CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE IN MIGRATION CONTEXT
VOICES OF MIGRANTS IN COLOMBIA

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cover photo: Maicao, Guajira. Beneficiaries of livelihoods reestablishment and strengthening project with the support of IFRC. Colombian Red Cross, 2021.

CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cash and voucher assistance (CVA), thanks to its multiple benefits, has gained great recognition among humanitarian actors and vulnerable populations; its scope has allowed the mitigation of initial needs and the promotion of stabilization and integration processes in affected communities, ranking it as the most strongly preferred modality of assistance. The humanitarian situation in Colombia is complex, particularly in the scenario of human mobility, given the context of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) as well as that associated with cross border and transcontinental migrations. The challenges to find appropriate mechanisms that allow safe, agile and inclusive delivery have increased in number and complexity, especially when taking into account the existing identification barriers in migratory processes.

The aims of this study were:

• *to learn and analyse community perceptions of cash and voucher assistance as a modality of humanitarian assistance, and*

• *to identify the most strongly preferred delivery mechanisms as a function of their feasibility, as well as community opinions regarding digital identities in the humanitarian response.*

The research was conducted using a mixed approach, using individual surveys, in which 208 people participated, and focus groups as data collection techniques, in which the voices of 192 people were heard, with the majority of those having also participated in the individual surveys. This research took place in four *departamentos* (geographic areas, hereafter "departments"): Norte de Santander, Guajira, Nariño and Cundinamarca. The population of interest were individuals who had to confront situations associated with mobility. Among the participants were migrants from Venezuela of various categories, IDPs, Colombian returnees as well as severely vulnerable members of the host community. There was significant participation from women, and a range of age groups was included to ensure the voices of older adults were heard.

The findings reaffirmed that CVA is the preferred modality to receive humanitarian assistance within the migrant population. The most favoured mechanism to receive CVA was cash in hand, in part due to the ease of access, since it does not require any particular knowledge of digital systems, nor access to technological tools.

In addition, despite being in transit at the time of the survey, the migrant population prefers to receive this type of assistance at the time of their settlement, because they consider that this can contribute to their stabilization processes. This coincides with migrants' perception that cash and voucher assistance's main benefit is the possibility of starting a productive unit, although the resources mainly end up being used to cover basic needs: food and accommodation.

In most cases, to access this assistance or other humanitarian services, migrants have been asked for an identification document, usually accompanied by a series of conditions and questions about their personal data to fill out a form or profile. For some, this process becomes repetitive, especially for those who receive several services, whether at the same point or in different parts of the country. According to participants, this could be made easier by having a general system that stores each family nucleus' information and that can be consulted only with biometric entry, the digital tool that they identify as the most secure and agile, by which they consider that impersonation is impossible.

These results are intended to provide information that will contribute to planning projects involving CVA, as well as additional research and, potentially, decision-making. They demonstrate communities' preferences for CVA and their benefit throughout the country. Further, decision makers should use these results when seeking to include interoperable digital identity systems in humanitarian responses. Indeed, this was identified as an obstacle to new digital alternatives, for identification as well as access to services, and to incorporate in CVA (exploring the nexus of technologies and pedagogy as aid).

2. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, CVA has become increasingly relevant in humanitarian responses. Organizations have developed an interest in exploring their multiple benefits. Implementing delivery mechanisms suited to a variety of contexts, both in emergencies and early recovery, promotes accountability mechanisms that identify condition-based community preferences by gathering information from communities themselves. In most cases, technological advances have made it easier to deliver such assistance in an agile and safe way. However, accessing CVA sometimes implies having a document that validates people's identities, or having access to the technology, which, in migration environments, can be complex. This has led to the development of strategies that facilitate the identification process to access services, involving tools such as digital identities.

This research in Colombia is part of a global consultation by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, focused on identifying opportunities and challenges in the use of CVA in attending to vulnerable migrant populations, as well as recommendations to increase the use of this modality.

As a contribution to this global product, the National Society of the Colombian Red Cross (SNCRC) sought to discover and analyse the perception of population groups in a situation of mobility in Colombia regarding CVA, listening to their voices and identifying their preferences concerning different delivery mechanisms, as well as their perspectives on the opportunities and risks presented by digital identities in humanitarian action. The aim is to provide information that helps those planning projects that include elements of CVA, based on the feasibility of those elements and the preferences of the population in the context of migration, and that supports additional research and decision makers seeking to include interoperable digital identity systems in the humanitarian response to migrants and refugees from Venezuela.

3. CONTEXT

The history of CVA in Colombia goes back a little more than two decades, when they were incorporated into the national government's social protection systems. With humanitarian agencies' increasing use of CVAs since 2016, a national-level, inter-agency cash working group (CWG, or GTM by its acronym in Spanish) was formed to "ensure a coordinated, harmonized, effective and efficient response, supporting actors that provide humanitarian responses to people affected by natural disasters, forced displacement, victims of the conflict, Colombian returnees or migrants".[1] However, CVA use in international migration assistance is only recent, so in 2019 the national government established guidelines for the implementation of such actions in the framework of the response to refugees and migrants from Venezuela. The guidelines prescribe a maximum of 370,000 Colombian pesos (109 US dollars / 98 euro[2]) for a household of four or more members and the inclusion of severely vulnerable host communities as a population susceptible to receive CVA.[3] In accordance with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Humanitarian Response Plan 2021 for Colombia, the CWG strategy is to promote increased use of this modality in various emergency scenarios. Indeed, the needs evaluations conducted with people in vulnerable situations show that CVA is the most strongly preferred form of assistance to cover their needs, which are mainly food and housing.

Based on reports from GTM and the *Grupo Interagencial de Flujos Migratorios Mixtos* (Interagency group on mixed migratory movements, GIFMM) *Plataforma Regional de Coordinación Interagencial para Refugiados y Migrantes de Venezuela* (Regional interagency coordination platform for refugees and migrants from Venezuela, R4V) platform, between January and July 2021, 444,754 people in Colombia received CVA from humanitarian agencies.[4] During the same period, SNCRC, through its national strategy for the care of the migrant population, assisted 8,252 people with cash and vouchers worth

1   GTM Colombia.
2   Based on the Oanda exchange rate in June 2019.
3   Cash Learning Partnership. 2020. *The provision of cash transfer programs in the response to the Venezuelan refugee and migrant crisis : findings and lessons learned.*
4   GTM Colombia.

302,631 US dollars in total. The mechanisms included debit cards, vouchers and cash transfers, complementing sectoral interventions in health, nutrition, protection and socioeconomic integration, and enabling more comprehensive responses. The prioritization of CVA provides relevant and timely solutions to situations of double or triple affectation due to conflict or natural disasters.

4. METHODOLOGY

This research was carried out using mixed (quantitative and qualitative) methods. It focused on primary information based on the perceptions, opinions and experience of CVA as a form of humanitarian aid. These were obtained from population groups in both internal and external migration scenarios. Interviewee profiles included migrants from Venezuela, IDPs and Colombian returnees. Input was also gathered from people who had previously benefited from SNCRC CVA programmes, as well as those who had not been assisted with cash and/or vouchers but had access to other types of care at the organization's humanitarian service points (HSP).

Data collection sites for this study were selected based on the presence of SNCRC's multisectoral migration response operations making use of CVA, including actions emphasizing health, protection and economic security. Accordingly, four departments of strategic national importance were selected where different migratory contexts and migrant profiles converge: in transit, pendular, with a desire to remain, transcontinental and IDP. On the border with Venezuela, the two points with the highest flow of Venezuelan citizens are Guajira (the city of Riohacha) and Norte de Santander (the city of Cúcuta). In the border zone with Ecuador, Nariño (the city of Ipiales), the transit of transcontinental migrants and Venezuelans is notable; finally, Cundinamarca (the city of Soacha) is among the points with the highest density of migrants and IDPs. The survey's goal was to obtain contributions from 200 people. Therefore, a non probabilistic intentional sampling method was used. Techniques applied included a call through of the database of people who had benefited from CVA from the SNCRC in the framework of its migration response, as well as random sampling of interested people while they waited for assistance at the points of care.
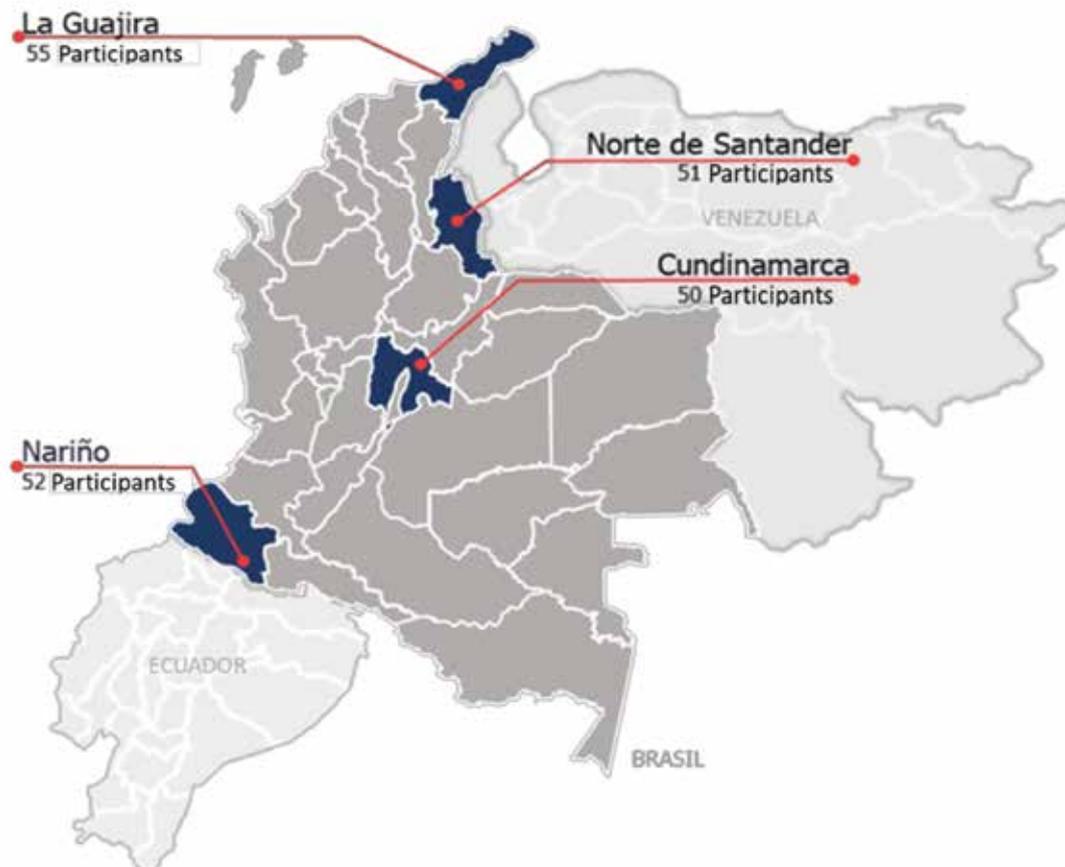

Figure 1 Map of Colombia showing the departments where the individual surveys and focus group discussions took place. Created by SNCRC.

Information was collected in two ways: individual surveys and focus groups. For the first, an instrument was designed using the Kobo platform, composed of 12 open and multiple-choice questions focused on respondents' experience and preferences with respect to CVA. The individual surveys were conducted mostly by telephone, mainly reaching people with access to a means of communication, who had previously received CVA from the SNCRC and whose contact details were easily accessible. This previous contact also helped to facilitate the interaction between SNCRC and the interviewee, working from a position of trust. In addition, this first exercise was carried out remotely to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. Face-to-face surveys were conducted, but to a lesser extent, principally with randomly selected participants and people waiting to be attended at the SNCRC humanitarian service points (HSPs) in those departments. The exercise was carried out from 23 August to 3 September 2021. In total 208 people responded to the individual survey.

The second exercise, the focus groups, took place from 1 to 4 September 2021. Most of the people who had answered the survey took part in the focus groups, while a few focus group participants had not completed individual surveys. There were 192 focus group participants in total. These sessions addressed the topic of digital identities, their correlation with CVA programmes, and humanitarian services. They were led at each location by an SNCRC staff member accompanied by two volunteers who had received training on the study, methodology and relevant topics. In Guajira, Nariño and Cundinamarca, local SNCRC offices were used for the focus groups, while in Norte de Santander the event was held in the public library. The number of participants was arranged according to the capacity of each space. The average group size was of 13–14 people, with an approximate event duration of two hours. Participants were provided with refreshments and a biosafety kit.[5]

The information gathered using the two research techniques is analysed below.

5. INDIVIDUAL SURVEYS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

A. Results

i. Characteristics of the surveyed population

83% **17%**
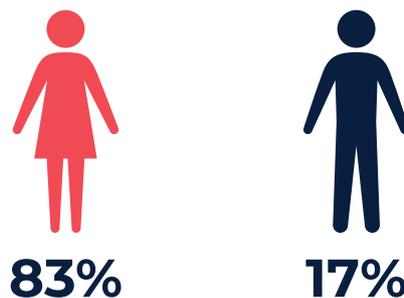
Graph 1. Disaggregation by sex

Of the 208 individual survey respondents, 17 per cent were men and 83 per cent were women (Graph 1). This apparent discrepancy is due to the database used to recruit participants containing a high percentage of women. This in turn corresponds to the CVA prioritization criteria favouring this profile. Additionally, one group of participants consisted of pregnant mothers who were waiting for healthcare assistance. It was also noted that many women were responsible for representing their households while the (usually male) head of the household was busy with work duties. Such gender dynamics are common cultural practices in Latin American countries, where women often assume the role of caregiver while men are providers, so community participation spaces such as those relevant to this study are occupied by women.

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5   Each kit contained two masks, a bottle of water, a small, individual container of antibacterial gel and another of antibacterial soap.
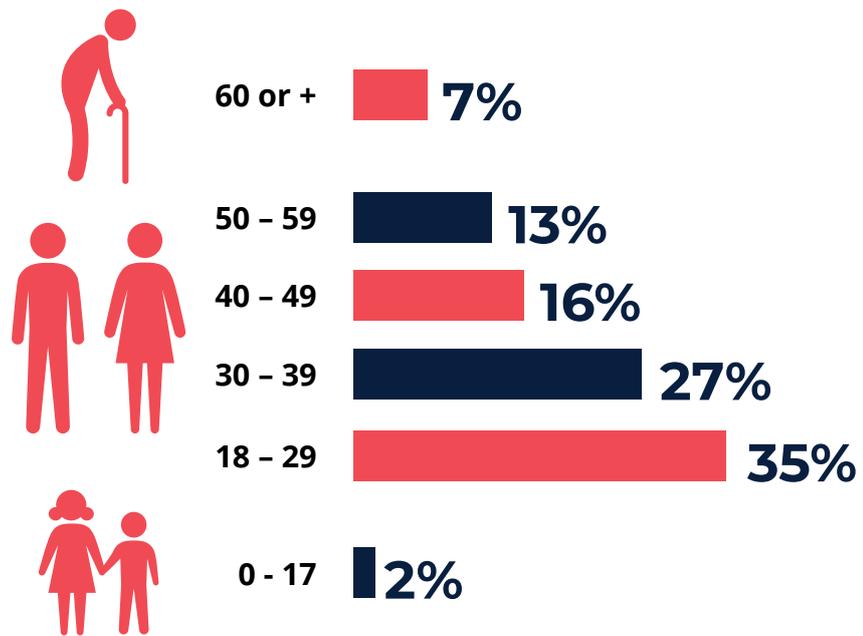
Graph 2. Age ranges

Six age ranges were examined (Graph 2):

a) 18 to 29 years old (35 per cent of respondents): this group having the highest participation rate may indicate many respondents have interacted with digital or technological media at some point in their lives;

b) 30 to 39 years old (27 per cent);

c) 40 to 49 years old (16 per cent);

d) 50 to 59 years old (13 per cent): the sum of participants in ranges a-d indicates that the vast majority of respondents were in the economically productive age range; and finally

e) over 60 years old (7 per cent): where there is perceived to be some lack of knowledge in the use of digital or technological media.
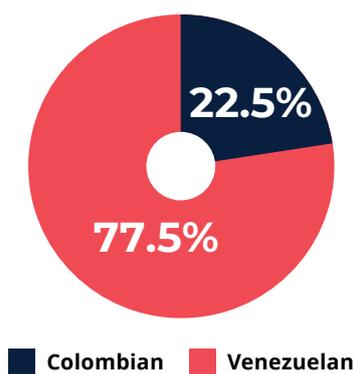
Graph 3. Nationality
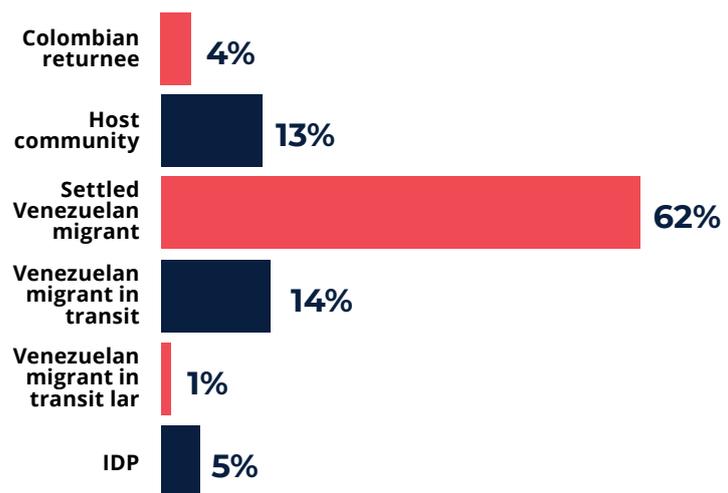
Graph 4. Type of population

As shown in Graph 3, 77.5 per cent of the surveyed population were of Venezuelan nationality. Among these, there are migratory profiles (Graph 4) with a desire to remain (62.5 per cent), who reside in the place where the information was collected; this is due to most migrants having previously benefited from humanitarian assistance, which provides them with stability in the city where they currently

live. The next most frequent category was Venezuelan migrants in transit (14 per cent), followed by pendular migrants (1 per cent). The remaining 22 per cent were Colombian nationals, including individuals displaced internally due to conflict or other reasons (5.5 per cent), severely vulnerable members of host communities (13 per cent) and Colombian returnees (4 per cent). The variety of these population profiles enabled the collection of different perspectives on CVA and digital identities, given that their use depends on aspects such as age, location and so on.
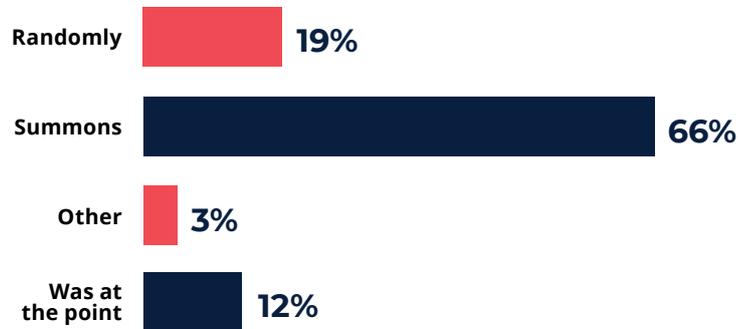
Graph 5. Means of participation

The distribution of survey respondent recruitment methods was as follows (Graph 5): 66 per cent were invited through calls using SNCRC beneficiary databases. The remaining 34 per cent were recruited in other ways (later referred to as "non-contacted"): 19 per cent were randomly approached along migratory transit routes, 12 per cent at an SNCRC humanitarian service point in each region where they happened to be at the time and 3 per cent by other means.

ii. Knowledge of cash and voucher assistance
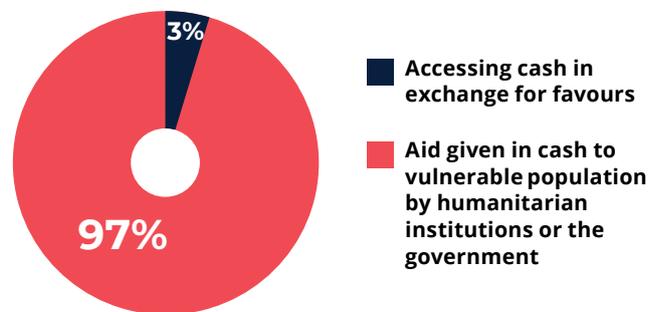
Graph 6. CVA Definition

When respondents were asked "What is cash and voucher assistance for you?" (Graph 6), 97 per cent were clear about its purpose (that CVA is meant as aid delivered in cash to vulnerable populations by humanitarian institutions or government) and only 3 per cent did not know how it works (indicating CVA consists of granting access to cash in return for favours), as they may have never heard exactly what it refers to and how to access it, given the percentage who had never accessed assistance of this kind.
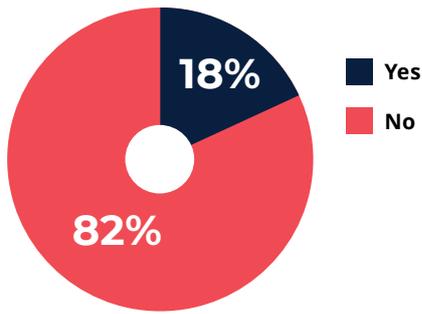
Graph 7. Explanations received for why someone receives CVA
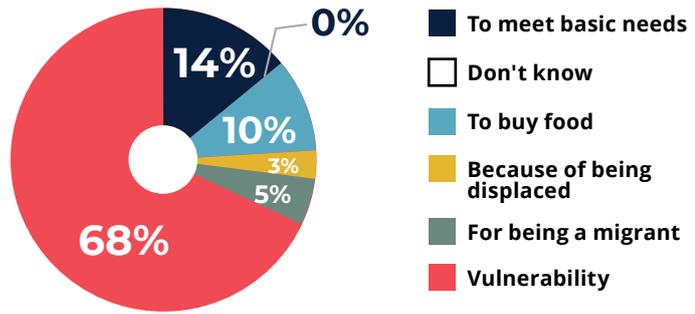
Graph 8. Main reasons for receiving CVA

Indeed, in response to the question "Have you been told the reasons why a person receives CVA or not?" (Graph 7), 82 per cent said that they did not know what the reasons for distributing CVA are and that if they had received an explanation, they had forgotten it. On the other hand, 18 per cent of respondents said yes, with the main reasons given (Graph 8) being vulnerability (68 per cent), and 14 per cent said that CVA is to cover basic needs.
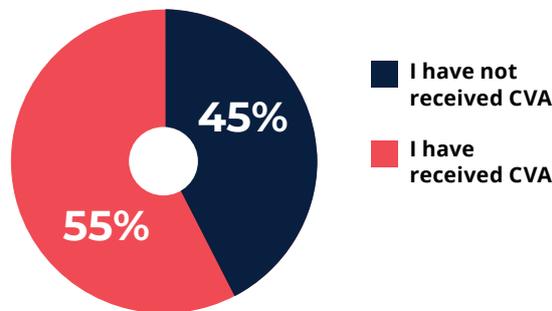
Graph 9. Proportion of participants having received CVA or not

Of the population surveyed, 55 per cent had at some point received CVA from a humanitarian NGO or a government, mainly through prepaid cards. Finally, 45 per cent reported never having received CVA (Graph 9). Here, there is a 10 per cent difference to explain. Sixty-six per cent of the people surveyed were contacted by telephone based on the SNCRC database of previous CVA recipients. However, only 55 per cent of interviewees acknowledged having received CVA in the past. This is due to the erroneous belief, prevalent among people receiving CVA, that having previously received CVA makes one ineligible to receive further CVA in the future. So, some participants feel the need to deny having previously received CVA. This situation is typical when conducting such interviews. Migrants have certain persistent impressions about access to services, despite SNCRC stating that an individual can access multiple services and that technology is applied only to know to whom and where assistance has been provided.

Among the 55 per cent of people who had ever received CVA, 41 per cent had received it in the form of ATM cards (Graph 10).[6]
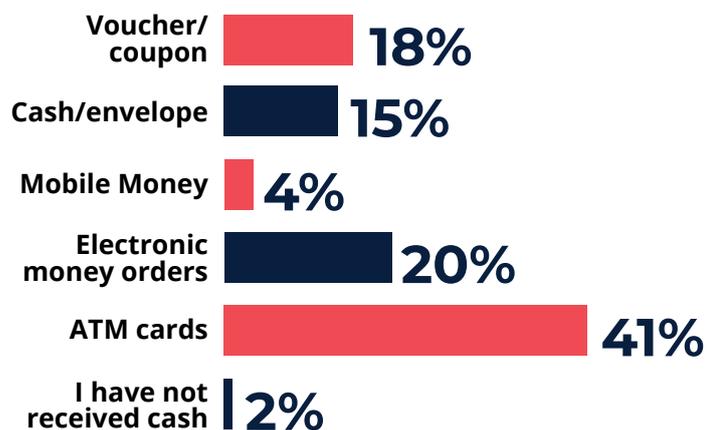
Graph 10. Mechanisms of cash received

6 Note that some respondents might have claimed to have received CVA in response to the first question to that effect (55% "yes" in Graph 9) but recognised the contrary when asked to specify the type of CVA received (2% "I have not received CVA" in Graph 10).

Graph 11. Documentation

Of those who had received CVA, 93 per cent mentioned that they were asked for proof of some type of foundational identity (ID), such as a citizenship card (83 per cent) or a Special Permit to Remain (PEP, Spanish acronym)[7] (10 per cent), and 6 per cent were not asked for any document to access the service (Graph 11). However, none of them reported that they were denied assistance if they did not have any of these documents.
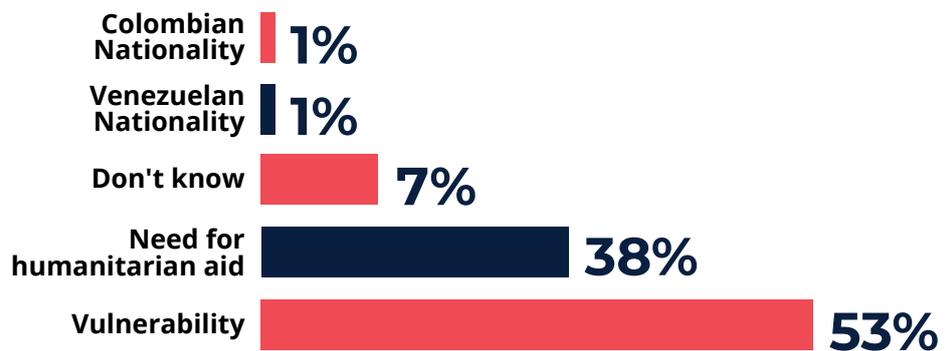
Graph 12. Selection criteria

To the question "What do you consider should be the criteria for a person to be a candidate to receive CVA?" (Graph 12), 53 per cent said that the main criteria is being a very vulnerable person, 38 per cent said those who really need the benefit, 7 per cent do not know, while the remaining 2 per cent consider that the criteria is being either a Colombian or Venezuelan migrant.

iii. Preferences

Eighty-four per cent of the people surveyed mentioned that CVA is the type of assistance that helps them the most, while 8 per cent cited specific services such as healthcare, legal assistance, or psychosocial care, and another 8 per cent preferred to receive in-kind assistance in the form of kits (Graph 13).

Similarly, of the 34 per cent of survey respondents who were not contacted through SNCRC databases, 84 per cent considered that CVA was the most successful strategy to receive humanitarian aid, which reinforces the main idea about CVA (Graph 14).
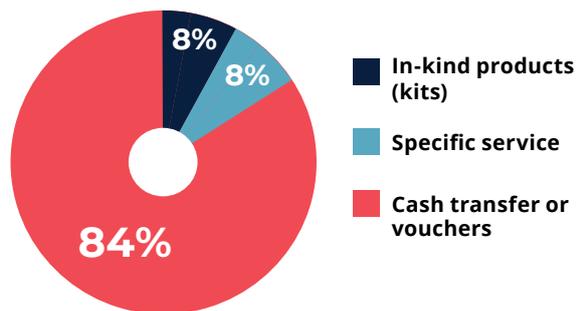
Graph 13. Modalities of humanitarian assistance
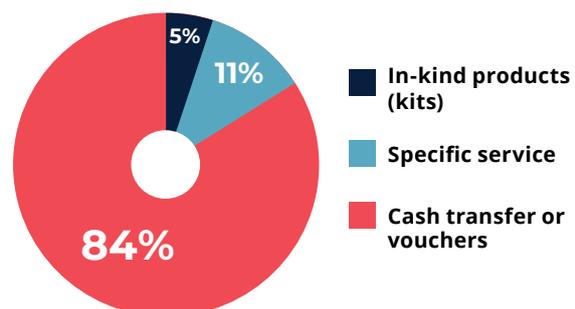
Graph 14. Modalities of humanitarian assistance, non-database respondents

7 The Special Permit to Remain is a document issued by Colombia's immigration authorities that allows one to transit through and remain in the country for longer than three months.

Regarding the stage at which they prefer to receive CVA, 84 per cent considered that the settlement phase is the best time, since this enables stabilization and social integration processes. Meanwhile, 7 per cent each mention the in-transit and point-of-departure phases as their preferences, and finally 2 per cent the time of return (Graph 15).

84%

7%   **7%**   **2%**

Starting   Transit   Settlement   Return
point
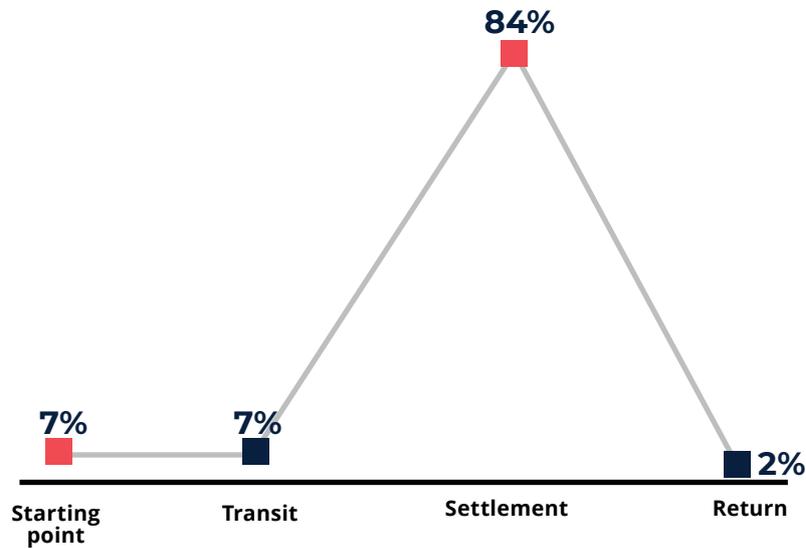
Graph 15. Preference when receiving CVA

When making the same analysis, taking only the responses of transit migrants and pendular migrants, the point of settlement was perceived to be the best moment to receive CVA. This suggests that, despite the option to receive CVA in transit, there is a preference for receiving it once settled, since this allows for dignity and stability in the territories where migrants settle (Graph 16).

79%

6%   **6%**   **9%**

Starting   Transit   Settlement   Return
point
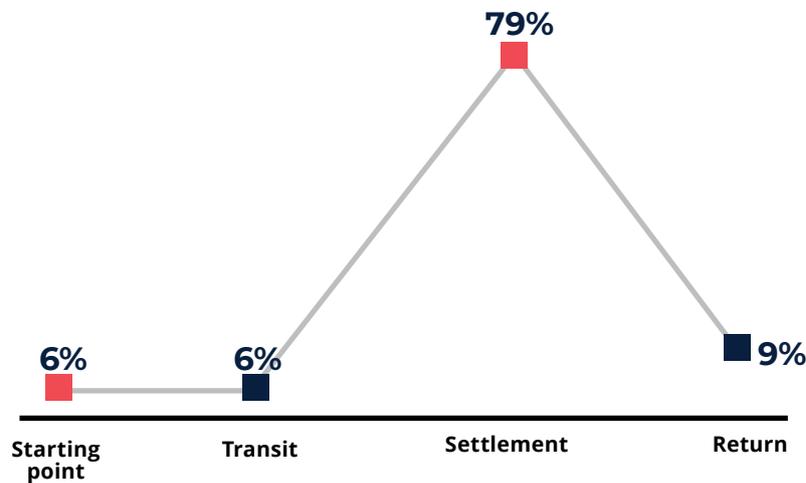
Graph 16. Preference when receiving cash transfer by migrants in transit and pendular migrants

For 52 per cent of the surveyed population, starting their own business was seen as the main advantage of CVA (Graph 17). Although respondents may plan to start a business, they often end up using their CVA to cover their basic needs. Meanwhile, of those who had not received any CVA to date, the main advantages were identified as follows:

· 18 per cent cited ease of use;
· 14 per cent reported that it would help cover rent payments ¬(the most frequent use in migrants' everyday lives);
· 8 per cent said it would help cover food needs;
· 6 per cent assumed that CVA would improve the quality of life of those receiving it;
· 2 per cent did not know.
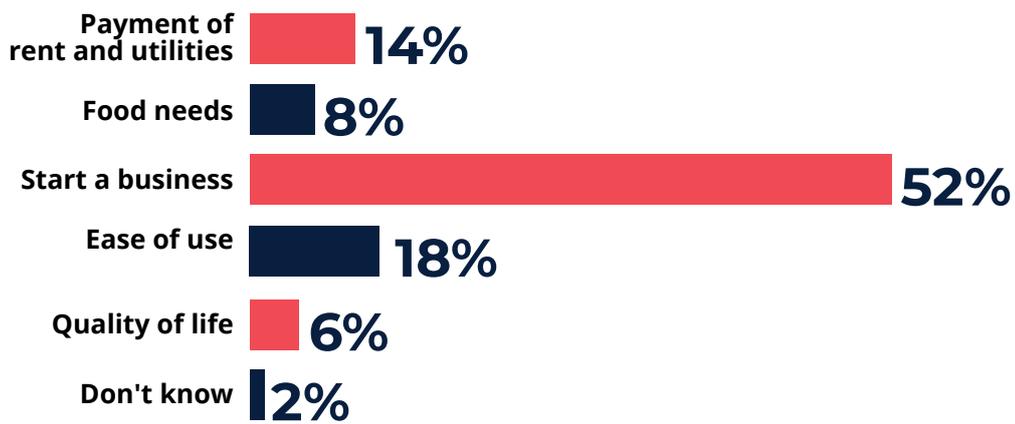
Graph 17. Benefits of CVA

A central finding concerns the main problems encountered by migrants when using CVA (Graph 18). Indeed, although 55.5 per cent of respondents indicated no problems, 21.5 per cent identified security risks, citing fraud and impersonation. Other challenges include losing or not having physical documents or the bank card received, not knowing how to use functional digital identities that allow withdrawals in electronic media, such as cards and/or withdrawal PINs. Finally, formalities to access the service, such as registration or completing profiles were mentioned as barriers.
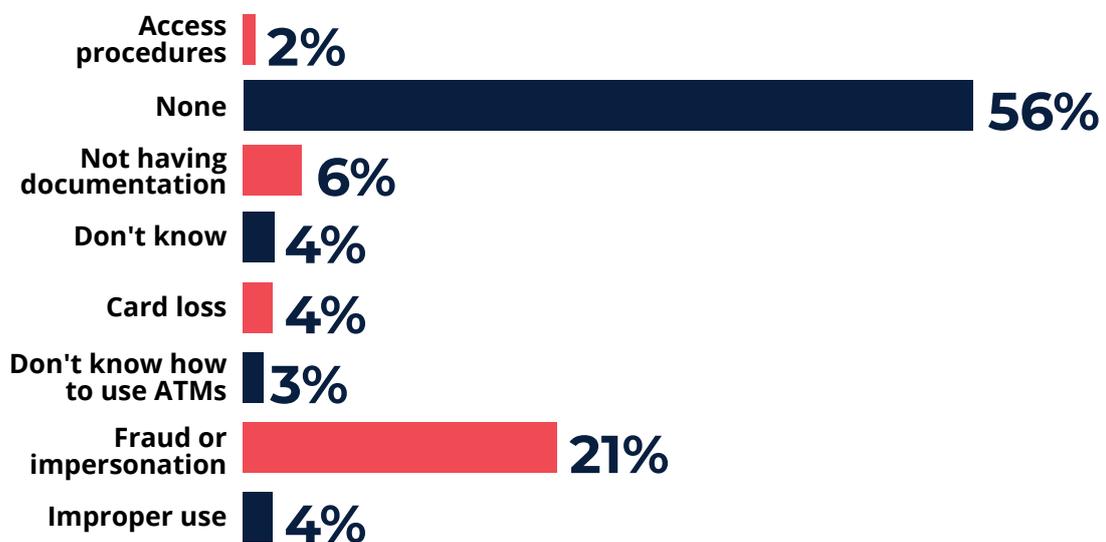
Graph 18. Main problems with CVA use

Of the respondents who has accessed CVA, 34 per cent reported using the resource mainly for food, 21 per cent for accommodation, 16 per cent for entrepreneurship, and 15 per cent for medical care. Fewer than 10 per cent each responded education for their children (7 per cent), personal protection (3 per cent), drinking water (3 per cent) and training and employment (1 per cent). It is important to mention that this question was open-ended. Within the 208 answers, eight categories were apparent, as shown in Graph 19.

Medical attention	**15%**
Personal protection	**3%**
Food	**34%**
Lodging	**21%**
Drinking water	**3%**
Training and employment	**1%**
Entrepreneurship	**16%**
Education for children	**7%**
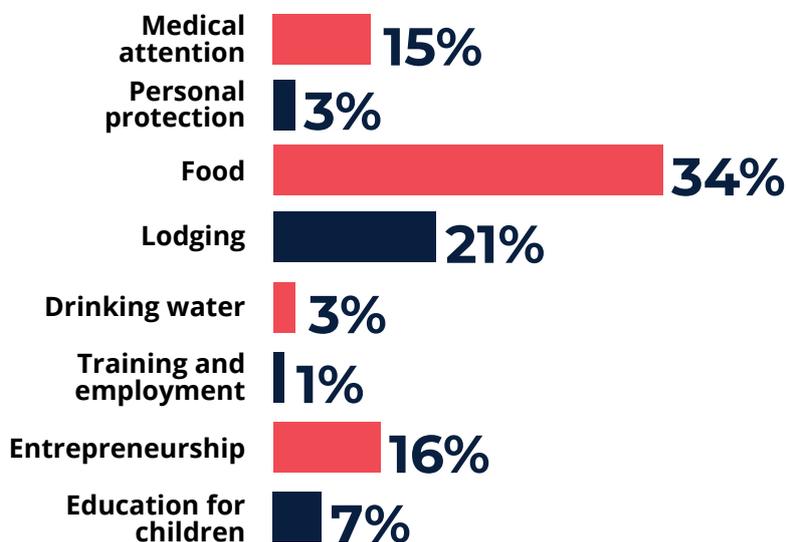
Graph 19. Prioritization of needs

Unconditional CVA was the most strongly preferred form of humanitarian CVA, identified by 54 per cent of respondents (Graph 20), because it allows faster use of the resource. Conditional CVA was preferred by 23 per cent of respondents. The remaining 23 per cent indicated that either option is suitable as long as they receive the assistance. This final finding first reflects these migrants' view that satisfying their needs is of primary importance, regardless of what conditions they must fulfill and given that in both cases they will receive assistance. Second, it is tied to the migrant profile in question – those indicating a preference for either conditional or unconditional CVA being mainly settled Venezuelan migrants, who are relatively at ease with the steps required to access conditional CVA.
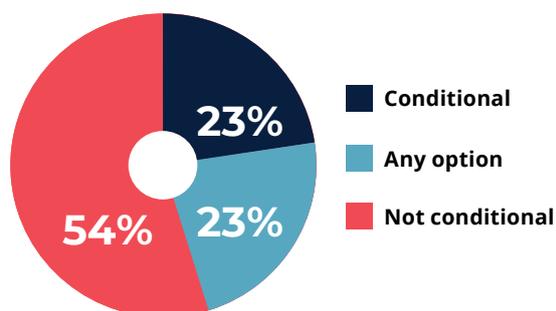
Graph 20. Type of CVA preferred

- Conditional
- Any option
- Not conditional

To further verify this finding, the results were filtered to reflect the 34 per cent of respondents who were not contacted through SNCRC databases (and therefore had not previously received CVA from SNCRC) with transit, IDPs and pendular migrant profiles. It was found that unconditional CVA was still the preferred way of receiving assistance, with a preference from a greater number of respondents (73 per cent of respondents) which can be understood given the need for immediate access to the service (Graph 21).

- Any option
- Conditional
- Not conditional
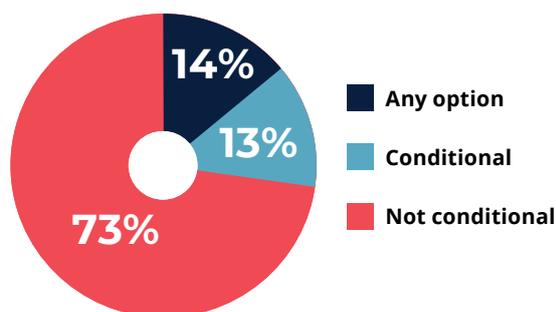
Graph 21. Type of CVA preferred, non-database participants
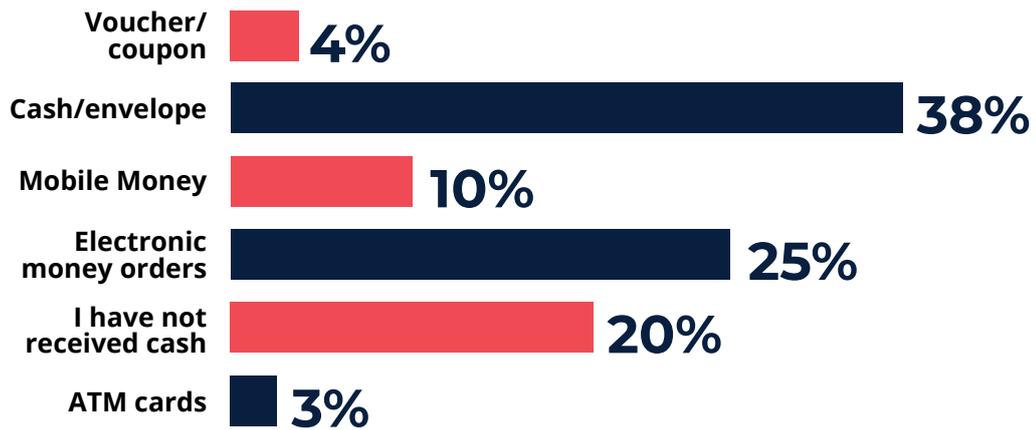
Graph 22. CVA delivery mechanism preference

- Voucher/coupon: 4%
- Cash/envelope: 38%
- Mobile Money: 10%
- Electronic money orders: 25%
- I have not received cash: 20%
- ATM cards: 3%

The three most strongly preferred mechanisms for receiving CVA were (Graph 22): cash (38 per cent), electronic money transfers through digital platforms (25 per cent) and ATM cards (20 per cent). This finding may be due to the ease of access and immediacy of use afforded by cash, given the possible barriers presented by a lack of knowledge in the use of technology, or by a lack of official identity documents as sometimes required by financial service providers.

Of the 34 per cent of people who were not contacted by telephone, 57 per cent preferred a delivery mechanism such as cash, which is easy for them to receive and to use as it is so common among the population. The second most frequently mentioned item was electronic money transfers. When analysing who most often cited these, it was found that they were migrants between 18 and 35 years old, demonstrating that people in this age range are familiar with virtual and electronic processes. Finally, 10 per cent mentioned ATM cards and 8 per cent mentioned money through applications on their mobile phones (Graph 23).
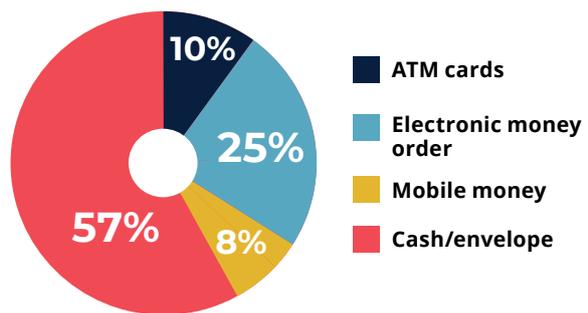
Graph 23. Preference in delivery mechanisms, non-database participants

- ATM cards: 10%
- Electronic money order: 25%
- Mobile money: 8%
- Cash/envelope: 57%

Of the people surveyed who had received CVA in the past, 63 per cent reported having used ATM cards to access the benefit, 17 per cent mentioned electronic money transfers, 6 per cent cash, 6 per cent vouchers or coupons, 4 per cent direct transfers to their bank accounts and 4 per cent mobile money in applications (Graph 24). Eighty-nine per cent thus used digital means to access the benefit, demonstrating a clear trend for the use of technological tools by organizations that provide such benefits. Further, despite their preference for cash, members of migrant communities have been forced to use the delivery methods made available to them. A certain overlap is nonetheless to be noted between the migrant preference for and organizational use of electronic money transfers for CVA.
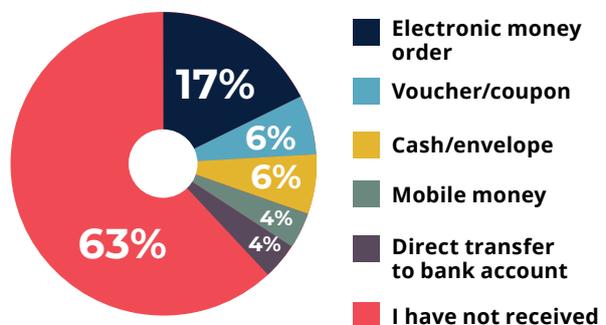
Graph 24. Most commonly used delivery mechanisms

- Electronic money order: 17%
- Voucher/coupon: 6%
- Cash/envelope: 6%
- Mobile money: 4%
- Direct transfer to bank account: 4%
- I have not received: 63%

Finally, to the question "How do you consider that CVA contributes to your stabilization processes?" (Graph 25), two key answers were generated by the interviewees. Some 88.5 per cent mentioned that CVA improves the quality of life of those who receive the benefit and that it helps contribute to the country where they are currently living, and 11 per cent said that CVA contributes to basic household needs, observing here that CVA is considered a very important strategy for stabilization and livelihood issues; the remaining 0.5% did not know how CVA would contribute to their stabilization processes.

Contributes to the basic needs of my household ▮ **11%**

Improves people's quality of life ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ **89%**

Graph 25. CVA Opportunities

B. Conclusions

1. In general, the individuals surveyed knew what CVA was. However, despite half of them having received CVA at some point, most of them did not know why someone would be eligible to receive such assistance, meaning this should be better communicated. Nevertheless, those consulted agreed on the criteria for prioritizing access to CVA, such as vulnerability and a clear need to receive the support.

2. Of the respondents who had benefited from CVA, almost all of them had to present a legal identification document at the time of receiving it. However, not having an ID did not prevent access to assistance in all cases.

3. Out of all the modalities of assistance in the response to migratory contexts, the population prefers receiving CVA rather than other forms of assistance. Their favourite delivery mechanism is cash. This result may be related to cash being easier for migrants in an irregular state or associated with barriers to accessing technological or digital media. Their next preference takes the form of electronic money transfers on digital platforms.

4. Part of the CVA delivery process includes guidance for beneficiaries on its use. However, some people are not familiar with electronic channels or digital mechanisms, particularly older adults, who face barriers to access and lack information/orientation in new technologies. This conclusion is compatible with the results of post-distribution monitoring carried out by SNCRC as part of its use of CVA to assist migrants, which are further reinforced by the consensus of voices of non-database participants. Before an activity involving CVA can be implemented, it will therefore be necessary to determine an inclusive and simple mechanism, that avoids the risks and exclusions involved with digital tools, especially in populations with minimal levels of digital literacy and reduced access to digital media.

5. The surveyed migrant population indicated that, during their migratory or displacement processes, the best time to receive CVA is during settlement, given that assistance and services are more available in transit than those to support the stabilization of migrants at points of arrival, demonstrating the importance of support in the former stage of migration. This finding is reflected in the SNCRC strategy when it comes to CVA, which is currently mostly applied at the stages of initial settlement and stabilization. Indeed, the transition to economic stability is progressive and requires finding a source of income, which implies that basic needs are more exacerbated during this period. Likewise, individuals recognized that this assistance improves the quality of life of the people who receive it and contributes to the economic development of the region where they are located.

6. The survey participants considered that CVA presents multiple benefits: the possibility to start their own businesses, the ease of access and use, and covering basic needs such as rent or utilities payments, which coincides with their priorities in the use of the resource.

C. Key recommendations

1. Strengthen the SNCRC communication strategy and language with the migrant and host communities (or affected communities) about the reasons for prioritizing certain profiles for CVA.

2. Reinforce learning, training and support processes for affected communities on the adequate use of electronic means that are frequently applied in CVA as well as the use of technologies such as ATMs and/or digital platforms such as Movii[8] or similar. This will aim to avoid barriers to access, reduce migrants' negative impressions that generate resistance to technology use, and ensure the population's understanding and capabilities in their use.

3. Given the preference expressed by the surveyed individuals, seek to increase the use of CVA in the humanitarian response to migrant populations, maintaining the priority on their delivery in the settlement stages of migrants' journeys, and advocating to partners, such as regional and national authorities.

4. Study the feasibility of increasing the use of cash or direct bank transfers as a CVA delivery mechanism, following the preferences of the surveyed people and considering the possible risks or barriers to this modality.

5. Develop strategies to avoid exclusion of people with minimal digital literacy from CVA programmes, while preserving traditional distribution mechanisms (cash in hand, physical tokens) in accordance with the population's profile.

6. Identify alternative CVA modalities for those who have no identification documents or who do not wish to be identified. This will require flexibility in the agreements and regulations with operating entities.

6. COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUPS

A. Results

Eleven focus groups were organized in four departments, enabling exploration of a variety of perspectives among the populations under study regarding digital identities in humanitarian services. The activity included both women and men covering a broad age range and representing diverse territories. The results presented here correspond to the perceptions of a non representative proportion of the overall population of migrants, IDPs and returnees in Colombia.

The people taking part in the focus groups were mostly the same as those who participated in the individual surveys. A few focus group participants were involved directly at humanitarian service points without completing the individual surveys.

The procedure began with the questions "What do you understand by the concept of digital identities?" and "Do you know any examples?" Below, participants' most common answers are represented in speech bubbles.

Next, the concept of ID was explained, as well as the differences between functional and foundational identities. The former authenticate an individual's identity to access a specific service (a function)– each individual can have several functional identities. The latter provide a legal identity to a broad population as a public good, without specifying a service. Foundational IDs enable individuals to demonstrate who they are. They are usually related to national authorities and cover the entire population of a country.

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8   Movii is a digital monetary account that is managed using a mobile phone application and a rechargeable debit card.

During the focus groups, it was pointed out that the discussion would focus on functional identity. Participants were asked whether they had already used anything similar.

Codes or ID number that are shown in grocery stores to buy food

ATM cards and electronic vouchers

Fingerprints to withdraw money
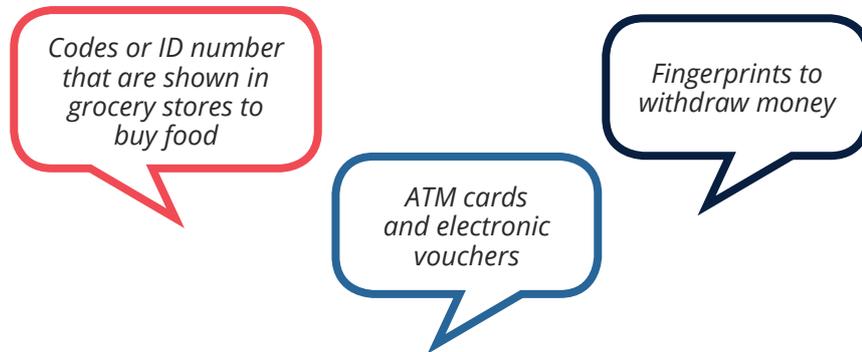
Next, it was examined whether they understood the difference between a functional ID and an identity document that establishes their identity, such as a cédula (citizenship card).

Participants across all groups indicated that they understood the difference. Comments worth highlighting include:

The functional identities are just to access some specific services.

The cédula is a foundational identity because it regularizes us, so the Temporary Statute of Protection for Venezuelans would be a foundational digital identity.

The transportation card or the university ID card are examples of functional identities.

The e-mail is part of a person's multiple functional digital identities.

Given the answers, it was clear that participants understood that foundational identities include identity cards or identity documents issued by a legal authority, while functional identities can be attributed by a humanitarian organization or service provider.

Finally, questions were generated to stimulate discussion on the opportunities and risks of using digital IDs when providing humanitarian aid to migrants. These are presented below.

iv. Would migrants trust a digital identity?

Opinions differed with respect to trusting a digital identity. On the one hand, some participants considered such IDs to be insecure because of barriers to information access (digital illiteracy) and to technology use, in addition to the fear of being impersonated:

> *I don't know if a code could suddenly lead to fraud when they go to a point of care and are told that they are already registered and that they have already received help, without this being real*

Venezuelan migrant woman. Focus group Cundinamarca.

On the other hand, others felt that digital ID use generates trust and brings more benefits, mainly for those who do not have a foundational identity document issued by an authority, such that the functional ID facilitates access to services without having to show documents. For example, with a personal password, fingerprint or facial recognition, they can electronically access assistance:

> *I would trust much more, because it is more likely that the risks are reduced with the digital identity than with the normal ID card because they often present ID cards that are not their own.*

Venezuelan migrant woman. Focus group Norte de Santander.

Focus group participants also mentioned that organizations providing functional digital identities should offer security in their commitment to use data responsibly. They expressed confidence regarding the personal information they have provided to access SNCRC's humanitarian services, as they consider that their personal data will only be used for the relevant purposes. However, they indicated distrust in other, less well-known foundations or individuals who require them to provide personal information to access benefits without having any guarantees concerning its use, as fraud may occur with ID cards and PEPs.

v. Opportunities

According to the focus group participants, digital identities present the advantage of facilitating timely and agile access to humanitarian services because they do not require constant collection of personal data and the repetitive presentation of documents. In this way, digitally capturing, storing and processing information reduces repetitiveness, avoids multiple characterizations and/or surveys of the same person and eliminates the risk of duplication of information between different areas of the same organization.

> *With digital identities, we can itemize the needs per person and family group, and it would not be necessary to repeat the same information because it would already be registered, we would have information in a database at national and international level.*

Migrant woman who returned from Peru. Focus group Cundinamarca.

At the same time, participants emphasized that organizations' procedures could be improved by implementing digital IDs, since repeated requests for identical information could be reduced, with personal data only needing to be updated and not reiterated at each request.

> *...with biometric identification or having a general code for personal use, avoiding giving unnecessary information and managing global information with the institutions.*
>
> *Venezuelan migrant woman.*
> *Focus group Nariño.*

Based on the analysis, an opportunity was identified in the process of information storage, in that the initial collection of personal data provided by end users could be stored digitally. This could allow the automatic application of prioritization criteria by sector and enable greater control over data to deliver more effective and timely assistance to previously registered people.

- **Do migrants think digital IDs will facilitate access to humanitarian services? Which services and why? Do migrants think digital IDs will give them better continuity of services?**

Focus groups participants concluded that digital identities facilitate access to humanitarian services, particularly for health services when a general clinical history is stored to ease assistance. They also considered that digital IDs principally enable access to CVA, since money can be used to access multiple goods and services, such as housing, food, transportation, education and so on.

> *For money transfers [CVA], electronic money transfers are easier because you do not have to handle any electronic mechanism such as ATMs, although with electronic money transfers sometimes it is not safe because as a Venezuelan, they do not allow you to withdraw the money and they ask for the valid ID cards or ask for a legible photocopy of the ID card in addition to the fingerprint. There have been withholdings in the delivery of money.*
>
> *Venezuelan migrant woman.*
> *Focus group La Guajira.*

Participants repeatedly cited electronic money transfers using authorized establishments where cash can be delivered and digital platforms responsible for making payments, collections and wire transfers in Colombia. However, in certain situations, this mechanism required them to have a valid foundational identity document to withdraw the funds. The use of their own bank accounts by participants is not common.

> *It is better receiving redeemable vouchers for items than to hand over money because of the risks of being robbed.*
>
> *Venezuelan migrant woman.*
> *Focus group Norte de Santander.*

Older participants in particular found that they could use straightforward mechanisms such as biometric fingerprinting easily. Other, more technological means, such as QR codes or interactive platforms, were perceived by these older migrants as more challenging due to lack of familiarity. Using ATMs to receive CVA can be difficult, for instance due to the lack of knowledge by elderly and illiterate migrants or a lack of dexterity and agility introducing errors into the withdrawal process. Therefore, a physical means such as a voucher or bar code to be scanned in a nearby establishment where food or necessities are available would be one of the ideal methods.

Although digital identities make delivering CVA easier, some participants reported being unfamiliar with electronic media, jeopardizing their access to assistance. Therefore, support and training are required.

- **Do migrants feel more dignified when obtaining a service through a digital identity?**

In response to this question, participants said using digital identities would be more dignified, because their personal information is in a single database, there is no need to repeat procedures and it does not matter if they have a foundational identity document or not. They believed they would receive a more dignified treatment because they would not be repeating the same personal information that is often difficult to tell a stranger.

However, they believed there should be enough supervision to keep the information confidential and to have procedures adapted to follow up on the families or individuals receiving assistance, to avoid duplication of services.

> *It would be ideal for information to be shared in a global system for the humanitarian network, such as a database shared between organizations, but tracked so that a single nuclear family does not take all the benefits that are scarce.*

Migrant woman.
Focus group Nariño.

- **Do migrants think it is too inconvenient to be registered at each service point each time they need another humanitarian service?**

Migrants in the focus groups expressed boredom and tedium at having to register at each HSP along the journey across the country. Even if registering with the same organization, they must provide personal data at all points of care, so they suggested there should be a universal digital registry to access humanitarian services. For example, using biometric records could be suitable, since participants are familiar with this type of system given their experience with the same process to access the Temporary Statute of Protection for Venezuelan Migrants[9] (ETPV by its acronym in Spanish), and with other humanitarian organizations. The community understood that filling out each organization's delivery forms is a requirement to receive each service, since they represent evidence of what has been provided. In addition, people who do not present a physical identity document face obstacles to receiving humanitarian aid.

> *Sometimes it is uncomfortable because it is repetitive, and they make us repeat our history several times. Every time to access a service they ask us for our ID cards, but they have never validated or verified them, but without an ID card they don't assist us... although it is understandable because we understand that they do it for safety reasons.*

Venezuelan migrant woman.
Focus group Cundinamarca

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9   The *Estatuto Temporal de Protección* seeks to protect migrants who are currently in irregular conditions, given that they are the most vulnerable, while discouraging irregular migration subsequent to the Statute's entry into force.

Participants conveyed that, generally, surveys and forms contain the same questions, and that even when receiving services from the same organization at the same point on the same day, they must fill out a record for each service received.

> *I walked from Cúcuta to Ipiales and at every point I had to do it, just to get a bottle of water, they asked me for my identity card and asked me the same questions... it is necessary, but it is the only way to receive help.*

Venezuelan migrant woman. Focus group Nariño.

> *It would be made much easier with a digital mechanism such as a fingerprint because they would already have my main information in the system.*

Venezuelan migrant woman. Focus group La Guajira.

Meanwhile, there was a total rejection of having to register at each point of care every time a humanitarian service is needed. The people consulted considered that their rights to privacy were being violated and they felt re-victimized. They criticized the information and registration systems as bureaucratic and unfriendly. They suggested the development of a national, systematic, online system that avoids the constant collection of personal data.

> *"Yes, it is inconvenient, because it should be one record for all organizations, but I have to tell my stories to everyone who does a characterization for me."*

Woman victim of internal displacement and GBV survivor. Focus group Norte de Santander.

> *It's the worst, I don't feel worthy when it happens to me that I register and they question my status.*

Venezuelan migrant man. Focus group Cundinamarca.

- **Would migrants be comfortable with technological access to digital identity? Enough to be able to manage and control its use and the data it stores?**

Here, opinions were divided: for some, access to an ID is comfortable – mainly those participants familiar with technology – while others express their discomfort because they are not trained in the use of these technologies.

> *On the one hand it's excellent, on the other hand bad, a colleague went to get the card and lost it and was left without the groceries.*

Woman victim of internal displacement. Focus group Norte de Santander.

In general, participants claimed that training is also required to manage digital systems and to approach new ways to access humanitarian aid, such as electronic channels for money transfers or vouchers redeemable for food.

> *I have difficulties with technology, I haven't had a single experience with one of those cell phones or the internet. My nephew went to the bank to withdraw money for me because I don't feel I can understand all those buttons, besides, I don't read well.*

Older woman.
Focus group La Guajira.

In the case of older adults or populations with no technology experience, they considered that access would be a little more complicated due to their lack of knowledge, and that they would not be able to control the information or its management.

Participants highlighted the technological and digital progress made by society and the world in general, and the increase in usage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. They stated that they will inevitably have to adapt to these changes. Therefore, pedagogical support in such media is essential to the evolution of migrant communities.

As well as the card, people being assisted through CVA during the SNCRC distributions received information on the use of ATMs. This process highlighted certain profile's lack of knowledge in this area, demonstrating in turn the potential to continue offering such training on digital topics (including in more advanced form), which could promote interaction with new technologies and even incorporation into day-to-day life.

- **Do migrants think it would be useful to be able to store their documents in a digital identity solution? For example, certificates.**

The people consulted agreed that digitally storing personal documents is beneficial. They gave e-mail as an example, where they can store their documents and consult or share them in an agile and instantaneous way. In addition, those who have lost their original personal documents can have a digital backup copy and complete electronic procedures more easily.

However, older adults among the participants expressed preferences for physical or traditional media due to lack of knowledge and, in many cases, digital illiteracy. But these people also believed that they could save time and have their documents saved and safe in case of loss, even if they do not know how to handle digital media.

> *That being the case, I could count on the support of a recognized NGO.*

Older adult woman.
Focus group La Guajira.

Participants acknowledged that they would feel comfortable if the personal information were to be handled and controlled by a known humanitarian organization, meaning that handing over the rights to use personal data would be exclusively conditional on the purpose of accessing humanitarian services.

> *It would be good; this helps migrants identify themselves and it's good because I would have all my documentation in case I lose it.*

Migrant woman.
Focus group Cundinamarca.

- **Do migrants think digital IDs will help them have more privacy and less exposure to authorities?**

> *Only if you don't share it with authorities, it causes more xenophobia, because you show your ID card and they treat you badly.*

Migrant woman.
Focus group Nariño.

In general, participants believed that digital identities favour privacy, as long as the personal information is used exclusively for humanitarian assistance and is not shared with migratory or judicial authorities, for fear of being located and deported in the case of irregular migrants or for fear of being located by illegal armed groups in the case of victims of internal displacement. They also pointed out that the exposure of their identity generates discrimination, so an ID used exclusively for access to services or goods favours personal protection and social integration processes.

vi. Risks

Regarding the problems, risks and difficulties in using an ID, there was a consensus that there are fewer risks with a functional ID than with a foundational one.

> *The ID cards (cédulas) are stolen, shown and the identity is impersonated. In several cases this has happened, in addition to the cédulas and the PEP there are black markets that sell them. They are riskier and without an ID card you cannot access any service.*

Migrant woman.
Focus group Cundinamarca.

> *I do not consider that there are risks since the information is secured and it is more complicated for it to be lost in physical than in a system, this would be a great system. It cannot happen, it is of greater security.*

Migrant woman.
Focus group Norte de Santander.

> *That the information is mishandled, that it is not secure, that it gets lost or that we don't know how it is going to be handled.*

Migrant woman.
Focus group La Guajira.

> *In the case of media such as mobile platforms to move money, that they take our money, because they hack the accounts.*

Migrant woman.
Focus group Nariño.

Although most participants agreed that there were not as many risks with a functional identity as with a foundational one, some identified the possibilities of loss, mismanagement or insecurity, partly for fear of information being leaked that could affect them. In addition, there were considerations about the fragilities that can occur in the security of digital systems where money is stored or moved, although no experience related to these facts was presented in the groups.

- **Have migrants had to give informed consent in the past to obtain humanitarian assistance? If yes, how did the provider explain to the migrants what "informed consent" means, how the data would be used and whether it would be shared? Were they given a copy of the information, did it make sense and could it be understood?**

In La Guajira, there was a group of participants who did not know what informed consent is, while in the other departments the majority confirmed that they knew what it is. After hearing an explanation of the term, all the participants affirmed that to access any service they have to sign or approve their consent, sometimes without clearly understanding what it is about.

Yes, they explained to me, but I don't remember what it says, but it's supposed to be an authorization so they can manage my data.

Migrant woman.
Focus group Nariño.

It is a document to authorize the NGOs to manage, take care of my data and that they will not share it.

Woman returnee.
Focus group Norte de Santander.

It has very difficult words, it is hard to understand. The truth is that if you sign it so that they can give you the help quickly because you need it... you must read the terms and conditions, because we accept and we never know what it says, because at any moment it can affect us somehow. And it is something very important.

Colombian woman, victim of internal displacement.
Focus group Norte de Santander.

Participants reported never having been given a copy of their informed consent. Those who understood what consent refers to, said that it is fine because they had provided their agreement and authorization to manage their data. They pointed out that the procedure for giving informed consent via a telephone call generates greater distrust, since it is more difficult to verify who is requesting the personal information.

• Do migrants worry about the risks of others having access to their information or location without their knowledge or consent?

The participants' responses to this question largely suggested that the protection provided by digital systems is very powerful, although there are always risks. However, the risks were perceived to be minor compared to the use of a physical identity document. Fear was mainly expressed regarding identity theft and their location being known.

> *It is worrying because of the frauds or scams that can occur due to access to personal information... The disadvantage is that they can locate me and know where I am.*

Woman. Focus group Nariño.

> *Yes, identities like Facebook or apps can give your location" "on Facebook I can make everything private, I can hide my identity" "In this kind of digital identities women are more vulnerable to human trafficking."*

*Older adult woman.
Focus group La Guajira.*

Furthermore, comments were made referring to SNCRC specifically, as well as the advantages of SNCRC having this information. However, there was a fear that personal data may be distributed between organizations without consent.

> *If I give the information to the CRC, I am not worried about it, on the contrary because I know that if I continue on my path they will help my whole family.*

*Woman.
Focus group Norte de Santander.*

• Do migrants think their digital IDs could be lost? Or that there could be difficulties in accessing them?

The means commonly associated with digital identities were fingerprints, facial recognition or codes, so there is less risk of loss or access difficulties.

> *A fingerprint could not be lost, nor falsified".... "the best identity is fingerprints and facial recognitions are more secure, they could not be misplaced.*

*Woman.
Focus group Cundinamarca.*

However, the main difficulty for access is the lack of knowledge of electronic and digital systems. Participants expressed the need for education and updates on these topics.

vii. Digital Identities: Focus group of persons victims of displacement

In Colombia, people who consider themselves victims of the internal armed conflict must make a statement to the public prosecutor's office, in which they must provide all the required information in a format designed for this purpose and provide a detailed account of the circumstances of time, manner and place in which the victimizing events occurred, according to Law 1448 of 2011.

Applicants must:

• have suffered, individually or collectively, damage due to events that occurred after 1 January 1985.

• submit the statement to the public prosecutor's office no more than two years after the event.

• bring documents to the public prosecutor's office proving the victimizing acts.

• in the event of updates to their situation, attach the supporting documentation as may be required.

• complete the form established by the Victims' Assistance and Comprehensive Reparation Unit.

However, many of the participants in the focus group in Norte de Santander consider themselves victims of internal displacement even though they are not registered in the single registry of victims. They said that they have made the statement to the authorities and have provided documentation on several occasions without being able to make the registration effective.

They pointed out the inconvenience of not using digital means to capture, process and store the information, which leads to reprocessing due to the constant collection of personal data to access the record. Having to narrate the facts repeatedly re-victimizes them, as in the case of sexual violence suffered as a result of the conflict, exacerbating the situation.

> *We have been looking for my dad for 31 years and what they do is affect the victims because they call us and it is to ask for more statements and not to give results, and then they say that there is a change of prosecutor, that this and that, what year was such and such, and we do not make progress because of them because they continue to affect us emotionally.*

Woman victim of displacement. Focus group Norte de Santander.

> *...it is very boring to always have to show the ID card, always tell the same story... and hand in thousands of photocopies of the same thing.*

Woman victim of displacement and sexual violence. Focus group Norte de Santander.

Participants suggested that the best way to avoid this situation would be to manage a single system, for example with digital fingerprint reading, which would allow entities to access information without the need to make multiple records, in addition to being able to deliver support by digital means to be stored and consulted as annexes to the process.

B. Conclusions

1. The focus group participants did not consider foundational IDs (*cédula* or PEP) to be secure identification documents because they can be victims of fraud or impersonation, mainly when accessing humanitarian services. They further argued that such IDs can be obtained fraudulently or that documents are sometimes created with someone else's data. This concern was expressed in in every department where focus group discussions took place, revealing that identity theft and

the use of fake-identification networks are sufficiently widespread to make an impression on the participants. According to the participants' views, this could be avoided by using digital identities, which are considered to be more accurate including, for instance, biometric data. In general, the participating population reported feeling more confident in a functional digital identity that would allow them to access different services at various points nationwide.

2. Venezuelan migrants are most affected by requests for citizenship cards to access goods or services, especially due to loss, theft, expiration or immigration status, and they considered repetitive request for cards and information each time they require a service to be uncomfortable, despite being aware that it is necessary for security reasons. They considered that implementing digital identities would facilitate procedures to access humanitarian services, particularly money transfers and healthcare, in addition to avoiding repeated requests for information, since with means such as biometric data or facial recognition, they believed that information could be updated, accurate and agile. Overall, participants shared that they were comfortable with the possibility of using biometric data in a digital identity.

3. A key challenge for the provision of humanitarian services through ID is to ensure that the handling of personal information does not violate privacy rights and does not expose migrants or victims of internal displacement to increased protection risks and discrimination.

4. The people consulted highlighted the usefulness of a universal information system in the country's humanitarian network that provides easy solutions for data management in migratory contexts for various humanitarian organizations.

C. Key recommendations

1. Explore having a single registry of beneficiaries or an interoperable system (a universal SNCRC information system) to avoid the repetitive collection of personal data, minimize data and facilitate access to CVA or any other humanitarian assistance service in an expedited and timely way and, if possible, extending it to all National Societies of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) at a regional or global level that are involved in the response to migrants.

2. Strengthen capacity building for SNCRC staff and volunteers regarding communication on informed consent, the importance of data protection, use of technologies for data capture, storage and processing and accountability in the use of personal information.

3. Reinforce the way in which the concept of informed consent is communicated to the affected population such that it is understood and ensuring people are given a copy of their statements.

4. Evaluate the advantages, opportunities and risks of biometric technology, as well as other potential mechanisms of digital identity for registering, identifying and assisting the migrant population, in order to:

   i. eliminate the multiplicity of physical records and unnecessary, repetitive paperwork and procedures
   ii. minimize the capture of personal information
   iii. avoid people receiving the same humanitarian assistance twice
   iv. avoid fraud and identity theft
   v. enhance the target population's dignity with more efficient assistance.

5. Examine functional identities as an assistance strategy in migration contexts to facilitate internal population characterization and prioritization processes, reducing the use of foundational identities.

7. MIGRATION NARRATIVES[10]

Yuleidy Soza

I am originally from Maracaibo, and I have been in Colombia for five years. We arrived with my daughter in 2015. When I arrived in Colombia, I was unaware of all the help that organizations gave to Venezuelan migrants, but two years ago I started to learn about projects that gave us a hand. With some acquaintances, we started to spread that information and now we have a WhatsApp group where we help each other and we orient ourselves. Now with the Statute[11] we are very proactive.

In 2019 I received help from the Red Cross, here in Bogota. They gave me groceries and also helped my daughter with psychological counseling. For her it has been very difficult. She has dual nationality: she is Colombian-Venezuelan. But she has had problems adapting because she feels distant from this country and people.

As a migrant, and also as someone who knows many people in my condition, who had to leave our country because of the situation we are living through there, we need first of all help to ensure our food and also health, because I understand that in Colombia healthcare is private and it is difficult for us to have access to it. Sometimes it is either food or medicine. And health is a priority for small children and older adults.

I have never received a voucher or a money transfer from the Red Cross, but it is an advantage to have the money there, because that allows you as a mother to cover the most important need, because sometimes it is not food, sometimes it is underwear for my children. For me, it is more difficult to ask for a change of clothes than food, especially here in Bogota with this climate. When you have the money, you can distribute it to the needs of the family at that moment. Even buying a pencil for my children to study, not having 200 or 300 pesos to buy that. When they give you the groceries or food, you think about selling it to use that money to buy clothes or medicine.

And more than the food aid, which is important, it helps us to stabilize the situation to cover the immediate needs. But we want to establish ourselves in Colombia, I came with the purpose of staying and I have been here for 5 years now. I have had ups and downs: before the pandemic I had a job and I was saving to start a business, but with the pandemic everything became very difficult. Right now what I need is a push to integrate myself in Colombia, as just another inhabitant. I am a professional, but I have not been able to get certified here, and I don't know how to do other things to get other jobs. We need workshops, knowledge, a bit of capital, advice to understand those laws for entrepreneurship and to be able to really be in Colombia.

Yennifer Ramirez

Three years ago I migrated to Colombia because of the situation we are going through in Venezuela. I am 43 years old, and I came with my husband and my two children. We arrived in Riohacha. We came to live in a small town, and since we have been here, we have been well received, the Colombians have opened their arms to us. I have to admit that arriving was a bit tough, but COVID-19 made the

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10   These narratives have been translated from their original Spanish versions and minimally edited to preserve the speakers' voices.

11   The Temporary Protection Statute (*Estatuto Temporal de Protección*) seeks to protect the migrant population who are currently in an irregular situation, considering how vulnerable they are, while also discouraging irregular migration since the measure entered into force.

situation even tougher. But thanks to our neighbours who have helped us we have managed to move forward; it is a time of struggle. Now with everything that has happened I am a leader, or rather spokesperson, of the Venezuelan communities in the township. I do it to help them, but also to help the Colombians, to help the community.

About two months ago, they called me to come to the Red Cross to conduct a survey to find out whether or not I could receive some money for rent that they were giving. I was selected, and they gave me a prepaid card, twice, to pay my rent, and the man who was accompanying me in the process told me that whatever I had left over I could spend on something else as long as I brought the receipts. In fact, I used that to pay my rent. What a blessing! With the pandemic I was left without a job, all the staff cutbacks, all the layoffs, the closing of companies, they leave you as you were when you first arrived. And with the money I had left over, I stretched it to buy food and I also invested it to buy bread flour to be able to sell *arepa mechada*.

When organizations like the Red Cross give us this help, they get us out of trouble, because at least I am the type of person who makes the most of the help I receive, and it is to pay for our rent, medicine and food. One knows and has the ability to choose which is the strongest need that one has at the moment and to be able to manage the aid that we receive to cover that need and then stretch the money to be able to pay for other things is the advantage of these money transfers.

Ah! but I tell you, as a spokesperson for the community, I know and all the migrants understand that at this moment the knowledge you give us, the information is more important than an aid that can last us three months. Because with what you can teach us and support us, we can start a small business and with that we ourselves will be able to have our money to pay for housing, food and medicine for more than three months. With that my children, my husband and I could support ourselves, and even help our community by giving them work.

8. FINAL REMARKS

- The outlook for the coming years in Colombia concerning migration and humanitarian situations in general will require the incorporation of more and better mechanisms to facilitate identification, profiling, assignment of assistance and tracking mechanisms oriented to affected individuals and families. Given this, it is expected that the findings presented here will be a first step towards strengthening humanitarian innovation approaches and the diversification of response alternatives.

- The development of processes to digitally identify people, seeking to facilitate timely delivery of assistance mechanisms, should ensure inclusive, population-based and territorial approaches, understanding the different types of mobility (in the case of responses to migratory phenomena), which facilitate having relevant and, in turn, considerable information in decision-making processes and operational adjustments.

- In the short term, it will be relevant to promote discussions on the integration of interoperable systems within the SNCRC at the national, regional or global level with other IFRC member societies involved in the response to migrants and refugees, allowing the storage and history of individuals' and families' digital information in the various services or assistance provided during their journey. This will allow for more dignified assistance by enabling more efficient referrals, avoiding repeated requests for the same information that sometimes be harmful and avoiding duplication of assistance.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Humanity

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality

In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity

There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network, with 192 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and around 14 million volunteers. Our volunteers are present in communities before, during and after a crisis or disaster. We work in the most hard to reach and complex settings in the world, saving lives and promoting human dignity. We support communities to become stronger and more resilient places where people can live safe and healthy lives, and have opportunities to thrive.