

Health Protection in Humanitarian Logistical Task Force of Brazil: implementing One Health approaches on the border with Venezuela

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Summary

The Humanitarian Logistical Task Force of Brazil, denominated “Welcome Operation”, has been an instrument of the Brazilian State with the purpose of giving support to the reception of immigrants at the Brazil-Venezuela border. The Task Force was activated in 2018 in the state of Roraima, northern region of Brazil, where immigrants in higher vulnerability situation were received.

Previous disorderly migration caused the appearance of cases of malaria, leishmaniasis and other infectious diseases, culminating in the declaration of a regional public health emergency. In this context, the present study aims to describe the One Health actions performed by the Health Cell and coordinated by the veterinary officer as part of the 6th military contingent of “Welcome Operation”.

Methods-Results

The study compiled records of activities planned to protect troops and migrants health from July to November 2019. Such actions were supported by diagnosis of the prior general situational and carried out through scheduled and unexpected inspections, continuous guidance, report issuing, and execution of preventive and corrective measures. All actions were done according to Brazilian legislation and taking the One Health approach into account.

Various activities were carried out: food safety, water quality control, zoonosis and pest control, environmental management, veterinary medical assistance and health intelligence, being performed more than 240 One Health actions. Those activities were carried out in several places: immigrant shelters and service stations, spontaneous occupations sites and in troop's facilities and accommodations.

Profound qualitative improvements in some health aspects of the troop and migrants could be observed despite the short period of the study. Health personnel rotation every four months, peculiarities of the operation and

relatively poor local health infrastructure were regarded as factors of negative impact. A detailed recording of all health aspects could be used as guidance for future contingent and the continuation of health protection practices.

Conclusion

Based on the records and observations, it was concluded that health protection actions with the One Health perspective were capable of improving health aspects of troops and migrants in contact with the Task Force.