

# Rapid needs assessment of older people: La Guajira, Colombia

January - May 2020

## Context

Population in Colombia includes more than 1.8 million people affected by the current socioeconomic crisis in Venezuela. Around 38,400 refugees and migrants are over 60 years and are at most vulnerable risk due to the discrimination they face in accessing health, medicine and employment opportunities.

HelpAge International, the UN Refugee Agency and the Interagency Group on Mixed Migration Flows led a report in January 2020 (before the arrival of COVID-19 in Latin America) through 516 interviews with older people describing the specific needs of older refugees, migrants, returnees from Venezuela and members of the Wayúu indigenous population living in Maicao, Uribia and Riohacha, Colombia.

The assessment aims to help authorities and all organisations operating in Colombia, including humanitarian agencies, donors and coordination mechanisms to develop and implement inclusive programs, and to support the promotion of the rights of older refugees, migrants, returnees, Wayúu indigenous peoples and host communities.

More than half of older people do not have access to clean water.



64% do not have access to bathroom facilities, 84% do not have access to hand washing facilities and 71% do not have access to toilets.



## Older people's priorities

Priorities	Data
<b>Water</b>	78% do not have access to safe drinking water and 80% feel insecure accessing water points.
<b>Food</b>	76% do not have enough to eat and 23% go to bed hungry 3 to 5 nights a week.
<b>Cash</b>	84% have no income and 66% have had to borrow since the crisis began.
<b>Safety</b>	91% said that if they receive cash they can use it safely.
<b>Shelter</b>	44% said their shelter needs major repairs and 23% cannot pay for materials.

## Recommendations for an inclusive response

- Use data disaggregated by sex, age, disability and ethnicity.
- Ensure that protection and inclusion programs and projects are covering older people situation.
- Identify older people who have lost or do not have relevant IDs to access services and support them to find or replace them.
- Establish outreach services for older people who are unable to reach static facilities and assist them to register and receive support.
- Register and consider caregivers of older people.
- Raise awareness of staff and partners about ageing and disability issues to promote the rights and dignity of older people.



Read the full report at:  
[helpagela.org/publicaciones/publicaciones-destacadas/](https://helpagela.org/publicaciones/publicaciones-destacadas/)

