Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)

COLOMBIA

Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID 2018)

Conflict displacement
Figures analysis

COLOMBIA - Contextual update

Stock:	6,509,000
New displacements:	139,000
Returns:	459,000
Provisional solutions:	541,000

For decades, Colombia has faced one of the world's most severe internal displacement situations caused by conflict. While the 2016 peace agreement between the Government and the FARC was a significant achievement, displacement has continued. Obstacles to return and a lack of durable solutions also persist, as some armed groups continue to be active and violate a wide range of human rights and as victim's comprehensive compensation and land issues remain unresolved.

After several years of improvements, particularly during the last two years of the peace talks between the Colombian government and FARC-EP, armed violence has increased in 2017 compared to the previous year, particularly attacks against civilians and protected persons. Several humanitarian indicators that started deteriorating in mid-2016 continued to do so over the last year. While the total estimated number of displacement has decreased, mass displacement increased in 2017 for the first time since 2012. Most of the events causing displacements (34 per cent) occurred in February and March 2017. The most affected departments were those in the Pacific Region (Chocó and Nariño) and the border with Venezuela (Norte de Santander). They account for over 80 per cent of mass displacements. Indigenous and Afro Colombian communities are the most affected, constituting about three thirds of all people displaced in mass displacement events. While combats between several actors have caused the most displacement, unilateral actions by ELN and Post demobilisation armed groups also stand out as displacement triggers.

COLOMBIA - Major displacement events in 2017

COLOMBIA

Caribbean Sea

Santa Marta
Barranquilla
Cartagena

PANAMA

VENEZUELA

Cúcuta

NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN

Medellín
Bucaramanga
Manizales
Pereira
Bogotá
Buenaventura
Tuluá
Cali

About 139,000 new displacements due to combats, threats, or other actions by post-demobilization armed groups, FARC dissidents, EPL, ELN, and others.
Location: Countrywide
Source: OCHA - CIMAU

Pasto

ECUADOR

BRAZIL

PERU

Leticia

100 km

Sources: Displacement data (IDMC); map (OCHA, Reliefweb) created in Sep 2013.
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations and IDMC.

iDMC internal displacement monitoring centre

20 YEARS 1998 - 2018

COLOMBIA - Stock: 6,509,000 IDPs
This corresponds to the total number of individuals in a situation of internal displacement at the end of 2017

Sources and methodologies
We base our estimates on the Victim's Registry (RUV), which is operated by the country's Victims' Unit and keeps record of all victims of the decades-long civil war. Based on data from other government agencies and from surveys, the RUV evaluates the extent to which a victim has overcome their situation of vulnerability. This assessment (SSV) takes into account seven categories of vulnerability: housing, family reunification, identification, nutrition, health, education, and income.

Main caveats and specific monitoring challenges
Due to the RUV's assessment of the IDPs' situation, the total stock estimate might include victims of forced displacement who have overcome vulnerability, but for whom there is not enough information to make that assertion. It might also include victims of forced displacement who have sought refuge outside Colombia's borders, and victims of forced displacement who were also reported as disappeared. The RUV is moreover continuously revising its databases, leading occasionally to significant revisions of figures used in our estimates.

IDMC figure, methodology and rationale
Since the RUV counts the total amount of people displaced since 1985, we partnered with them to obtain a stock figure by discounting people who have died, and people who have moved towards a durable solution. In order to estimate the latter, we take the results of the RUV's SSV into account.

Significant changes from last year: methodological and contextual changes
The GRID 2018 figure is lower than last year's because we obtained information on the situation of IDPs, allowing us to approximate the number of people who have overcome their main displacement-related vulnerabilities. This is the primary explanation of the stock decrease of nearly 1,000,000 people compared to the estimate for 2016. In addition, the updated stock figure also decreased due to some downwards revisions by RUV, and due to more than 18,000 IDP deaths.

COLOMBIA - New displacements: 139,000

This corresponds to the estimated number of internal displacement movements to have taken place during the year

Sources and methodologies
We base our estimates on the Victim's Registry (RUV), which is operated by the country's Victims' Unit and keeps record of all victims of the decades-long civil war. The UN's Colombia Information Management and Analysis Unit (CIMAU), led by OCHA used a statistical methodology in order to project the annual consolidated figure of new displacements. CIMAU decided to make a projection with 2009 to 2016 RUV data.They used a Seasonal Autoregressive Integrated Moving Average Model (SARIMA), which is essentially a linear regression which estimates new displacements for a given month based on displacements during the same month of the previous year, displacements during the previous month, the moving averages of those two months (average new displacement per month in the previous 12 months), and mass displacements during the month in question.

Main caveats and specific monitoring challenges
The CIMAU figure is based on a projection. The methodology used is still under revision. While the projection aims to take into account present mass displacements in the calculation, it is still mainly based on historical data. Additionally, it is a national projection and does not allow for differences in the regional trends of displacement. RUV data suggests a decrease in displacement in 2017 while humanitarian actors have witnessed an increase in mass displacements. This could be due to a change in the dynamics of displacement or due to a bias in the reporting mechanism of the RUV.

IDMC figure, methodology and rationale
We adopt CIMAU's projection because the RUV's data is not up to date: victims have two years to report displacement and even after they have done so, the RUV may still take time to process their request.

Significant changes from last year: methodological and contextual changes
CIMAU updated their methodology this year to a more sophisticated statistical method. The figure is lower than for 2016. While this might be associated to the peace deal the Colombian Government signed with the FARC it could also be related to the bias or shift in displacement dynamics mentioned above. CIMAU's methodology is more precise than before and does take into account mass displacements; we therefore doubt that the decrease is due to the change in methodology.

COLOMBIA - Returns: 459,000

This corresponds to the number of individuals for which sufficient evidence exists to indicate a return to the habitual place of residence

Sources and methodologies
We base our estimates on the Victim's Registry (RUV), which is operated by the country's Victims' Unit and keeps record of all victims of the decades-long civil war. Based on data from other government agencies and from surveys, the RUV evaluates the extent to which a victim has overcome their situation of vulnerability. This assessment (SSV) considers seven categories of vulnerability: housing, family reunification, identification, nutrition, health, education, and income.

Main caveats and specific monitoring challenges
The estimate does not technically refer to returnees (their geographical location is unknown) and may include IDPs who have settled elsewhere or locally integrated. However, we include them as such for lack of a more appropriate category and because overcoming vulnerability is the best available proxy for a returns figure. The total returns figure might still exclude victims of forced displacement who may have overcome vulnerability, but for whom there is not enough information to make that assertion.

IDMC figure, methodology and rationale
We consider that the victims of displacement included in the RUV, and for whom there is enough information available to assert that they have overcome vulnerability, can be considered in a similar situation to people moving towards achieving or having achieved a durable solution. We therefore discount them from the total figure of IDP stock.

Significant changes from last year: methodological and contextual changes
We did not publish a returnee figure in the GRID 2017 because we had not been granted access to the vulnerability data collected by RUV.

COLOMBIA - Provisional solutions: 541,000

This corresponds to cases of individuals who IDMC considers to not have achieved a durable solution

Specific challenges in accounting for Returns

To honor the victims of the conflict and to protect the reparations they are entitled to, the Victims' Unit does not remove victims from its registry unless their inclusion process is proven to be fraudulent. They have programs to support IDP returns and keep track of the participants in these programs. However, the RUV does not have any information that enables them to evaluate the success of IDPs attempted returns. The best proxies available are the government's socio-economic indicators. These allow the RUV to carry out a vulnerability assessment (SSV) considering seven categories: housing, income, family reunification, education, identification, health, and nutrition. These categories differ from the IASC indicators on durable solutions. They do however provide an idea about the IDPs' situation. Unfortunately, due to information constraints, the RUV only has complete SSV results for less than 20% of all IDPs.

Local integration process - N/A: The RUV carries out a vulnerability assessment considering seven categories: housing, income, family reunification, education, identification, health, and nutrition. Of up to three million people with information available for the housing category, almost one million have overcome housing related vulnerability. These do not technically constitute returns, relocations, or local integrations since there is no information available about their geographical location. However, given that they have overcome the vulnerability most characteristic to displacement, they can be considered a step closer to achieving a durable solution. This million might include the 459,000 already registered as returns, wherefore we subtracted 459,000 from the one million to arrive at an estimate of the IDPs having only achieved provisional solutions. We consider that the remaining 541,000 are part of the "Local integration process" - Provisional Solution category and that they can be taken off the stock figure for Colombia.

Return to the unknown - No sufficient evidence to conclude the return movement resulted in a durable solution (some evidence exists of a return or relocation/resettlement movement): More than 452,000 people participated in the Victims Unit's Return Programs. However, nothing is known about the success of their return. They might be included among the 541,000 who have overcome housing related vulnerability and are thus not taken off the stock figure.