

DDR AND CHILD SOLDIER ISSUES

A MONTHLY REVIEW
JULY 2016

USAID supports the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Colombia through the **Recruitment Prevention and Reintegration (RPR) Program**. The RPR Program provides institutional strengthening for the Government of Colombia (GOC) to support legal, social and economic reintegration services to demobilized adults and disengaged children, as well as to prevent new recruitment.

The GOC supports demobilized adults through its **Colombian Reintegration Agency (ACR)**. The DDR initiatives of the ACR aim to fulfill the following objectives: 1) Create conditions for demobilized ex-combatants to become independent citizens, 2) Strengthen socio-economic conditions in receptor communities, and 3) Promote reconciliation.

Children and adolescents who disengage from illegal armed groups, recognized as victims, receive special attention through programs and policies led by the **Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF)** through its Specialized Assistance Program, which aims to reestablish and guarantee rights with special emphasis on protection, education and health.

This monthly review, produced by IOM, provides a summary of news related to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in Colombia, along with statistics on ex-combatant adults and disengaged children.

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KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Colombia's Constitutional Court approves plebiscite

On Monday, July 18th, Colombia's Constitutional Court approved the plebiscite for the peace accords. This mechanism uses a popular vote to either legitimize or reject a single issue, and will potentially take place around October this year. Citizens will have the opportunity to vote either "yes" or "no" for the peace accords and the results will be binding for President Santos. Voters will not have the typical electoral option of "voto en blanco" – i.e., voting neither for nor against, but registering a vote nonetheless – and the process will require 4.5 million votes (13% of the Colombian voting population) to be valid. A positive vote will catalyze the constitutional reforms process required to implement the accords.¹ Additionally, the Constitutional Court deemed it acceptable for public officials to lead campaigns regarding the plebiscite, though these campaigns may not be used to promote particular parties or candidates, nor may they use state resources.² Analysts predict animated opposition from the Centro Democrático party.³

Gender Sub-commission presents results in Havana

On Sunday, July 24th, the joint GOC-FARC delegation released the work of the Gender Sub-commission in Havana. Chief negotiators implemented the Sub-commission in September 2014, two years after the start of the peace talks; it is the first commission of its kind to address gendered and LGBT community concerns during peace negotiations.⁴ To this end, it has received testimonies and recommendations from victims (60% of those who visited Havana were women), 18 women's and LGBT organizations, 10 experts on sexual violence, female ex-combatants from five other countries, and the permanent technical support of three experts from Colombia, Cuba, and Norway.⁵

Among the Gender Sub-commission's contributions are the following: on the first point of rural reform, women will have differential access to educational opportunities, to the Land Trust (an early provision in the accords that guarantees access to land for certain underprivileged and conflict affected actors), and to mechanisms for closing the gender gap with regards to land ownership and retention. On the second point of political participation, risk assessments for violence against social leaders will include assessments of both gender- and sexual orientation-based discrimination and threats against their person or their families. The fourth point of the accords addresses both illicit drug production and consumption, and promises gender-based evaluations of participation in and effects of both. Most notably on the fifth point of victims, sexual violence will be excluded from all amnesty considerations, and the Truth Commission emerging from the peace talks will have a dedicated gender work group.

¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/pasos-para-votar-el-plebiscito-para-la-paz/16648059>

² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/justicia/claves-del-plebiscito-para-referendacion-de-acuerdos/16648586>

³ <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/07/18/politics-rolls-colombias-tentative-peace-deal-with-the-farc-eln-santos-uribe/>

⁴ <http://www.derechoshumanos.gov.co/Prensa/2016/Paginas/ComunicadoConjunto82.aspx>

⁵ <http://www.derechoshumanos.gov.co/Prensa/2016/Paginas/abecapreguntasrespuestasenfocoquogenero.aspx>

PEACE PROCESSES

Break in the bilateral ceasefire between the FARC and the GOC

A confrontation in the department of Meta between the FARC and the GOC broke the June 23rd bilateral ceasefire agreed upon by the parties in. On Friday July 8th, FARC members of clashed with a special forces unit of the Colombian Army, which operates under a mandate of territorial monitoring, control, and protection of civilian populations. The reportedly accidental confrontation occurred within the context of an overarching mission coordinated by the United Nations, the Colombian Army, and the FARC, in which certain FARC members were set to leave their camps to either prepare the transitional zones where they will lay down arms, or to train with the UN on issues of monitoring and verification. In this instance, the FARC reportedly had inadvertently traveled outside of the agreed upon zones where security was guaranteed, due to using incorrect coordinates.⁶ No Colombian Army soldiers or civilians were harmed in the encounter, and uncertainty remains as to whether or not any FARC members were injured.⁷ No further breaks in the cease fire occurred throughout the month of July.

Two FARC Fronts Reject Impending Peace Accord

The First and Seventh Fronts of the FARC announced that they do not plan to lay down their arms in the event of a peace accord. The two fronts reportedly have combined operations in the eastern departments of Vaupes, Guaviare, and Meta, and comprise roughly 800 guerrillas (11% of the estimated 7,000 remaining FARC members), and both groups have links to lucrative illegal mining and drug trafficking operations.⁸ Conflicting accounts remain as to whether these announcements were the acts of a few financially-motivated leaders, or if they represent the intentions of entire blocs.⁹ In response, the FARC leadership asserted that economic interests are motivating the dissident factions, and stated that those who did not conform to the peace accord would be “putting themselves outside of the FARC-EP and [would not be able to] use its name, arms or properties for any purpose.”¹⁰ President Santos stated that any FARC who did not adhere to the peace agreement would be killed or imprisoned through ongoing war operations.¹¹

Three FARC negotiators to lead guerrilla group's disarmament

On July 30th, three FARC leaders who have had active roles in the peace negotiations in Havana – Pablo Catatumbo, Marco León Calarcá y Carlos Antonio Lozada – were appointed to lead the process of temporarily relocating the guerrillas to the areas where they will eventually lay down their arms.¹²

PEACE PROCESSES

United States commits \$33 million to demining

On July 26th, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos attempted to give new life to the stalled peace talks with the ELN by naming Carlos Velandia (alias 'Felipe Torres') y Gerardo Bermúdez (alias 'Francisco Galán') as representatives for the peace talks. The two men were previously members of the guerrilla group. Talks with the guerrillas have stalled since the March 30th announcement that the ELN would begin a peace process with the GOC. The GOC claims that this is due to the unmet requirement that the group stop its attacks and kidnapping practices; the ELN accuses the GOC of intentionally freezing the talks. President Santos issued a special resolution to remove outstanding warrants against Velandia and Bermúdez so that they might participate in future dialogues. They will still be required to attend their own judicial proceedings, however, which include charges of kidnapping, homicide, robbery, and participation in the ELN.¹³ Both men ostensibly resigned from the guerrilla group years ago, and past clashes between Bermúdez and the ELN's Central Command have resulted in some spokespersons from the ELN rejecting his presence on the negotiating team.¹⁴ Nonetheless, the guerrilla group still maintains that it is open to dialogues with the GOC.

⁶ <http://equipopazgobierno.presidencia.gov.co/prensa/declaraciones/Paginas/humberto-calle-aspectos-humanitarios-farc-enfrentamiento-coordenadas-candilejas-uribe-meta.aspx>

⁷ <http://www.fuerzasmilitares.org/notas/colombia/ministerio-de-defensa/6947-roto-cese-al-fuego.html>

⁸ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/procesodepaz/frente7delafarcclamapocosedesmovilizariadiceprocuradoralejandroordonez/16639561>

⁹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/justicia/personasqueestariandetrasdedecisiondefrenteprimerdealejarsedelprocesodepaz/16639361>

¹⁰ <http://www.pazfarc-ep.org/comunicados/estadomayorfarc/item/3490-comunicado-sobre-el-frenteprimero-armando-rios.html>

¹¹ <http://cnn.espanol.cnn.com/2016/07/07/sants-a-las-farc-el-que-no-se-desmovilice-terminara-en-una-tumba-o-en-una-carcel/>

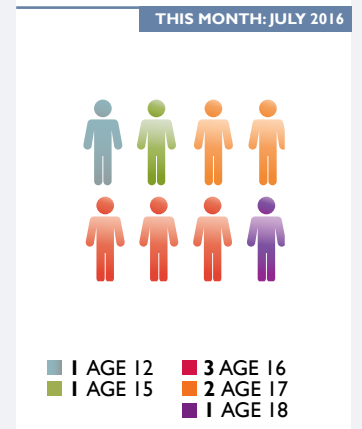
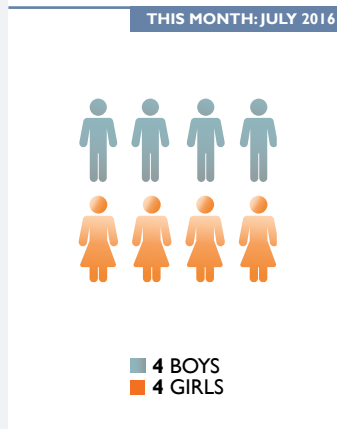
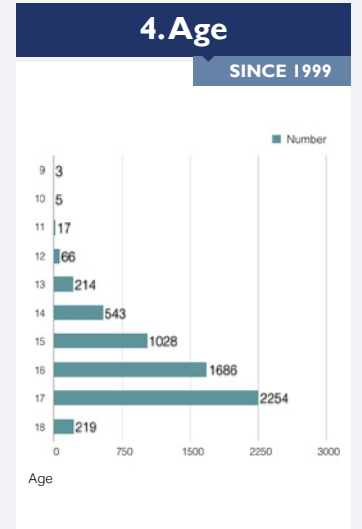
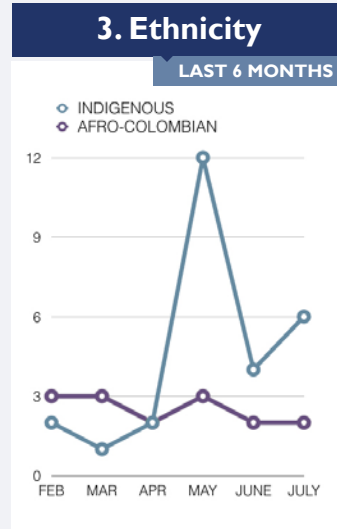
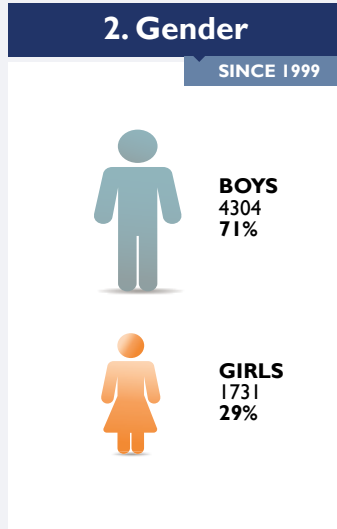
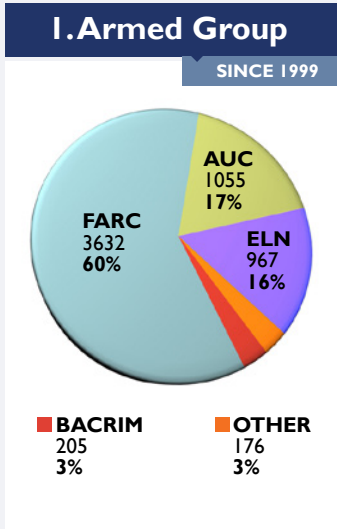
¹² <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/farc-pablo-catatumbo-calarca-y-lozada-lideraran-proceso-de-desarme-y-ubicacion-temporal/484020>

¹³ <http://www.elspectador.com/noticias/politica/gobierno-designa-carlos-velandia-y-francisco-galan-gest-articulo-645550>

¹⁴ <http://www.elspectador.com/noticias/politica/elrechazanombriamientodefrancisco-galan-gestordarticulo645807>

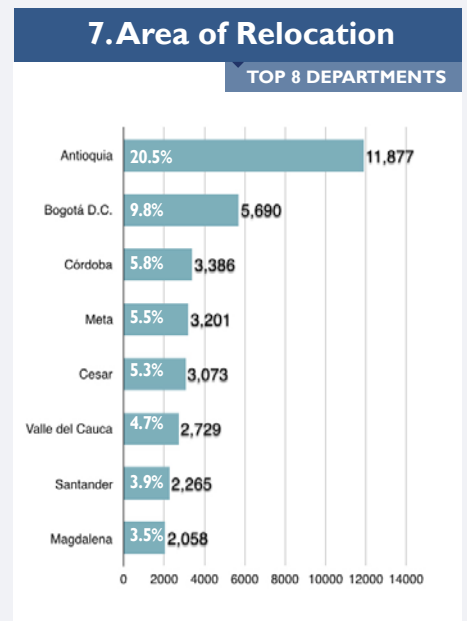
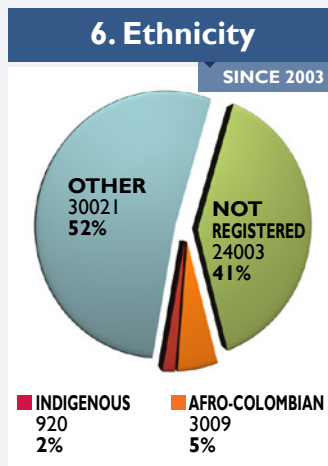
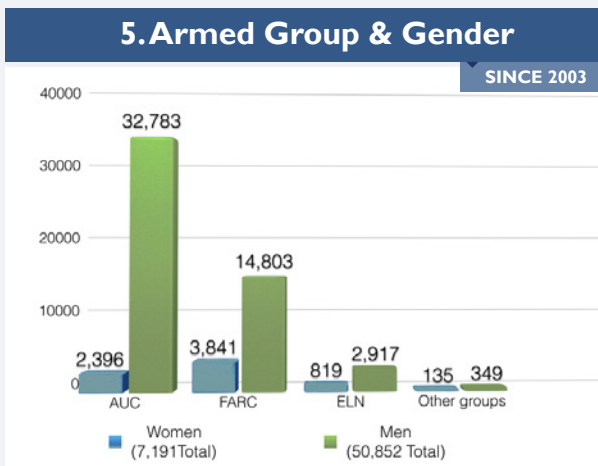
FIGURES & TRENDS

Disengaged Children & Adolescents TOTAL 6,035



* These data are estimates based on the information available

Demobilized Adults TOTAL 58,043



Data up to July 31, 2016

Figure 1: Total number of disengaged minors grouped by gender. Boys have historically been more frequently recruited than girls.

Figure 2: Numbers of minors who disengaged from each IAG. Most disengaged children were recruited by the FARC.

Figure 3: Total number of disengaged minors by ethnicity. Indigenous groups are disproportionately affected by recruitment.

Figure 4: Numbers of disengaged minors in each age group. The average age of recruitment is between 15 and 18 years old.

Sources for figures 1-4: ICBF Database, Unified Beneficiary Registry (RUI)

Figure 5: Total number of male and female adults who demobilized from each IAG. The AUC had the lowest proportion of women.

Figure 6: The eight departments to which the highest numbers of ex-combatants relocate for their reintegration process.

Figure 7: Total number of demobilized adults by ethnicity.

Sources for figures 5-7: ICBF Database and ACR Reintegration Information System (SIR)

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Members of the United Nations monitoring and verifying team arrive in Colombia

A 23-member team of United Nations observers arrived this past week to complement the original group of 20 civilian staff in Colombia. The observers from Argentina, Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, and Uruguay will be responsible for monitoring and verifying the implementation of the bilateral ceasefire and final peace agreement.¹⁵ Eventually, 500 observers will participate in the mission, and will mostly comprise individuals from the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).¹⁶

European Union is “totally committed” to supporting Colombia’s peace process

The European Union Special Envoy to the Colombian peace process, Eamon Gilmore, announced on July 8th that the European Union is “totally committed” to support Colombia’s peace process. Gilmore made these remarks in Urabá on his fifth visit to the country and in conversation with the OEA, MAPP/OEA mission. He was accompanied by the European Union ambassador to Colombia, Ana Paula Zacarías.¹⁷

USAID and the IOM host International Summit on Reintegration, Reconciliation, and Peace Building in Colombia

The five-day international summit occurred during the second full week of July and was designed to facilitate the exchange of best practices among international DDR leaders and policy makers. Humberto de la Calle, chief GOC negotiator in Havana, provided opening remarks for the event, which hosted representatives from Kenya, El Salvador, Guatemala, Azerbaijan, the United States, England, Northern Ireland, and the Philippines. Also present were demobilized guerrillas from other post-conflict settings, such as El Salvadorian ex-combatant María Ofelia Navarrete, who noted that “peace in Colombia will benefit all Colombians...[and], at the end of the day, the dissidents will be convinced that peace is better than war, as long as the peace accords are achieved.”¹⁸

New and renewed commitments to demining in Colombia

On July 20th, the U.S.-Norwegian Demining Initiative gained momentum after a day-long planning summit. The Initiative involves the public and private sectors and NGOs with the mandate to combat the humanitarian damage caused by landmines and unexploded ordinance in post-conflict countries. Already, the Initiative has conducted a successful pilot program in Colombia.¹⁹ Additionally, Norway announced the same day that Colombia would comprise one of the 13 countries included in its 45 million euro support for demining projects. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs looks to eradicate land mines within 10 years.²⁰

INSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS

Special Jurisdiction for Peace will not apply to dissident FARC members

The Special Jurisdiction for Peace is a key transitional justice mechanism that will comprise part of the institutional infrastructure for Colombia’s post-conflict transition. The GOC has confirmed that it will only apply to those guerrillas who sign the final peace accord. Thus, should any dissident groups continue organized, armed action – such as the First Front that has threatened to do so - they will be subjected to ordinary justice proceedings against organized crime in the event of their capture.²¹

GOC finalizing protocols for FARC transitional zones

On July 26th, President Juan Manuel Santos announced that the operational procedures are almost ready for the FARC transitional zones where the guerrillas will gather to lay down their arms for up to 180 days. The national government and local administrations are working with the public forces to finalize the protocols, which should be released prior to the signing of the final accord. The purpose of these documents is to ensure that the FARC transitional zones do not have a negative effect on the surrounding populations.²² The monitoring and verification of the zones falls under purview of the United Nations.

¹⁵ <http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/First%ADGroup%ADof%ADUN%ADPeace%ADProcess%ADObservers%ADArrive%ADin%ADColombia%AD20160629%AD0028.html>

¹⁶ <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/proceso-de-paz-500-observadores-tendra-la-mision-de-verificacion-de-la-onu/483620>

¹⁷ <https://www.mappoea.org/noticias/eamongilmorevaloraenormecontribuciondemappoeaalapazencolombia/>

¹⁸ <http://nacionesunidas.org.co/blog/2016/07/13/usaideoimapoyancumbreinternacionalenreintegracionreconciliacionyconstrucciondepaz/>

¹⁹ <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/07/260292.htm>

²⁰ <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2016/07/20/netherlandswanttoeradicateandmineswithin10years>

²¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/procesodepaz/justiciaespecialparalapazylajusticiaordinariaenacuertosdepaz/16643247>

²² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/protocolosdezonasdeconcentraciondelasfarc/16654814>

INSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS

Colombian armed forces restructuring under the *Plan 2030* framework

Defense Minister Luis Carlos Villegas announced on July 27th various structural changes to the Colombian armed forces, which are designed to respond to anticipated new forms of post-conflict security challenges. The armed forces will increase efforts in several areas, including the following: peace-keeping operations, international cooperation, coverage of the country's interior and frontier regions, demining operations, and participation in regional development initiatives.²³

DIVERSITY ISSUES

Ethnic perspectives included in the peace accord negotiations

The High Commissioner for Peace, Sergio Jaramillo, and chief GOC negotiator in Havana, Humberto de la Calle, met with 13 indigenous leaders this month and agreed to create assurances that the implementation of the peace accords would include ongoing consultations with indigenous and Afro-Colombian leaders.²⁴

Members of Colombia's armed forces complete training in gender

Colombia's *Centro de Entrenamiento y Capacitacion para Operaciones de Paz* (CENOPAZ) (peace-building operations training center) completed a two-week course in July titled "Gender in United Nations Peace-building Operations". The course trained officials and sub-officials in the Air Force, Navy, and Marines on United Nation norms in such operations, and on how to recognize and address gender-based violations of human rights.²⁵

FURTHER READING

President Santos and Senator and Ex-President Uribe continue feud

The very public feud over the peace negotiations between ex-President, current-Senator Alvaro Uribe and current President Santos continues. Since 2010, ex-President Uribe has refused to return to the presidential palace, and has been the most outspoken and severe critic of the current leader's efforts to arrive at a final peace accord with the FARC. President Santos wrote and published a July 10th letter to Uribe, noting that it was their responsibility to "lead by example so that they might guide the country on a path of reconciliation rather than one of confrontation." In the letter, Santos asked for Uribe's support so that he might "help the [GOC] with his indisputable leadership and without abandoning his critical independence" in order to help advance the peace process.²⁶ Towards the end of the month, Uribe responded, saying that he and his Centro Democrático political party would be willing to discuss the peace accords in progress if there was a willingness on the part of the negotiators to revisit the issue of impunity, political eligibility, and Special Jurisdiction for Peace. As of the writing of this month's Issues, that willingness has not materialized.²⁷

Strong presence of illegal mining in Colombia's narco-trafficking regions

In Colombia, 88% of gold production occurs illegally, often involving the use of mercury, which enters the food and water supply of regional inhabitants. Roughly one-third of the country hosts illegal mining, and the operations have provided a robust source of revenues for organized crime and guerrilla insurgents. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reports more than 2,000 hectares of vegetation and forests deforested each month in Colombia to support illegal mining activities; the deforestation is particularly pronounced in the same regions in which cocaine production has historically been strong.²⁸ With the post-conflict restructuring of the Colombian armed forces, various branches will conduct more operations to combat these practices. The areas of the country most affected by illegal mining include Chocó, Antioquia, Bolívar, and Córdoba, as well as Nariño, Cauca, Valle, Caquetá, and Guainía.²⁹

²³ www.fuerzasmilitares.org.

²⁴ <http://www.altocomisionadoparalapaz.gov.co/Prensa/Paginas/2016/julio/Delegaci%C3%B3n-del-Gobierno-acordo-una-hoja-de-ruta-para-trabajar-en-la-perspectiva-etnica-de-los-acuerdos.aspx>

²⁵ <http://www.fuerzasmilitares.org/notas/colombia/armada-nacional.html>

²⁶ <http://www.eltiempo.com/contenido/politica/gobierno/ARCHIVO/ARCHIVO-16643054-0.pdf>

²⁷ <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/proceso-de-paz-con-las-farc-uribe-hablaría-con-santos-y-timochenko-con-condiciones/482824>

²⁸ <http://nwnoticias.com/#!/noticias/el-88-de-la-produccion-de-oro-de-colombia-es-illegal-alertan-mineros>

²⁹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/lucha-contra-la-mineria-illegal-en-colombia/16649281>