

A MULTIMEDIA PROJECT OF THE JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE COLOMBIA

WALKERS

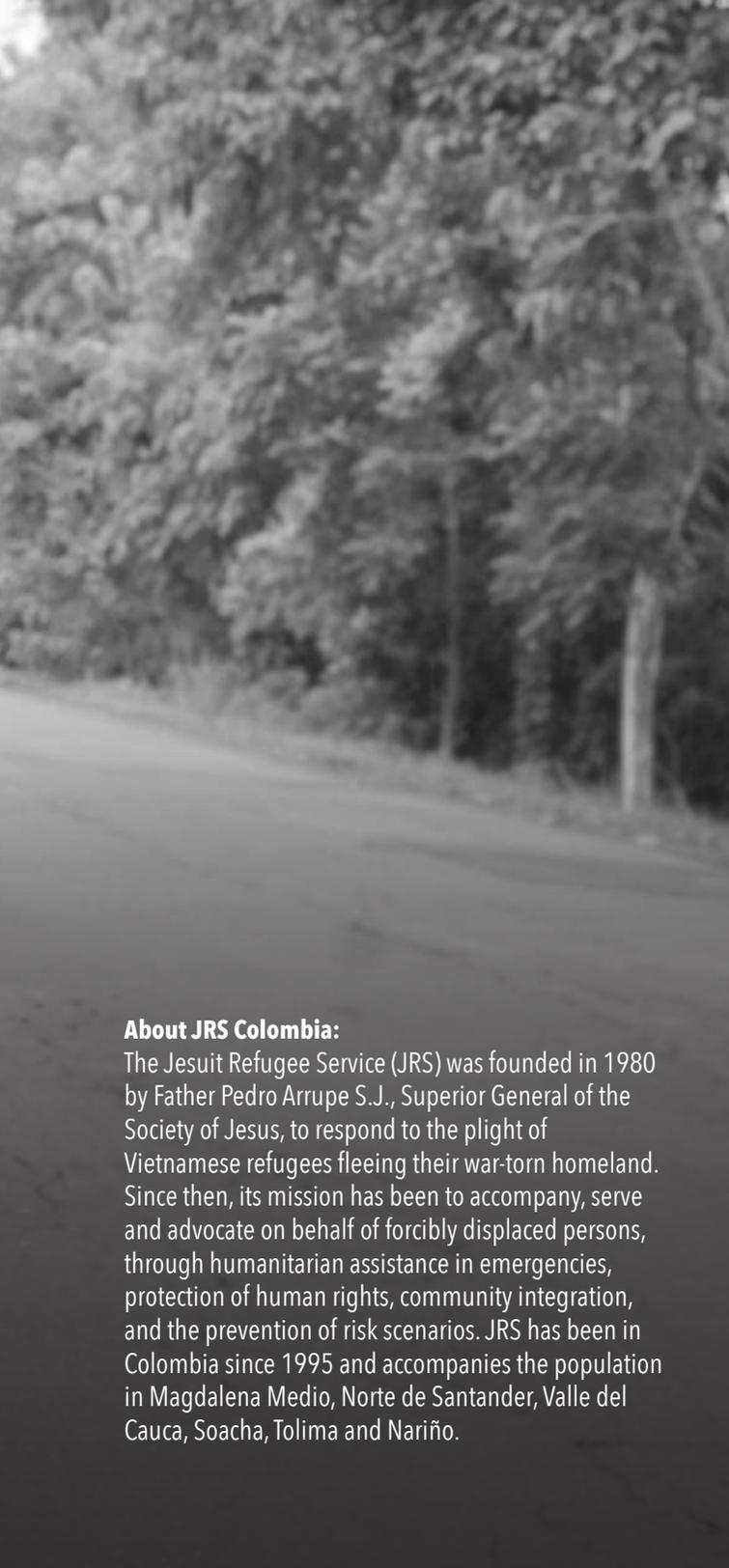
NOBODY SHOULD RISK THEIR LIVES
TO START OVER AGAIN

USERS MANUAL FOR AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTS

For thousands of years, walking has been a fundamental part of human development. We move because of our beliefs, for survival, by inheritance, by instinct. Walking has become the means and the engine for people to migrate and to build a path to hope.

“Walkers” is the story of thousands told by a few, around the experience of forced cross-border migration in the framework of the economic, political, and social crisis in Venezuela, and a pandemic that led thousands of people to walk through Colombia and Latin America to start all over.



**About JRS Colombia:**

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) was founded in 1980 by Father Pedro Arrupe S.J., Superior General of the Society of Jesus, to respond to the plight of Vietnamese refugees fleeing their war-torn homeland. Since then, its mission has been to accompany, serve and advocate on behalf of forcibly displaced persons, through humanitarian assistance in emergencies, protection of human rights, community integration, and the prevention of risk scenarios. JRS has been in Colombia since 1995 and accompanies the population in Magdalena Medio, Norte de Santander, Valle del Cauca, Soacha, Tolima and Nariño.

WALKERS

Short documentary film / 16:28 minutes / Colombia / 2021

An audiovisual product of JRS Colombia

Direction and script **Katherin Alfonso**

General production **Daniel Cuevas**

Director's assistant **Santiago Castillo**

Audiovisual production Páramo Films, **Yagé Producciones**

Director of Photography **Hanz Rippe Gabriel**

Camera assistant and focus puller **Juan Sebastián Rincón**

Film editor **Julián Pineda**

Soundtrack Rafael Silva, **Nicolás Cantor**

A project funded by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Caritas Germany, German Cooperation, and Manos Unidas.

WALKERS

Documentary mini-series / 6 chapters

An audiovisual product of JRS Colombia

Direction and script **Katherine Alfonso**

General production **Daniel Cuevas**

Director's assistant Santiago Castillo, **María Camila Pabón**

Audiovisual Production **Páramo Films**

Camera Hanz Rippe Gabriel, **Juan Sebastián Rincón**

Camera assistant **Daniel Restrepo**

Film editor **Julián Pineda**

A project funded by the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM)



DIRECTOR'S NOTE:

Echoing the voices of the most vulnerable, marginalized, and excluded people is one of the main calls we have as a social work of the Society of Jesus. Accompanying those who walk in search of a better future, fleeing from a country in which surviving has become a daily challenge, is the mandate of a non-governmental organization like the Jesuit Refugee Service Colombia.

Telling stories from a rights perspective and giving a voice to those who are daily protagonists of the human drama that forced migration involves has been my task. That is why, faced with the desperate situation of thousands of people on the road, with our work teams in the field attending to the emergency of entire families crossing the inclement Latin American terrain for months on foot, we decided to make a high-level documentary that would give an account of this situation, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Walkers" is a short film and a documentary miniseries, recorded between December 2020 and August 2021, on the roads most used by Venezuelans to reach other countries on the continent or other cities of Colombia. "Walkers" tells us through the voices of those who walk how leaving a country in search of a better quality of life has been an ancient tradition, and how in recent times it has implied an internal journey and a constant dichotomy between the resistances facing the journey and the desire to build a better future.

"Walkers" also draws attention to the protection gaps and the most vulnerable migratory profiles, revealing the faces of those who are often just considered a number and bringing the reality of thousands of migrants closer to those who do not know them. This multimedia project seeks above all to sensitize civil society to the importance of hospitality as that bridge or link that allows these human beings to not lose heart on the road.

That is why this booklet not only proposes an exploration of the audiovisual tool as a powerful element capable of constructing meaning and changing perspectives but also seeks to guide the discussions and appropriations of these products through a methodology that can be used with any social group. We invite you to watch the episodes and follow the steps proposed to put a grain of sand in the construction of a more humane, close, empathetic, and hospitable society with the forced migrant population.

Katherin Alfonso

Walkers multimedia project director
JRS Colombia National Communications Coordinator

The "Walkers" project contributes to awareness-raising, transformation, and social construction actions around the realities of forced migration in the Latin American and Caribbean region, especially regarding the migratory flow from Venezuela.

These audiovisual pieces and the dissemination methodology seek to

- Sensitize different audiences (people and/or specific organizations) to the experience of walkers, who represent one of the most dramatic features of forced migration in recent times.
- Inform people about some issues of interest regarding migration that need to be urgently addressed by States/governments through public policies with a Human Rights approach, and also by society in a more extended culture of hospitality seeking reconciliation and facilitating the construction of a fraternal social fabric and protection of rights.
- Show the reality of forced migration as a consequence of various types of violence that threaten the life and dignity of millions of people in Latin America and the Caribbean, with a focus on the Venezuelan population and binational indigenous communities, an expression of the exclusion of broad sectors of the population, violation of their human rights and deepening of the culture of contempt.
- Contribute to the transformation of imaginaries and practices around migration, displacement, and refuge, through the promotion of the culture of hospitality, fraternity, and social friendship as concrete paths to the revolution of love.



ROADMAP
OF THE PRODUCTS

WALKERS

(The short film)

NOBODY SHOULD RISK THEIR LIVES TO START OVER AGAIN

Synopsis

Millions of Venezuelans have left their homes to start over in another country, but the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic and the political tension to manage the crisis have been obstacles in their way. The current social situation has left them with only one option: to walk in search of a new home. The challenges of the road are not easy and vulnerability is on the surface. This documentary tells the story of those who throw themselves body and spirit on the road in body and spirit, of those who escape as an act of tradition and resistance, and of those who forge paths to hope with initiatives of fraternity.



WALKERS

(The mini-series)



Chapter 1:

What Has Colombia's Humanitarian Response Been to the Phenomenon of Walkers?

Location: Norte de Santander, Colombia

The Venezuelan migration crisis has been felt especially at the border. The department of Norte de Santander has lived permanently with both cultures. The walkers' phenomenon imposed important challenges for the government, NGOs, and civil society of the country in terms of humanitarian assistance. How has the response been? What is being done? And what challenges have arisen?

Episode 2:

Boys and Girls Walking

Location: Soacha, Cundinamarca



The departure from Bogotá concentrates a high flow of walkers seeking to migrate to different cities in Colombia and other countries in South America. Unaccompanied minors, children, and adolescent walkers have very high protection gaps and vulnerabilities when subjected to long walks and difficulties on the road. How does a boy or girl live through this experience?



Chapter 3:

Men Who Walk South: A Story of Strength and Return

Location: Nariño, Colombia

At the beginning of the migratory boom, many men moved alone; today, they are still the bulk of those who walk. Many face multiple risks, with fewer opportunities for help-seeking as they are the livelihood and economic hope of their families. How do men experience forced migration and how can we accompany them?



Chapter 5:

Being a Woman and Walking: A Story of Resilience

Location: Magdalena Medio

More and more women are taking the route alone or with their children in search of better opportunities. Women and queer people face challenges on the roads that can undermine their dignity. What is it like to be a forced migrant woman and to walk? What risks are they exposed to?

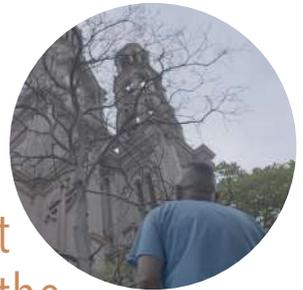


Chapter 4:

Building Spaces for Integration and Binational Hospitality

Location: Arauca, Arauca

Many of the people who walk look for opportunities to stay in Colombia. Arauca, a Colombian department along the Venezuelan border, has launched the concept of a "solidarity border." How are the Venezuelan community and Colombian returnees received in Colombia?



Chapter 6:

Being a Migrant and a Victim of the Colombian Armed Conflict

Location: Palmira, Valle del Cauca

For many Venezuelans who walk, the armed conflict in Colombia is just a distant story that some of them have heard about. On the roads, illegal armed groups take advantage of the vulnerabilities of migrants. This is a story of resilience, reconciliation, and personal growth as a survivor of double victimization.



METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSAL

A metaphor for the walking person

General directions:

- The audience will have a physical and emotional experience of movement.
- Whoever facilitates the exercise will ask people to leave the place and to follow a path that will lead them to recognize a story.
- The facilitator can choose the audiovisual product (short film or some episodes of the series) that fits the activities here proposed.
- Note: People can use the application "Otro Passo Más" (www.otropassomas.com) to guide the activity of walking either at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end.

STEPS:

1. I am a walker

Motivation

- Testimony to be taken from the documentary (that talks about the experience of change ...)
- As migrants, we are on the move in our lives too, experiencing painful transitions and losses. We are on a path that involves wounds, paths, and learning.

Activity

People are invited to carry out an individual exercise of remembering a person who they have not seen in a long time; a person that is far away either because they moved and decided to stay in that place or because they had to leave. They are to bring them to their memory, name them, and get in touch with feelings of this memory and recognize the emotion.

2. ANOTHER walker

Motivation

- We only exist in the encounter with the other person; humanity is built in the encounter with other beings that are different and complementary. The consciousness of the human being is produced in the act of appearing to oneself and other people.

Activity

People are to sit facing each other and in silence look into each other's eyes. They are to answer the following questions

- From the emotional point of view: what emotion does that face evoke in me?
- From the relational point of view: what do we have in common and what is different?
- From the context: Affirm out loud, I would give my life for you!

3. WE move

Motivation

- Starting from the shared identity, explore the sense of common loss, the experience of forced migration, and exodus.
- Help to understand that what migrants carry with them are immaterial elements, they carry their history and identity.

Activity

Directions:

- A. Collectively write on a large paper everything that represents the identity of the group (guide them so that they can express the best, the most beautiful, what they have in common)
- B. Admire what your shared identity represents and celebrate it.
- C. The person in charge of the activity instructs them to tear this piece of paper into pieces.

D. Each person is invited to prepare an imaginary suitcase to start the journey to another place. What they can carry are ideas, actions, experiences, stories, a bag with values.

E. Pack the suitcase with: thoughts and ideas/beliefs and values / actions and practices

F. Walk to the screen to see the audiovisual material.

4. Towards an ever greater we: HUMANITY

Motivation

- Millions of people in the world are forced to give up everything they have to save their lives and dignity. They must pack the minimum to be able to make the trip.
- Migrants, displaced persons, and refugees suffer exile, stigmatization, and rejection. They also receive hospitality and meet new people.
- They carry everything they are with them. They are walkers in search of life and they walk to defend it above all else.

Activity

People are invited to see the short film or the chapter chosen for this session.

Directions:

- Breathe consciously.
- Watch and listen with curiosity.
- Get in touch with the feelings of the story.

5. LISTENING TO OTHERS

Motivation

- Listening circles are traditional ways to build community, they are thought in such a way that allows people to express their thoughts and emotions without being judged or questioned.

- Allowing each person to express themselves and then interact and learn in the encounter.
- People are invited to write based on this experience and this audiovisual.

Activity

Personal writing, reading, and listening:

A. Round 1. What is it that does not give me peace of what I have seen, heard, and experienced? / Write on paper, take rounds, read and listen.

B. Round 2. What gives me peace of what I have seen, heard, and experienced? / Write on paper, take rounds, read and listen.

C. Round 3. What things from what I have heard can I add to my luggage? / Write on paper, take rounds, read and listen.

6. WE ACT:

Can we take another step?

Motivation

- The transformation of society is a continuous process of individuals who based on their responsibility achieve changes in unjust structures and achieve relationships that allow good living for all. It is a revolution based on love.

- Currently, there are more than 26 million refugees, 48 million internally displaced, and around 281 million international migrants: this is a reality that touches every country on the planet. In Latin America and the Caribbean forced migration of different nationalities has increased in the last decade led by people leaving Venezuela towards all the countries in the region (5.4 million), and a constant flow of people from Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras to Mexico and the United States, and the journey that thousands of people from Haiti, Cuba, and African countries make through all of Latin America seeking to reach the United States.



- In the Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus (2019 to 2029), the promotion of the culture of hospitality is recalled as one of the ways to confirm in practice the commitment to migrants, refugees, victims of wars, and human trafficking.

Activity

In conversation groups, people are invited to ask themselves about what they are **ALREADY** doing.

They are guided to recognize and describe what is already in progress (personally and collectively) and what else can they achieve:

- A.** Social advocacy (actions in the community, in daily interactions)
- B.** Public advocacy (from communication, message dissemination, conversations)
- C.** Advocacy (policies and practices that facilitate or hinder)

WALKERS

To access all the chapters of the series and the documentary, scan the following QR code:



We also invite you to take



"another step"
with people forced to migrate

People forced to migrate take many steps on their way, and in each step, they teach us that love and life have no limits or borders. They must get moving to rescue their lives and just like them, all of us must be aware of the importance of moving to advance. Otro Passo Más is a song that helps increase the ability to listen and to see the reality of the life of people forced to migrate. To get to know the campaign and to move with the song, scan the following QR code:



A campaign of:





**NOBODY SHOULD RISK THEIR LIVES
TO START OVER AGAIN**

WALKERS: USERS MANUAL FOR AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTS

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WALKERS

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