular significance. Scientific assessments, humanitarian situation reports, and documentation produced by international organizations indicate that the disaster significantly affected critical infrastructure, public services, healthcare delivery, housing, and humanitarian conditions in the impacted regions.

These developments occurred in a country that was already facing prolonged institutional deterioration, a complex humanitarian emergency, and widely documented challenges related to governance and public administration. Consequently, the humanitarian consequences of the earthquake cannot be assessed in isolation from the broader institutional context in which they occurred.

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<sup>40</sup> **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).** (2011). *Handbook and Guidelines on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status*. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

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Taken together, the available evidence indicates that the earthquake of June 24, 2026, substantially altered the contemporary conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Accordingly, any objective assessment of the country's current humanitarian and institutional conditions must take into account the cumulative effect of both the pre-existing structural vulnerabilities and the additional consequences generated by the earthquake.

## **5.2. The Earthquake as an Aggravating Factor in Venezuela's Contemporary Country Conditions**

Natural disasters do not, **in and of themselves**, constitute a basis for refugee status or other forms of international protection. International legal frameworks governing international protection distinguish between the occurrence of a natural disaster and the legal assessment of the protection environment within the affected country.

However, when a large-scale disaster occurs in a country already experiencing significant institutional fragility, a prolonged humanitarian crisis, and well-documented challenges in guaranteeing the effective enjoyment of fundamental rights, its consequences may substantially alter the country's objective conditions. Under these circumstances, the humanitarian impact extends beyond the immediate physical destruction caused by the disaster and affects the State's overall capacity to protect its population.

Scientific assessments conducted by the **United States Geological Survey (USGS)**<sup>41</sup>, the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)**, and the **Copernicus Emergency Management Service (Copernicus EMS)**<sup>42</sup> indicate that the earthquake of June 24, 2026, caused extensive damage to residential communities, public infrastructure, healthcare facilities, transportation networks, and essential public services.

At the same time, humanitarian situation reports issued by the **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**<sup>43</sup>, the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**<sup>44</sup>, the **Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)**<sup>45</sup>, and the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)**<sup>46</sup> documented a substantial increase in humanitarian needs, particularly with respect to shelter, healthcare, food security, access to safe drinking water, sanitation, child protection, and psychosocial support.

These developments occurred in a country that had already experienced prolonged institutional deterioration, sustained reductions in public investment, weakened governance, and declining operational capacity across essential public institutions. Consequently, the humanitarian consequences of the earthquake were significantly aggravated by pre-existing structural vulnerabilities and were not solely the result of the seismic event itself.

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<sup>41</sup> United States Geological Survey (USGS). (2026). *Earthquake Hazards Program*

<sup>42</sup> Copernicus Emergency Management Service (EMS). (2026). *Rapid Mapping Activation – Venezuela Earthquake*.

<sup>43</sup> Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). (2026). *Venezuela Earthquake Situation Reports*.

<sup>44</sup> United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2026). *Venezuela Earthquake Humanitarian Situation Report*.

<sup>45</sup> Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). (2026). *Emergency Health Update: Venezuela Earthquake*

<sup>46</sup> International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). (2026). *Emergency Appeal: Venezuela*.

Taken together, the available scientific and humanitarian evidence indicates that the earthquake of June 24, 2026, substantially aggravated the existing humanitarian and institutional conditions in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Accordingly, the disaster should be understood as a contemporary event of particular significance that further affected the country's protection environment and increased the humanitarian needs of the affected population.

### **55.3. Reduced State Capacity to Respond to Humanitarian Needs**

A State's ability to respond effectively to a large-scale humanitarian emergency depends on the availability of institutional resources, operational capacity, financial resilience, and effective coordination among national and local authorities. The restoration of essential public services, assistance to displaced persons, the repair of damaged infrastructure, and support for long-term recovery processes likewise require sustained administrative, technical, and logistical capacities.

Prior to the earthquake of June 24, 2026, numerous international organizations had documented significant institutional challenges affecting public administration, the healthcare system, public infrastructure, emergency preparedness, and the provision of essential public services in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. These conditions limited the State's capacity to respond effectively to complex humanitarian situations even before the disaster occurred.

The earthquake imposed additional demands on institutions that were already operating under significant structural constraints. The emergency response required the simultaneous deployment of search and rescue operations, emergency medical assistance, temporary shelter, restoration of electricity and potable water services, transportation logistics, humanitarian coordination, infrastructure damage assessments, and support for displaced communities.

Humanitarian agencies reported that humanitarian assistance needs increased substantially following the earthquake, while various operational challenges—including damage to infrastructure, logistical constraints, and insufficient institutional resources—affected the pace and effectiveness of response activities. These circumstances hindered the restoration of essential services and the timely delivery of assistance to the affected population.

The recovery phase also presents significant institutional challenges. The reconstruction of hospitals, schools, housing, transportation infrastructure, public services, and community facilities requires substantial financial resources, specialized technical capacity, efficient public administration, and long-term planning. International experience demonstrates that recovery from disasters of this magnitude often extends over several years, particularly where pre-existing institutional vulnerabilities limit national response capacity.

Taken together, the available evidence indicates that the earthquake of June 24, 2026, further reduced the operational capacity of the Venezuelan State to respond to humanitarian needs. This reduction is attributable not only to the immediate effects of the seismic event but also to the cumulative impact of prolonged institutional deterioration, the weakening of public infrastructure, and the limitations in administrative capacity that already existed before the disaster.

These developments are relevant to understanding the contemporary humanitarian conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and provide important contextual elements for those assessing the country's current institutional capacity, humanitarian recovery needs, and long-term resilience.

#### **5.4. Implications for the Country's Contemporary Conditions**

Country conditions assessments are intended to provide an objective analysis of the political, humanitarian, institutional, economic, and social circumstances existing at a given point in time. These assessments support policymakers, humanitarian organizations, and governmental agencies in understanding the evolution of conditions that may influence humanitarian response, regional stability, migration trends, and international cooperation.

The evidence presented throughout this assessment indicates that the earthquake of June 24, 2026, constitutes an event of particular significance for the contemporary conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Scientific analyses, humanitarian assessments, and reports produced by international organizations consistently demonstrate that the disaster substantially increased humanitarian needs while placing additional pressure on public institutions and essential services that were already experiencing prolonged structural deterioration.

The cumulative effect of these developments extends beyond the immediate consequences of the earthquake. Damage to healthcare facilities, housing, transportation infrastructure, public services, educational institutions, and community facilities has affected the living conditions of millions of people and placed additional demands on institutions whose operational capacity was already limited. Recovery efforts are expected to require sustained support at both the national and international levels over an extended period.

International humanitarian standards recognize that large-scale disasters frequently generate secondary consequences that persist long after the initial emergency phase has ended. These include prolonged internal displacement, increased poverty, disruption of education, deterioration of public health conditions, economic instability, and increased pressure on already limited public resources.

Within this broader context, the earthquake of June 24, 2026, should be understood as an event that substantially altered the contemporary humanitarian and institutional landscape of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The disaster intensified pre-existing structural

vulnerabilities and generated new humanitarian challenges that continue to influence the country's overall conditions.

Taken together, the available evidence demonstrates that the earthquake constitutes a relevant component of Venezuela's contemporary country conditions. Its humanitarian and institutional consequences provide important context for current discussions concerning humanitarian assistance, post-disaster recovery, regional migration, international cooperation, and the engagement of the international community with respect to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

### **5.5. Relevance to United States Humanitarian and Immigration Policy**

The findings presented in this assessment provide an updated overview of the humanitarian, institutional, and human rights conditions in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela following the earthquake of June 24, 2026. As in other large-scale humanitarian crises, significant changes in country conditions may be relevant to ongoing discussions concerning humanitarian assistance, migration management, regional stability, and international cooperation.

The humanitarian consequences documented throughout this report indicate that the earthquake substantially increased humanitarian needs while further reducing the operational capacity of public institutions that had already been affected by prolonged structural deterioration. Damage to critical infrastructure, interruptions in essential public services, increased population displacement, and growing humanitarian assistance needs significantly altered the contemporary conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

International organizations have consistently recognized that governments responsible for evaluating humanitarian and immigration policies should consider the most recent and reliable information available regarding the country of origin. Contemporary country conditions constitute an essential factual basis for understanding the evolution of humanitarian situations and for informing public policy decisions relating to humanitarian response and international protection.

In this regard, the findings contained in this assessment may contribute to public policy discussions concerning humanitarian assistance, post-disaster recovery, migration management, **Temporary Protected Status (TPS)**, refugee protection, and other humanitarian programs established under United States law. This report is intended to provide objective, evidence-based information that may assist policymakers in evaluating the humanitarian consequences of the earthquake of June 24, 2026, within the broader context of Venezuela's pre-existing institutional and humanitarian challenges.

This assessment does not advocate for or recommend any specific legislative or administrative outcome. Its purpose is to present an independent analysis of scientific, humanitarian, and institutional information that contributes to a broader understanding of the current conditions in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and of the humanitarian

implications arising from one of the most significant natural disasters experienced by the country in recent decades.

The analysis presented throughout this chapter demonstrates the impact of the earthquake of June 24, 2026, on the contemporary conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and underscores the importance of considering these developments in current international protection assessments. On the basis of the scientific, humanitarian, institutional, and legal evidence developed in the preceding chapters, the following chapter presents the technical conclusions derived from this assessment.

## VI. TECHNICAL CONCLUSIONS

Based on the scientific, humanitarian, documentary, and legal evidence examined throughout this assessment, as well as the methodology described in this report, the author presents the following technical conclusions. These conclusions reflect the professional assessment derived from the comprehensive analysis of the contemporary conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela following the earthquake of June 24, 2026, and summarize the principal findings of this investigation.

**First.** The earthquake of June 24, 2026, constitutes one of the most significant seismic events recorded in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in recent decades. The scientific and humanitarian evidence examined demonstrates that the event caused significant damage to the population, public infrastructure, healthcare facilities, essential service networks, and other strategic components indispensable for responding to large-scale emergencies.

**Second.** This investigation concludes that the humanitarian consequences of the earthquake cannot be attributed exclusively to the intensity of the natural phenomenon. The magnitude of its effects was conditioned by a pre-existing context characterized by institutional deterioration, the weakening of the rule of law, the progressive reduction of the operational capacity of public institutions, the deterioration of critical infrastructure, and a prolonged humanitarian emergency previously documented by international organizations.

**Third.** The technical evidence demonstrates that seismic risk and the principal structural vulnerabilities existing in Venezuela had been identified prior to the earthquake through specialized studies conducted with the participation of national institutions. In particular, the *Study on the Basic Disaster Prevention Plan for the Metropolitan District of Caracas*, prepared by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), documented the need to strengthen critical infrastructure, modernize early warning systems, reinforce hospitals and other strategic facilities, consolidate preventive planning, and develop institutional capacities to reduce the impact of future earthquakes.

**Fourth.** The recommendations formulated by JICA are fully consistent with the principles subsequently incorporated into the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, demonstrating that investment in prevention, resilient infrastructure, institutional strengthening, and disaster preparedness constitutes a widely recognized international standard for protecting populations and reducing foreseeable risks.

**Fifth.** The analysis demonstrates that the progressive deterioration of hospitals, potable water supply systems, electrical grids, telecommunications, transportation infrastructure, and other essential services significantly reduced the State's capacity to respond effectively to a large-scale emergency. These conditions increased the vulnerability of the affected population and limited the continuity of services indispensable for the protection of life, health, and personal integrity.

**Sixth.** International humanitarian agencies documented a substantial increase in needs relating to healthcare, temporary shelter, food security, potable water, sanitation, child protection, psychosocial support, and the restoration of critical infrastructure. This assessment confirms that these needs developed within an already deteriorated humanitarian context, thereby increasing the complexity of response and recovery operations.

**Seventh.** The investigation demonstrates that the earthquake had a disproportionate impact on children and adolescents, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, individuals with chronic illnesses, and other populations in situations of vulnerability. The differentiated protection of these groups constitutes an essential obligation of the State under international human rights and disaster risk reduction standards.

**Eighth.** The evidence examined confirms that transparency, timely access to public information, the proper documentation of fatalities, injuries, missing persons, displaced persons, and rescued individuals, as well as accountability during the emergency, constitute essential components of an effective humanitarian response. These measures are indispensable for protecting human rights, facilitating family reunification, preventing further violations, and strengthening public confidence in the institutions responsible for emergency management.

**Ninth.** This assessment demonstrates that disaster risk reduction constitutes a permanent responsibility of the State that extends beyond the immediate response to emergencies. Sound institutional planning, the efficient use of public resources, sustained investment in resilient infrastructure, maintenance of critical infrastructure, strengthening of healthcare systems, technical training of competent institutions, and community preparedness form part of the State's due diligence obligations aimed at protecting the population against foreseeable threats.

**Tenth.** As a consequence of the earthquake of June 24, 2026, the contemporary conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela underwent a substantial transformation that increased humanitarian needs and further deepened existing institutional limitations. Accordingly, the evidence compiled in this report constitutes objective, technical, and legally relevant information for understanding the evolution of the country's situation and for contributing to the formulation of public policies, international cooperation, humanitarian assistance, post-disaster recovery, and the assessment of international protection mechanisms in light of the documented contemporary circumstances.

The foregoing conclusions represent the final technical assessment derived from the investigation presented in this report and are based on the integrated analysis of scientific evidence, humanitarian documentation, specialized technical studies, international human rights standards, and the other sources examined in accordance with the methodology described herein. Their purpose is to contribute to an objective and comprehensive understanding of the humanitarian, institutional, and legal consequences arising from the earthquake of June 24, 2026, while providing relevant technical elements to support the

development of public policies, the strengthening of institutional resilience, and the effective protection of human rights.

## VII. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Damarys Rangel is a Venezuelan attorney, human rights specialist, and advocate. She obtained her law degree in 1996 and has since dedicated nearly three decades to the practice of law, the protection of human rights, the promotion of access to justice, and the protection of individuals and populations in situations of vulnerability.

She is the Founder and President of **Human Rights with DR Corp. (DDHHUNIVERSAL)**, a nonprofit organization incorporated in the United States and recognized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The organization promotes human rights education, humanitarian assistance, access to justice, and legal guidance for individuals and families facing situations of vulnerability.

Throughout her professional career, she has conducted legal research and prepared technical assessments on country conditions, institutional governance, corruption, forced displacement, humanitarian emergencies, gender-based violence, and international protection. Her work integrates legal analysis with multidisciplinary research methodologies grounded in scientific evidence, humanitarian reports, international human rights standards, and specialized country conditions documentation.

She has authored numerous independent country conditions reports, technical human rights assessments, and humanitarian analyses relating to Venezuela and other countries in Latin America. Her work is conducted in accordance with internationally recognized standards for documentary research, independent source verification, and the application of International Human Rights Law, International Refugee Law, and other relevant international legal frameworks.

This assessment forms part of DDHHUNIVERSAL's ongoing research program on human rights, international protection, governance, humanitarian emergencies, and contemporary country conditions. Its purpose is to contribute, through rigorous technical research supported by verifiable evidence, to the analysis of public policy, the promotion of human rights, and a broader understanding of complex humanitarian contexts by governmental authorities, international organizations, academic institutions, and other interested stakeholders.

## **VIII. METHODOLOGICAL AND INDEPENDENCE STATEMENT**

This assessment was prepared independently and in accordance with internationally recognized standards applicable to documentary research, country conditions analysis, human rights documentation, humanitarian assessment, and disaster risk management studies.

The investigation is based on a multidisciplinary methodology integrating information from international organizations, humanitarian agencies, scientific institutions, specialized technical studies, satellite imagery, governmental documentation, academic publications, human rights reports, and other publicly available sources considered reliable. The information collected was subjected to a systematic process of verification and triangulation in order to strengthen the accuracy, consistency, and reliability of the findings presented in this report.

The analysis combines methodologies drawn from International Human Rights Law, International Refugee Law, International Disaster Law, International Humanitarian Law, disaster risk management, and institutional analysis, thereby enabling a comprehensive assessment of the interaction between the earthquake of June 24, 2026, the pre-existing structural conditions, and their impact on the effective enjoyment of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The factual information relied upon in this assessment was obtained from, among other sources, United Nations bodies, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), national and international scientific institutions, and other entities of recognized authority and expertise.

The analytical observations, technical assessments, and conclusions contained in this report represent exclusively the author's independent professional evaluation, based on a comprehensive analysis of the evidence available at the time the research was completed and on the application of internationally recognized legal and methodological standards.

The author declares that this assessment was prepared independently, in good faith, and in accordance with the principles of objectivity, impartiality, professional integrity, technical independence, and methodological rigor. The author further declares that no instructions, compensation, financial benefits, funding, or influence were received from any government, political party, international organization, interest group, or any other entity that could compromise the independence of the analyses and conclusions presented in this report.

The methodology applied seeks to provide an objective assessment of the contemporary conditions existing in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela following the earthquake of June 24, 2026. Nevertheless, given the dynamic nature of humanitarian emergencies and evolving country conditions, certain facts may change after the completion of this research. Accordingly, this report reflects the documented circumstances and the evidence available at the time of its preparation, without prejudice to future updates that may become necessary should significant changes occur in the situation analyzed.

## **IX. LIMITATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT**

This assessment reflects the best information available as of the date of its publication. Humanitarian emergencies are dynamic events, and conditions on the ground may continue to evolve as new information becomes available and recovery efforts progress.

The findings presented in this report are based on scientific assessments, humanitarian situation reports, official publications, satellite observations, international human rights documentation, and other reliable sources that were publicly available at the time this assessment was prepared. Although every reasonable effort was made to verify the information through an independent process of source triangulation, certain data may subsequently be updated or revised by the organizations that produced them as additional field assessments are completed.

This report does not constitute an exhaustive assessment of every aspect of the humanitarian emergency. Its scope is limited to the analysis of those developments considered most relevant to understanding the humanitarian, institutional, and human rights consequences arising from the earthquake of June 24, 2026, as well as their implications for the contemporary conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Furthermore, this assessment is not intended to analyze individual cases, determine legal eligibility for specific immigration or humanitarian benefits, or anticipate future decisions by the competent authorities. Such determinations fall exclusively within the authority of the bodies empowered to make them in accordance with applicable domestic law and international law.

Accordingly, the conclusions contained in this report should be understood as an objective, independent, and technical assessment prepared on the basis of the evidence available at the time of its publication. They may be supplemented by future scientific findings, humanitarian reports, or institutional assessments as the recovery process continues to evolve.

## **X. DISCLAIMER**

This assessment has been prepared independently on the basis of publicly available information obtained from international organizations, humanitarian agencies, scientific institutions, governmental sources, specialized technical studies, academic publications, and other documentation considered reliable in accordance with the methodology described in this report.

The findings, analyses, and conclusions contained in this document reflect exclusively the author's independent professional and technical assessment and do not necessarily represent the official position of any government, international organization, public or private institution, or any of the sources cited throughout this report.

This document constitutes a general technical report on the contemporary conditions of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela following the earthquake of June 24, 2026. Its purpose is exclusively informational, academic, research-oriented, documentary, and intended to support the development of public policies relating to human rights, disaster risk reduction, international protection, and humanitarian assistance.

This report does not constitute an individualized assessment, an expert opinion regarding a specific case, a certification of particular facts, a determination of eligibility for immigration benefits, or legal advice directed to any specific individual. Accordingly, it should not be interpreted or used as a substitute for an individualized human rights expert report, as every administrative or judicial proceeding requires an independent assessment of the particular circumstances, the available documentation, and the applicable legal framework.

The use of this report as a general reference does not imply that its conclusions are automatically applicable to any specific case. Every individualized expert report prepared by DDHHUNIVERSAL requires an independent process of investigation, documentary analysis, and technical evaluation conducted specifically for the requesting individual and expressly authorized by the author.

This report forms part of an original research project developed by the author within the framework of DDHHUNIVERSAL's academic and technical activities. Its contents are published exclusively through the organization's official channels. Any reproduction, modification, adaptation, partial extraction, alteration of its content, use out of context, or incorporation, in whole or in part, into individualized expert reports, legal documents, or other publications is strictly prohibited without the prior express written authorization of both the author and DDHHUNIVERSAL.

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A blue-tinted photograph of a woman with curly hair shouting into a megaphone. The image is overlaid with a grid of white and dark blue squares and rectangles. The text is placed on a dark blue rectangular background on the right side of the image.

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