



SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN EMERGENCIES IN COLOMBIA

Save the Children's programs are responsive to protracted and acute emergencies. In March 2019, Save the Children's Emergency Health Unit set up a Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Unit in Maicao, Colombia to provide SRH services directly to Venezuelan migrants. The outpatient facility and mobile outreach clinic offer:

- Antenatal and postnatal care.
- Newborn health care,
- Contraceptive services,
- Postabortion care (PAC) services,
- Clinical management of rape,
- Prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs),
- Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS),
- Sexual- and gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention and treatment; and
- Referrals for vaccination, hospital-level services and cash assistance.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Location	Maicao, Paraguachón, Fonseca, La Guajira Department, Colombia
Facility Type	Urban outpatient SRH Unit, with mobile outreach clinic
Number of SRH consultations	13,990 (Apr- May/ 2019 - 2020)
Number of new health clients	(4,914 for clinical services and 831 in MHPSS) (Apr- May/ 2019 - 2020)

Once in Colombia, Venezuelan migrants who seek healthcare encounter barriers to due to political, legal and financial limitations of the overburdened Colombia health system. Migrants are offered emergency care, in case of life or death situations, and very limited preventive healthcare. For preventive and non-emergency services, the national system requires payments that are significant barriers for migrants left impoverished by Venezuela's economy. To address this gap, Save the Children initiated and continues to directly provide comprehensive SRH services according to the Minimum Initial Service Package for Reproductive Health in emergency settings with approval from and in support of the Ministry of Health of Colombia.

Facing a new challenge, How to response under COVID-19 pandemic

Committed to providing quality SRH services demanded by Venezuelan migrants, our program built up an internal Preparedness Plan for sustaining response during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under four pillars the program has been providing support to the most vulnerable people in La Guajira,

Pillar A. Establishing a focal point for our COVID-19 adaptation

One of the recommendations from the IPC (Infection prevention and Control) guidelines is to establish a focal point in order to ensure the effectiveness in the response and the adherence to the Colombian and Save the Children protocols.



Handwashing instruction given by Sandry Rodríguez (head nurse), our health point for COVID-19 processes.

Pillar B. Infection Prevention and Control strategies

- Pre - triage area

We ensure that in the pre-triage area we early recognize suspected patients using screening questionnaires. After that, immediate isolation of patients with suspected COVID-19 symptoms in a separate area is done.



A trained health provider is informing the patients about the new measures. We believe that is important for them to know why are we adapting the response.

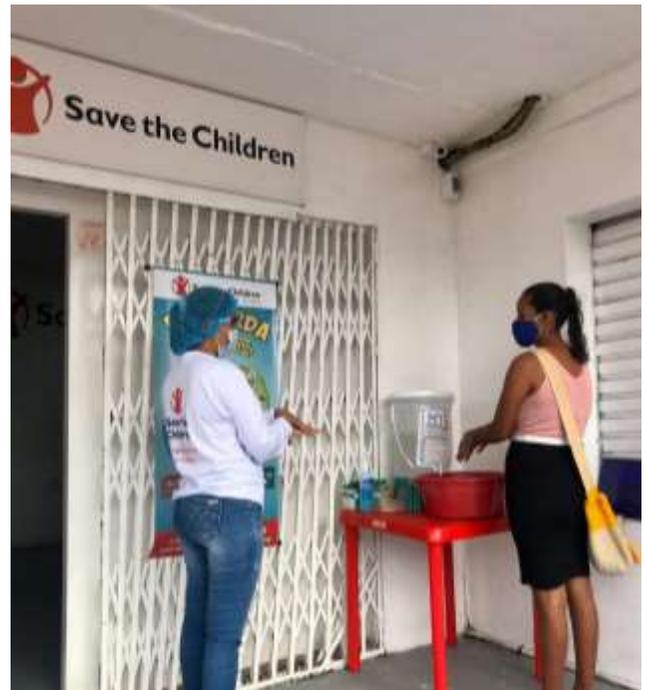
- **Handwashing area**

Both the isolation and the normal entrance have a handwashing area which was provided by the WASH team and is supervised by our nurses or social workers. Everyone has to comply with our IPC protocols, even administrative collaborators, providers, or partners.

In addition, before the patients enter to the facility, we offer a medical mask to patients with or without suspected COVID-19 symptoms.



*Andreina Ojeda, one of our general physician, washing her hands at the portable handwashing, **Isolation area.***



*One of our patients receiving instructions about proper handwashing technique by a head nurse from the Unit, **Non-isolation area.***

- **Providing sexual and reproductive health services**

Even though the measures from the Colombian government, such as the lockdown and barriers to access the Unit in Maicao (for instance, transport difficulties), the sexual and reproductive health Unit at Maicao is still working under IPC protocols, ensuring that our patients had the best quality services even during this pandemic context. Antenatal care, postnatal care, and other services are available for women, men, adolescents and children without barriers.



For us is essential to aware people about prevention from Sexual Transmitted Diseases, the delivery of condoms is one of our key strategies (A transsexual woman is receiving condoms from one of our head nurses (Picture on the top left).

As well as, we are contributing to the decrease of unwanted pregnancies by continuing our contraceptive service. A head nurse placing a subdermal implant (Picture on the top right).



In the photo below left, one of our auxiliary nurses is weighing and carving a newborn who has received our general medicine services.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support is given by one of our psychologist. Gender based violence has increasing and the level of the violence as well. We are the only NGO supporting and

providing with an integrative service for all GVB survivors.

