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“If the coronavirus doesn’t kill us, hunger will”

Regional absenteeism and the Wayuu permanent humanitarian crisis

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For more than 30 years after the arrival of the first multinational coal company in La Guajira, the Wayuu have raised their voices. They denounce the extermination of their people, the dispossession of their territory and their resources, and the negligence of the Colombian and Venezuelan states in facing a humanitarian crisis caused by hunger and the death of more than 4,000 children. The World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 pandemic within this context.

Various voices participated in the writing of this text as an attempt to strengthen collaborations between activists, leaders, members of Wayuu organizations, and anthropologists. Two research projects are the interface for the continuing links to collectively reflect on the structural problems that cause hunger and imagine initiatives for the political, economic, and cultural changes that would be necessary to guarantee the food security and territorial autonomy of the Wayuu.

To write the text, we circulated five questions by telephone and email and compiled the different answers. We interwove our voices from each author’s knowledge of the territory and the arrival of COVID-19 as a pandemic that has caused a crisis on top of crises and structural pandemics that for centuries have affected the ethnic survival and territorial autonomy of the Wayuu people. In order to deepen the reflection on the structural dynamics that have placed the Wayuu in permanent humanitarian crises, at the University of Antioquia we advanced an analysis of the geo-



politics of the region, especially the relationship between Colombia and Venezuela.

Local border populations maintain interdependence through constant family relationships and exchanges of goods, and not because of the collaboration for regional development between the Colombian and Venezuelan governments. On the contrary, this historical socio-spatial interdependence is affected and cut by conflicts over geographical boundaries, the transit of armed groups, and the illegal trafficking of arms, drugs, and fuel, among other goods, which make this border of more than 2,000 kilometers a continuous axis of disagreement. Moreover, although governments have at times strategically activated economic and commercial relations, none of these agreements approach the region through an integral and sustainable framework.

This text continues a dialogue between local and lived knowledges and experiences of members of the Wayuu people and those of researchers from the University of Antioquia. It seeks to describe the inequalities and hardships that a pandemic such as the one that the world is presently suffering causes for the Wayuu, as well as the chain of dispossessions and deprivations that this indigenous people has suffered, making them even more vulnerable to this health crisis. It argues that there is a need to resolve the border conflicts and consolidate a sustainable and integral regional collaboration between Colombia and Venezuela. The Wayuu face the pandemic with hunger, without water and material means of subsistence, and lacking political autonomy in their territories. They suffer abandonment, corruption, and depend on Colombian person-focused social programs and services and on international humanitarian aid, which are not currently guaranteed because of the COVID-19 emergency. Furthermore, the Wayuu returned to Colombia or were expelled from Venezuela when the economic crisis began, even though they are citizens of both countries.

Colombia and Venezuela's regional efforts are weak concerning the Wayuu and the other twelve binational indigenous peoples located on the border. On the contrary, policies of both countries do not protect from—and sometimes even cause—food, ecological, and territorial crises. Both countries have to transcend border disputes, ideological differences, economic and development policies, and the geopolitical and international insertion vision that has retrogressed the process of binational economic integration since 1999. Instead, each government represents the other as the “enemy”: pro-Uribe governments in Colombia call the opponents pro-Chávez, Chávez, or even causing a pre-Chávez environment. On the other side, Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro accused Colombia of wanting to invade militarily with US assistance, and recently he accused Colombia of orchestrating the invasion of COVID-19 to Venezuelan territory.

This text presents the configuration of the dynamics in the binational region and discusses how it has been unable to respond to the Wayuu food crisis and how they are far from preventing the spread of COVID-19 to the Wayuu, much less contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This case shows how regional integration in South America is appropriate in form and content for meeting the needs of ethnic groups.

Wayuu life at the border: Interdependence in crisis

The ancestral territory of the great Wayuu nation expands in what is now Colombia and Venezuela, in the department of La Guajira and the state of Zulia, respectively. Both countries have recognized citizenship for all Wayuu, so in theory, they can freely transit over this imposed border. However, the seasonal migrations and traditional cross-border residence were interrupted because of the current Venezuelan economic and political crisis and the closing of the border since 2015. We do not have accurate counts for the total Wayuu population. According to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela census of 2011, 413,437 people auto-identified as Wayuu, representing 57.1% of its total indigenous population (Gobierno Bolivariano de Venezuela, 2011). The 2018 Colombian census registered 380,460 Wayuu people, representing 20% of the indigenous population (Gobierno de Colombia, 2019).

The Wayuu recognize their historical seasonal, economic, and social mobility. They remember the transhumance, called *o'onowa* in Wayuunaiki, to bring animals to graze on land with water during periods of drought. For a long time, mobility has taken the form of labor migration to urban centers, such as the city of Maracaibo where there is employment, or to salt mines, Zulia haciendas, and the coal mines in the region. In addition, the Wayuu have constantly participated in commercial activities at the numerous ports of the peninsula and up to very south of Cesar and Magdalena in the Colombian territory, and in the states of Zulia, Táchira, Falcón, and Mérida in Venezuela. La Guajira has high rates of informal work; people have no food or economic security. The access to health and education services as well as administration forces them to temporarily live in or visit urban centers in both countries. Finally, violence has also caused Wayuu displacement to other places in their ancestral territory or outside it.

Map 1 illustrates this historical socio-spatial interdependence of the Wayuu people. During a social cartography workshop at the Zahino resguardo, an indigenous reserve located at the south of La Guajira, we followed with the elders the routes in the Wayuu ancestral territory both in Colombia and Venezuela.



Map 1 • Map showing the routes in the Wayuu ancestral territory as narrated by the Zahino elders. Source: Esteban Torres Muriel with the participation of Zahino's people. Social cartography workshop at the Zahino reserve, March 8, 2020.

The search for jobs, food, sources of water, gas, commerce, health care, education, and recreation, as well as visiting family and allies are the main reasons for Wayuu seasonal migration or mobility. The white line in map 1 represents the residential displacement from the territories at Alta Guajira to the South of La Guajira in the decade of the 1940s. The migrants sought territories in other areas related to their family and with better water and soil conditions for people and animals.

The red line in this map follows the traditional roads, through which the Wayuu traveled and built their routes between Colombia and Venezuela. Both men and women transited these roads between the 1970s and 1980s because they reduced the distance, time, and money needed to reach the commercial cities to find jobs, purchase food and other goods, or visit family. The main cities connected by these traditional roads were Rosario de Perijá, Machique and Agustín Codazzi. With the exacerbation of violence in the Colombian territory in the 1990s, some illegal armed groups settled in the Serranía del Perijá where the traditional road is located. The abandonment of this route contributed to the food and economic crises of the Wayuu.

The black dotted line in map 1 represents the national road that crosses the border and connects the department of La Guajira in Colombia with the state of Zulia in Venezuela, mainly linking the cities of Maicao and Maracaibo. It is the official route uniting the two countries, and thousands of people transit it every day with different purposes. Although it has existed since the formation of the Colombian and Venezuelan states, it gained importance when the traditional roads became unsafe and the Venezuelan economic and political crisis began after 2010.

Finally, the blue line in map 1 represents a gasoline line. It corresponds to the traffic routes of gasoline from the state of Zulia to the department of La Guajira and other neighboring departments on the Colombian side. Many people participate in gas trafficking, including the Wayuu.

For hundreds of years, people, animals, news, and goods moved through the ancestral territory divided by Colombia and Venezuela like other borders (Puerta Silva & Vélez Rendón, 2011). Comings and goings in and within the ancestral territory and outside it are part of the Wayuu's worldview and sense of place and nation: *Woumain*.

Nevertheless, from the time of the separation of Colombia and Venezuela in the 19th century, conflicts centered on three regions: the Guajira peninsula, the San Faustino region, and the region south of the Meta river (González Arana & Galeano David, 2014, p. 77), but only the corvette Caldas incident, in which a Colombian corvette entered Venezuelan waters in 1987 is considered extremely serious in the 20th century. The 1990s and the first decades of the 21st century were characterized by in-

cursions to Venezuela by Colombian guerrillas, paramilitaries, smugglers, and drug traffickers. Since the 1987 incident, governments created at least seven neighborhood commissions, a mechanism to handle disputes and promote binational cooperation processes. In 2007, they were suspended due to high-profile incidents linked to the FARC guerrilla (Morales Ortiz, 2010).

At the beginning of the 21st century, Colombia was the greatest threat to security in the region due to drug trafficking, the internal conflict, and US involvement in its anti-guerrilla and anti-drug policies. For its part, Venezuela became the promoter of Latin American socialism of the 21st century (González Arana & Galeano David, 2014). Analysts agree that, since the diatribe between then-Venezuelan President Chávez and then-Colombian President Uribe erupted, “the interconnection between the two countries is not the result of a presidential decision, but of the social dynamics of neighboring communities [living] on both sides of the border” (Morales Ortiz, 2010, p. 41). The efforts of Colombian President Santos in 2010 to reactivate the cross-border economy (González Arana & Galeano David, 2014) failed to come to fruition when the Colombia–Venezuela border was closed in 2015 amid the Venezuelan crisis.

The living conditions of the Wayuu people on both sides of the border have much to do with both countries’ governments’ interests in their ancestral territory. Development approaches and interest in exercising sovereignty explain the differences between public infrastructure (roads, hospitals, schools, and water facilities), presence of state institutions (both bureaucratic and military), and the configuration of economic activity on both sides of the border (Puerta Silva, 2020). It is only because of the energy crisis of the 1970s that the Wayuu’s territorial resources became central for the Colombian economy. On the Venezuelan side, although the Wayuu lived in precarious settlements around Maracaibo, the government had subsidized access to food and gas, as well as to wage labor, with which they sent or brought basic goods and remittances to their relatives in Colombia (this due to the buoyant oil economy since the second half of the 20th century, which remained strong until 2013). Likewise, the rural Wayuu communities had access to drinking water, energy, and health and education services, which was not the case on the Colombian side where most of the Wayuu ancestral territory is located.

Nevertheless, like many indigenous populations in the world, the territory is seen as rich in resources whereas the people inhabiting it have become poorer (Guerra Curvelo, 2007; Puerta Silva, n.d.). They are subject to seeing their autonomy continuously dispossessed due to extractive activities, violence, urban growth, and the presence of both “neoliberal” and “socialist” states. The Wayuu feel abandoned and discriminated by both

countries and absent from both nations, and even more, they feel betrayed by Chávez and by the withdrawal of indigenous rights recognized in the new constitution of 1999 (Alès, 2018).

The Venezuelan crisis has particularly affected Wayuu food security.¹ Three main issues have been identified: (1) the lack of availability of food and other goods for food security, such as gasoline; (2) the reduction of remittances and goods from Venezuela; and (3) the arrival of the migrant population, whether Venezuelans or the so-called returnees, some of whom have been expelled (Puerta Silva, 2020). The political, economic, and social crisis of Venezuela manifests in the abrupt change of migration patterns (quantity and type of migrants), the loss of food security, and the increase of infant mortality (Gandini et al., 2019, pp. 9–10; 13). Also, the crisis has triggered the growth of extreme poverty in Venezuela, the expansion of public expenditure, the increase in the fiscal deficit and public debt, unprecedented inflation, the contraction of GDP, the loss of legitimacy of the Maduro government, and the increase of international sanctions on Venezuela that affect its entire population (Reina et al., 2018; Sutherland, 2019).

Economic interdependence of border populations (Viloria de la Hoz, 2014) explains why the current food and commodity shortages in Venezuela seriously affect the Wayuu (Bonet-Morón & Hahn-de-Castro, 2017), especially in the Alta Guajira, a region isolated from Colombian urban centers and markets, where food came from Venezuela at affordable prices. The support networks, the mobility of relatives, and the transmission of remittances and packages complemented direct purchase of goods. The shortage of food in Venezuela (Guerrero Barriga, 2014) and the closure of the border affected the coping strategies that the Wayuu had historically activated in times of need. The Guajira was never able to consolidate agricultural sufficiency in the 19th century (Viloria de la Hoz, 2014), which was aggravated in the 20th century with the mining and energy extraction that contributes to dispossession, restriction, and pollution of both the territory and the resources for indigenous subsistence (Puerta Silva, n.d.).

In fact, before the Venezuelan political crisis, the foreign ministries of Colombia and Venezuela during the governments of Álvaro Uribe and Hugo Chávez established measures to mitigate hunger among the Wayuu. Yet, in 2015, Maduro closed the border and began deporting Colombians, and that affected traditional trade of water and fuel, farming, and fishing, produce and handicrafts (OCHA, 2014, 2015). Although the border reopened in the second half of 2016, food shortages, hyperinflation, the accelerated devaluation of the Bolívar, and mass emigration continued (Reina et al., 2018).

From the territory of life to dispossession and abandonment

Wayuu life develops in the territory; as the ancient Wayuunaiki language teaches, in its two roots: the word *süñüt Wayuu* indicates with *wa* that it comes from *waya* “we,” and *yuu*, “connection with the territory” and/or “spirit.” At the same time, *wayuunaiki*, has its two roots, *wayuu* and *aniüiki*. *Wayuu* is the root word that indicates person/persons, while *aniüiki* indicates language/languages. The Wayuunaiki allows transmission of the *akuaippa*, “the way of the Wayuu,” as well as the stories of origin, the ancestral cemetery, and the worldview; this is, through the ancestral practices of the territory, which also obliges the Wayuu to be caretakers and voices of the territory for its protection. The Wayuu, in their connection with the territory, have and maintain their *akuaippa*. Each Wayuu recognizes and claims a place of origin, the homeland: *Woumain Pa*, Guajira. Wherever they are, the Wayuu maintain their daily life according to their traditions and customs and their cultural practices as members of the Wayuu communities.

A people of living culture, with their worldview and territorial belonging; the Wayuu maintain themselves in spite of the difficulties they have faced historically. They are a hardened people, a people of struggle, whose ancestors have defended the territory since the Spanish violent arrival and colonization impositions. The Wayuu are a people that have sought through the centuries to adapt and re-adapt to the territory and global conditions, in spite of severe adversity, including racism, discrimination, development, extractivism, and neoliberal economic policies that go against their fundamental rights and their ethnic survival. In spite of the achievements of Colombia’s National Constitution of 1991, which provided greater rights to the Wayuu, the challenges are great in terms of recovering the autonomy of the people.

Wayuu economic activities and subsistence dynamics take place within and outside their own territory, including goat and sheep farming and agriculture, especially in the middle and southern territories of the department of La Guajira, and fishing in the coastal territories. Wayuu communities are also characterized by the production of handicrafts and trade, wage and salary work, and participation in tourism activities that have increased in recent decades.

Before the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Interamerican Court declared the situation of the Wayuu to be a humanitarian crisis and called for precautionary measures to eliminate hunger. The Wayuu people were suffering from malnutrition, thirst, and lack of daily sustenance. Their abandonment by the state and the imposition of the extractivist economic model on the territory had been historically cruel to the people.

Different global and regional dynamics explain this: capitalism and socialism in Colombia and Venezuela have broken down life dynamics, the Wayuu social system, and traditional economies. Also, the national identities have eroded Wayuu identity. Finally, climate change and coal mining in both states, El Cerrejón in Colombia, and Carbozulia in Venezuela, have affected water sources, affecting livestock and agriculture, and destroying practices for economic, cultural, and, in essence life sustainability. The availability, quality, access, and distribution of water are central aspects of the Wayuu humanitarian crisis.

Pandemic and confinement without means for ethnic survival

The Wayuu population has suffered the death of more than 4,770 boys and girls from malnutrition (Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, 2015, 2017). The Wayuu were in a bad state, in crisis, and the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated this reality. The real pandemics that La Guajira suffer are contamination, de-territorialization mainly because of the concessions of land and mineral resources to multinational corporations, corruption, and the main pandemic: hunger. COVID-19 makes the Wayuu more vulnerable and puts them at much more at risk than they have traditionally suffered.

The news about the COVID-19 pandemic first came through radio,² television, and social media. Information passed in Wayuunaiki through leaders. However, the efforts of the Colombian and Venezuelan states have been proven insufficient, so indigenous organizations began their own communication campaigns.³ The Wayuu Communications Network and Fuerza Mujeres Wayuu.org broadcast different radio and audiovisual messages in Wayuunaiki and Spanish about COVID-19.⁴ The information has also spread through oral communication, since the Wayuu people have no access to the internet.

However, confinement and distancing within communities are difficult to achieve among Wayuu because they prevent daily life and ritual activities. Groups of people are found fetching water in streams or jagüeyes⁵ when they look for water or go out to graze animals. In addition, promoting hand washing with soap and water is useless when there is no water. While the Wayuu have adapted their ways of life to intense periods of drought and short periods of rain, the droughts reported since 2012 have affected them more severely due to the land dispossession and de-territorialization caused by mining and energy projects including displacement by violence (Bonet-Morón & Hahn-de-Castro, 2017) and increased dependency on state assistance (Torres Muriel, n.d.).

Moreover, the “Take care and put on your face mask” campaigns are absurd when there is no food. The Wayuu society has collapsed and is desperate. Wayuu families block roads and railway lines, yet the state response has been to send out riot police, which have sent at least 43 youngsters to jail (Protestas en Colombia, 2020).

COVID-19 confinement has also limited traditional economic activities. The Wayuu have limitations on access to internal and external transportation and suspension of commercial activities of handicrafts, fishing, shepherding, and meat have placed many in the community at risk of further poverty. There is no way to guarantee economic dynamics within communities; women are essential for the family economy, and as in other places, they are seeing their workloads multiplied. Additionally, all school-based activities in the region stopped as did health care, nutrition centers, and other government facilities in each locality. School activities are almost totally suspended because youth and children do not have the technological means nor internet connections to participate in remote classes. School closings also affect their access to food provided by the schools.

The state of emergency declared by Colombia and Venezuela follow similar approaches regarding indigenous peoples in other parts of the world. La Guajira confirmed its first case of COVID-19 on March 31, 2020 (Covid-19 en La Guajira, 2020); this department does not have health care capacity, much less intercultural health care for indigenous peoples. Governments did not design an intercultural protocol for the protection, prevention, and management of deaths, the latter being a key issue for the Wayuu. For them, cemeteries are sacred sites and funerals are cultural rituals of accompaniment of the dead while they go to the other world, to *Jepira*.⁶ Banning collective funerals and cremating bodies contradicts all traditional Wayuu funerary practices. Bodies must have their final rest in their territory, in their ancestral maternal cemetery, from where indigenous worldviews configure and strengthen identity. For suspected COVID-19 cases, the deceased need to be buried as if they were *asiruu* (death by violence). The pain of the Wayuu people for the loss of the bodies of their dead is so hard that that they published the “Wayuu People’s Manifesto for respect for our dead” in response to government management of COVID-19-related deaths (Autoridades tradicionales et al., 2020; Guerra C., 2020).

The state of emergency declared by both countries exacerbates the critical situation of the Wayuu. COVID-19 is a crisis on top of crises. It is a crisis that accentuates and elevates the food sovereignty crisis, the lack of access to water, and the violation of human rights historically experienced within communities. Therefore, it is not simply a new situation that has suddenly arisen. The pandemic is a disease, *a’leeyajawaa*.⁷ Following the

Wayuu's worldview, this virus is going around the world, carried by the wind. It is *ko'ochii*, a runny nose disease that weakens the body with a dry cough and difficulty breathing.

Regional responses to confront this virus are always lacking. Colombian and Venezuelan COVID-19 strategies are domestically focused, and they do not take into account the multicultural population of the border. Furthermore, Venezuela is sinking into a deeper political and economic crisis, and Colombia is negligent regarding the rules of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights for Wayuu protection,⁸ which should force the Colombian state to guarantee food security and the lives of Wayuu boys and girls. Sadly, this does not reflect reality.

Ethnic resilience and survival

When the news of COVID-19 began, a healer from Alta Guajira announced her dream, that all the Wayuu communities should dance *yonna*,⁹ the typical Wayuu dance. Most Wayuu followed these instructions for COVID-19 treatment and prevention. They assumed that COVID-19 would be like already-lived experiences with other deadly diseases that reached Wayuu territory, which the Wayuu people survived: the black plague, smallpox, and so on. The Wayuu rituals of protection as mandated by dreams include playing the *kaasha* (drum), dancing the *yonna* and drinking *sawa* (roasted cornmeal mixed with sugar). Their purpose is to ward off COVID-19 and to ward off evil spirits.

The old Wayuu people also dreamed of the use of traditional plants and baths. Dreams are lived as self-protection mechanisms to prevent the arrival of the virus. Rituals were carried out by the *outsü* (a medicine and spiritual guide), which are transmitted to her through revelation and working with native medicinal plants historically used by Wayuu. They are powerful plants that safeguard the users. They are used for the bath ritual and for the treatment of colds and flu. They are odorous plants that the spiritual guide uses to remove any bad energy or disease.

COVID-19 has also exacerbated food insecurity among the Wayuu. The Colombian state has concentrated its aid on the distribution of water and food, but it has been insufficient because of its lack of cultural adaptation and because of corruption and clientelism, which aggravates internal conflicts in Wayuu communities due to competition for survival.

The need for survival strategies is leading the Wayuu to sacrifice their "banks"—that is to say, their animals. For example, goats are being sold in order to have corn, beans, and grains that make it possible to maintain communities while the pandemic prevents economic activities, such as

the sale of handcrafted goods. Selling the goats is considered a final coping strategy because they are delicate “savings banks” for Wayuu families. Selling the goats is considered an emergency for the Wayuu.

Conclusion

COVID-19 has impacted the Wayuu people in many different ways. The Wayuu people think that their bodies are not conditioned to overcome this virus. The water and food deficit makes them weak. The impossibility of access to health care services contributes to general vulnerability. Health facilities are not conditioned appropriately either. We could say that the Wayuu people is a “crop broth for the virus” in which countless deaths may occur. There is specific concern for senior men and women who play a special role in Wayuu societies. There is concern about elder people because malnutrition affects them as well as children. They safeguard the unique wisdom and knowledge of the indigenous people and they protect the purest language and the purest customs. Due to all these crises—malnutrition, drought, lack of food, and lack of opportunities to develop economically—the Wayuu people think they will collapse. There is a need for suitable mechanisms for regional management of humanitarian support to communities and intercultural approaches to health care and sustainable ethno-development.

Like everywhere else in the world, the COVID-19 pandemic unveils, in a very critical and dramatic way, existing crises and conflicts. Pandemics historically affecting the Wayuu include poverty, malnutrition, inequality, and racism. On top of these afflictions, the Wayuu suffer from the closure of the Colombia–Venezuela border, the conflicts between the Colombian and Venezuelan governments, and their mutual inability to better respond to the needs of their citizens. COVID-19 is a crisis on top of these preexisting crises. The pandemic will sharpen the “weapons and arrows” of the existing humanitarian crises afflicting the Wayuu territory. Although COVID-19 occupies all the political, economic, and social attention, the energy and resources of the Colombian and Venezuelan governments are focused on each domestic situation without a binational or comprehensive regional approach to addressing system threats to Wayuu existence, such as hunger, lack of water, weak health care infrastructure, violence associated to illegal trafficking, and the murder and continuous threats to community leaders and Wayuu rights’ activists. Individually lived COVID-19 experiences highlight the impact of the disease of the physical body, but the collective Wayuu experiences with COVID-19 illustrate the effects of diseases of the territory and of the soul. So far, ethnic groups like

the Wayuu have not been included in region-building processes, so regional remedies for diseases such as hunger, water insecurity, and health risks remain as elusive as a COVID-19 vaccine.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank RISC-RISE for the invitation to write about the regional crisis at the Colombia–Venezuela border. A first version of this article was sent to colleagues in Brazil who are compiling a book on territory and pandemic and is part of a continuous collaboration between the University of Antioquia and the Wayuu co-authors, currently ongoing thanks to two research projects: Design of an Information System for the Integral Monitoring of Hunger Determinants (SINHambre), co-financed by MinCiencias, University of Antioquia, Pastoral Social and University of La Guajira; and the joint project “Four stories about food sovereignty” with the University of Victoria, Fuerza Mujeres Wayuu, and the University of Antioquia.

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NOTES

1. At least in two of its dimensions: the physical availability of food, and the economic and physical access to it in Colombia.
2. In the Colombian territory there are only two Wayuu radio stations; in the Venezuelan case, although there is no station recognized as indigenous, some of the existing stations are managed by members of indigenous peoples.
3. Video 1: <https://bit.ly/3e7J8BQ>; Video 2: <https://bit.ly/2WZNRA2>.
4. Radio online program: <https://bit.ly/2XnQ1IC>. Blog: <https://notiwayuu.blogspot.com/>. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Fuerza-Mujeres-Wayuu-913069132141388/>.
5. A jagüey is a traditional water-collecting reservoir.
6. *Jepira* is the place where the souls of the dead gather. It is located in Alta Guajira, a place beyond the sea, where the deceased meet other deceased members of their family and their animals.
7. There is still no agreement on whether it is the correct term given the novelty of the disease, but it is the existent term for a disease that have similar symptoms (Personal communication José Ramón Álvarez González).
8. Medidas Cautelares 51/15; Resolution 60 of 2015 and Resolution 3 of 2017; and those of the Constitutional Court: Judgement 2012-00061 of 2013, T-704 of 2016, T-466 of 2016, Judgment 2012-00191 of 2017, T-302 of 2017, T-415 of 2018, T-058 of 2019, T-172 of 2019, among others.
9. The *yonna* dance, also called *Chichamaya*, is a traditional ritual that engages members from different families and serves multiple purposes: "exogamous unions are supported; interclanil offenses are dispelled or compensated; the advent of a new *piache* and the presentation of fertile young women are exalted. The recovered health, the arrival of the rains, the abundant harvests, the

visit of friends and relatives are other reasons for the Wayuu to organize a *pioi* (dance floor), meet with the sound of the *kasha* (drum), and imitate their *uchii* (animal) brothers, thank their creators, and maintain the natural and social order of their culture (Fernández, 2006, cited by Carrasquero & Finol, 2010, p. 21).

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