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# Social protection responses to forced displacement in Colombia

- María Cecilia Dedios

## Qualitative research team

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# Key questions: qualitative component

- IDPs receive more help than the non-displaced population. At the same time, coverage of Venezuelans is low.
  - What is participants' experience of accessing assistance and social protection programmes?
- Assistance and social protection show a weak relationship with wellbeing measures.
  - How do participants understand wellbeing? And what is the connection between wellbeing and assistance/social protection from the perspective of participants?
- A lot of the assistance comes from Government, but international agencies and community organisations also contribute.
  - To what extent and in what ways have humanitarian assistance and social protection been linked? What benefits and drawbacks do stakeholders associate with these linkages?

# Qualitative data

1. We did in-depth interviews (n=18) and focus groups (n=12) with Venezuelans, IDPs and the host population.
2. We did semi-structured key informant interviews (n=24) with government institutions, international agencies, NGOs, and civil society to have a comprehensive understanding of policy-making decisions on internal and international displacement

# Qualitative sample

**Table 2** Qualitative sample description

	Hosts	IDPs	Venezuelans	Total
<b>In-depth interviews</b>	6	6	6	18
Bogotá residents	3	3	3	9
Cúcuta residents	3	3	3	9
<b>Focus groups</b>	4	4	4	12
Bogotá residents	2	2	2	6
Cúcuta residents	2	2	2	6
<b>Key informant interviews</b>	0	9	15	24
On the response in Bogotá				7
On the response in Cúcuta				7
On the response at national level				10

Source: authors' own elaboration



# Access to assistance and social protection

# Greatest social assistance coverage - IDPs

- IDPs knew the requirements and processes to access assistance and social protection (Sisben – the social registry)
- Particularly true for people in the RUV (*the Registry for Victims of the Conflict, including IDPs*)

*Well these days they call it 'compensation'. Each person gets compensated for being displaced, after a certain period of time. You fill in forms, afterwards you have to know how to bring a list with everything that happened to the person (Focus group, IDP, recipient, Cúcuta)*

# Greatest social assistance coverage - IDPs

- The main barriers relate to the requirements to be recognised as conflict victims and the delays in receiving help (cash transfers)

*We were displaced before. But when I was an adult and I had my children and my children's father died, I started working for a company. I said 'no, I'm not going to ask for help there'. I preferred to work than to go (ask for assistance) because that's like begging them to recognise you (Interview, female recipient, Bogotá).*



# Least social assistance coverage – Venezuelans

- Venezuelans expressed confusion regarding the requirements and processes to access assistance programmes and social protection
- Variation in the experience of getting regular migration status and household configuration in terms of nationality

*Of course, one thing is to have a Colombian ID card and I don't have it, with the Colombian ID card it's different, but in the case of Venezuelans that only have a passport and the PEP (residence permit), well yes they could have it, I can't say they wouldn't, but really I don't know anyone who has received assistance (Focus Group, Venezuelan, non-recipient, Bogotá)*

# Least social assistance coverage – Venezuelans

- Access strategies: diversify options, contribute to a support network

*Since I'm working all the time (...) I pay someone to look after her [my daughter]; and sometimes she brings her home to me because she lives near the school. And she says to me: "Imagine this, they're giving out a subsidy". And I say: "Oh really? How?". "Yes, for 7 months, they're giving out a subsidy." And I say: "Oh, honey, I really just don't have time. Or rather, I never have time." I said to her. So she said to me "How can you say that? Speak to the school director." And I said: "Okay". And that day, they had virtual meeting with me and all that. They told me that the children that hadn't received the subsidy, it was because they hadn't registered; others, because they didn't have the ID card; others because ... I don't know, there's a process. So, the teacher got my daughter in. (Interview, Venezuelan, recipient, Bogotá)*

# Least social assistance coverage – Venezuelans

- Barriers to receiving cash benefits:
  - Access to bank account
  - ID document
  - Access to a permanent telephone number
  - Fear of revealing migrant status and being stigmatised
- Migrants with assistance received help in-kind mainly and didn't report major delays with the assistance received.

# Relationship between assistance/social protection and household wellbeing

# Association between social assistance and wellbeing

- People that receive social assistance highlighted the importance of the assistance in the short term, especially in moments of crisis (across all sub-groups of participants)

*A lot because we were going through a critical situation and when it arrived it was a blessing from God. Let's say, we didn't have [food] and suddenly the day we didn't have, the food assistance arrived, it always helped us, thank God (Interview #3, Venezuelan, recipient, Cúcuta).*

# Association between social assistance and wellbeing

- For IDPs, social assistance is seen as a duty of the State to address their displacement situation. Difficulties accessing help and benefits (UARIV reparations) are perceived as new failures of the State to protect them.
- Venezuelans perceive social assistance as an act of charity by the State. The feeling that it creates is one of gratitude.



# Association between social assistance and wellbeing

- Assistance doesn't allow people to have economic and social agency in the medium to long term (across all subgroups)
- The relationship between social assistance and wellbeing:
  - **IDPs:** Those who have managed to get in the RUV (Victims' Registry) are hoping/waiting for the single compensation payment as their opportunity to improve their life conditions or to have some start-up capital.
  - **Venezuelans:** to have the option to regularize their migration status to be able to work.

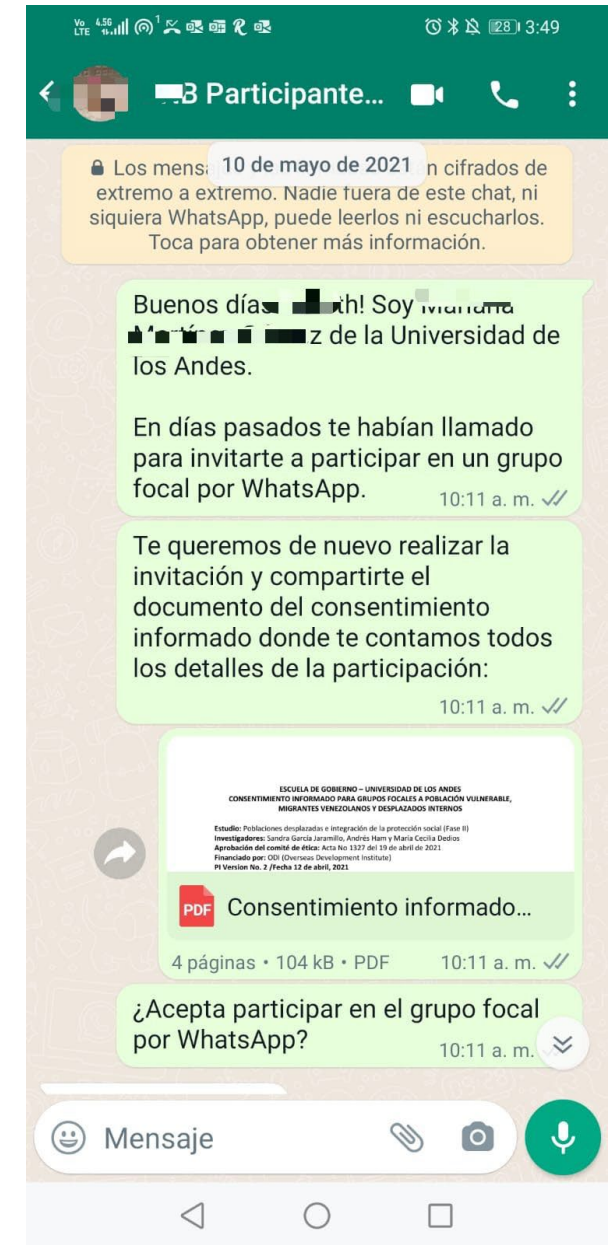
# Focus groups in the time of Covid-19

# Doing Focus Groups by Whatsapp

- Methodological innovation in response to quarantine/lockdown measures
- What worked?
  - We managed to get around the barrier of lack of availability. Participants could reply whenever they were free
  - They didn't have to reply on the spot. Possibility to reply in their own time.
  - Forms of communication: voice notes, videos, text, emojis
  - Simplified process to prepare data for analysis

# Doing Focus Groups by Whatsapp

- Changes to the logistics: informed consent process, guaranteeing internet access for a week, incentives.
- Changes to the moderation: tutorial videos, communication combining audio, images, texts, navigating confidentiality.



# ¿Cómo eliminar la información una vez culminen los grupos focales?

(SEE VIDEO IN EVENT RECORDING)

# Doing Focus Groups by Whatsapp

- Lessons learned
  - Moderation of focus groups online requires constant attention during the implementation period.
  - Specific skills required for moderation.
  - Challenges, particularly among migrants, in accessing mobile phones and internet. Replicates the barriers participants faced accessing social protection services



# Link between humanitarian assistance and social protection

Key informant interviews

# Links between humanitarian assistance and social protection

- Internal displacement:
  - A broad legal and operational framework exists for assistance provision by the government.
  - Assistance is given principally at the national level. The international programming offered is focused on new displacements.
  - International provision is to a large extent integrated with government systems: it follows government policies, uses joint coordination mechanisms and administrative systems.

# Links between humanitarian assistance and social protection

- Venezuelan response:
  - The government provides most of the assistance and services.
  - The growing international response is increasingly aligning (with the state). In ad hoc cases, it is fully integrating with state systems: joint coordination mechanisms, cases of integrated financing.
  - It still hasn't been consolidated into a wider public policy framework.

# Links between humanitarian assistance and social protection

- The links between national and international systems came about because of:
  - The urgency, magnitude and long term horizon of the displacement crisis
  - The government's political will, and strong coordination role
  - Progressive policies towards IDPs and Venezuelans
  - Covid-19

# Stakeholder perspectives: Benefits (of linkages)

- From the government's perspective:
  - Less duplication in activities, better targeting of recipients, broader coverage and services, increased institutional capacity and securing of additional resources
- From international agencies' perspective:
  - Optimisation of limited resources, expansion in coverage, better long-term approach, identification of gaps in programming, unmet needs and opportunities to improve

# Stakeholder perspectives: Disadvantages (of linkages)

- Logistical and operational difficulties: particularly in the secure and responsible exchange of data
- Concerns about government commitments to displaced people being undermined by budgetary pressures
- Concern about social tensions that can result from perceptions that government assistance is being given to Venezuelans at the expense of help for vulnerable citizens.



# Thank you!

Reporte

## Respuestas de protección social al desplazamiento forzado en Colombia

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