

DDR AND CHILD SOLDIER ISSUES

A MONTHLY REVIEW
APRIL 2017

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

Formal FARC-EP member list, registration and identification of arms complete

On Tuesday, April 4th, FARC-EP leadership handed over to the GoC its formal list of 6,804 FARC-EP members and 1,541 militia members. An additional list of militia members will also be forthcoming. This list marks the completion of an important aspect of the peace accords and catalyzes three subsequent processes: 1) the GoC will review the list for individuals who are not actually FARC-EP members, but who are instead just trying to get in on the transitional justice benefits accorded to them (one such case has already been identified); 2) it will be the benchmark for those eligible for important amnesty and pardon proceedings; and 3) those individuals not on the list will not be eligible for any judicial benefits related to the peace accords.¹ By April 10th, The UN, FARC-EP, and the GoC also completed the registration and identification of all FARC-EP arms within the transitional zones. Work has also begun on extracting the arms from the guerrillas' weapons caches in the territories.²

FARC-EP and GoC representatives consider extending D+180 timeline in transitional zones

In the face of the challenges facing FARC-EP and GoC representatives in the transitional zones to date, leaders from both sides began discussing the possibility of extending FARC-EP time in the transitional zones beyond the original D+180 date of June 1st. This extension would be contingent on the FARC-EP completing their commitment to fully lay down their arms by D+180, according to High Commissioner for Peace, Sergio Jaramillo. Additionally, the legal standing of the zones would also change, and they would be re-purposed to facilitate reincorporation of the FARC-EP through programs such as literacy courses. More development will follow on this possibility in the coming weeks.³

Sixteen more minors exit FARC-EP Ranks

During the reporting period, 35 minor swere released from the FARC-EP ranks, for a total of 76 minors released since September 2016.^{4,5,6,7} UNICEF received them together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); both agencies operated with support from the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF), the Presidential Council for Human Rights, and IOM. Additionally, Paula Gaviria of the High Council for Human Rights announced that the minors who exit the FARC-EP camps will not be removed from the program once they reach their 18th birthdays, which takes into account the fact that they grew up within the context of the war (the majority who have exited are between 16 and 17 years old).⁸

¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/primer-listado-de-integrantes-de-las-farc-en-zonas-veredales-74978>

² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/entrega-de-armas-de-las-farc-culmina-76864>

³ <http://colombia2020.elespectador.com/pais/zonas-veredales-irian-mas-alla-de-la-dejacion-de-armas>

⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/farc-entrega-otro-grupo-de-menores-de-edad-al-cicr-articulo-687570>

⁵ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/acuerdos-de-gobierno-y-farc/cruz-roja-traslado-nuevo-grupo-de-menores-de-las-farc-GI6309800>

⁶ <https://www.icrc.org/es/document/colombia-grupo-de-menores-de-edad-de-las-farc-salen-de-una-de-las-zonas-veredales>

⁷ <https://www.icrc.org/es/document/colombia-culmina-nueva-salida-de-menores-de-edad-de-las-farc>

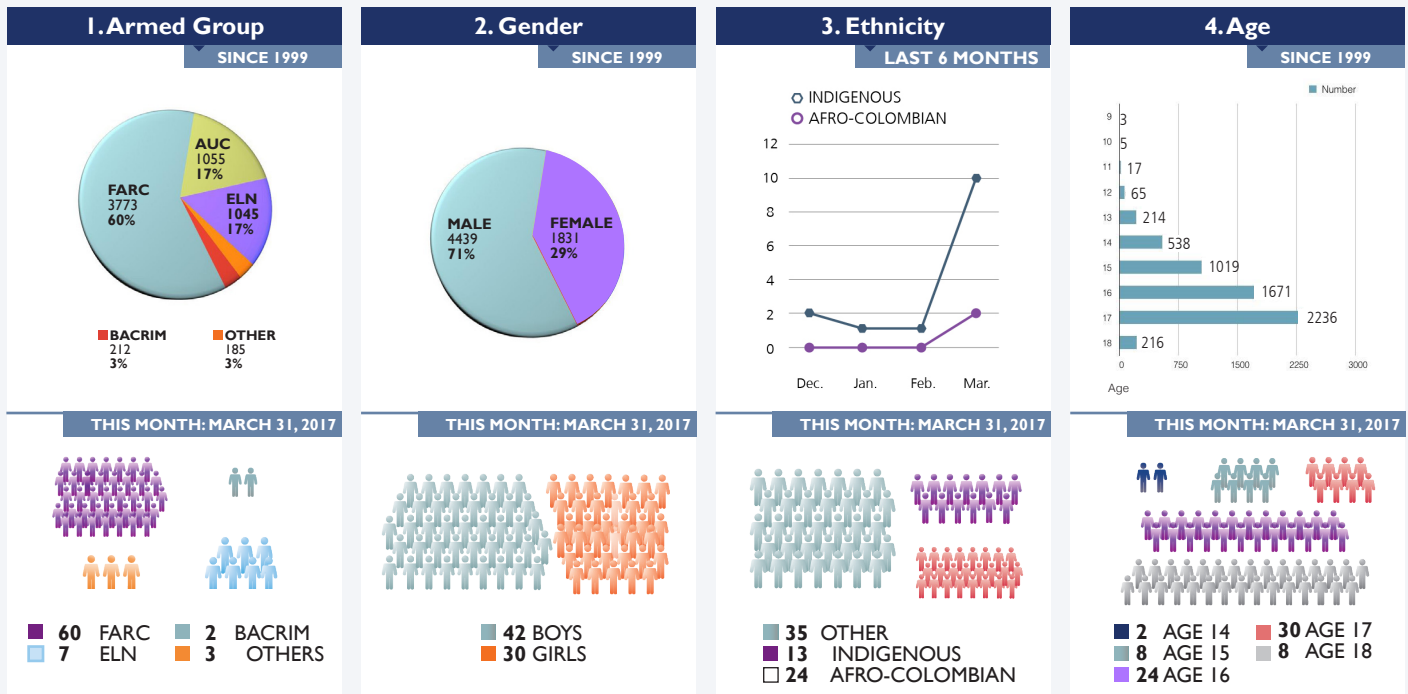
⁸ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/menores-de-las-farc-que-cumplan-18-anos-no-perderan-beneficios-77994>

FIGURES & TRENDS

* These data are estimates based on the information available

Disengaged Children & Adolescents

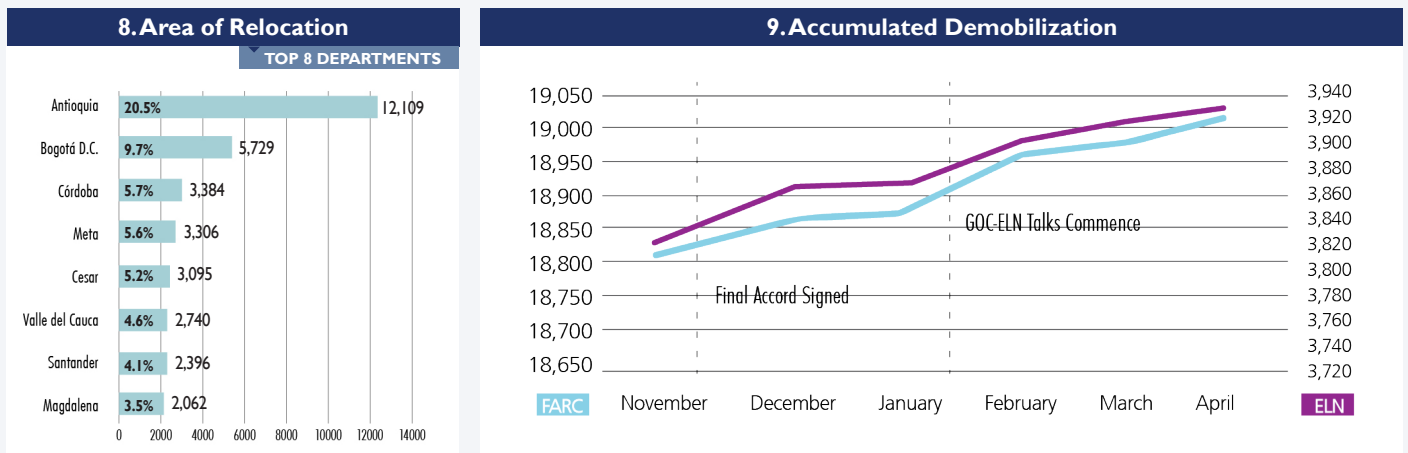
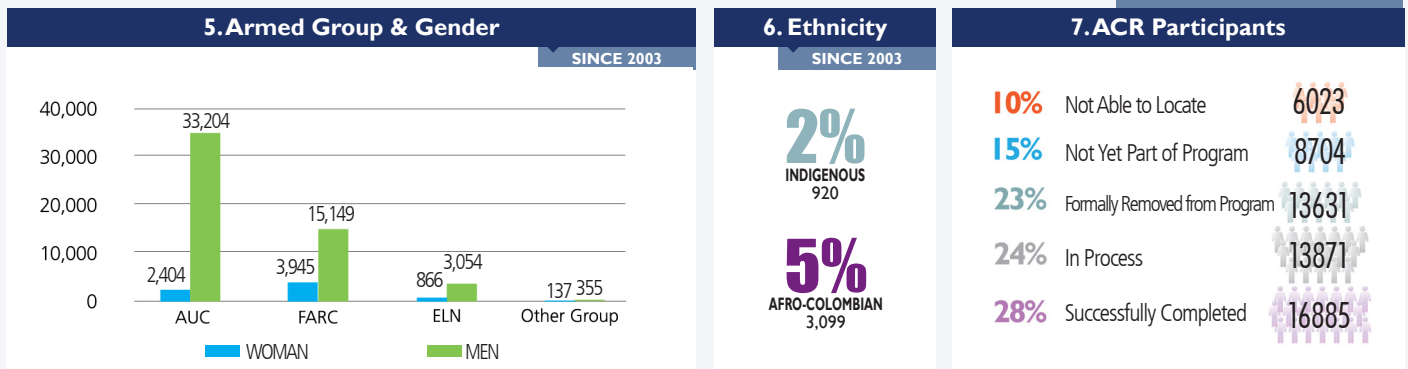
TOTAL 6,270



5: Victims of Forced Recruitment

Total 8,155** / Month to month 57**

** Number of cases of child recruitment reported to the Victims Unit.



Data up to January 31, 2017

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: Demobilized Adults

Figure 8: Total number of demobilized adults by ethnicity. Sources for figures 5-7: ICBF Database and ACR Reintegration Information System (SIR)

Figure 9: Accumulated Demobilization

Challenges to implementation continue, leaders look ahead to reincorporation

On April 5th, Special Representative of the Secretary General to the Head of the United Nations Mission in Colombia, Jean Arnault, made a statement on recent progress and challenges facing the implementation of the peace accords in Colombia. He praised the legislative advances, continued release of minors from FARC-EP ranks, and progress on illicit crop eradication, among other things. Arnault additionally noted that the core area of concern is the slow pace of implementation along several critical axes within the agreements included in the peace accords, especially the construction of the camps, the implementation of the Amnesty law and security guarantees, and plans for reincorporating FARC-EP guerrillas.⁹ Following, in anticipation of the subsequent stages for implementation, the GoC and the FARC-EP have requested a new UN Peace Mission for Colombia. The current mission is responsible for monitoring the disarmament of the FARC-EP and to resolve issues related to maintaining the bilateral cease fire. The new mission would shift its focus to verifying the reincorporation of the FARC as well as the implementation of protection and personal security for the ex-guerrillas and their political party.¹⁰

FARC-EP weapons caches continue to emerge

The Colombian Army discovered a sizeable weapons cache in the department of Putumayo, which is estimated to be one of 900 belonging to the FARC-EP throughout the country. The discovery, made not through FARC-EP intelligence, but rather through civilian reports, created tensions between both sides and fanned the flames of opposition leaders rallying against the peace accords.¹¹

FARC-EP members targeted for killings

Luis Alberto Ortiz Cabezas had the dubious distinction of being the first FARC-EP member killed after the peace process. On Thursday, April 20th, 15 days after leaving the Vista Hermosa prison as a beneficiary of the Amnesty and Pardon Law, Ortiz was murdered in Tumaco by an alleged member of another organized armed group.¹² As a result of the killing, the National Ombudsman's Office asked for increased security for demobilized FARC-EP members, stating that it should be a top priority for state institutions.¹³ Within a week, a second FARC-EP militia member beneficiary of the Amnesty Law was killed, this time in Cauca), allegedly by an individual from an IAG that has recently increased recruitment efforts in the region.¹⁴

FARC-EP dissidents suspected in fatal explosion in Guaviare

In the hamlet of La Momposina in the department of Guaviare, an April 8th explosion resulted in four soldiers injured, one missing, and one killed. The Armed Forces have blamed FARC-EP dissidents for the explosion.¹⁵

PEACE PROCESSES

GoC and ELN conclude first round peace dialogues

The GoC and the ELN guerrilla group concluded the first round of peace negotiations on April 6th, in Quito, Ecuador. The two-month initiation to the public phase of the peace negotiations resulted in four distinct agreements: 1) a framework for reference regarding sub-point 5f (humanitarian actions and dynamics); 2) plans for developing a pilot program for humanitarian demining; 3) an agenda to continue discussions on point 1 (Societal Participation in the Dialogues) and sub-point 5f; and 4) terms of agreement for other countries supporting the peace process between the two sides.¹⁶

⁹ https://colombia.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/april_statement_to_the_security_council_of_jean_arnault.pdf

¹⁰ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/diferencias-entre-nueva-mision-de-la-onu-y-la-actual-para-el-proceso-de-paz-80922>

¹¹ <http://colombia2020.elespectador.com/pedagogia/lascalasdelasfarcuniesgoanunciado>

¹² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/las-farc-denuncian-asesinato-de-guerrillero-indultado-en-tumaco-79814>

¹³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/defensoria-del-pueblo-pide-mas-esfuerzo-en-proteccion-de-desmovilizados-de-las-farc-articulo-690101>

¹⁴ <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/asesinan-a-jose-huber-yatacue-otro-miliciano-desmovilizado-de-las-farc/523287>

¹⁵ <http://www.fuerzasmilitares.org/notas/colombia/ejercito-nacional/7504-guaviare-minado.html>

¹⁶ <http://es.presidencia.gov.co/noticia/170406-Comunicado-conjunto-002-Mesa-de-Conversaciones>

ELN peace delegation addresses public participation and de-escalation of conflict amid ongoing confrontations

On April 14th, the ELN peace delegation responded to a letter from three NGOs, which expressed concerns about the process for public participation in the peace dialogues. The delegation responded that the route has not yet been determined, but that they are developing a process currently termed “Preliminary Hearings,” through which they will receive and process initiatives, proposals, and shared experiences.¹⁷ The same day, an attack on the Colombian Army in the department of Cauca, which was attributed to the ELN, resulted in one soldier killed and one injured.¹⁸ Following, on Monday, April 18th, the ELN peace delegation announced that, although the guerrilla group’s Central Command has clearly stated that it will not stop kidnapping practices due to its need to continue financing the group’s activities.¹⁹ Nonetheless, On Tuesday, April 25th, the ICRC received two individuals who had been held by the ELN in the department of Chocó.²⁰

Following, the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace announced Friday, April 28th, that it approved a meeting between the Central Command of the ELN and the High Secretariat of the FARC-EP in Havana, Cuba for the first week of May. The second round of peace negotiations between the GOC and the ELN were scheduled to begin on May 3rd; it has now been rescheduled to May 10th due to the Havana visit.²¹ However, the second round of talks will launch under the shadow of ongoing ELN attacks, kidnapping, and confrontations with the regular Army. On Thursday, April 27th, the group allegedly attacked an oil pipeline in El Carmen, Norte de Santander, and leaving 700 families without water service due to the pollution that the attack released into the water supply.²² Three days later, in the municipality of Pailitas, César, the ELN reportedly detonated explosives in a car, killing one police officer, and leaving four more individuals wounded.²³

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Paraguay to send 80 more citizens to support peace accord implementation in Colombia

At the end of the reporting period, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos visited Paraguay, and was presented with the keys to the nation’s capital and named an honorary citizen. Within the context of the visit, it was announced that 80 more Paraguayans – both military and civilian – would join the monitoring and verification efforts for implementing the peace accords. They are set to join their 34 compatriots already working in Colombia.²⁴

Full United Nations Security Council visit announced

At the end of the month, the United Nations Security Council announced that Ambassadors or all 15 of its member states would visit Colombia for the first time in a show of international support for the peace process. The visit is scheduled to last three days, and will comprise conversations with members of the Colombian Congress, representatives of the United Nations System, Members of the MM&V, and a visit to one of the transitional zones. The Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2261 on January 25, 2016, which established the UN Mission comprised by unarmed international observers, to monitor and verify the laying down of arms and to form part of the tripartite mechanism (MMV) to verify the definitive bilateral ceasefire and cessation of hostilities.²⁵

¹⁷ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/con-audiencias-previas-se-evaluaria-participacion-en-dialogos-con-el-eln-articulo-689258>

¹⁸ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/un-soldado-muerto-y-otro-herido-dejo-ataque-armado-en-caloto-cauca-EY6331521>

¹⁹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/eln-dice-estar-dispuesto-acordar-acciones-humanitarias-con-el-gobierno-articulo-689653>

²⁰ <https://www.icrc.org/es/document/liberacion-de-pareja-en-poder-del-eln-en-choco-colombia>

²¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/gobierno-autoriza-reunion-entre-el-eln-y-las-farc-82886>

²² <http://confidencialcolombia.com/es/1/actualidad/30749/ELN-bombardea-oleoducto-antes-de-sentarse-hacer-la-paz-en-Quito-ELN-Atentado-Di%C3%A1logos-de-Paz.htm>

²³ <http://confidencialcolombia.com/es/1/actualidad/30802/Un-muerto-y-cuatro-heridos-por-atacado-de-ELN-en-C%C3%A9sar-ELN-Juan-Camilo-Restrepo-Atentado-Cesar.htm>

²⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/80-paraguayos-se-sumaran-labores-de-verificacion-del-acuerdo-de-paz-santos-articulo-690698>

²⁵ <https://colombia.unmissions.org/en/security-council/C2%B4s-visit-commitment-peace-colombia-jean-arnault-head-un-mission>

INSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS

Significant advances in institutional transitional justice frameworks emerge

On April 5th, President Juan Manuel Santos signed a series of decrees that create the legal framework for the Truth Commission (Decree 588), the Unit for the Search for Disappeared Persons (Decree 589), and the Selection Committee for the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations, and Non-Repetition (Decree 587). These represent major advances in the legislative framework for core transitional justice mechanisms within the final set of peace accords. Additionally, it was determined that neither the GoC nor the FARC-EP will be permitted to select judges for the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP). Instead, the magistrates will need to have already completed a long line of public and private service that alleviates concerns about corruptibility by either side. Relatedly, President Juan Manuel Santos announced the creation of the Colombia in Peace Fund, which will receive and administer nationally budgeted resources, support from royalties, and private sector and international supports for implementing the peace accords.²⁸

Humanitarian demining initiatives advance

In the second week of April, DAICMA (the GoC institution responsible for demining initiatives) completed the first training of nearly 1,500 former FARC-EP members as part of the humanitarian demining project in which the guerrillas will participate under the organizational name Humanicemos. This work currently takes place in 207 of the 673 municipalities contaminated with explosive artefacts of war. As a point of reference, there are 1,122 municipalities in total in Colombia.²⁹

DIVERSITY ISSUES

Special Authority for guaranteeing a tailored approach to gender formed

On April 11th, the Commission on Tracking, Promotion, and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Accord (CSIV) announced the formation of the Special Authority for guaranteeing the implementation of the accords with a tailored approach to gender. The Special Authority comprises representatives from seven national and territorial women's organizations in Colombia and will have permanent communications established with the CSIV. The organizations will include the following: four at the territorial level, one that represents women victims of the armed conflict, two national organizations, and one LGBTI organization.³⁰

Indigenous groups contest GoC consultation in implementation process

During the reporting period, indigenous organizations spoke out against the GoC, claiming that it had not followed through on the agreed upon obligation to consult indigenous peoples when elements of the peace accord that would affect them and their lands were presented to Congress. Four norms have already been approved through the Fast Track process, and six are currently under review; yet, National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) president Luis Fernando Arias says that they have yet to be consulted. Arias stated that if the GoC was willing to violate their right to Previous Consultation, then the Indigenous communities had no obligation to comply with the judicial decisions that followed.³¹

²⁵ <https://colombia.unmissions.org/en/security-council/C2%B4s-visit-commitment-peace-colombia-jean-arnault-head-un-mission>

²⁶ <http://www.derechoshumanos.gov.co/Prensa/2017/Paginas/comision-de-la-verdad-unidad-busqueda.aspx>

²⁷ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/gobierno-y-las-farc-no-pueden-escoger-juces-para-conformar-jep-XB6355707>

²⁸ <http://es.presidencia.gov.co/discursos/170427-Declaracion-del-Presidente-Juan-Manuel-Santos-en-el-acto-de-creacion-del-Fondo-Colombia-en-Paz>

²⁹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/farc-apoyan-el-desminado-en-colombia-76988>

³⁰ <http://www.mininterior.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/noticias/instancia-especial-para-contribuir-garantizar-el-enfoque-de-genero-en-la-implementacion-del-acuerdo-final>

³¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/indigenas-no-han-sido-consultados-en-implementacion-de-la-paz-78464>

FURTHER READING

FARC-EP disseminates its new “April Thesis” outlining new role in Colombian society

Towards the end of April, the FARC-EP released its “April Thesis,” a document containing 61 points delineating its new objectives in peacebuilding and democratic engagement. The 56-page document occurs in six chapters: (1) a crisis of capitalism and geopolitical configurations in America; (2) elements of the context of the final accord and areas of contestation; (3) implementation of the final accord and the process of reincorporation; (4) our party and political perspective; (5) our political strategy in the historic present; and (6) political transition and the transitional government.³²

The changing and variable profiles of the Colombian campesino

At the beginning of April, Colombian NGO Indepaz released a report on the state and identity of Colombian campesinos in the 21st century. They noted that previous conceptions of a homogenous small independent farmer are not aligned with the current myriad forms that rural life currently occupies: most notably, in the unique mix of large estates of concentrated land holdings (latifundio) and small estates or landholdings (minifundio). The analysis notes that rural inhabitants are much more diversified in their activities than they were 100 years ago, and that the effects of the armed conflict include a generalized trend towards capitalist agro-industry practices and extraction of natural resources. Distinctions in campesino life also fall along dimensions of age, with younger members of rural families passing more time in community settings than in isolated farms, altering perceptions of farmer families are generally isolated with small moments of engagement when they hire help for busy seasons. Additionally, the report notes that coca production and its fumigation have affected more than two million hectares and 400,000 families in rural sectors over the last two decades.³³

³² <https://www.arcoiris.com.co/2017/04/estas-son-las-61-tesis-de-abril-que-defendera-el-partido-politico-de-las-farc/>

³³ <http://www.indepaz.org.co/7399/campesinos-del-siglo-xxi/>