

Ceasefire agreements and early reintegration:

IMPLICATIONS OF BILATERAL CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT FOR REINTEGRATION IN COLOMBIA

INTRODUCTION

On June 23rd, the Government of Colombia (GOC) and the leftist guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) signed a bilateral ceasefire agreement that includes provisions for where the FARC will gather (23 'transitional zones' and 8 smaller 'camps') to progressively lay down their arms over a period of six months, once a final peace agreement is signed.ⁱⁱ After nearly four years of peace negotiations, this tremendous step forward met with widespread celebrations across Colombia, and boosted Santos' approval ratings from 21% to 30% after the announcement,ⁱⁱⁱ despite ongoing criticism from opponents of the peace process. This Spotlight examines one critical component of the ceasefire agreement: early reintegration initiatives for the FARC members within the transitional zones. The document introduces basic concepts, situates Colombia's ceasefire agreement within other international agreements of its kind, describes remaining uncertainties, and offers several recommended approaches in order to increase the odds for a successful transition to civilian life for FARC members.

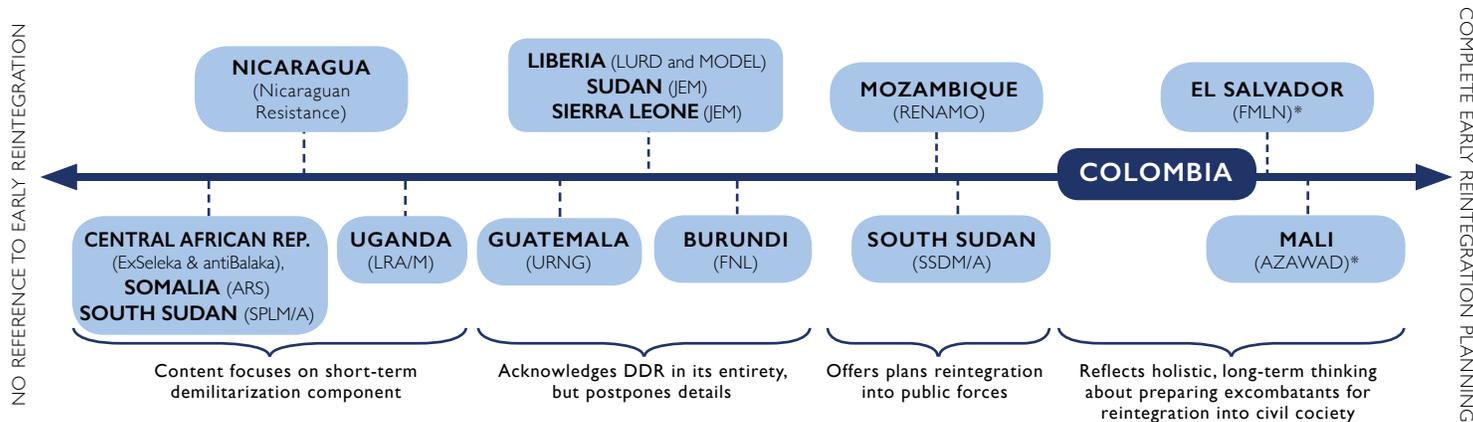
EARLY EFFORTS TO PROMOTE LONG-TERM REINTEGRATION

'Early reintegration' refers to activities that occur during the early stages of the demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) process aimed at ensuring that reintegration rolls out effectively and robustly, thereby improving long-term outcomes. This includes, for instance, vocational and temporary employment training, literacy programs, healthcare services, orientations on the longer-term reintegration process, formal education, direct cash payments, food provisions, allowances for basic sanitary and survival items, and data collection on ex-combatant profiles used to inform future reintegration programming. While each context presents its own unique challenges, early reintegration programs can provide a basic framework for promoting the economic, social, and cultural aspects of the reintegration process. The economic stability of ex-combatants is a core concern for policy makers, as a lack of income-generating

activities upon reincorporation is one of the key factors in recidivism.^{iv} Former FARC members can also expect to encounter fairly inhospitable socioeconomic and political terrain upon reincorporation, including, but not limited to basic job requirements that they lack due to time spent outside of civil society (such as required military service records). They may potentially also have under-developed social skills required for maintaining interpersonal relations due to their experiences with violence, trauma, and isolation. These factors are all exacerbated by a prevailing stigma against ex-combatants in many of the communities they will enter. For reintegration to be successful, this complicated array of challenges must be addressed. Finally, successful early reintegration may engender greater commitment to the initial disarmament and demobilization as well, particularly among sub-factions of the FARC that lack strong political will to return to civilian life.^v

SITUATING COLOMBIA'S CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

On the global stage, Colombia's ceasefire agreement addresses early reintegration more explicitly than its predecessors have done. As shown in the continuum below, few agreements even mention preparing the ex-combatants for entering civilian life; this is especially true when ex-combatants are not transferred en masse to the public forces, as is the Colombian case. It is also important to note that the two more comprehensive ceasefire agreements (El Salvador and Mali) embed within a larger peace accord, which may explain why they have included significant planning for early and regular reintegration activities. The agreements reviewed include the following:



* Ceasefire agreements comprise part of a whole peace agreement.

GOVERNMENT / TREATY DATE	ATTENTION TO EARLY REINTEGRATION ACTIVITIES
Central African Republic 23 July 2014	No mention
Somalia 9 June 2008	No mention
South Sudan 23 January 2014	No mention
Nicaragua 18 April 1990	Armed actors proceed to "security zones"
Uganda 23 February 2008	Mentions cantonment & security measures at sites
Liberia 17 June 2003	Displaces DDR details to future conversations
Sudan 10 February 2013	Displaces DDR details to future conversations
Sierra Leone 10 November 2000	Displaces DDR details to future conversations
Guatemala 4 December 1996	Displaces DDR details to future deliberations; asserts that there will be political, social, and economic components
Burundi 18 June 2006	Clearly defines DDR as short-, mid-, and long-term process; binds parties to future details of DDR program (to be determined)
Mozambique 24 August 2014	Facilitates integration into public forces
South Sudan 27 February 2012	Guarantees for political participation; guarantees for partial integration into public forces
Colombia 23 June 2016	Provisions for identification, formal and vocational education, other preparatory activities
El Salvador 16 January 1992	Clear provisions for education, employment, housing and other programs; future legislative measures to guarantee political participation
Mali 15 May 2015	Optional integration into public forces with alternatives for those who opt out; bookmarks state resources required for implementation; comprehensive measures for socioeconomic and political development.

REMAINING UNCERTAINTIES

The June 23rd ceasefire agreement in Colombia between the GOC and FARC offers the following reference to early reintegration programming:

In developing the process for preparing FARC-EP combatants for reincorporation into civilian life, [the GOC and the FARC-EP] will implement measures and preparatory activities within the Zones, which will include all kinds of training of the FARC-EP - according to their own interests - on productive labors, basic primary, secondary, or technical education, sessions for the issuance of identification cards, and other preparatory activities designed to prepare the FARC-EP for reincorporation and to facilitate the transition to legality.

This concise but accommodating inclusion of early reintegration activities indicates a progressive advance in ceasefire agreements, and offers promise for long-term strategic thinking on the DDR process more generally. Nonetheless, many questions remain as to how the GOC will realize these “preparatory activities” and how the FARC guerrillas will receive them. Drawing on lessons learned from both the Colombian and international contexts, we expect to see more information emerging on the following dimensions:

TIME & INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRAINTS

- How early reintegration activities will be completed within a six-month time frame
- How institutions and educators will address the infrastructure limitations of the transitional zones
- What the process will be for recruiting and training instructors and professionals who will be called on to operate in novel, dynamic environments

RELATIONSHIP TO REINSERTION & LONGER-TERM REINTEGRATION

- How the early reintegration services will link to reinsertion and long-term reintegration strategies
- What will be the relationship between preparatory activities and the eventual socioeconomic and political environments in which the demobilized will find themselves

INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- What specific institutions will be present within the zones tasked with completing the activities (e.g., public vocational institute SENA, state records office Registraduría, NGOs, private companies, and/or international cooperation options)

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- What the shared objectives are for the educational, vocational, and/or other services
- What the specific desired outcomes are for basic citizen documentation requirements (e.g., identification cards, military service cards, inclusion in biometric data bases)

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Despite these uncertainties, this analysis offers several recommendations for improving the odds of success in transition:

- **Set clear expectations among all involved parties** regarding what can and cannot be reasonably accomplished within the time and budget constraints of the transitional zones. Mistrust towards state institutions is extremely high among these and other conflict-affected actors;^{vi} it will be important to both be faithful to commitments and to be sure that potential beneficiaries have a clear understanding of the range and limits of what is being offered.
- **Approach workshops and courses within the transitional zones through a holistic lens – i.e.,** balance formal education with life skills training, vocational with psychosocial skills. Once these ex-guerrillas leave the transitional zones, income generation will be an overwhelming concern for most, and skill requirements will differ vastly along many axes, including whether or not they are rurally situated. However, finding and keeping a job requires a balance of all of the abovementioned skill sets;^{vii} the transitional zones offer an ideal moment to begin building these skills.
- **Address early reintegration services using tailored approaches,** which adjust content and delivery based on age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and disability.^{viii} The differential needs of sub-populations relate to different forms of vulnerability and risks for recidivism after they leave the transitional zones. For example, racism against some ethnic groups may diminish job prospects in addition to their ex-guerrilla status; female ex-combatants will likely experience additional and distinct forms of stigma upon reentry, for example due to assumptions of sexual violence or promiscuity.

Ongoing review and oversight of early reintegration programs will support more effective program implementation within the transitional zones, and allow both policy makers and transitioning FARC members greater continuity throughout the earliest stages of their entry to civilian life. Such continuity can help to contribute to greater stability over the long-term.

¹http://files.ctctodn.com/f2e255c0101/2eaf8f93-e25b-4a06-9401-fbfe17114e17.pdf?utm_source=Texto+del+Acuerdo+sobre+el+fin+del+conflicto&utm_campaign=Proceso+de+Paz%2C+nuevos+comunicados%2C+27+de+febrero+de+2014&utm_medium=email

²<http://www.elheraldo.co/nacional/estas-son-las-23-zonas-veredales-y-los-ochos-campamentos-donde-se-ubicaran-las-farc-268160>

³<http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/politica/resultados-de-la-encuesta-gallup-del-mes-de-julio-2016-DA4525270>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/2GDDR_ENG_WITH_COVER.pdf

⁶http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/colombia/AB2014_Colombia_Country_Report_v21_revised_W_06042015.pdf

⁷<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13533310500066537?mobileUi=0&journalCode=finp20#.v5E6ilPhDIU>

⁸http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/2GDDR_ENG_WITH_COVER.pdf