

HIGHLIGHTS

- The effects of the war, continue to impact children and adolescents in Colombia
- Wounaan indigenous community at risk of cultural and physical extinction due to the armed conflict
- Colombia participates in global review of IASC Gender Handbook
- Citizen participation in the peace process

FIGURES

# of IDPs in mass events	1.169
# people affected by access and mobility constraints	265.306
# people affected by natural disasters	2.484

FUNDING

US\$103,711.900 2016 humanitarian funding being implemented as of 17 March 2016 (OCHA 4W)



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Children and adolescents, seeds of hope for peace

This article is contributed by COALICO.

Peace is built with children and adolescents!

The “Red Hand Day” was commemorated on 12 February to remember the date in 2002 when the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict entered into force. This protocol obliges States to prevent the recruitment of children and adolescents in armed conflict and to attend those who continue to be victims of this type of violation of their rights.

According to the monitoring of the NGO coalition “Coalición contra la vinculación de niños, niñas y jóvenes al conflicto armado en Colombia (COALICO)”, the effects of the war continue to impact the lives of many children and adolescents in the country. In 2015, COALICO registered at least 1,690 armed conflict events, of which 403 directly impacted children and adolescents. Among these incidents, there were 135 forced displacement events, 121 related to the use and recruitment of children by armed groups, 38 violations against their right to life, 25 sexual violence events, 46 violations against children’s personal freedom, 22 attacks on civilian properties, schools and hospitals, and 16 restrictions to access to communities and confinement events. These events were concentrated in Antioquia (16%), Chocó (10%), Valle del Cauca (9%), Cauca (8%) and Caquetá (7,65%). COALICO also registered 40 civic-military actions and integration activities carried on by the Armed Forces that involved children in 15 departments in the country.

Along with the commemoration of the “Red Hand Day”, COALICO, together with other organizations and entities in Bogotá, held the conference, “Children and adolescents, protagonists in building peace”, acknowledging the role of children and adolescents in the construction of peace in Colombia. The event included the participation of 80 children, adolescents and youths between 4 and 19 years coming from different regions, who shared their proposals with State representatives, such as Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar, Defensoría del Pueblo, the Secretaría Técnica de la Comisión Intersectorial de Prevención del Reclutamiento, Procuraduría General de la Nación, among others; and with international organizations such as UNICEF. The voices of children and adolescents shared that living in peace is: “Eating your soup and eating pastries” (a 4 year old girl); “Nights and days without feeling fear. Caring for and loving animals” (participants from 6 to 12 years); and “Educational reform that promotes social skills and not competition” (participants from 13 to 19). At the end of the event, a pact was signed to capture the conclusions of the participating children and adolescents, their opinions, interests, contributions and what they hope from peacebuilding. COALICO committed to following up on this pact.

The Wounaan, at risk of extinction due to the conflict

This article is contributed by OCHA Chocó and Valle del Cauca¹

The presence of several non-state armed actors² and their disputes for territorial control and control over illicit economies have put the Wounaan indigenous community at risk of cultural and physical extinction. This situation also increases the risks associated with gender-based and sexual violence, particularly against women and girls, who are extremely vulnerable. The Wounaan community is made up of around 11,000 people living in rural Chocó and Valle del Cauca.

Nearly 60 per cent of this group (7,066 people),³ live along the banks of the San Juan river, on the border between Litoral de San Juan in Chocó and Buenaventura in Valle. This area is a strategic corridor connecting a mountainous region of Valle del Cauca with the Pacific Ocean. In addition, Litoral de San Juan has a number of tributaries that facilitate illicit activities.



Credit: OCHA Ricardo Cortez, Taparalito displaced community in Buenaventura.

Displacement, restrictions on access and human rights violations

These communities have been facing the humanitarian consequences of the armed conflict for at least a decade. In 2013, the Ombudsman's Office⁴ issued a risk report alerting on the imminent increase in human rights violations and infractions to International Humanitarian Law against the Wounaan community. In 2014, 73 community representatives of El Papayo community were forcibly displaced to Cali due to the presence of unidentified armed actors in their territories.⁵ During the same year, there was an increase in threats, armed confrontations, incursions, intimidations and homicides in their territories by unidentified armed groups, leading to the gradual displacement of nearly 2,000 people from 13 Wounaan communities⁶ and one Afro-colombian community. Victims took refuge in community centres and in Buenaventura, sheltered in a sports stadium and at family's homes, in overcrowded conditions with a permanent risk of urban violence by post-demobilization armed groups that have been impacting Buenaventura for the past several years. This displacement from a rural to a urban setting lasted for more than a year and made evident the gaps in response at municipal level. Main shortfalls were identified in the relation to food security, water and basic sanitation, primary and mental healthcare and protection. During the time of displacement three Wounaan children died from preventable diseases.

At the same time, those remaining in their communities as part of a resistance effort suffered from confinement and prolonged movement restrictions due to armed groups's presence. In Puerto Pizarro indigenous reservation, two children died due to the lack of proper healthcare. Restrictions and intimidation continued during 2015, leading to three mass displacements⁷ and one individual displacement, for a total of 714 IDPs.⁸ In 2016,

¹ To see pictures, please follow this link: <http://bit.ly/1XvE2kn>

² Monitor OCHA accessed on 07 March 2016

³ Plan de salvaguarda étnico del pueblo Wounaan. 2011.

⁴ Informe de Riesgo No. 001-13 de la Defensoría del Pueblo. 2013.

⁵ See [Flash Update](#)

⁶ The most affected Wounaan communities, between 2014 and 2015, in Litoral de San Juan (Chocó) are: El Papayo, Unión de Guadualito, Unión de Balsalito, Buenavista, Tío Cirilo, Gurataco, San Bernardo, Burojón y Taparalito. Y en Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca): Puerto Pizarro, Agua Clara, Chamapuro y Chachajo.

⁷ In June 2015, 142 Indigenous from el Papayo displaced to the city of Buenaventura. In December 2015, 118 Indigenous from Taparalito displaced to Buenaventura and 459 to the urban setting of Litoral de San Juan (Docordó).

⁸ See [Flash Update](#)

there are new reports of victimizations such as collective and individual threats and homicides.

Returned communities remain at risk

In December 2015, after a year of displacement, a return plan was finally put in place for the community sheltered in Buenaventura. Indigenous leaders denounced the negative impact of a prolonged displacement on their cultural survival and the lack of institutional response. The Mayor's offices of Docordó and Buenaventura committed to supporting the return, along with the UARIV and Governors of Valle and Chocó, including support with transportation, education, healthcare, water and sanitation and nutrition. Nonetheless, in early 2016, one of the IDP communities that had returned, Agua Clara, reported that during the emergency four children had died; the most recent case occurred following the return. The community attributes these deaths to their difficulty in accessing healthcare, potable water, food security and transportation. At the same time, the community denounced the non-fulfilment of commitments by the authorities, and urgently requested action to mitigate the risks they continue to face, in particular minors.⁹

Women and girls have been disproportionately impacted by years of violence and face the greatest risks to situations of violence, abuse and exploitation.

Wounaan women especially vulnerable

The situation of girls and women is particularly worrisome. Women and girls have been disproportionately impacted by years of violence and face the greatest risks to situations of violence, abuse and exploitation. Most women from the Wounaan community do not speak Spanish which limits their participation in decision-making processes and access to information. They also face movement restrictions and difficulties in accessing transportation to services, particularly the communities in Litoral de San Juan. The lack of accompaniment and translation in relation to essential protection and sexual and reproductive health services also increases their vulnerability.

International humanitarian response complements State's assistance

The magnitude of the emergency faced by the Wounaan community also represented a challenge for humanitarian actors that supported the response in a coordinated and articulated manner with State institutions and Indigenous leaders. OCHA, with the participation the Local Humanitarian Teams in Chocó and Valle del Cauca, and the Comité Interinstitucional Humanitario de Buenaventura – CIH, carried out four MIRA rapid needs evaluations¹⁰ in Indigenous territories and in shelters in Buenaventura. The evaluation results led to projects financed through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the European Commission's Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO), USAID and by humanitarian organizations' own resources.¹¹ Several NGOs and UN Agencies such as the Jesuit Refugee Service, HelpAge International, Alianza por la Solidaridad, Heartland Alliance, Cruz Roja Colombiana, Fundación Halú, Doctors Without Borders, the ICRC, WFP, UNHCR, FAO, PAHO-WHO, NRC and OCHA participated to this mobilization, that include immediate response and medium term actions.

Displacement continues

The Wounaan continue to be at-risk due to armed violence. By late 2015, nearly 600 people from the Taparalito community were victims of displacement due to threats by non-state armed actors; of these, 459 fled to the municipal seat of Litoral de San Juan, Docordó, and another 124 to urban Buenaventura.¹² This last group has remained in neighborhoods of communes 12 and 4, in conditions of extreme vulnerability. The Ombudsman's Office and the humanitarian community have declared these

⁹ Letter of Agua Clara community to the Secretaría de Convivencia de Buenaventura y Coordinadora regional de la UARIV, delivered on 26 February 2016. There is no clear information about the number of children who died during the emergency both in communities affected by mobility restrictions and IDPs.

¹⁰ See MIRA Reports ([December 2014](#), [January 2015](#), [February 2015](#), [July 2015](#))

¹¹ See stories from the field: *Un alivio en medio del desplazamiento*

¹² See [Flash update](#)

neighborhoods at high-risk due to disputes between the post-demobilization armed groups La Empresa and Clan Úsuga.

Within this context, there is an urgent need for comprehensive interventions with a differential approach, allowing for the return of IDPs with guarantees of security, protection and dignified living conditions. All these actions must take into account the needs and capacities of women, children and adolescents, to ensure they are protected against risks of violence and abuse. At the same time, interventions should promote the participation and capacities of women as key actors in the recovery and development of the Wounaan community.

Colombia participates in the global review of the IASC Handbook on Gender in Humanitarian Action

This article is contributed by the inter-agency gender advisor (GenCap)

A mission from the Gender Reference Group of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) took place in Bogotá during the week of 22 February with the aim of consulting with a variety of stakeholders for the review of the Global Gender Manual on Humanitarian Action (Women, Girls, Boys and Men – Different Needs, Equal Opportunities). This process is led by UNWomen and Oxfam with the support of a Directive Committee made up of experts in gender from several agencies members of the GRG.



Credit: Inter-agency gender advisor (GenCap) Devann de la Puente. Reviewing the Global Gender Manual on Humanitarian Action (Women, Girls, Boys and Men – Different Needs, Equal Opportunities). workshop, Bogotá.

The Handbook, which was originally published in 2006, was developed to provide a general vision of the principles of gender equality in humanitarian action, offering practical directives on the integration of these principles in humanitarian services, including the clusters. Nonetheless, the Handbook currently fails to reflect the reforms that have meanwhile been undertaken in the humanitarian system, among them the current interaction between the cluster system, the gender marker and the Humanitarian Programme Cycle. Colombia was one of the four countries selected to support the Handbook review process, due to its humanitarian and transition context, as well as its progresses in promoting a gender approach.

The mission consisted of two parts: one with interviews of key actors, such as cluster leads, gender focal points and government counterparts. The second part included a two-day workshop, with the objective of collecting inputs on best practices and challenges related to gender integration in humanitarian action; and to collect suggestions on content, design and dissemination of the reviewed Gender Manual. The workshop included the participation of 25 people in Bogotá and from the field, civil-society organizations, including Indigenous and LGBTI groups, the United Nations system, international NGOs, the Colombian Red Cross, ICRC and government entities including UARIV, ICBF, APC and the Ministry of Health.

Participants highlighted the need to further involve women's groups and civil society working with indigenous and Afrocolombian populations, LGBTI groups etc, faith based organisations etc in humanitarian response, not only as implementing partners, but also from the design phase and in decision-making processes. Some of the other issues pointed out were related to the revision and improvement of existing tools to ensure that awareness is raised about the needs and specific capacities of each gender, in particular, women, girls and LGBTI population. Some of tools mentioned at this regard were: needs assessments, registry forms and contingency plans. The need to improve coordination on

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gender issues in humanitarian, peacebuilding and development contexts was also highlighted.

Consultations for the review of the Handbook will continue in Jordan, Nepal and South Sudan. The results will be presented during the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in the month of May. The revised Handbook will be ready for publication in early 2017. In Colombia, the relevant groups of the humanitarian architecture (for example, the subgroup on gender-based violence) will provide follow-up on the proposals that emerged from interviews and during the workshop, counting on the support of the new inter-agency gender advisor (GenCap) of the Humanitarian Country Team. The humanitarian community has a key role in promoting do no harm, ensuring protection for communities, promoting the capacities of women and girls and gender equality in all humanitarian and transition actions.

Colombia launches post-conflict fund

The United Nations Multidonor Trust Fund for post-conflict in Colombia was launched from the Presidential Palace on 17 February.

The Multidonor Fund is established as a responsible and transparent tool within the framework of Colombia in Peace, the initiative led by the Government that groups different cooperation funds for the post-conflict. The objective of the Fund is to finance a coordinated response in stabilization, preparedness and early implementation of the peace agreements. The Fund is governed by a Directive Committee, co-chaired by the Advisory Minister for the Post-conflict and the UN Resident Coordinator, supported by a Technical Secretariat and administered by the Multidonor Partner Trust Fund Office in New York.

The Fund has three primary objectives: to make available to the government the capacity and the existing work of the United Nations; to ensure a national, coordinated and aligned appropriation of United Nations actions in line with government priorities; and to provide a responsible and transparent financial instrument to mobilize and channel funding to respond to immediate and medium-term priorities for the post-conflict.

In this sense, the Fund includes three operating windows: one national that channels resources directly to Government entities; another non-governmental that channels financing to implementing non-governmental partners through a managing agent; and another in which United Nations Agencies are eligible to receive financing.

The Interinstitutional Post-conflict Advisory Board identified the following issues to be prioritized by the Fund: access to justice, local alternative development, peacebuilding and reconciliation culture, human rights and social co-existence, demining, preparation for transitional justice and reparation, citizen participation, pedagogy and communication, conflict prevention, public health, food security and strengthening capacities to fight against crime. In this initial prioritization, humanitarian issues were not specifically identified, although some humanitarian actions could be included from other sectors, for example food security.

It could be necessary that the humanitarian community continue to advocate for humanitarian issues, which are still relevant, especially in the immediate post-agreement period, so that they receive sufficient visibility and are taken into account as a fundamental complement to peacebuilding and sustainable development.

Citizen participation in the peace process

This article is contributed by UNDP Colombia

Between 2012 and 2016, the Government of Colombia and FARC-EP, parties to the Peace talks, requested to the United Nations in Colombia and the Universidad Nacional - Centro de Pensamiento y Seguimiento al Diálogo de Paz, to organize and systematize five national and four regional Forums on the six topics of the General Accord for the Termination of the Conflict and Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace:



Credit: UNDP, Political participation forum

- Comprehensive agrarian development (with a focus on the territories)
- Political participation
- Solution to illicit drug problem
- Victims
- End of the conflict
- Referendums, verification and implementation

This request made by the parties had as its objective to promote citizen participation in the peace process and the UN and Universidad Nacional worked in a coordinated manner to create participation spaces. UN Agencies and Programmes displayed an important inter-agency effort led by UNDP.

A total of 7,795 people participated in nine forums. Around 59 per cent of participants were men and 41 per cent women, from 2,700 civil-society organizations, political and social movements, and the private sector. In the organization of the Forums, efforts were made to guarantee pluralism and representation from the regions, ensuring the participation of representatives from all 32 departments and the capital in the five national Forums.

Once each Forum was finalized, the organizers systematized the proposals and handed them over to the parties to the Peace Talks, to serve as inputs to the discussions on the General Agreement.

The last forum took place from 8 to 10 February 2016 on two points currently being discussed by the parties: the end to conflict and the referendums, implementation and verification. More than seven-hundred people participated to this Forum held in Bogota, in representation of 339 organizations, political parties, social movements and the private sector. Some 45 per cent of participants were women and 55 per cent men. This Forum, as was the case in the others, was characterized by inter-agency support including UNODC, OCHA, IOM, UNICEF, UNWomen, UN Human Rights, UNHCR, FAO and UNDP.

The Forum was characterized by wide participation and respectful dialogue, with diverse perspectives and a differential approach; participants acknowledged the difficulties faced by each population group and related to the topics under discussion. Different organizations presented their proposals and shared their vision. The Forum was distinguished by a high level of preparation and constructive discussion, which was reflected by the large number of written proposals presented by the citizens (more than 302 in total).

In brief

- **2015 displacement estimates:** according to analysis of official and updated UARIV data, OCHA estimates that the total IDP population in 2015 could reach 180,325 people.
- **El Niño event:** According to information provided by the Ombudsman's Office, as a result of the El Niño 313 people were displaced from a rural area of Bolivar department. The displacement occurred after a prolonged drought that created humanitarian needs in food security, nutrition, water, basic sanitation and hygiene. The community fled to the municipal seat and is currently in temporary shelters. According to the Office, these same people were earlier victims of displacement by the armed conflict. The Ombudsman Office also informed that 558,000 people would be affected by el Niño only in the Caribbean and Andean regions; 397,000 hectares and 225,000 livestock (sources of food and livelihoods for communities in the region) were also affected. In 2015 the UNGRD reports 547,529 people affected by natural disasters for the entire country. This number does not make reference to people directly impacted by El Niño and include people affected by natural disasters in general.

Para más información, por favor contactar a: OCHA Colombia, ochacolombia@un.org Tel. +571 6221100

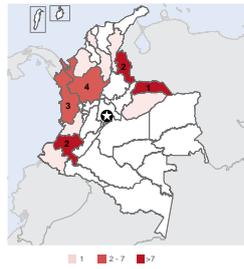
Para medios de comunicación, por favor contactar a Chiara Capozio, Oficial de Asuntos Humanitarios: capozio@un.org Tel. (+57-1) 6221100 Ext. 1303.

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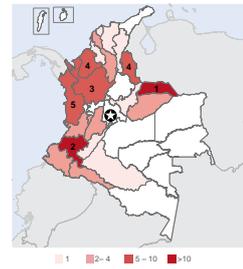
Annex: Colombia Humanitarian Situation, February 2016

Map 1: # Armed actions



Department	#Actions
1 Arauca	12
2 Cauca	8
3 Norte de Santander	8
4 Chocó	6
5 Antioquia	4
Other	11
Total	49

Map 2: # of attacks against civilians



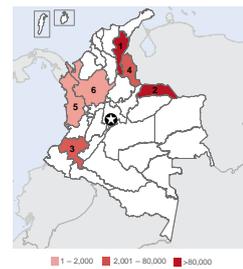
Department	#Actions
1 Arauca	25
2 Cauca	19
3 Antioquia	10
4 Norte de Santander	6
5 Córdoba	6
Other	34
Total	100

Map 3: of IDPs in mass events



Department	#IDPs
1 Chocó	950
2 Nariño	219
Total	1.169

Map 4: # people affected by access and mobility constraints



Department	#Actions
1 Cesar	149.400
2 Arauca	80.825
3 Cauca	30.967
4 Norte de Santander	2.830
5 Chocó	1.134
6 Others	150
Total	265.306