



**Final Evaluation Report on the Project: "Protection and Humanitarian Assistance for People Affected by the Humanitarian Crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela Border"**

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\* Cover photograph: A drawing done by a child participant in a focus group in Villa del Rosario, Norte de Santander (Colombia). 1 December, 2016.

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Any omission or error in the information presented in this report is entirely the responsibility of the evaluation team.

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## 1. Executive Summary

### *Context and Description of the Project*

In August 2015, the Venezuelan government declared a constitutional state of exception in some states that border with Colombia, which amongst other actions carried out, included the closure of that border and the deportation of undocumented Colombians. In addition to the deportations, these measures have resulted in the displacement of a significant number of Colombians through informal channels (i.e., trails and river crossings), who returned due to the fear of being deported, being separated from their families and having their rights violated. The closure of the border has also affected Colombians who lived in the border area and depended heavily on the social and economic dynamics of the border. During 2016 the "drop by drop" return and deportation of Colombians has continued, and the entry of Venezuelans into the country has increased considerably.

Returnees and deported people, as well as the Venezuelans who have entered Colombia, have a variety of humanitarian protection needs (e.g., food, shelter, health, education and documentation) as well as early recovery needs (e.g., housing, school infrastructure, and access to employment amongst others).

During the acute phase of the emergency, the Colombian government decreed a state of emergency in 40 border municipalities within 7 departments, and established some short-term measures to serve the vulnerable population. Subsequent to the end of the state of emergency, the national government has not implemented assistance strategies for the affected population, except for the "Colombia Nos Une" [Colombia Unites Us] program administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Additionally, the municipalities and departments receiving the affected population have not adopted strategies to meet those needs, and in many cases lack the institutional capacity to ensure adequate assistance.

In this context, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), implemented a project to assist people affected by the border crisis in 10 municipalities within 3 border departments: Uribía, Maicao and Riohacha in La Guajira; Arauca and Araucita in Arauca; and Tibú, Puerto Santander, Cúcuta, Villa del Rosario and Herrán in Norte de Santander. The project was composed of three components that sought to address some of the needs of the affected population: Education in Emergencies, Education, and Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA).

### *Purpose of the Evaluation*

The evaluation of the project "Protection and Humanitarian Assistance for People Affected by the Humanitarian Crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela border" aims to obtain an independent review of the pertinence of the project design, the coherence of the actions implemented in relation to the humanitarian crisis, as well as the impact of the project on the lives of the beneficiary population. The analysis of the findings was carried out from a lessons learnt approach which will contribute to the creation of good practices for the design and implementation of similar projects in the future.

Specifically, the evaluation has three main objectives:

1. Assess the relevance of the three project effects in regard to the needs of the affected population, the local context and NRC policies.
2. Analyse the extent to which the project's actions were implemented as planned and the relationship between the activities carried out and the outputs obtained.

3. Evaluate the impact of the project on the situation of the children, adolescents and adults affected by the humanitarian crisis and benefited by the project.

### *Methodology*

The evaluation of the project had a qualitative approach taking into account the purpose of the evaluation and the evaluation questions formulated. The methods used included an analysis of programme and operational documents of the project, and carrying out in-depth interviews and focus groups with various stakeholders related to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project. A total of 43 in-depth interviews and 22 focus groups were held, involving national and regional level NRC staff members, officials from international organisations, beneficiaries of the 3 program components, local government officials, teachers, coordinators, and principals amongst others. The sample included 135 beneficiaries of the different project components who participated in the focus groups and interviews conducted in the three departments.

### *Key Findings*

#### *Evaluation Question No. 1: Is the project relevant and coherent?*

- The project addresses some of the priority needs of the affected population. However, in the case of the design of effect 1, its indicators and activities did not enable the creation of protective spaces for children and adolescents and therefore could not give them protection. In other words, the modified logical framework proposes - for purposes of the indicator - that a protective space is defined by beneficiaries having accessed two of the response components: student or hygiene kits, survival skills workshops, teacher training or school kits. Thus, in the case of children and adolescents - who only benefit from student or hygiene kits and school kits - it is not clear how they would ensure their protection in terms of the proposed effect.
- The project design partially took into account the institutional weaknesses and levels of vulnerability of the departments. In the case of La Guajira, the project's actions could have been focused on improving the institutional capacity of local authorities.
- The municipalities and the prioritised population suffer a serious level of impact due to the border crisis and have high levels of vulnerability.
- The effects, indicators and activities are partly coherent. However, in the case of effects 1 and 3, a definition of the basic rights to be guaranteed would allow for the coherence of the activities and indicators, with the effect, to be assessed. Furthermore, the effect 1 indicator - as modified - would not be coherent with the effect description, as not all beneficiaries would participate in the protective spaces contemplated by the effect. The children and adolescents who receive only student kits, hygiene kits and school kits are a case in point.
- Indicators are measurable and verifiable. However, the indicators of effects 1 and 3 correspond to output indicators and therefore do not reflect a change in the condition of the beneficiaries or a change in social conditions; changes that the project's activities intend to accomplish.
- Although there was no direct participation of the population in the project design, given the circumstances of the crisis, the NRC participated in identifying needs during the acute phase of the border crisis and used, in some cases, reports from the Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) in which the affected population participates in the identification of needs.

- The project design takes into account a gender-based approach in one of its activities (i.e., delivery of hygiene kits), and an ethnically differential approach in the delivery of student kits. The project design does not take into account a differential approach in other activities such as the survival skills training and teacher training in the Education in Emergencies component, the School Motivational Meetings (SMMs) in the Education component and the information sessions in the ICLA component.

Evaluation Question No. 2: Did the implementation of the program follow the original planning?

- The project attended to the initially defined target population taking into account the different migratory profiles.
- In general terms, the output indicators identified in the logical framework for each of the project's components were met, and the project's activities responded directly to humanitarian and protection needs, such as education and information, and indirectly to food and access to health. However, the implementation of the project was not carried out uniformly in all departments, which may limit the scope of the expected results.
- The project team has professional experience and excellent human qualities, which are recognised by both beneficiaries and allies.
- The monitoring mechanisms made it possible to demonstrate the need to modify the project. Nonetheless, monitoring can be more systematic and focus on improving project actions. For example, in addition to the emphasis on periodic beneficiary and indicator reports, measuring instruments could be designed and applied systematically with beneficiaries to identify opportunities for improving the quality of services provided by the NRC, and these could be used when making decisions.
- Better connection between the three teams of the project has the potential to produce greater impacts, and to enable a more efficient use of resources.
- Given the circumstances within the NRC, coordination was limited between the local and national teams, which potentially affected the impacts generated.
- During the implementation, a gender-based approach was partially carried out. The reports related to gender-based approach could be implemented in the SMMs.
- Although some actions have taken into account the cultural differences of the beneficiaries (e.g., one of the mentors of the SMMs in La Guajira is Wayúu), this is not a transversal approach in the project.

Evaluation Question No. 3: Did the project contribute to achieving the expected effects for the beneficiary population?

- Children, adolescents, their families and teachers value very highly the student and hygiene kits as well as the school kits. However, not all children and adolescents benefited adequately from the survival skills workshops and the teacher training activities. The generation of positive results was limited in regard to creating protective spaces for beneficiaries.
- There is evidence of a motivational and attitudinal change from the SMMs participants, as well as a change in their family environment. These changes, combined with the efforts made by the mentors to encourage schooling, mean that a significant percentage of the children who participated in the SMMs are already enrolled in school or in the process of being enrolled for next year. Nonetheless, legal and institutional

barriers persist that hinder access to education for part of the population attended to, as is the case with Venezuelan children and adolescents.

- Beneficiaries who are also victims of the armed conflict in Colombia, are aware of their rights and the institutions to which they must turn. Likewise, beneficiaries with documentation needs know and have gone through the procedures to address them. However, in the case of the Venezuelans, despite the fact that the project has identified the relevant attention services for them, there are still institutional barriers to accessing their rights.

### *Lessons Learnt*

#### *Lessons about the Design of the Project:*

- Participation in multiagency characterisation exercises such as MIRAs, bolsters the NRC's knowledge about the context of and the impacts on the population which can serve as a baseline in acute emergency scenarios when, for reasons of time, it is not possible to carry out our own needs assessment.
- Participation by the field team and the coordination of monitoring team in the project formulation stage should be increased, especially in the design of impacts and indicators. The NRC is currently pursuing actions in this regard, for example, through the implementation of the project management cycle that involves the participation of local teams at all stages of the process, and also, in general, via the process of restructuring and decentralisation implemented in the second half of 2015.
- It is key to take into account the differences of context between the departments where intervention will be carried out so as to be able to plan the activities and outputs.
- The particular needs of indigenous communities should be considered when planning activities. Linking staff who are experts on indigenous issues and building local teams may be amongst the strategies used to promote a ethnically differential approach in project design.

#### *General Lessons about the Implementation:*

- Networking with other organisations and/or community leaders was an effective strategy to facilitate the entry of the NRC into communities in which it was not previously present.
- Coordinating the three project teams when they work in the same municipalities is key to generating greater impact for the population and long-term effects. It also enables a more efficient use of resources, particularly in missions involving high logistical and transportation costs.
- Networking with other organisations to complement actions provides more comprehensive assistance. The networking that occurred with the World Food Programme (WFP) is a case in point: the WFP delivered food vouchers to the beneficiary families and allowed them to temporarily solve an urgent humanitarian need.
- Relationships have been developed with institutions and communities in La Guajira and Arauca that would be important to maintain and consolidate in order to achieve a greater impact in future interventions.
- Advocacy and coordinated work with local entities is key to achieving the expected results. The case of joint and coordinated work with some of the agencies of the Local Coordination Team (LCT) in Arauca and La Guajira and with the District Departments of Education in Maicao and Arauquita highlights this.

The main document contains specific lessons learnt for each of the project components.

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## 2. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
CEAs	Community Educational Agents
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
LCT	Local Coordination Team
SMMs	School Motivation Meetings
ICLA	Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance
MIRA	Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WFP	World Food Programme
UCP	Unified Command Post
PNIP	Population in Need of International Protection
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
SRV	Single Registry of Victims
UACRV	Unit of Attention and Comprehensive Reparation for Victims
NUMRD	National Unit for the Management of the Risk of Disasters

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## 3. Introduction

### 3.1. Context: The Humanitarian Crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela Border

The humanitarian crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela border has gone through different dynamics in the last year, imposing additional challenges to state entities and other organisations that have tried to give assistance to the people affected by it. The following is a brief description of the dynamics of the crisis and the needs of the people affected by it. This description aims to provide a context with which to understand the relevance of the project “Protection and Humanitarian Assistance for People Affected by the Humanitarian Crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela border” implemented by the NRC and financed by the SDC.

#### 3.1.1. The Acute Phase of the Crisis: “The Border Began to Exist When it Closed”<sup>1</sup>

In August 2015, the Venezuelan government declared a constitutional state of exception in the state of Táchira, which later extended to Zulia and Apure. These states border the Colombian departments of La Guajira, Norte de Santander, Arauca and Vichada.<sup>2</sup> The Venezuelan government underpinned the declaration of the state of exception with the need to combat “the smuggling of food, medicine and fuel to Colombia, as well as the criminal violence of paramilitary groups”.<sup>3</sup>

Amongst the measures included in the state of exception was the closure and militarisation of border crossings and the deportation of undocumented Colombians.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the border closure reflected the Venezuelan government's People's Liberation Operation (OLP, being its initials in Spanish), that has purpose of “... [safeguarding] the security of Venezuelans against the pretensions of some sectors to import the practice of paramilitarism in order to break the stability and peace in Venezuela”.<sup>5</sup>

As a result of these measures, official figures on 14 October, 2015 indicate that 1,950 Colombians were deported and about 20,000 people returned through informal channels (trails) due to the fear of being deported, being separated from their family members and having their rights violated.<sup>6</sup>

Many of the returnees and deportees had to leave their belongings in Venezuela and arrive in Colombia with urgent humanitarian needs in terms of shelter, food, health, water, sanitation, hygiene, protection and education. The state response to meeting these needs was limited by the lack of institutional capacity and preparation at the local level to address the crisis.

Taking into account the magnitude of the crisis, the Colombian government decreed on 7 September, 2015 a state of emergency in 40 border municipalities within 7 departments.<sup>7</sup> Decree 1770 and subsequent decrees included measures that facilitated family reintegration through the issuance of immigration permits for Venezuelan members of

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with an OCHA official. 30 November, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> OCHA. Border Situation Report No. 12 (15/10/2015).

<sup>3</sup> El Tiempo. Venezuela ratifica el Estado de Excepción en frontera con Colombia. 2 November, 2015.

<http://www.eltiempo.com/mundo/latinoamerica/crisis-en-la-frontera-con-venezuela-ratifican-estado-de-excepcion/16419022>

<sup>4</sup> OCHA. Humanitarian Bulletin. Issue 44. 2015.

<sup>5</sup> El Espectador. Operación de Liberación del Pueblo, “más que plomo al hampa”. 27 August, 2015.

<http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/elmundo/operacion-de-liberacion-del-pueblo-mas-plomo-al-hampa-articulo-582094>

<sup>6</sup> OCHA. Humanitarian Bulletin. Issue 44. 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Presidential Office of the Republic. Decree No. 1770 of 7 September, 2016.

mixed families,<sup>8</sup> as well as the issuance of identity documents, temporary accommodation, food, rent subsidies, transportation, and vaccination amongst others.

Colombian state assistance was concentrated in the department of Norte de Santander, where NUMRD, with the support of other local institutions and non-governmental entities like the NRC, responded to the needs of the people affected by the crisis during the 30 days in which the emergency was decreed. The people attended to were registered by the NUMRD in the SRV, however, this registry was closed as of 23 September, 2015 despite the fact that individual cases of deportation were still being reported.<sup>9</sup> This decision prevents those who return after this date from accessing the exceptional measures established in the decrees for dealing with the crisis.<sup>10</sup>

Despite efforts to address the emergency, many affected people did not receive humanitarian assistance because they entered the country through informal crossings<sup>11</sup>, were housed with friends and relatives, and/or moved to other areas of the country where the emergency was not decreed. According to data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - that during the emergency phase granted transport assistance to people who wanted to move to other cities - the people affected have mainly moved to the departments of Norte de Santander, Santander, Atlántico, Bolívar, Cesar, Risaralda, Magdalena, Cundinamarca, Córdoba, Risaralda and Valle del Cauca.<sup>12</sup>

Given the short period (30 days) during which the emergency was decreed and the gaps in assistance, humanitarian needs of those affected during the acute phase of the emergency persist.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, there are no government programs aimed at meeting the early recovery needs of families who have remained in the country.

### 3.1.2. 2016: Drop-by-Drop Migratory Flow and Early Recovery Needs

During 2016, people affected by the political and economic situation in Venezuela continued to arrive in the country. It has been established that people arriving have different migratory profiles: deported, expelled and returnees, who are also made up of mixed families.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of Venezuelan nationals entering the country.

According to Migration Colombia's figures, between January and July 2016, 124,542 Venezuelans entered Colombia with an average of 17,791 people per month.<sup>15</sup> The number of Venezuelan nationals who entered the country between August and October 2016 - after the border was opened again in August - increased by almost 200%. These figures are purely indicative as they are only records of authorised crossings and do not take into account whether people are just entering to visit or intend to stay.

According to interviews and focus groups carried out with beneficiaries, heads of schools, institutions, NRC staff members and other organisations during the fieldwork in the three

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<sup>8</sup> The concept of mixed families for this evaluation is to be understood as families whose members have different nationalities and migratory status.

<sup>9</sup> OCHA. Humanitarian Bulletin. Issue 44. 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Norwegian Refugee Council. Interim Report for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Project: "Protection and Humanitarian Assistance for People Affected by the Humanitarian Crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela border".

<sup>11</sup> Via interviews with Migration Colombia, WFP, and some teachers in the La Guajira department, it was established that there are more than 180 informal crossings (trails) where people travel daily between the two countries.

<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs. National government actions in regard to assistance for Colombians on the border with Venezuela. <http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/especiales/venezuela/>

<sup>13</sup> Interview with an OCHA official. 1 December, 2016.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Migration Colombia. Monthly Bulletin of Statistics.

[http://migracioncolombia.gov.co/index.php/es/?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=718](http://migracioncolombia.gov.co/index.php/es/?option=com_content&view=article&id=718)

departments (La Guajira, Arauca and Norte de Santander) where the project being evaluated was implemented, the following needs were identified:

Necessity Type	Necessity
<b>Humanitarian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food</li> <li>- Shelter</li> <li>- Basic services</li> <li>- Sanitary units in informal settlements</li> <li>- Health</li> <li>- Clothing</li> <li>- Documentation</li> <li>- Access to education for Venezuelan children</li> </ul>
<b>Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prevention of the trafficking in and recruitment of persons</li> <li>- Prevention of the sexual exploitation of women and minors</li> <li>- Prevention of the generation and diffusion of xenophobic sentiments</li> <li>- Prevention of child labour</li> <li>- Prevention of domestic violence and sexual abuse</li> <li>- Information about the rights of victims</li> </ul>
<b>Early Recovery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Housing</li> <li>- School infrastructure</li> <li>- Access to employment</li> <li>- Psychosocial attention</li> <li>- Validation of studies abroad</li> <li>- Prevention of school absenteeism</li> <li>- Access to education for older adults</li> </ul>

As evidenced by the above table, humanitarian needs persist, however given that many of the affected people have established their residence at the places of reception, the protection risks and early recovery needs are more pressing at this time than in the acute phase of the crisis. For example, most of the adults in the focus groups identified training for employment and income generation as their main needs.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, this population suffers multiple impacts caused by the border crisis which are aggravated in the case of those who are victims of armed conflict, as they are also exposed to the consequences of the rainy season that particularly affects the informal settlements where they are currently living. These multiple impacts cause a loss of resilience.<sup>17</sup>

These needs are aggravated depending on the institutional context of each department. In the case of La Guajira, structural institutional weakness means that humanitarian needs remain unresolved. While in Arauca and Norte de Santander, although there is a greater institutional presence, the dynamics of the armed conflict become an additional risk factor for people arriving in these territories. Finally, the difficulties of accessing employment are more evident in North Santander since Cúcuta is the city with the third highest unemployment rate in the country.<sup>18</sup>

Currently, the only state program in place to serve the people affected by the crisis is the “Colombia Nos Une” [Colombia Unites Us] program administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This program provides accommodation and food for three nights and transportation

<sup>16</sup> Focus groups with male and female beneficiaries in Maicao, Arauca, Villa del Rosario, Cúcuta.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with an OCHA official. 1 December, 2016.

<sup>18</sup> National Administrative Department of Statistics [DANE being its Spanish acronym]. Great Comprehensive Household Survey 2016. October, 2016.  
<https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/estadisticas-por-tema/mercado-laboral/empleo-y-desempleo>

assistance to other areas of the country.<sup>19</sup> Those who are referred to this program must be Colombian, of legal age and have entered the country in the last 12 months.<sup>20</sup> Given the limited resources of the program, the department of Norte de Santander is giving priority to mothers who are heads of family.<sup>21</sup> In the case of La Guajira, resources are no longer available.<sup>22</sup>

As mentioned above, people who arrived after 23 September, 2015 have not been able to access SRV registration, limiting their access to humanitarian assistance and certain state benefits such as the free issue of special admission and permanence permits for spouses and permanent partners of Colombian nationals, procedures that require a registration certificate issued by the UCARV to be presented.<sup>23</sup> This lack of registration created an additional difficulty of not having official figures that would allow the number of people affected during this year, and where they are, to be identified.

Finally, a third scenario is the latent possibility of a massive influx of Venezuelans into Colombian territory because of their country's political and economic instability. An example of this is the border closure decreed by the Venezuelan state on 12 December, 2016. This scenario would be especially worrying given the lack of attention services for the Venezuelan population and the barriers that exist which enable them to access basic rights such as health and education.

### 3.2. Project: Protection and Humanitarian Assistance for People Affected by the Humanitarian Crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela Border

Given the profile and experience of the organisation, the NRC designed and implemented the project "Protection and Humanitarian Assistance for People Affected by the Humanitarian Crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela border" funded by the SDC. The project aimed to improve the protection of the population affected by the humanitarian crisis during the emergency phase.

To address the humanitarian crisis described in the previous section, the project proposed an intervention framework with 3 components: Education in Emergencies, Education, and ICLA. In particular, the project aimed to generate three effects on the beneficiary population through the following activities:

Effect	Activities
<p><u>Effect 1:</u> Children and adolescents affected by the humanitarian crisis at the border have had their basic rights protected and guaranteed during the emergency (Education in Emergencies Component)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survival skills sessions with children and adolescents</li> <li>- Student kits<sup>24</sup> and hygiene kits<sup>25</sup> are delivered to children, adolescents and receiving schools.</li> <li>- Training activities for teachers and educational agents from receiving educational institutions on education issues in emergency contexts.</li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> Interview with a "Colombia Nos Une" official. 30 November, 2016.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with an OCHA official. 1 December, 2016.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with a Migration Colombia official. 23 November, 2016.

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs. National Government actions in regard to assistance for Colombians on the border with Venezuela. <http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/especiales/venezuela/>

<sup>24</sup> According to identified needs, the student kits consist of economic assistance, uniforms or school kits. As mentioned in the project, school kits have been adapted to the cultural identities of the departments in which the project is implemented.

<sup>25</sup> Hygiene kits have been designed according to a gender-based approach to address the different needs of men and women.

**Effect 2:** Out-of-school children and adolescents affected by the humanitarian crisis at the border access education (Education Component)

- Identify the out-of-school children, adolescents and youth affected by the border crisis by conducting censuses.
- Implement the *Programas Puente* [Bridge Programs], through the SMMs methodology, so that out-of-school children and adolescents are linked to the school.
- Delivery to previously out-of-school children and adolescents who are linked to the school, student kits to facilitate their access to and permanence in the school.
- Management and support as the children and adolescents enter regular classrooms or flexible educational models.
- Outreach with the local educational authorities to reduce the access barriers to education and to implement strategies for permanence and teacher allocation.

**Effect 3:** People affected by the humanitarian crisis at the border have accessed their basic rights according to existing programs (ICLA Component)

- Information and counselling sessions about the attention services.
- Legal assistance.
- Training and technical assistance to local authorities and their staff about the attention services for the PNIP and victims of armed conflict.
- Delivery of mobility kits

While the effects and activities planned in the project design were maintained throughout the implementation phase, there were some changes during this time given the difficulties in identifying the beneficiaries<sup>26</sup>, the increased costs of intervention in some areas, and the fact that the NRC was establishing contact with the departments of La Guajira and Arauca for the first time. These circumstances imposed additional logistical and budgetary challenges. The following is a comparison chart of the main changes that occurred during the implementation:<sup>27</sup>

Item	Proposal	Implementation
<b>Beneficiary Population</b>	People who had to move due to the border crisis.	In addition to the people who had to move, the beneficiary population was expanded to the following profiles: <sup>28</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Colombians with refugee status in Venezuela.</li> <li>- Colombians seeking refuge in Venezuela.</li> <li>- Colombian victims of armed conflict who migrated to Venezuela, but never sought refuge.</li> <li>- Venezuelan relatives of Colombians who were forced to come to Colombia because of the persecution in Venezuela.</li> <li>- Colombian economic migrants who returned voluntarily due to the economic situation in Venezuela.</li> <li>- Colombians who depended on the border economy.</li> <li>- Venezuelans who arrived in Colombia in search of access to work, food, medical care and medicines.</li> </ul>
<b>Municipalities Prioritised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>La Guajira</u>: Uribía and Maicao</li> <li>- <u>Arauca</u>: Arauca, Arauquita and Puerto Rondón</li> <li>- <u>Norte de Santander</u>: Tibú, Puerto Santander, Cúcuta, Villa del Rosario and Herrán</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>La Guajira</u>: Uribía, Maicao and Riohacha</li> <li>- <u>Arauca</u>: Arauca and Arauquita</li> <li>- <u>Norte de Santander</u>: Tibú, Puerto Santander, Cúcuta, Villa del Rosario and Herrán</li> </ul>

<sup>26</sup> In multiple interviews NRC officials stated that one of the main challenges of the project was the actual identification of the population. In many cases the affected people are without support networks which would enable them to settle somewhere, making them a 'floating' population. Furthermore, due to the time that elapsed between the submission of the project and its approval, the contact information was no longer up to date and mechanisms to actively search for the population had to be implemented.

<sup>27</sup> Appendix No. 2 contains graphs showing the implementation of the project by departments; reference is made to the number of beneficiaries and the number of school, hygiene and mobility kits that were delivered.

<sup>28</sup> Norwegian Refugee Council. Project modifications document.

<b>Activities</b>  Which components will be implemented in each department is not specified.		<u>La Guajira:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The three components of the project were implemented.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Education in Emergencies component was implemented with limitations on teacher training activities and survival skills sessions.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, there were no Community Education Agents (CEAs).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> ICLA concentrated its support towards the Municipal Representatives' Offices of Maicao and Riohacha. However, there was no staff training process.</li> </ul>
		<u>Arauca:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Education in Emergencies component was implemented in Arauquita and teacher training activities were carried out with only one of the prioritised receiving entities (El Vigía Indigenous Education Centre).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> ICLA was implemented in the municipality of Arauca. It concentrated its support towards the Municipal Representative's Office of Arauca. However, there was no process of staff training.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Education component was not implemented.</li> </ul>
		<u>Norte de Santander:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The three components of the project were implemented.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Education in Emergencies focused on the development of survival skills for children and adolescents through the training of CEAs, with student volunteers of the Universidad Simón Bolívar in Cúcuta. Kits were not given to all beneficiaries as they were delivered to them during the acute phase of the emergency prior to the start of the project.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In Ocaña, ICLA advanced a process of training officials in the framework of a diploma.</li> </ul>

According to the beneficiaries report, as of 31 October, 2016, the project has provided assistance to a total of 5,955 people, corresponding to 111% of the target beneficiaries that the project proposed to assist. Of the total project beneficiaries, 3,510 (59%) received services related to effect 1 of the project, such as student or hygiene kits, or they participated in survival skills sessions. For their part, 848 (14%) of the beneficiaries have received services related to the effect 2. Of these, 800 students were identified in the out-of-school students' census, 518 also participated in SMMs, and 100 have received school kits. Finally, 1,499 (25%) beneficiaries have received information, counselling or legal assistance and 98 local authorities' staff (2%) have been trained. Of the total beneficiaries attended to as of 31 October, 2016, 3,037 (51%) are located in Norte de Santander, 2,067 (35%) in La Guajira, and 851 (14%) in Arauca. Additionally, 3,265 (55%) of the beneficiaries are women, while the remaining 2,690 (45%) are men.

### 3.3. Purpose of the Evaluation

The evaluation of the project "Protection and Humanitarian Assistance for People Affected by the Humanitarian Crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela border" aims to obtain an independent review of the pertinence of the project design, the coherence of the actions implemented in relation to the humanitarian crisis, as well as the impact of the project on the lives of the beneficiary population. The analysis of the findings was carried out from a

<sup>29</sup> These changes in the implementation will be explained in detail in the Findings section.

lessons learnt approach which will contribute to the creation of good practices for the design and implementation of similar projects in the future.

Specifically, the evaluation has three main objectives:

1. Assess the relevance of the three project effects in regard to the needs of the affected population, the local context and NRC policies.
2. Analyse the extent to which the project's actions were implemented as planned and the relationship between the activities carried out and the outputs obtained.
3. Evaluate the impact of the project on the situation of the children, adolescents and adults affected by the humanitarian crisis and benefited by the project.

In order to achieve the proposed objectives, three evaluation questions were asked with their respective sub-questions, which will be developed in the Findings section.

The evaluation analysed the implementation of the project during the period from 15 December 2015 to 15 October 2016. The findings of the evaluation will contribute to the creation of good practices for the implementation of similar projects in the future, will serve as an input for NRC strategic planning, and will inform the formulation of a proposal that the NRC will submit to the SDC for a possible next phase of the project.

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## 4. Methodology

The evaluation of the project had a qualitative approach taking into account the purpose of the evaluation and the evaluation questions formulated. The methods used included document analysis, in-depth interviews and focus groups with various stakeholders related to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

The selection of participants for the interviews and focus groups was carried out following what the literature has called convenience sampling. This means that the participants were not chosen randomly or via using probability, but rather based on criteria such as ease of contact, ease of access to the geographical areas in which they are located, and how the project was implemented. The focus group participants were selected by NRC staff in the Northeast area, based on the beneficiary profiles established by the evaluation team.

A total of 43 in-depth interviews and 22 focus groups were conducted,<sup>30</sup> including the following:<sup>31</sup>

- 4 interviews with NRC national level staff members.
- 21 interviews with staff from the Northeast area, including managers, coordinators, officers, assistants, consultants, mentors and enumerators.
- 4 focus groups with children and adolescents, 3 with teachers, educational agents and/or school principals, and 3 interviews with principals from beneficiary schools of effect 1 in the 3 departments.
- 7 focus groups with children and adolescents beneficiaries of effect 2 in La Guajira and Norte de Santander.
- 7 focus groups and an interview with beneficiaries of effect 3 in the 3 departments.
- 14 interviews with allies in the 3 departments, including officials from the District Departments of Education, UNHCR, OCHA, Migration Colombia, and Municipal Representatives' Offices amongst others, and 1 focal group with the LCT of La Guajira.

The sample included 135 beneficiaries of the different project components who participated in the focus groups and interviews conducted in the three departments.

The document analysis included the narrative description of the project, the logical framework and its modifications, as well as the beneficiaries' reports and the mission report prepared by the SDC. Likewise, the program documents of the project components were analysed, including the policies of the ICLA programs and NRC Education, as well as SMMs and Education in Emergencies documents. Population characterisation formats and measurement instruments used by ICLA management and the out-of-school census format, as well as the reports for the planning of the SMMs for the Education component, were also reviewed.

The notes taken from the interviews and focus groups were systematised and loaded into the NVivo qualitative data analysis program. In this program we created 14 nodes of analysis, which include issues relevant to the evaluation questions and/or common themes

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<sup>30</sup> The interviews and focus groups were carried out using the instruments included in Appendix No. 3. These instruments served as a guide for the activity and were adapted to the specific interviewee as well as the dynamic of the interview or focus group. Initially a survey was designed for youth and adult beneficiaries but after the first application, the evaluation team decided to suspend it because it was very complex for the beneficiaries.

<sup>31</sup> Appendix No. 7 includes a complete list of interviewees and focus groups carried out.

that we identified in the fieldwork.<sup>32</sup> The notes of each interview and focus group were coded using these analysis nodes, which allows access to or analysis of all the existing references for each node in a consolidated way, as well as being able to filter them by effect or department.<sup>33</sup>

Extensive data collection, the ability to interview beneficiaries, allies and NRC staff members, in the 3 departments for the 3 effects,<sup>34</sup> facilitated us to identify and triangulate trends, common themes and findings both during data collection and analysis. This allowed us to have a detailed and comprehensive view of the project - including its design, implementation, monitoring and impact - which the findings presented below are based on.

Despite the efforts made by the evaluation team and the NRC, it is important to recognise that the inability to access all project implementation sites and/or all beneficiaries<sup>35</sup> was a limiting factor for the project's evaluation. This is because there may be implementation challenges, successful experiences or cases, or positive or negative impacts on the beneficiaries, which the evaluation team has not been able to gain knowledge of.

Likewise, the absence of a baseline on the beneficiaries and results of project interest constitutes a limitation to knowing the true impact of the project. This is because, for most of the expected results, it is not possible to verify objectively whether the quality of life of the beneficiaries has actually improved, and whether that improvement that can be identified is directly related to the project activities or to other factors of context or the individual. However, we understand that this limitation is due to the nature of the emergency and the changing circumstances between the formulation and implementation of the project.

In any case, as will be discussed later, the methodology applied and the triangulation carried out allowed us to identify trends about the three evaluation questions that reliably reflect the design, implementation and impact of the project.

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<sup>32</sup> These nodes were: coordination with national level, project design, gender-based approach, donor expectations, impact, implementation, implementation-joint work, implementation-outreach, lessons learnt, logical framework, monitoring, needs and crisis impacts, participation, and prioritisation.

<sup>33</sup> Appendix No. 4 contains examples of the NVivo analysis carried out

<sup>34</sup> With the exception of Arauca where effect 2 was not implemented.

<sup>35</sup> Particularly in the absence of probability sampling.

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## 5. Findings

Each evaluation question was analysed using the following scale to measure accomplishment:

- Achieved broadly with few exceptions.
- Moderately achieved: a combination of strengths and weaknesses or gaps.
- Partially achieved: a lot of weaknesses and gaps.
- Not achieved: no strengths evident.

The analysis of this scale was done using the indicators and/or criteria of each sub-question included in the evaluation matrix (Appendix No. 5) as an input.

### 5.1. Evaluation Question No. 1: Is the project relevant and coherent?

*Partially achieved: a lot of weaknesses and gaps.*

#### **5.1.1. Is the project adequate to respond to the local context and the priority needs of the beneficiaries?**

*The project addresses some of the priority needs of the population. However, given the changes in context and mobility of the population, some of the planned activities did not meet their needs at the time of implementation.*

As mentioned in the introduction, the needs of the population affected by the border crisis are many and varied. Amongst these needs, the project design focused on attending to three areas: access to protective spaces, access to education and obtaining information, counselling and legal assistance, which facilitates access to their rights, including access to humanitarian aid in the case of victims of armed conflict, or access to the subsidised health system and other services offered by the state.

However, in the case of activities corresponding to effect 1 of the project, the way in which the activities and the indicators are presented in the project's logical framework, does not allow the need to access protective spaces to be fully addressed. This is because it is possible that, as the activities and indicators are presented, some children and adolescents who are beneficiaries of the project only receive student or hygiene kits, and their school receives a sports or teaching kit bag, but do not benefit from survival skills workshops or teacher training activities, which are more directly related to the creation of protective spaces for children and adolescents.

*The design partially factored in institutional weaknesses and levels of vulnerability of departments.*

In the case of the components that were implemented in the three departments, the project in its formulation proposed that the same activities be carried out in all three departments. However, the NRC staff at the national and regional level who were interviewed acknowledge that, for example, institutions are weaker and vulnerability levels are higher in La Guajira than in the other two departments. In this regard, two NRC staff members from the national level expressed that making an impact in La Guajira requires a larger scale investment, affirmations that were confirmed during the meeting with the Riohacha LCT.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> LCT Riohacha focus group. 24 November, 2016.

These statements indicate that the project's actions for the department of La Guajira could have a different emphasis than the actions proposed for the other departments. In particular, greater emphasis could be placed on activities aimed at improving the institutional capacity of the District Departments of Education and other local institutions, or on other actions that address the priority needs of the population affected by the border crisis.

#### **5.1.2. Does the project propose to attend the population most affected and vulnerable by the humanitarian crisis?**

*Prioritised municipalities show high levels of impact from the crisis. However, due to the lack of official figures, it is not possible to determine if they are the most affected.*

The majority of municipalities where the intervention was planned, correspond to border municipalities where the emergency was declared by the national government in September 2016.<sup>37</sup> Other municipalities such as Riohacha in La Guajira, or Ocaña in Norte de Santander were identified as recipient municipalities of returnees once the acute phase of the emergency had passed.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, interviews with staff from other international organisations and with other local allies in the three departments confirm that the places where the intervention was planned, correspond to municipalities that are highly affected by the border crisis and lack, at different levels, adequate institutional capacity to deal with the crisis.<sup>39</sup>

However, given the border permeability and the mobility of the affected population,<sup>40</sup> data are not available to determine which municipalities are actually most affected by the border crisis, in order to then compare them with the municipalities prioritised by the project.

*The affected population presents high and structural levels of vulnerability.*

Those affected by the border crisis who returned or resided in the prioritised municipalities had and maintained high levels of vulnerability, as confirmed by focus groups with beneficiaries and interviews with local allies.<sup>41</sup> People living in Colombia, who depend or depended on the border economy, lack other income-generating opportunities and even before the crisis, were a vulnerable population. Most deportees or returnees lost their assets in Venezuela and settled in areas of extreme vulnerability, many of them in informal settlements. Venezuelans with unlawful presence in the country do not have the resources to access visas that allow them to support themselves and cannot access state services, except for urgent health care. Finally, the majority of the affected population in these municipalities lack support networks or sources of income to support them.

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<sup>37</sup> Presidential Office of the Republic. New measures in taxes, housing, employment and trade to alleviate situation of those affected by border crisis. [http://wp.presidencia.gov.co/Noticias/2015/Septiembre/Paginas/20150916\\_05-Nuevas-medidas-impuestos-vivienda-empleo-comercio-aliviar-situacion-afectados-crisis-fronteriza.aspx](http://wp.presidencia.gov.co/Noticias/2015/Septiembre/Paginas/20150916_05-Nuevas-medidas-impuestos-vivienda-empleo-comercio-aliviar-situacion-afectados-crisis-fronteriza.aspx)

<sup>38</sup> NRC staff interview 21 November, 2016 and the document "Modification to the project SDC NRC".

<sup>39</sup> Riohacha LCT focus group held on 24 November; interview with Pastoral Social (Caritas) staff in Maicao held on 23 November; meetings with UNHCR officials in Arauca and Norte de Santander held on 29 November and 2 December respectively; meetings with OCHA officials in Arauca and Norte de Santander held on 1 and 2 December, respectively, amongst others.

<sup>40</sup> Interviews with NRC staff and assistants, with UNDP and Migration Colombia staff and with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other local allies, report on the mobility of the population. This mobility occurs in two ways: people who return to Venezuela, and people who are in border municipalities for some time and then move to other areas within the same municipalities, nearby municipalities, or to more distant municipalities where they have support networks or expect to find better job opportunities.

<sup>41</sup> Interviews with Pastoral Social (Caritas) in Maicao, held on 23 November; focus group with the Riohacha LCT held on 24 November; interviews with OCHA officials from Arauca and Norte de Santander held on 1 and 2 December, respectively; and other local allies in Norte de Santander.

### 5.1.3. Has the project's logical framework been designed in a coherent, clear, precise, measurable and verifiable manner?

*The effects, indicators and activities are partly coherent.*

The document analysis shows that there is coherence between what is described in the narrative of the project and what is reflected in the logical framework and its modifications. Likewise, it is evident that the activities, indicators and outputs corresponding to effect 2 of the project are coherent.

As for effect 1 of the project, there is evidence of a lack of coherence between the effect, and the indicators and activities. The expected effect of this project component is that children and adolescents affected by the border crisis have their basic rights during the emergency protected and guaranteed. The effect does not distinguish what actual basic rights the project is seeking to guarantee, making it difficult to assess the coherence of the effect with the indicators and activities. Additionally, in the modified logical framework, for the purpose of the indicator, a protective space is understood as the beneficiaries accessing two of the components: student or hygiene kits, survival skills workshops, teacher training or school kits. In the case of children and adolescents who would only benefit from student, hygiene and school kits, it is not clear how they would ensure their protection in terms of the proposed effect.

Effect 3 shows a similar incoherence. According to this effect, the beneficiaries of the project's activities can access their basic rights. Nonetheless, as with effect 1, it is not specific to which basic rights the effect refers, so it is not possible to assess the coherence of the effect with the indicators and activities.

*Indicators are measurable and verifiable. However, some effect indicators correspond to output indicators.*

In general it is observed that the effect and output indicators are measurable and verifiable for the three effects, particularly after the project's logical framework was modified. However, for effects 1 and 3, the effect indicators proposed in the logical framework, correspond to output indicators rather than to effect indicators.<sup>42</sup> Both indicators refer to beneficiaries receiving project services (e.g., participating in information sessions or workshops, receiving kits, etc.), but a change in the status of beneficiaries is not being measured.

An effect indicator for effect 1 could be, for example, the percentage of children and adolescents who have understood the key messages of the workshops, or the percentage of children and adolescents who feel more secure or protected after the intervention. In the case of effect 3, an effect indicator could be the percentage of people who demonstrate that they know and/or have used attention services to access their rights, or the percentage of beneficiaries who have been able to access their rights in a certain time after the intervention. In both cases, the effect indicators would be more robust if they were established as a comparison before and after the intervention (e.g., change in the percentage of people who demonstrate knowing and/or using attention services).

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<sup>42</sup> A result or effect is "the state or condition of the target population or the social conditions that the program expects to have changed" (Peter Rossi et al., *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*, Sage Publications, 2004, p. 204). For example, a change in the motivation of the children or adolescents, or an improvement in the students' school performance. On the other hand, an output corresponds to the services delivered by the project, such as having participated in a workshop or having received kits. The purpose of any project or program is that the activities and outputs achieve an expected result or effect, but there is no guarantee that this will be the case, and it is therefore important to distinguish clearly the two types of indicators in the logical framework.

*Due to the circumstances of the emergency and the mobility of the population there was no direct participation of the affected population in the project design, although in some cases there has been indirect participation through the MIRA.*

In conducting the interviews with both national and regional level NRC staff and beneficiaries, no evidence was found of direct involvement in the identification of needs or in the design of activities and components of the project by those affected. However, in the case of Norte de Santander, the NRC team had the opportunity to know firsthand the needs of the returnee population during their participation in the acute phase of the emergency and in the support given in the UCP.<sup>43</sup>

In the case of Arauca, interviews with staff from the Northeast area reveal that the Flash MIRA Report was used for the needs analysis of this department. This report was conducted between 30 September and 2 October, 2015,<sup>44</sup> and was based on the information collected by participating organisations in 16 interviews conducted in the field, following the established methodology for this effect.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, the NRC has participated in the preparation of the MIRA reports that were carried out during 2016 in Arauquita<sup>46</sup> and in the south of La Guajira<sup>47</sup>, which also contain extensive data collected through interviews and focus groups.

*The project design partially addresses a differential approach.*

The design of effect 1 addresses a gender-based approach in that it ensures that hygiene kits contain differentiated elements for each gender. Likewise, this effect takes into account the needs of the indigenous population attended to, as it proposes that the school and hygiene kits will be adapted to the cultural characteristics of the beneficiaries, particularly in the case of the department of La Guajira. Apart from these two cases, the design of the project does not contemplate other differential actions for gender or ethnicity.

## 5.2. Evaluation Question No. 2: Did the project implementation follow the original planning?

*Moderately achieved: a combination of strengths and weaknesses or gaps*

### 5.2.1. Did the project attend the target population initially defined?

*The project served the target population initially defined, taking into account the different migratory profiles.*

As explained in the introduction, during project implementation the profiles of the beneficiary population were expanded so as to include Colombians and Venezuelans who had to move to Colombia because of the crisis, as well as the people who derived their

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<sup>43</sup> Interviews with staff at the national level and with the managers and coordinators of the Northeast area between 16 November and 6 December, 2016.

<sup>44</sup> Humanitarian Team Colombia. Colombia - Flash MIRA Report. The situation of the returnee population from Venezuela in Arauca, Arauquita and Saravena (Arauca). [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/061015\\_flash\\_mira\\_arauca\\_final.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/061015_flash_mira_arauca_final.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> [https://wiki.umaic.org/wiki/Multi-cluster/Sector\\_Initial\\_and\\_Rapid\\_Assessment\\_\(MIRA\)](https://wiki.umaic.org/wiki/Multi-cluster/Sector_Initial_and_Rapid_Assessment_(MIRA))

<sup>46</sup> Humanitarian Team Colombia. Colombia - MIRA Final Report: Multiple Impacts Informal Settlements El Bosque, El Portal del Llano and Simón Bolívar, Municipality of Arauquita (Arauca) 11/08/2016. [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/110816\\_mira\\_multiafectacion\\_arauquita\\_vf.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/110816_mira_multiafectacion_arauquita_vf.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> Humanitarian Team Colombia. Colombia - Final Report MIRA Rural District Las Colonias, Township of Conejo of the Municipality of Fonseca; Rural District Potrero Grande of the Municipality of Villanueva and Townships Cañaverales and Los Haticos of the Municipality of San Juan del Cesar (La Guajira) 07/07/2016. [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/07.07.06\\_informe\\_final\\_mira\\_sur\\_de\\_la\\_guajira.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/07.07.06_informe_final_mira_sur_de_la_guajira.pdf)

livelihood from the border economy. The expansion of the beneficiary profiles was a success of the project, since it allowed us to assist a greater number of people with serious humanitarian needs and contributed to making the different impacts caused by the border crisis visible.

This decision was especially relevant for the Venezuelan population who find themselves in an unlawful immigration situation, who cannot receive health care unless it is a medical emergency, cannot access education without a student visa and cannot work without a work visa.<sup>48</sup> This population face greater barriers to meeting their basic needs and since most of them have very limited resources, they cannot afford the necessary procedures to regulate their migratory situation. Thus, the assistance given by the NRC allowed them to have their basic needs met such as food through the delivery of mobility kits and access to health through counselling and legal assistance.

An example of the importance of assisting this population is the case of one of the Venezuelan participants in the focus groups, who arrived in Colombia pregnant and had contracted the Zika virus. Given her unlawful immigration status, she was denied medical care and pre-natal checks. Thanks to the NRC legal assistance, she was able to access medical services through the filing of a writ for the protection of constitutional rights (*tutela*). Furthermore, the SMMs allow children to participate in safe environments and in some cases the outreach with the educational institutions allows them to be educated while they solve their migratory situation.<sup>49</sup>

With respect to the municipalities in which the project was implemented, it is important to note that most of them were included in the proposal, except in the case of Arauca, where Puerto Rendón was excluded. Consequently, taking into account the same considerations that were presented on this issue in evaluation question no. 1, it can be said that the project was implemented in the municipalities most affected by the crisis and with weak presence and institutional capacity.

#### **5.2.2. Did the activities implemented correspond to the activities included in the logical framework of the project, and its content respond to the needs of the beneficiaries?**

*The activities implemented corresponded to the activities planned in the logical framework and partially responded to the needs of the beneficiaries.*

In general terms, the output indicators stated in the logical framework for each of the project components were met. The project activities responded to humanitarian and protective needs such as documentation, education and information on rights directly, and indirectly to issues of food and access to health. However, as explained in the introduction, the implementation of the project was not carried out uniformly in all departments, potentially limiting the scope of the expected results.

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<sup>48</sup> A student visa costs approximately \$67 USD and a work and resident visa for the spouse, \$400 USD. Interview with a staff member of the Ombudsman's Office. 30 November, 2016.

<sup>49</sup> The schooling of Venezuelan children is feasible when one of their parents is a Colombian national or if they were born in Colombia when one of their parents resided legally in the country. However, when naturalisation is not possible, the only way is to apply for a student visa which, because of its cost, is very difficult to acquire for some families. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Handbook on Colombian nationality. Bogotá, 2010.  
[http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/sites/default/files/tramites\\_servicios/nacionalidadpdf.pdf](http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/sites/default/files/tramites_servicios/nacionalidadpdf.pdf)

## Effect 1 – Education in Emergencies

In the departments of La Guajira and Arauca student kits, hygiene kits, educational bags and sports kit bags were delivered. However, due to time and resource constraints some difficulties were encountered in conducting the survival skills sessions. In some cases, the sessions were carried out in the context of delivering of kits, which limited their duration,<sup>50</sup> and in some schools, the spaces were not adequate enough to carry out the session. For example, children and adolescent participants in a focus group in Maicao expressed that it was difficult for them to grasp the topics developed in this session because it was conducted on the school's soccer field and both the primary and secondary school students were present. The fact that it was such a large group and done outdoors made it difficult for them to listen and concentrate.

In these same departments there were difficulties in teacher training. Teacher training is planned as two full day sessions with subsequent repeat sessions with students. However, in the case of La Guajira, due to the distances and the costs of the missions, the training sessions had to be done two days in a row and it was not possible for teachers to carry out the homework activities.<sup>51</sup> For the same reasons, in the case of Arauca, only the teachers of the El Vigía Indigenous Education Centre<sup>52</sup> - one of the three prioritised institutions - were trained and an attempt was made to promote the training of CEAs in another institution, but it is not clear that they carried out activities with the children and adolescents.

In the case of Norte de Santander there was greater emphasis on the development of survival skills through the training of CEAs, who had the possibility of working with the children and adolescents for a longer period. The CEAs were student volunteers from the Universidad Simón Bolívar who took the opportunity to practice and increase their professional skills. From the analysis of the focus groups with children and adolescents who worked with the CEAs,<sup>53</sup> it can be concluded that this strategy has a greater impact on the creation of safe behaviours, since it is a lengthier intervention that allows the children to grasp the message and put it into practice. However, taking into account that the CEAs have some degree of autonomy to design the plan of each session,<sup>54</sup> it is not very clear that all the children and adolescents were working on the same issues, which can generate differentiated impacts on the beneficiary population. The teacher training was concentrated in Villa del Rosario.

In terms of content, it is important to note that the NRC's "Education in the Acute Phase of an Emergency" handbook for teachers and CEA provides key content, assistance strategies and clear pedagogical activities for working with children and adolescents. While the handbook is intended for a context of armed conflict, the strategies and tools it presents may be applicable to other types of emergencies. This handbook provides general guidelines to both NRC staff as well as teachers and CEAs about the topics to work on in the survival skills sessions. In addition, the project team and CEAs conducted an initial needs assessment with children and adolescents to define the issues to be developed in the survival skills sessions.<sup>55</sup> These tools contributed to the activities which meant that

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<sup>50</sup> Interview with a NRC staff member. 23 November, 2016.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Interview with a NRC staff member. 2 December, 2016.

<sup>53</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, Colegio Luis Manuel Castro. Villa del Rosario, Norte de Santander. 30 November, 2016.

<sup>54</sup> It is important to note that the sessions planned by the CEAs are reviewed by NRC staff to ensure the relevance of the topics and activities to be developed in the session. However, from the focus group with CEAs conducted on 29 November, 2016, it was concluded that each group worked on different themes and activities with the group assigned. These may be relevant, but by being different, they may have a differentiated and in some cases limited impact on the beneficiary population.

<sup>55</sup> Interview with a NRC staff member. 2 December, 2016.

they were able to respond to the particular needs of the beneficiaries. However, given the time and budget constraints previously mentioned, it was not possible to use them in all educational institutions prioritised by the project in the departments of Arauca and Norte de Santander, which limited the scope of the expected results.

With regard to school kits, hygiene kits, the educational bag and the sports kit bag, both the children and teachers expressed in the focus groups and interviews<sup>56</sup> that their delivery was very timely as they helped mitigate the parents' lack of resources to acquire school supplies and they also represented working tools for teachers and CEAs. They emphasised the quality of the materials and the backpacks and also commented that the kits could contain more notebooks (as secondary school students and adolescents study more subjects) and also a book to encourage the habit of reading.<sup>57</sup>

In the case of the hygiene kits, in order to address the age-based differential approach, it would be important for the kits to include shampoo and deodorant. Considering the number of students from the prioritised institutions, the number of sports kit bags and pedagogical bags delivered was insufficient. Furthermore, teachers expressed concern<sup>58</sup> about the response of the children and adolescents who did not receive kits, especially in educational communities where there is widespread lack of resources. According to them, the differential treatment can cause difficulties amongst students, so in some institutions they chose to distribute the contents of the kits amongst all students. For its part, the NRC team implemented strategies such as the inclusion of all school children in recreational and training activities in order to mitigate the impact on those who did not receive kits.

Finally, the school principals and teachers of two of the priority schools in La Guajira and Arauca<sup>59</sup> expressed that, while they appreciated the materials given to the school and the students, there are other more pressing needs in terms of school infrastructure and equipment (for example, the adequacy of the kitchens and the lack of acceleration programs for older students).

## Effect 2 – Education

The Education component was implemented in the departments of La Guajira and Norte de Santander and included: (i) the carrying out of censuses to identify out-of-school children and adolescents affected by the border crisis; (ii) the development of SMMs; (iii) delivery of school kits and other supports; (iv) working with and supporting mentors as children and adolescents enter into a regular classroom or flexible educational models.

Whilst conducting censuses, the established target of identifying 800 out-of-school children and adolescents was met.<sup>60</sup> However, during the census, there were some drawbacks that were efficiently circumvented by the project team. First, as explained above, given the 'floating' nature of the population affected by the crisis, there were difficulties in identifying the children and adolescents with the project profile, which implied a greater effort by the enumerators to cover different areas of the prioritised municipalities and more time conducting the censuses.<sup>61</sup> In the case of Norte de Santander, the census was carried out

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<sup>56</sup> Children and adolescents focus groups; teacher focus groups; and interviews with school principals in Maicao, La Guajira and Villa del Rosario, Norte de Santander.

<sup>57</sup> Children and adolescents focus groups Maicao, La Guajira and Villa del Rosario, Norte de Santander; interview with a NRC staff member. 23 November, 2016.

<sup>58</sup> Teacher focus group Villa del Rosa, Norte de Santander and interviews with teachers, principals and the District Department of Education in Arauquita.

<sup>59</sup> Teacher focus group and interviews with school principals in Maicao, Norte de Santander and Arauquita, Arauca.

<sup>60</sup> Norwegian Refugee Council. Beneficiaries Report to 31 October, 2016. Project: "Protection and Humanitarian Assistance for People Affected by the Humanitarian Crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela border".

<sup>61</sup> Enumerator interviews, La Guajira and Norte de Santander.

before the start of the project, which means that the contact data were no longer valid at the time of the SMMs, which in turn involved an additional effort because the enumerators had to carry out an active search.<sup>62</sup> In order to mitigate these difficulties and the security risks in certain sectors, community leaders were contacted to provide support in entering neighbourhoods and helped with the identification of the population. This strategy meant that a larger number of families participated in the census; people can be distrustful of this type of activity because it creates false expectations or because they believe they are related to political issues.<sup>63</sup>

The document analysis of the census format and the systematisation matrix shows that the formats used have clear and concise questions that allow the collection of the necessary information. Furthermore, they include questions related to the effects of the armed conflict. During the systematisation, the number of out-of-school children who would potentially benefit from the SMMs was also clearly identified. Nonetheless, one of the enumerators<sup>64</sup> considered that the space constraints in the needs and allocation section did not allow him to include all relevant information. Also the format does not include questions with a gender-based approach.

With regard to the implementation of the SMMs, the beneficiaries participating in the focus groups<sup>65</sup> agreed that they enjoy these spaces and highlighted the learning acquired during them. Nevertheless, they expressed some logistical disadvantages that affect meetings being able to be carried out, such as the conditions of the meeting places: many of them do not have enough tables and chairs to work, are not accessible when it rains, are far away, or are in areas with security risks.<sup>66</sup> Likewise, the sessions are not carried out on the same day of the week, which prevents them from attending due to lack of knowledge and planning.<sup>67</sup> The NRC promoted actions to mitigate these situations through the establishment of agreements with schools to use the facilities at the end of the school day, covering the transportation costs of the children living in remote areas and the supervision of mentors.<sup>68</sup> One of the mentors in Maicao considers that holding the meetings in educational institutions is key to motivating the children and adolescents to return to the school "since they can have a more tangible experience".<sup>69</sup>

In relation to the topics that were discussed during the meetings, the beneficiaries considered that they were taught to relate better to family members, their community and the environment. During the meetings, activities were carried out to generate trust and issues such as conflict resolution, the environment and human rights were developed.<sup>70</sup> There are reports for each of the sessions that specify the objectives to be achieved and the topics to be addressed. These reports have standardised contents but additionally allow the mentors to adapt the activities according to the context and the characteristics of the groups with which they working.

With regard to content, young people<sup>71</sup> - taking into account their stage of development - insisted that issues such as sexual education, prevention of drug use and attention

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<sup>62</sup> Interview with a NRC staff member. 1 December, 2016.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Interviews with the enumerators, Riohacha. 23 November, 2016.

<sup>65</sup> Focus groups with children and adolescents Riohacha and Maicao, La Guajira; and Cúcuta and Villa del Rosario, Norte de Santander.

<sup>66</sup> Focus groups with children and adolescents Riohacha and Maicao, La Guajira.

<sup>67</sup> Focus groups with children and adolescents Cúcuta and Villa del Rosario, Norte de Santander.

<sup>68</sup> Interviews with a NRC staff member. 21 November and 1 December, 2016.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with a mentor, Maicao. 23 November, 2016.

<sup>70</sup> Interviews with a NRC staff member. 21 November and 1 December, 2016 and document analysis of the reports.

<sup>71</sup> Focus groups with children and adolescents Riohacha and Maicao, La Guajira; and Cúcuta and Villa del Rosario, Norte de Santander.

services for dealing with domestic violence and sexual abuse be included. Similarly, the mentors<sup>72</sup> indicated that they require more training and tools to identify and activate attention services in cases of child abuse and domestic violence. Finally, both the beneficiaries and the mentors expressed that it is very important to link the parents of the families to the meetings because their children staying in school (or not), very much depends on their understanding of the importance of education.

To meet these needs, the NRC has reports on the issue of gender which were not implemented in this project as they are under review by NRC gender experts. Reports of many topics will be reviewed again next year and new topics related to school life will be added. It is hoped that the gender-related reports will be implemented.<sup>73</sup> Also, the NRC staff recognise the need to strengthen the training of mentors.

On the other hand, the support of the mentors in the schooling process has been determinant to achieving the results of the project. The vast majority of the participants in the SMMs are enrolled for the 2017 school year and for those people who were not in the meetings, direct schooling was carried out. However, on the other hand, as mentioned in the introduction, the main barrier to schooling is that the children and adolescents born in Venezuela lack documentation. This is particularly worrying in the case of those who cannot be naturalised because they have no family ties with the country. In addition to the impossibility of accessing the school, the concern arises as to whether or not to promote the participation of these children in the meetings, as they could generate false expectations.<sup>74</sup>

Finally, the delivery of educational supports such as the school kits, uniforms and enrolment payments has facilitated the process of enrolling children with very limited resources. The outreach advanced by the NRC to the Maicao District Department of Education is noteworthy as it resulted in the cancellation of the cost of enrolment fees for the beneficiaries of the project.<sup>75</sup> The activities of the education program include monitoring the permanence of the beneficiaries in educational institutions. However, due to the project's implementation being conducted within a short time frame, it was not possible to systematically follow up in all cases.

### **Effect 3 – ICLA**

Information and counselling workshops were held in all three departments on attention services for victims of armed conflict and people affected by the crisis.<sup>76</sup> Legal assistance was also provided in matters of documentation, health, receiving declarations about impacts caused by the armed conflict, access to the Single Registry of Victims, humanitarian assistance and compensation provided for in the victims' law.<sup>77</sup>

The beneficiaries<sup>78</sup> reported that the information days were held at times in which they were able to attend and in appropriate places. They expressed that, thanks to these events, they have a clearer understanding of their rights and the institutions that they could go to. In addition, the fact that staff and consultants can access the "Vivanto" system of the UCARV is highlighted as a plus of the project, as this allows them to access the information immediately and have a clear explanation of the status of their case. Initially the content of

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<sup>72</sup> Interviews with mentors, Maicao and Riohacha. 23 November, 2016.

<sup>73</sup> Interview with a NRC staff member. 2 December, 2016.

<sup>74</sup> Interviews with NRC staff members. 2 December, 2016.

<sup>75</sup> Interview with a NRC staff member. 21 November, 2016.

<sup>76</sup> Interviews with NRC staff members. 22 and 28 November, 2016.

<sup>77</sup> Focus groups with adults, Maicao, Cúcuta and Villa del Rosario.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

the information days was focused on victims' issues, however, as the needs of people who did not qualify as victims were identified, the attention services for documentation and access to health were incorporated into the sessions.<sup>79</sup>

Staff training activities and outreach were not implemented uniformly in all three departments. The training on the impacts caused by the border crisis was carried out as a diploma directed towards staff from different municipalities in the Catatumbo region. Some of those participating in the diploma<sup>80</sup> mentioned that the contents of the border crisis module were very useful for raising awareness and bringing them closer to the subject. However, time was very limited to be able to cover all content. Reviewing the presentation made on this topic, it was recognised that the contents were concentrated on refugee issues, but did not include the services that exist for obtaining documentation and other legalisation processes.

In the departments of Arauca and La Guajira, the capacity of the Municipal Representatives' Offices in Arauca, Maicao and Riohacha to provide attention was fortified as they are considered the institution that people most frequently go to to request help. However, the transfer of knowledge and capacity is not clear with this strategy. The municipal representatives and staff of the Municipal Representatives' Offices interviewed expressed<sup>81</sup> that they need to continue to count on the support of the project because of the limited human resources they have, but when asked about the needs of the population affected by the border and the role of the Municipal Representative's Office to attend to those needs, they do not have deep knowledge and are not very aware of the situation. Further, they do not seem to have specialised knowledge on the subject of victims, much less on attention services for people affected by the crisis, and they do not show great interest in the training processes.

Finally, the outreach work is more visible in the department of Norte de Santander where the NRC promoted working groups to consolidate attention services for people affected by the border crisis and registration days for children and adolescents in rural areas of Cúcuta that had entered the country by informal crossings.<sup>82</sup> It is not the same case in Arauca and La Guajira, where there is greater institutional weakness and the NRC does not have a constant presence, so consequently the consolidation of relationships with some of the institutions is an incipient process.

### **5.2.3. Were the human, technical, material and financial resources sufficient to achieve the expected effects of the project?**

*The project team has professional experience and excellent human qualities, which are recognised by both beneficiaries and allies.*

The professional training and experience of the team are relevant to attending to the needs of the project and the beneficiaries. In the components of Education in Emergencies, Education and ICLA, the teams responsible possess undergraduate studies and some postgraduate degrees related to education, law and human rights. Additionally, several members of the education team have participated in previous projects as mentors of the SMMs, and so understand the methodology and the challenges of its application. Likewise, most of the team members come from the regions where the project is being carried out,

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<sup>79</sup> Interviews with NRC staff members. 22 and 28 November, 2016.

<sup>80</sup> Telephone interviews with diploma participants. 1 December, 2016.

<sup>81</sup> Interviews with staff of the Municipal Representatives' Offices in Maicao and Arauca. 23 and 29 November, 2016.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with staff at the Ombudsman's Office. 30 November, 2016.

which means that they have a deeper understanding of the context and the institutional and community dynamics.

Both the beneficiaries and the partners repeatedly expressed during the fieldwork that the people who participated in the project have great capacity for listening, understanding their situation and for being empathetic.<sup>83</sup> In the case of the Education in Emergencies component, the teachers highlighted the creativity and dynamism of those who worked with them and with the children and adolescents.<sup>84</sup> The SMMs participants expressed that the mentors were not only concerned with addressing the issues, but that they also followed up on their case and established trust with their families and communities.<sup>85</sup> Finally, the personnel that provides legal assistance, have both broad knowledge of the legislation and attention services, and great human qualities which results in them devoting the time necessary to know each case and following it up.<sup>86</sup>

In terms of human resources, overall the team was capable of implementing the project's activities. However, in the department of La Guajira one person was responsible simultaneously for the Education component and the Education in Emergencies component. This generated difficulties at the beginning of the project in terms of timeline and follow-up activities. In order to mitigate this limitation, the staff of Education in Emergencies of Norte de Santander helped with the implementation in La Guajira.

Finally, changes in the context between the time of submission and approval of the project required budget adjustments to include costs related to the transportation of beneficiaries, transportation of the kits to Arauca and trips to rural areas of La Guajira. These adjustments were due not only to the changing circumstances between when the project was created and when it was implemented, but also to the lack of experience in budget management in the Northeast office due to the restructuring of the NRC, its low participation in the formulation of the project, and the lack of a comprehensive knowledge of the new departments in which the NRC began to work.<sup>87</sup> All planned activities were carried out but with a greater amount of resources, more monitoring and follow-up of the process could have been made during the implementation. Greater involvement of NRC staff who know the operation and costs in the field would have improved the design and implementation of the project.

#### **5.2.4. Did the project monitoring system identify difficulties and take action to overcome them?**

*The monitoring mechanisms made it possible to see the need to modify the project. However, monitoring can be more systematic and focus on improving the project's actions.*

The team implemented a project monitoring and evaluation system that consisted of tools such as the monitoring and follow-up matrix, as well as the database of beneficiaries. These tools, together with the monitoring work carried out by the project teams, allowed the timely identification of the logistical and mobility difficulties encountered at the beginning of the project, as evidenced by the changes proposed in the framework logical.

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<sup>83</sup> Focus groups with adults, and children and adolescents in Maicao, Riohacha, La Guajira; Arauca, Arauca; and Villa del Rosario and Cúcuta, Norte de Santander.

<sup>84</sup> Focus group with the principal and District Department of Education in Arauca. 28 November, 2016.

<sup>85</sup> Focus groups with children and adolescents in Maicao, Riohacha, La Guajira; and Villa del Rosario and Cúcuta, Norte de Santander.

<sup>86</sup> Focus groups with adults Maicao, La Guajira; Arauca, Arauca; and Villa del Rosario and Cúcuta, Norte de Santander.

<sup>87</sup> Interviews with NRC staff, coordinators and managers from the Northeast area and with NRC staff at the national level. 15 and 16 November, 2016 in Bogotá, La Guajira, Arauca and Norte de Santander.

Likewise, the project components have tools to measure the impact of the activities. For example, the Education in Emergencies component has a test applied to teachers, given to them before and after the training workshop, as well as one for the children and adolescents given to them before and after the survival skills sessions and a strategy assessment format completed by the children which is presented at the end of the intervention.<sup>88</sup> In the case of Education, the NRC staff members mentioned in interviews that they have a tool to measure whether participants have captured the key messages. With regard to ICLA, surveys are conducted after the information days and efforts have been made to use strategies that are more in line with the educational level of the beneficiaries.<sup>89</sup>

The application of these instruments allows for the impact of the activities during the implementation to be understood and facilitates the identification of difficulties. However, from the information gathered in interviews with the NRC staff members, it is unclear how the results of these instruments are systematised and analysed, the frequency with which they are applied and the way they inform the implementation and decision making during the process. Keeping in mind that the application of these instruments and other methods like focus groups allows the beneficiary population to participate during the implementation, it is necessary to make efforts to analyse this information in a more systematic way and to identify clear mechanisms to be incorporated into the implementation.

Although the coordination of monitoring team has made efforts to develop and advice on the construction of instruments such as those mentioned above, these have focused on monitoring the fulfilment of the goals in terms of the number of beneficiaries and activities carried out.

#### **5.2.5. To what extent did the actors involved in the implementation of the project establish and use coordination mechanisms?**

*Better coordination between the project teams has the potential to produce greater impacts, and ensures that resources are used more efficiently.*

Coordination meetings between the three components were held at the beginning of the project to determine the distribution of resources and to coordinate logistical issues. In general terms, the teams of the three components were in constant communication and were aware of the progress of their colleagues.<sup>90</sup> Nonetheless, this does not mean that they work together on the implementation and with the communities and beneficiaries in all departments.

In the case of La Guajira department, the project components worked independently although they prioritised the same municipalities (Maicao and Riohacha) and one staff member was responsible for two of the components. The lack of joint work was reflected in that both Education and ICLA searched for the beneficiaries through censuses and telephone calls but did not share the information, which would have facilitated the work and would have proven a more efficient use of resources. Also, despite ICLA's efforts to provide information and counselling to parents in one of the institutions prioritised by the Education in Emergencies component, most of the beneficiaries of Education in Emergencies and Education<sup>91</sup> were not aware of the ICLA component and in turn, the

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<sup>88</sup> Document analysis of the formats sent by the Education in Emergencies team.

<sup>89</sup> Interview with a NRC staff member. 22 November, 2016.

<sup>90</sup> Interview with a NRC staff member. 2 December, 2016.

<sup>91</sup> Focus groups with children and adolescents in Maicao and Riohacha, La Guajira.

beneficiaries of ICLA and the staff members of the institutions where they worked did not know about the other two components.<sup>92</sup>

In the case of Arauca, since the components of Education in Emergencies and ICLA were implemented in different municipalities, it was not possible to connect them together. However, the ICLA consultant helped with some cases of schooling for children and adolescents with documentation problems.<sup>93</sup>

On the contrary, in the case of Norte de Santander, there is evidence of greater connectivity between the components, especially in the case of the beneficiaries from the municipalities of Cúcuta and Villa del Rosario. In the focus groups with adults,<sup>94</sup> participants were found who had received ICLA services, and their children participated in the SMMs or studied in schools prioritised by the Education in Emergencies component. In general, participants expressed that access to multiple services enabled them to meet some of their most pressing needs while simultaneously advancing their early recovery needs. For example, the fact that their children participated in the NRC activities allowed them time to go out and get a job. In this case it was clearly demonstrated that when the three components are coordinated together to provide the assistance, the impact of the project is greater.

*Given the circumstances within the NRC, there were coordination limitations between the local and national teams which potentially affected the creation of impacts.*

The implementation of the project took place simultaneously with the internal restructuring process of the NRC. This affected the coordination dynamics between the local and national teams. The need for this coordination is seen through the national level outreach in issues of documentation and legalisation issues of Venezuelan citizens where specialists could have played a very important role.<sup>95</sup> It is noteworthy that the specialists of ICLA and Education were recruited months after the project began which made it difficult for them to participate in a more active way.<sup>96</sup>

#### **5.2.6. Does the implementation of the project consider a differential approach?**

*During the implementation, the gender-based approach was partially addressed.*

In general, the three components of the project ensured the participation of women in proportion to their degree of impact by the humanitarian crisis. As demonstrated by the report of beneficiaries, as of 31 October, 2016, women make up 55% (3,265) of the people who have been attended to by the project. In general, women have been most affected by the crisis since many of them are heads of household and are in charge of child support and care, and in some cases, of disabled relatives and/or older adults.<sup>97</sup>

Implementation of the project partially addressed the specific needs of women affected by the humanitarian crisis. The hygiene kits contained menstrual pads and mobility kits were prioritised for women heads of household. Gender issues, however, were not addressed in the SMMs. As mentioned above, the reports on these topics are under review and are expected to be implemented next year.

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<sup>92</sup> Focus groups with adults in Maicao. Focus group with LCT in Riohacha and an interview with the Municipal Representative's Office in Maicao, Guajira.

<sup>93</sup> Interview with an ICLA consultant. 29 November, 2016.

<sup>94</sup> Focus groups with adults in Cúcuta and Villa del Rosario, Norte de Santander.

<sup>95</sup> Interviews with NRC staff members. 2 December, 2016.

<sup>96</sup> Interviews with NRC national level staff members. 6 December, 2016.

<sup>97</sup> Focus groups with women in Maicao, La Guajira; Cúcuta and Villa del Rosario, Norte de Santander.

*Although some actions have taken into account the cultural differences of the beneficiaries, this is not a transversal approach in the project.*

The implementation of the project took into account the cultural differences of the target population. For example, in Uribía the mentor of the SMMs is Wayúu and the ICLA team that carried out an information session in the rural area of Maicao, did so in this indigenous community's native language - Wayuunaiki. Furthermore, in Arauquita teachers from the El Vigía Indigenous Education Centre were the ones who presented and explained to their students the contents of the hygiene kit. However, these efforts were neither systematic nor transversal during project implementation

### 5.3. Evaluation Question No. 3: Did the project contribute to achieving the expected effects for the beneficiary population?

*Moderately achieved: a combination of strengths and weaknesses or gaps.*

#### **5.3.1. To what extent were basic rights guaranteed and the protection of children and adolescent beneficiaries secured during the emergency? (Effect 1)<sup>98</sup>**

*Children, adolescents, their families and teachers greatly valued the student and hygiene kits as well as the school kits.*

Student and hygiene kits have an effect on the mitigation of basic needs and motivation of students. The beneficiaries who received them indicated that they allowed their parents to save money,<sup>99</sup> and that they gave them the materials they needed to study.<sup>100</sup> Furthermore, principals and teachers stated that the kits motivated the children because they enabled them to work better, be more comfortable,<sup>101</sup> and contents themselves mitigated basic needs.<sup>102</sup> Teachers stated that having more notebooks "allows them to be more organised and follow a sequence" which will produce better results in terms of their performance.<sup>103</sup>

Likewise, pedagogical and sports kit bags have created a change in some pedagogical practices in the classroom. Teachers stated that they use the contents of the pedagogical kit bags to implement other activities and to make classes more dynamic. For example, they have been used to do activities in math classes and in classes on ethics and values.<sup>104</sup>

In spite of the above, students, teachers and principals also expressed concern about the possible adverse effect of delivering student kits or pedagogical and sports materials to only some students within the same school campus,<sup>105</sup> or to only one campus and not to ones nearby that pertain to the same school.<sup>106</sup>

*As for access to protective spaces, not all beneficiaries who received the kits participated in the safe behaviours training, or logistical conditions prevented them from paying attention to the training. Not all children and adolescents benefited from the teacher training component.*

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<sup>98</sup> Although the effect indicator proposed in the modified logical framework was met, due to the considerations made in section 5.1.3, the analysis of this section will not be developed in relation to this indicator, but rather, to the expected effect of this project component.

<sup>99</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, Arauquita. 28 November, 2016.

<sup>100</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, rural area of Santa Cruz, Maicao. 22 November, 2016.

<sup>101</sup> Teachers focus group, Maicao. 22 November, 2016.

<sup>102</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, Arauquita. 28 November, 2016.

<sup>103</sup> Teachers focus group, Maicao. 22 November, 2016.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> An interview and focus group with authorities and principals held in Arauquita on 28 November, 2016, and a focus group with teachers and office clerks held in Villa del Rosario on 30 November, 2016.

<sup>106</sup> Children and adolescents focus group Maicao. Noviembre 22, 2016.

According to students and teachers, survival skills workshops have allowed children and adolescents to learn some key messages. Students who participated in the survival skills workshops said they learnt to be more careful,<sup>107</sup> to look after their personal hygiene,<sup>108</sup> to be more respectful and to pay more attention.<sup>109</sup> For her part, a teacher who participated in the focus group in the rural area of Santa Cruz, Maicao, said that talks about how to accept and overcome difficult situations have been important for children and their parents.

In the case of Villa del Rosario, where the activities were carried out through the CEAs, the teachers stated that the children and adolescents knew exactly when the talks were, and that they generated a lot of joy. One teacher said she felt displaced by the CEAs, and one coordinator indicated that the children felt more protected by the school.<sup>110</sup> Likewise, the principal of an educational institution in Arauquita indicated that the teachers were made aware of and were educated on the training.

In spite of these positive results, the fact that not all the beneficiary children and adolescents participated in these workshops,<sup>111</sup> that logistical conditions complicated the carrying out of some workshops,<sup>112</sup> and that not everyone benefited from the teacher training activities,<sup>113</sup> meant that there were limits to producing positive results in terms of creating protective spaces for the beneficiaries.

### **5.3.2. Did the project encourage the children and adolescents to access in educational institutions? (Effect 2)**

*There is evidence of a motivational and attitudinal change on the part of the participants in the SMMs, as well as a change in family environment.*

The focus groups with children and adolescents who were beneficiaries of this project component, and the interviews with the SMMs mentors in La Guajira and Norte de Santander show that the project generated important changes in the attitude of the children and adolescents and their motivation regarding school. Some children and adolescents stated that the SMMs allowed them to build trust, socialise and relate to people with whom they had no prior contact despite living in the same neighbourhood.<sup>114</sup> A participant from one of Maicao's focus groups stated that she was not sociable at school, but that after the SMMs this changed.<sup>115</sup>

The beneficiaries also indicated that their relationship with their families changed thanks to the SMMs. For example, in the case of Riohacha, the participants claim that their relatives perceive them as less rebellious, more cooperative and respectful.<sup>116</sup> They also stated that they learnt to share and are calmer.<sup>117</sup>

Several beneficiaries expressed a change of motivation in regard to school. For example, a beneficiary in Riohacha indicated that he did not plan to continue studying the following year, but that thanks to the SMMs, decided to finish high school.<sup>118</sup> Another beneficiary

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, Villa del Rosario. 30 November, 2016.

<sup>110</sup> Focus group undertaken with teachers, coordinators and the principal in Villa del Rosario, 30 November, 2016.

<sup>111</sup> Interviews with NRC staff members and principals in Arauquita.

<sup>112</sup> Children and adolescents focus group Maicao. 22 November, 2016.

<sup>113</sup> Interviews with NRC staff members.

<sup>114</sup> Focus groups held in Riohacha, Maicao, Cúcuta and Villa del Rosario on 21 and 22 November and 1 December 2016, respectively.

<sup>115</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, Maicao. 22 November, 2016.

<sup>116</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, Riohacha. 21 November, 2016.

<sup>117</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, Villa del Rosario. 1 December, 2016.

<sup>118</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, Riohacha. 21 November, 2016.

said that during this year she had stopped attending classes for two weeks, but after starting to participate in the SMMs, decided to return to finish and fulfil her dream of becoming a lawyer.<sup>119</sup> Other participants stated that the SMMs helped them to learn that "one without study is nothing".<sup>120</sup> Even the youngest children expressed that after the SMMs they were more motivated to go to school.<sup>121</sup> The previous findings were confirmed in interviews with four mentors in La Guajira<sup>122</sup> and one in Norte de Santander.<sup>123</sup>

These findings are very positive and reflect the impact of this project component on the lives of the beneficiary children and adolescents. However, some focus group participants were already in school.<sup>124</sup> In this case, whilst the actions of the project could be having effects on the educational permanence, motivation and quality of life of these children and adolescents, the actions would not be coherent with the expected effect of this component, which is to ensure access to education for those who are out-of-school and so may imply a limitation for the participation of other out-of-school children who have not benefited from the project.

*A significant percentage of the children who participated in the SMMs are already enrolled in a school or are in the process of enrolling. However, this impact is limited in the case of Venezuelans and Colombians with documentation problems.*

In the focus groups and interviews we discovered that most of the beneficiaries of the project are in the process of enrolling for next year thanks to the project's activities and services. For example, in the case of Maicao, three participants in one of the focus groups held on 22 November were to take an examination the next day to find out what grade they should enrol in and had reserved places in educational institutions. This information was confirmed by the Maicao mentors who stated that the children and adolescents who were not being schooled, had their documentation up to date and complete and were in this very same process.<sup>125</sup> An official from the Maicao's District Department of Education who helped obtain places for this population, also confirmed this information.<sup>126</sup>

We also have information on the efforts that mentors in Riohacha and Norte de Santander have made to obtain places for the beneficiaries, including conversations with the principals about the activities of the project, and the delivery of uniforms and student kits.<sup>127</sup> Likewise, the NRC has provided them with money to pay enrolment fees in Riohacha, where educational institutions charge approximately \$35,000 Colombian pesos [approximately \$12.25 USD, February, 2016].<sup>128</sup>

In these two departments, the greatest obstacle to ensuring access to education, has been documentation issues. This applies to both Colombian returnees who have not been able to access the apostilled certificates for their studies in Venezuela, and to the children of Colombians who have not been naturalised due to difficulties in accessing their documents in Venezuela. This is also the case for Venezuelans who require a student visa and

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<sup>119</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, Maicao. 22 November, 2016.

<sup>120</sup> Children and adolescents focus group, Cúcuta. 1 December, 2016.

<sup>121</sup> Focus groups held in Riohacha and Villa del Rosario on 21 November and 1 December, respectively.

<sup>122</sup> Two interviews were held in Maicao on 22 November and two in Riohacha on 23 November, 2016.

<sup>123</sup> Interview. 2 December, 2016.

<sup>124</sup> Most of these cases do not correspond to direct schooling efforts carried out by the NRC but rather to the children and adolescents who were already in school before the intervention began.

<sup>125</sup> Interviews with mentors, Maicao. 22 November, 2016.

<sup>126</sup> Interview. 23 November, 2016.

<sup>127</sup> Interviews with NRC staff members and mentors held on 21 and 23 November 2016 in La Guajira and between 30 November and 2 December in Norte de Santander.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

apostilled certificates of their studies to be able to study in Colombian educational institutions.<sup>129</sup>

### 5.3.3. Did information, counselling and legal assistance activities contribute to beneficiaries accessing their basic rights? (Effect 3)

*Beneficiaries who are victims of armed conflict state that they know their rights and the institutions to which they must turn to.*

The focus groups held with beneficiaries in the three departments show that the project's actions were beneficial to the people affected by the border crisis who also had the status of victims of armed conflict, as these people showed more knowledge about their rights as victims and the mechanisms for claiming them. For example, some beneficiaries in Arauca, Maicao and Cúcuta indicated that they received counselling on how to demand their rights, including submitting declarations and appeals to the UCARV.<sup>130</sup>

Likewise, the beneficiaries indicated that the NRC provides them with access to their case information in the UCARV database.<sup>131</sup> One of the participants in this focus group said that the NRC "is the closest we have to a Victims Unit".<sup>132</sup> Another beneficiary interviewed in Riohacha positively valued the possibility of accessing the databases of UCARV (i.e., Vivanto), and indicated that due to the project's activities she learnt where to go, according to her needs. She also noted that her case has already been responded to and is in the process of being handed over.<sup>133</sup> For the population of Maicao, the possibility of accessing the information on the UCARV database has meant reducing the number of people who have to go to the UCARV office in Riohacha, where one has to request a turn the day before, and arrive very early on the day of the appointment to request assistance, or spend the night queuing up outside.<sup>134</sup>

*People with documentation needs know and have gone through the procedures to address them.*

The project's actions have also benefited people with documentation needs. These people expressed that the information and counselling sessions allowed them to know the procedures for obtaining access to their documents (e.g., naturalisation of Colombian born children in Venezuela or naturalisation of Venezuelans whose are Colombians).<sup>135</sup> In fact several of the participants in these focus groups had already been able to naturalise or naturalise their families thanks to the counselling provided by the NRC.<sup>136</sup>

The biggest obstacle identified in this aspect is the difficulty that the beneficiaries have in obtaining their documents (e.g., birth or marriage certificates) in Venezuela, and having

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<sup>129</sup> Interviews with NRC staff members held on 21, 23 and 30 November, and 1 and 2 December; an interview with an official of Norte de Santander's District Department of Education on 1 December; and a focus group with teachers, coordinators and the principal in Villa del Rosario on 30 November, 2016.

<sup>130</sup> Focus group with men held in Maicao on 23 November, 2016; focus group with women held in Cúcuta on 1 December, 2016; focus group with men held in Cúcuta on the same date; and a joint focus group held in Arauca on 29 November, 2016.

<sup>131</sup> Women's focus group, Maicao. 23 November, 2016.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Interview Riohacha. 24 November, 2016.

<sup>134</sup> Focus groups held in Maicao on 22 November, 2016; interviews with NRC staff members and the Pastoral Social (Caritas) staff member in Maicao held between 22 and 24 November, 2016.

<sup>135</sup> Men's focus group held in Maicao on 22 November, 2016; mixed focus group held in Arauca on 29 November, 2016; men and women's focus groups held in Cúcuta on 1 and 2 December, 2016.

<sup>136</sup> Men's focus group held in Maicao on 22 November, 2016; men and women's focus groups held in Cúcuta on 1 and 2 December, 2016.

them apostilled so that they can carry out the respective procedures in the municipalities where these such documents must be apostilled.<sup>137</sup>

*Although the project has been able to establish what attention services exist for Venezuelans, there are still barriers to accessing their rights.*

During the implementation of the project, it was possible to establish what attention services exist for Venezuelans with no family ties to Colombia.<sup>138</sup> For the beneficiaries, knowing about these programs, and the options and difficulties they offer, has a positive impact because at the very least, their uncertainty is reduced.<sup>139</sup> Nonetheless, institutional barriers (e.g., the need to have a student, resident or work visa) persist so that these people can access their rights, which exceed the functions of the NRC field offices.

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<sup>137</sup> Interview with NRC staff members held on November 29, 2016; and interviews with an official of the Ombudsman's Office in Norte de Santander and other local allies held on 30 November, 2016.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Interviews with NRC staff members held on 20 November, 2016.

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## 6. Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

The following are lessons learnt and recommendations from the interviews and focus groups conducted during the fieldwork and from analysing the findings and the documents.

### 6.1. Lessons about the Design of the Project

- Participation in multiagency characterisation exercises such as MIRAs, bolsters the NRC's knowledge about the context of and the impacts on the population which can serve as a baseline in acute emergency scenarios when, for reasons of time, it is not possible to carry out our own needs assessment.
- Participation by the field team and the coordination of monitoring team in the project formulation stage should be increased, especially in the design of impacts and indicators. The NRC is currently pursuing actions in this regard, for example, through the implementation of the project management cycle that involves the participation of local teams at all stages of the process, and also, in general, via the process of restructuring and decentralisation implemented in the second half of 2015.
- It is key to take into account the differences of context between the departments where intervention will be carried out so as to be able to plan the activities and outputs.
- The particular needs of indigenous communities should be considered when planning activities. Linking staff who are experts on indigenous issues and building local teams may be amongst the strategies used to promote an ethnically differential approach in project design.

### 6.2. General Lessons about the Implementation

- Networking with other organisations and/or community leaders was an effective strategy to facilitate the entry of the NRC into communities in which it was not previously present.
- Coordinating the three project teams when they work in the same municipalities is key to generating greater impact for the population and long-term effects. It also enables a more efficient use of resources, particularly in missions involving high logistical and transportation costs.
- Networking with other organisations to complement actions provides more comprehensive assistance. The networking that occurred with the World Food Programme (WFP) is a case in point: the WFP delivered food vouchers to the beneficiary families and allowed them to temporarily solve an urgent humanitarian need.
- Relationships have been developed with institutions and communities in La Guajira and Arauca that would be important to maintain and consolidate in order to achieve a greater impact in future interventions.
- Advocacy and coordinated work with local entities is key to achieving the expected results. The case of joint and coordinated work with some of the agencies of the Local Coordination Team (LCT) in Arauca and La Guajira and with the District Departments of Education in Maicao and Arauquita highlights this.

### 6.3. Lessons about the Implementation, Monitoring and Follow-up - Effect 1: Education in Emergencies

- In order to have medium- and long-term effects, self-care workshops and teacher training could be done consistently in all departments and strategies for monitoring and follow-up of the repeat sessions could be established.

- The CEAs training strategy seems to have a greater impact on the creation of safe behaviours as it is a lengthier intervention that allows the children and adolescents to grasp the message and to put it into practice. Alliances such as the one developed with the Universidad Simón Bolívar in Cúcuta could be replicated in other departments to facilitate the implementation of the strategy.
- Given the current needs of the population affected by the crisis and the particular characteristics of the departments in terms of institutional capacity, the possibility of different types of support other than kits could be explored, such as school infrastructure.
- One person having to carry out two project components simultaneously affects the ability of team members to meet the timeline of activities and follow up on them.<sup>140</sup>

#### 6.4. Lessons about the Implementation, Monitoring and Follow-up - Effect 2: Education

- The delivery of economic assistance like uniforms and the payment of enrolment fees facilitates access to and permanence in the school.
- The characteristics of the places where the SMMs are carried out affect the quality of the sessions and the participation of the beneficiaries. Conducting meetings in the educational institutions is key to motivating the children and adolescents to return to school because it allows them to have a more tangible experience.
- It is necessary to train mentors on how to identify and activate attention services in cases of child abuse and domestic violence.
- In addition to the issues of school motivation, it is important to include issues that take into account the stage of development of the participants as well as ones that will facilitate them staying in the school, such as sexual education, prevention of drug use and attention services available for occurrences of domestic violence and sexual abuse.
- Parental involvement in the process strengthens the process of schooling and retention, especially in the case of smaller children.

#### 6.5. Lessons about the Implementation, Monitoring and Follow-up - Effect 3: ICLA

- The delivery of mobility kits was a success as it provided quick humanitarian assistance and respects the decision-making power of families and knowledge of their own needs. In the words of a NRC staff member, this action "dignifies the process of receiving help".<sup>141</sup>
- It is necessary to fortify the training of staff members and ensure that the activities implemented take into account the different levels of institutional capacity in the departments where the project will operate.
- It is necessary to increase outreach at the national and local level so that attention services for documentation issues are known and understood, as this then facilitates education and other rights such as health being accessed, as well as the naturalisation and legalisation of Venezuelan students.

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<sup>140</sup> As mentioned in section 5.2.3, the fact that one of the NRC staff members was simultaneously responsible for the Education and Education in Emergencies components generated difficulties at the beginning of the project in terms of the timeline and follow-up to the activities.

<sup>141</sup> Interview with a NRC staff member. 2 December, 2016.

- Designing and printing information brochures about documentation services and naturalisation and legalisation procedures could help people to remember and understand the information received on the information days.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Focus group with adults. Arauca, Arauca. 29 November, 2016.

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## 7. Appendices

1. Terms of Reference
2. Graphs showing the implementation of the project by department; reference is made to the number of beneficiaries, the number of school kits, hygiene kits and mobility kits delivered
3. Instruments used in interviews and focus groups
4. Examples of analysis performed using NVivo
5. Evaluation matrix
6. Fieldwork schedule
7. List of respondents and description of focus groups
8. Biography of the evaluation team

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