

DDR AND CHILD SOLDIER ISSUES

A MONTHLY REVIEW
AUGUST 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 **Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization (ARN)**. The DDR initiatives of the ARN aim to fulfill the following objectives: 1) Continue facilitating those already in the process of reintegration according to historically established policies, 2) Facilitate the reincorporation of the FARC according to the needs determined by the 2017 socioeconomic census and as mandated by the National Council for Reincorporation, 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.

CONTENT

Key Developments.....	1
Implementation of the peace accords.....	1
Figures & Trends.....	2
Peace Processes.....	4
International Support.....	4
Institutional Progress.....	4
Diversity Issues.....	5
Further Reading.....	5



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

FARC completes handing over arms, camp security now priority

After eight months, on August 15th, the last of the FARC arms were handed over to the UN Mission and stored in containers to be transported and decommissioned. In total, the 7,000 ex-combatants of the FARC in the zones handed over 8,100 arms and over 1.3 million ammunition cartridges to be incinerated.¹ Also, the UN Mission reported it safely detonated over 22,000 kilograms of explosives--including over 1,800 land mines and 4,000 grenades. The handing over of the arms and munitions can accelerate the planned social and economic reincorporation of the ex-guerrillas in the 26 transition zones. However, with the handover of arms, ensuring the security of the zones and the ex-combatants becomes a priority and primary responsibility of the Colombian Police and Armed Forces to create safe spaces for the reincorporation process. In response, the Ministry of Defense announced a plan to dispense 5,000 members of the Colombian Armed Forces to be positioned in the 10 highest risk transition zones for this purpose.^{2,3}

FARC launches political party, Names Londoño as president of party

After five days of deliberation, the FARC announced on August 31st, that their new party will retain the FARC acronym – a controversial decision – but that the letters will stand instead for the Revolutionary Alternative Force for the Common People. The delegation of 1,200 members who attended the FARC congress ended with a 628 vote in favor of the new party name.⁴ On Tuesday, September 4th, the 111 member National Council of the new party created a National Political Council comprising 15 individuals. Former chief negotiator for the FARC, Rodrigo Londoño (former alias “Timochenko”), was designated as the president of the political party.⁵

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE ACCORDS

FARC-EP

Deadline extended for cache removal

On Thursday, August 31st, the U.N. Mission in Colombia announced an agreement to extend the deadline for decommissioning the FARC weapons caches to September 15th. The extension was approved both by the GoC and the FARC. Currently, the Mission has extracted 640 caches and anticipates a total of 957. The operations have been supported by FARC intelligence, with operational support from the Colombian Armed Forces and National Police.⁶

¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/las-farc-entregaron-8-112-armas-a-la-onu-120070>

² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/retos-de-las-zonas-veredales-tras-entrega-de-armas-de-las-farc-120308>

³ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/plan-del-gobierno-para-proteger-a-exguerrilleros-de-las-farc-120528>

⁴ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/partido-politico-de-las-farc-tiene-nombre-DA7211577>

⁵ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/rodrigo-londono-timochenko-presidente-del-partido-politico-de-las-farc-AD7234435>

⁶ <https://colombia.unmissions.org/comunicado-de-prensa-misi%C3%B3n-de-la-onu-en-colombia-extensi%C3%B3n-plazo-caletas>

FIGURES & TRENDS

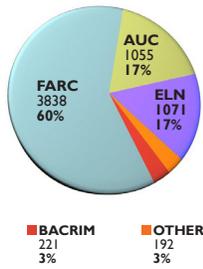
* These data are estimates based on the information available

Disengaged Children & Adolescents

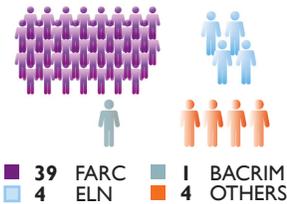
TOTAL 6,377

1. Armed Group

SINCE 1999

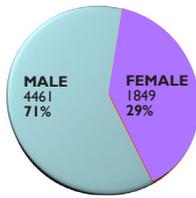


THIS MONTH: AUGUST 31, 2017

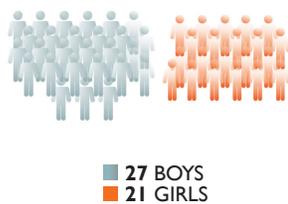


2. Gender

SINCE 1999

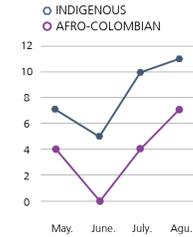


THIS MONTH: AUGUST 31, 2017

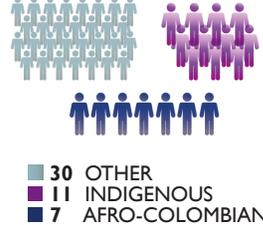


3. Ethnicity

LAST 4 MONTHS

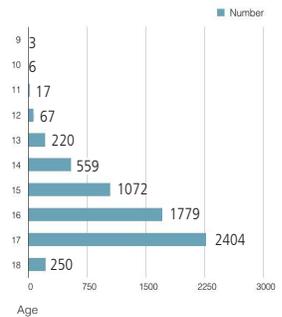


THIS MONTH: AUGUST 31, 2017

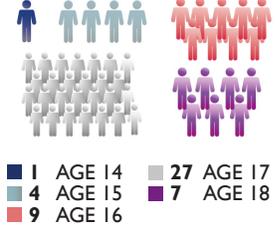


4. Age

SINCE 1999



THIS MONTH: AUGUST 31, 2017



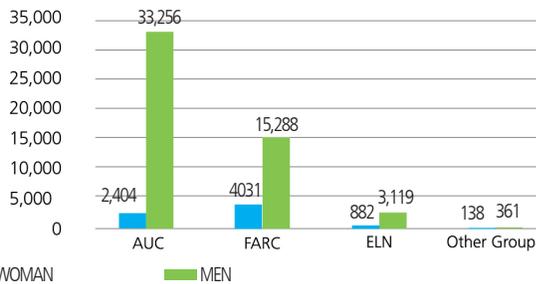
5: Victims of Forced Recruitment

Total 8,382** / Month to month 132**

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

5. Armed Group & Gender

SINCE 2003

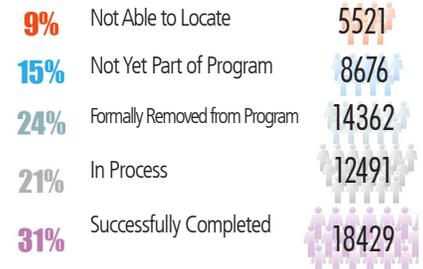


6. Ethnicity

SINCE 2003

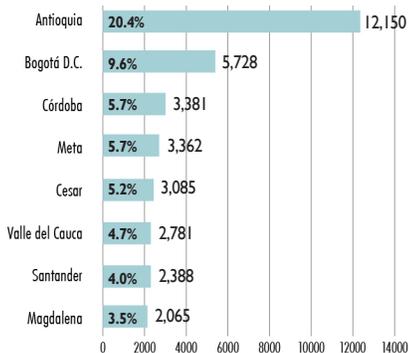


7. ACR Participants

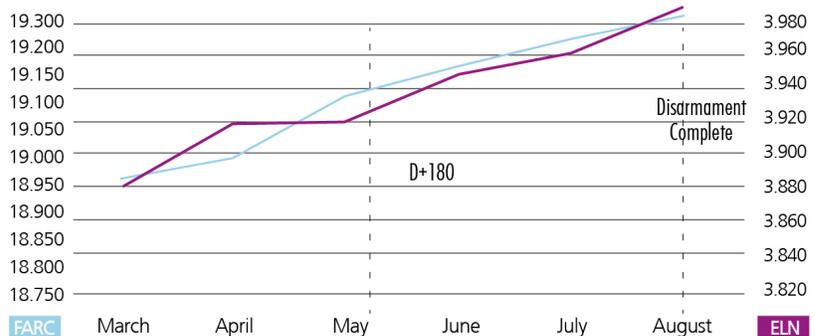


8. Area of Relocation

TOP 8 DEPARTMENTS



9. Accumulated Demobilization



Data up to August 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: CBF 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: CBF Database and ACR Reintegration Information System (SIR)

Figure 9: Accumulated Demobilization

Government of Colombia creates Commission to review inventory of FARC assets

The Ministry of the Interior announced the creation of a commission to verify and process the inventory of assets declared by the FARC to the GOC as part of the Peace Accord. The list of current FARC assets are valued at over USD\$ 328 million (COP\$ 963,241,000,000) and includes 242,000 hectares in property, 300 vehicles, 21,000 cows, 600 horses, USD\$ 450,000 in cash, 375 kilograms of gold, and assorted everyday items such as brooms, frying pans, and lemon squeezers. The finalized list of all FARC assets accumulated during the more than 50 years of the conflict will be monetized to create a fund to benefit victims of the conflict.^{7,8}

Another group of minors leave FARC camps

The International Red Cross stated it received 24 minors from different FARC camps. Upon an initial medical assessment, the youth were handed over, as previously agreed, to a team comprised of UNICEF, IOM, and the Colombian Government to be provided services and cared for in specific transition houses to facilitate their transition to civil life and family reunification. Since September of last year, a total of 112 minors have been received and provided attention in the transition houses.⁹

Former militia leader of the FARC 18th front killed

On Monday, August 14th, Jesús Adán Mazo, former militia leader of the 18th front of the FARC-EP was killed in Ituango, just a few meters from the transitional zone. He was shot three times in the middle of the night by individuals who entered his home, and is the second former FARC member killed in Ituango. On Monday, August 14th, Jesús Adán Mazo, former militia leader of the 18th front of the FARC-EP was killed in Ituango, just a few meters from the transitional zone. He was shot three times in the middle of the night by individuals who entered his home, and is the second former FARC member killed in Ituango.¹⁰

Senate approved FARC to serve in National Protection Unit

The Colombian Senate approved the legal project that would allow former FARC-EP members to serve in the National Protection Unit (UNP) as bodyguards. The measure passed 52:1, and now awaits presidential approval. UNP Director Diego Mora responded to those opposed to the inclusion of former guerrillas in this unit, saying that former M-19 guerrillas are currently in the UNP and they have served and reintegrated well in their duties. Currently, 315 former FARC-EP have applied to be in the Unit; 53 have been denied due to inability to pass the requirements.¹¹

FARC accredited for humanitarian demining

The Organization of American States (OEA) has accredited the FARC-EP organization for humanitarian demining – Humanicemonos DH – after nine months of preparation. More than 1,000 former guerrillas are anticipated to participate in this work, with 1,700 expressing interest in a recent socioeconomic census of the guerrilla group. In all, 11 teams comprising various organizations will be working on this aspect of the peace process throughout 137 municipalities in Colombia.¹²

Tripartite mechanism ambushed

On August 6th, a team of representatives from the United Nations, Colombian National Police, and the FARC-EP were ambushed in a rural area of Cauca while they were working to extract a weapons cache. During the confrontation, one member of the National Police was wounded.¹³ The ELN has denied any involvement in response to reports that the individuals who executed the ambush were wearing the guerrilla organization's arm bands.¹⁴

JEP advances selection process

On August 3rd, the Selection Committee for the Special Jurisdiction for Peace announced that 2,328 individuals had applied for positions within the JEP transitional justice mechanism. The committee will have until October to decide among the candidates for who would best qualify for the following positions: 38 titled judges and 13 alternates, the director of the Unit for the Search for Disappeared Persons, and the Director of the Unit for Investigation and Accusation within the JEP. The next selection process will open August 28th, at which point the Selection Committee will open the call for individuals interested in participating in the Truth Commission.¹⁵

⁷ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/ministro-del-interior-responde-a-cuestionamientos-del-fiscal-sobre-bienes-de-farc-122872>

⁸ <http://www.elspectador.com/noticias/politica/las-farc-reportaron-963-mil-millones-en-bienes-pastor-alape-articulo-709823>

⁹ <http://nacionesunidas.org.co/blog/2017/08/16/nuevo-grupo-de-adolescentes-es-entregado-por-las-farc-ep/>

¹⁰ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/asesinaron-al-jeffe-de-milicias-del-frente-18-de-las-farc-DD7104324>

¹¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/congreso-aprobo-proyecto-para-que-ex-miembros-de-farc-sean-escoltas-118120>

¹² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/exguerrilleros-de-las-farc-empiezan-desminado-en-colombia-119018>

¹³ <https://colombia.unmissions.org/comunicado-de-prensa-misi%C3%B3n-de-la-onu-en-colombia-0>

¹⁴ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/eln-niega-autoria-en-ataque-a-mision-de-la-onu-117224>

¹⁵ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/personas-que-se-postularon-para-cargos-en-la-jep-116330>

Government of Colombia/ELN working to reach ceasefire in time for Pope visit

With the imminent visit of Pope Francisco to Colombia on September 6, the government of Colombia and ELN are searching to agree to a negotiated cease fire in time for the visit. Although both sides have expressed political will, specific details and conditions within the negotiations taking place in Quito, Ecuador continue to present obstacles to reaching an agreement. Each side has blamed the other for the delay in reaching a cease fire agreement.¹⁶

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Possible negative impact of Brexit on E.U. budget for Colombia

The European Union concluded its third round of negotiations regarding the Brexit decision for England to leave the E.U. without much in the way of substantive advances. One of the proposals on the table is for the British to cover their current budget allocations through 2020, as well as obligations assumed with third countries, which would affect the Post-Conflict Trust Fund for Colombia. Currently, the fund - a donation and not a loan - has contributions of 95 million euros with aspirations for an eventual 500 million sourced from 19 of the 28 countries in the union, including the United Kingdom. Definitive impacts of Brexit on this fund will continue to emerge as debates continue.¹⁷

European Union delegates visit new Territorial Space for Training and Reincorporation (ETCR)

E.U. Special Envoy, Eamon Gilmore, visited the ETCR in La Carmelita, Putumayo, and subsequently announced ongoing E.E. support for the peace process in Colombia. The E.U. delegates spoke with FARC members living in the ETCR, and asked about their hopes and expectation for reincorporation. The ex-combatants responded in turn that education would be very important for them, and the value of some of the productive projects that they have already engaged in since their demobilization. The visit was accompanied by other United Nations agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Agency for Refugees (UNHCR).¹⁸

INSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS

GoC declares 166 mine-free zones

On August 17th, President Juan Manuel Santos announced during an event in the department of Antioquia the culmination of 166 antipersonnel mine-free municipalities in the country. Colombia has one of the highest incidences of these kinds of explosives, alongside Afghanistan, with nearly 53 million square meters of mined territory. To date, more than 4.2 million square meters of this total have been cleared. The GoC strategy is to focus on the municipalities with the highest density of antipersonnel mines so that the communities living in these areas can be first to be able to use these lands freely and without fear. The Ministry of Defense, High Council for Postconflict, Descontamina Colombia, the Colombian Armed Forces, the U.S. Embassy, and territorial-level governments are all collaborating on the initiative, along with other international supporters.¹⁹

GoC collaboration brings services to conflict affected zones

The GoC collaborative initiative, Colombia Renace, is a state services fair currently touring the regions of Colombia most affected by the armed conflict. In the last week of August, Colombia Renacer took place in the municipalities of Rioblanco and Planadas, within the department of Tolima: 30 territorial and national state entities convened to inform and provide services to 1,150 inhabitants of these municipalities. The effort is a joint undertaking by the Presidential Council for Human Rights, local and national government offices, the High Council for Postconflict, the Ministry of Justice and Law, the National Department for Planning and its associate Agency for Territorial Renovation, among others.²⁰

¹⁶ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/se-acerca-la-visita-del-papa-y-cese-al-fuego-con-el-eln-sigue-lejano-articulo-709050>

¹⁷ <http://www.eltiempo.com/mundo/europa/brexit-afectaria-presupuesto-de-ayuda-de-la-union-europea-para-colombia-125900>

¹⁸ <http://diariodelsur.com.co/noticias/nacional/la-union-europa-resalto-el-apoyo-al-proceso-de-paz-de-colomb-338356>

¹⁹ <http://www.accioncontraminas.gov.co/prensa/2017/Paginas/170817-Gobierno-declara-166-municipios-libres-de-contaminacion-por-minas.aspx>

²⁰ <http://es.presidencia.gov.co/noticia/170830-Feria-de-servicios-Colombia-Renace-llega-a-zonas-afectadas-por-el-conflicto-armado>

DIVERSITY ISSUES

Indigenous women speak out on their daily struggles

A recent in-depth investigation conducted in the department of Antioquia reported on the daily struggles of indigenous women who battle with the tensions inherent in achieving personal growth and advancing and conserving ancestral traditions against the backdrop of silent sexism and the “ancestral forgetting” of the Colombian state. Among the challenges with which these women must contend are educating themselves in non-indigenous school systems in a second language (Spanish), gender-based responsibilities that result in their staying within the indigenous reservation more than their male counterparts, and a roughly 80% incidence of single mother head of household living situations. Some indigenous female leaders are now seeking to better their conditions of education, healthcare, access to productive economic activities, and greater political participation. The complete in-depth study was supported by the Editorial Board of Colombia 2020, the Swedish Embassy, and IOM.²¹

LGBTI communities convene to coordinate accord implementation

During the last week of August, 35 leaders of the LGBTI community in the Caribbean region met in order to ensure effective representation in the accord implementation processes. Their first meeting included representatives from each of the Caribbean departments, along with three participants from Cauca and Segovia, Antioquia; they worked together to develop a regional agenda for the LGBTI movement, and emphasized the differential way in which members of this community were impacted by the armed conflict. Among the several initiatives that emerged from this meeting, participants developed plans for promoting and presenting candidates both for the standard Congressional elections, as well as for the Special Constituencies for Peace. They also developed an information network for sharing and collaborating on departmental level action plans.²² Also this month, political figure Piedad Córdoba received the Rodolfo Walsh prize by the Department of Journalism at the National University – La Plata for her work defending the rights of the LGBTI community.²³

FURTHER READING

International experiences with organized armed groups and justice

Foundation Nuevo Arcoiris released a report titled “Synthesis of international and alternative experiences with criminal gangs and paramilitary successor organizations submitting to justice.” The report first distinguishes violent conflicts involving organized armed groups from more traditional armed conflicts that are motivated by political struggle, social demands, or by territorial social control. Analysts draw from international cases in Africa, Haiti, and Central America in order to derive general lessons learned around reducing violence and criminality in the immediate post-accord period, as well as to develop a set of general guidelines for dismantling criminal gangs and ensuring security and democracy for communities. The report acknowledges the complexity of the Colombian case, with its decades of conflict, myriad armed actors, and multiple peace processes and agreements, as well as the unique brand of para-politics and para-economics that operate concurrently in contemporary life.²⁴

International Day for Victims of Forced Disappearance used to motivate justice mechanisms

Among many other institutions, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights used the International Day for Victims of Forced Disappearance in order to lean on the GoC to advance in their work to prevent Forced Disappearances and to provide justice to those who have been victims of this war crime. Todd Howland of the High Commission of the U.N. for Human Rights, noted that it is indispensable to guarantee the functions of the Unit for the Search of Disappeared Persons within the transitional justice framework of the Final Accord, and to contribute to the clarification of what happened throughout the armed conflict in these regards.²⁵

²¹ <http://colombia2020.elespectador.com/pais/mujeres-indigenas-en-las-mil-y-una-luchas>

²² <https://www.elheraldo.co/politica/la-comunidad-lgbti-del-caribe-se-compromete-en-la-construccion-de-la-paz-398233>

²³ <https://www.pagina12.com.ar/59649-premio-rodolfo-walsh-para-piedad-cordoba>

²⁴ <http://www.arcoiris.com.co/2017/07/arcanos-no-21-la-persistencia-del-paramilitarismo-principal-amenaza-para-la-paz-y-los-ddhh-en-colombia/>

²⁵ <http://nacionesunidas.org.co/blog/2017/08/29/en-dia-internacional-de-las-victimas-de-desapariciones-forzadas-hacemos-homenaje-a-las-victimas-y-recordamos-las-obligaciones-del-estado-frente-a-este-crimen-de-lesa-humanidad/>