

# INFOSHEET: ICBF Child Welfare Observatory



The Child Welfare Observatory of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF) **analyzes dynamics, risks and protective environments related to the wellbeing of children and their families**, based on qualitative and quantitative evidence. Led by a strategic team within ICBF, the Observatory is responsible for providing the ICBF Deputy Director General with information, advice and technical inputs to facilitate decision-making on actions, public policies, and programs for children and their families.



## OBJECTIVES:

The aim of the ICBF Child Welfare Observatory is to improve the general welfare of children and their families, strengthen protection and prevent rights violations by increasing knowledge of their situation and vulnerabilities.

The focus is on **monitoring diverse issues** affecting children and their families, according to each regional context, in order to support appropriate responses. Using models to estimate cross-cutting risks experienced by children and adolescents, the Observatory issues **regional alerts** on potential rights violations to support and strengthen ICBF prevention and protection programs.

Information is gathered in analytical **bulletins and other publications** to facilitate decision-making on public policies and programs for the comprehensive protection of children. Knowledge products are shared with institutions and actors working on child and family welfare issues through forums, working groups and other events.

Since 2001, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has been implementing its **Disengaged Child Soldiers and Youth at Risk of Recruitment Program**. IOM has been working to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Colombia to assist child and adolescent victims of recruitment by illegal armed groups and prevent their recruitment in the context of the armed conflict.

As part of this program, USAID and IOM have been providing support in the development, consolidation and strengthening of the **ICBF Childhood Welfare Observatory**.

## CONTEXT:

ICBF launched the Observatory in June 2012, with support from USAID and IOM, to fulfill responsibilities and respond to a need to better monitor the rights and situation of children and adolescents (CH&A) throughout the country.

The ICBF is the governing body for the National Family Welfare System (SNBF) as established by Law 1098 of 2006, with responsibility for coordinating the institutions responsible for guaranteeing CH&A rights, preventing violations of their rights, ensuring their protection and reestablishing rights that have been violated, including at national, departmental, district, and municipal levels as well as in indigenous territories.

The 2010-2014 National Development Plan, “Prosperity for All,” also calls on the ICBF to create and implement a Unique Childhood Information System (SIUN) in order to allow for continued monitoring of progress in the fulfillment of the rights of CH&A and assessments of socio-economic conditions, household risks and vulnerabilities.

Since the ICBF is responsible for monitoring and follow-up regarding the guarantee of CH&A rights, there was a need for an entity that could compile, organize, analyze and interpret the information generated daily at national and regional levels, in order to enable timely and appropriate decision-making, ensure ongoing monitoring of childhood policies and promote the improvement of strategic plans designed to strengthen the family as the cornerstone of society and child development.

**ACTIVITIES:**

Since its launch in June 2012, the Observatory has continuously improved its monitoring, analysis and coordination activities. Activities in 2012 focused on establishing the conceptual and methodological model, which was consolidated throughout 2013. In 2014, the focus is on continuing to strengthen the Observatory and increase its impact.

	2012	2013	2014
<b>PLANNING &amp; METHODOLOGY</b>	Strategic planning and development of the <b>conceptual and methodological model</b> began in June 2012.		
<b>MONITORING</b>	Designed a <b>series of indicators</b> for monitoring risks and dynamics, based on qualitative information from primary and secondary sources.  Began to <b>monitor</b> dynamics related to childhood and families.	Continued monitoring of dynamics of children and families, based on inter-institutional sources.  <b>Econometric models</b> developed to assess risks of CH&A rights violations.  <b>Monitoring dashboards</b> created to analyze progress made across indicators in specific areas, to monitor rights violations and generate alerts.	Continue monitoring dynamics, with a focus on the <b>regional level</b> and issues related to <b>family, post-conflict, equity</b> and <b>development</b> .
<b>ALERTS &amp; ANALYSIS</b>	Began to develop publications on the risks and dynamics being monitored.	<b>Early warning alerts</b> on the risk of rights violations.  <b>Analytical bulletins</b> , books and other documents.  Based on the monitoring dashboards, <b>infographics</b> were published on the ICBF website and in other media.	Strengthen publications and knowledge management.  Assist in the compilation of <b>case studies</b> on the reintegration process and <b>regional analyses</b> on the peace process.  Support a <b>study on human trafficking</b> of vulnerable CH&A in the coffee region.
<b>COORDINATION &amp; INFORMATION SHARING</b>	Management of inter-institutional databases.  	Began to <b>share knowledge</b> and information generated by the Observatory with key actors involved in CH&A issues to help improve actions, policies and programs.  Developed <b>technical working groups</b> on specific themes.	Develop dissemination strategies to increase the impact of knowledge products.  Lead the <b>national network</b> of childhood observatories, and support development of the <b>international network</b> of childhood observatories throughout Latin America.  Support the creation of <b>ethnic childhood observatories</b> in five regions, through the transfer of the ICBF Observatory model.

## IMPACTS:

The activities carried out by the Observatory have supported and facilitated the following results:

Improved **understanding** of issues that affect children and their families

Strengthened **knowledge networks**

Strengthened decision-making and **policy** development

Technical inputs to support ICBF **strategic planning** processes

Early warning alerts to facilitate **prevention** of rights violations

Support the **targeting** of high-risk municipalities

Analyses facilitate appropriate **responses** to specific issues



**85% of public servants** surveyed within ICBF and other institutions indicated that they **use the publications** produced by the ICBF Child Welfare Observatory

## ISSUES:

Issues that have been covered by the Observatory include:

- Recruitment by illegal armed groups
- Criminal justice system for adolescents
- Reestablishment of rights
- Sexual violence
- Sexual and commercial exploitation
- Youth labor
- Nutrition
- Kidnapping
- Youth crime
- Family and communities
- Teen pregnancy
- Post-conflict and peacebuilding

## INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION:

The knowledge and information generated by the Observatory is shared with key actors to support improved actions, policies and programs. This includes coordination within ICBF, and knowledge sharing with other institutions.



### Within ICBF:

#### Deputy Director General

Support policies and strategic planning

#### Mission Directorates

Share information and review bulletins

#### Planning department

Support statistics, research, and evaluations

#### Communications department

Coordinate publications and events

### Other Institutions:

National Statistics Department (DANE)

National Planning Department (DNP)

Unit for Victims' Attention and Reparation (UARIV)

Presidential Program for Comprehensive Action against Mines (PAICMA)

National Institute of Health (INS)

National Institute of Legal Medicine

Inter-sectoral Commission for Recruitment Prevention (CIPRUNA)

Inter-sectoral Commission for Early Alerts (CIAT)

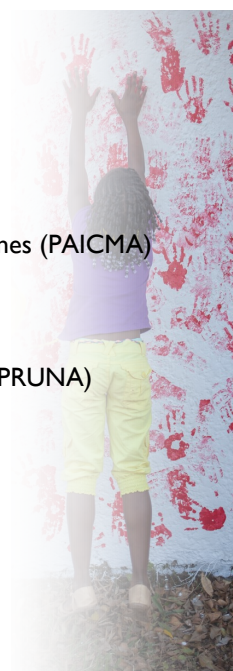
Office of the Ombudsman

National Family Welfare System (SNBF)

Other observatories

NGOs, universities and the private sector

International agencies (IOM, UNICEF, UNODC)



## KEY RESULTS IN 2013:

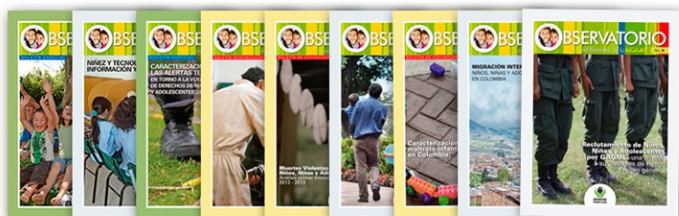
### National and International Recognition

The Observatory received technical **recognition** at national and international levels, and became a source of information and a reference for decision-making on issues related to childhood and adolescence.

The Observatory leads the **International Network of Childhood Observatories**, created in 2013 as a result of the first International Meeting of Observatories on Childhood. The network seeks to build a knowledge society on issues surrounding childhood, adolescence and families by sharing methodologies, lessons learned and good practices for program and policy development.

### Publications

**20 analytical information bulletins** were produced on various topics in 2013, all posted on the ICBF website.



Publication of a **book**, *Observe to Protect: An alternative focus to validate the dynamics and risks for the recruitment and use of children and adolescents by illegal armed groups.*

### Hiring a Former Beneficiary:

A significant recent achievement was the hiring of a former beneficiary of the ICBF Assistance Program for disengaged CH&A, who will provide **technical and administrative support** for the Observatory.

Support will include organizing qualitative and quantitative data and strengthening the network of childhood observatories at the international and national levels.

The professional will also carry out **field visits** and produce at least two **bulletins** on issues related to the guarantee and violations of rights and the recruitment of CH&A, with support from the technical team of the ICBF Observatory.

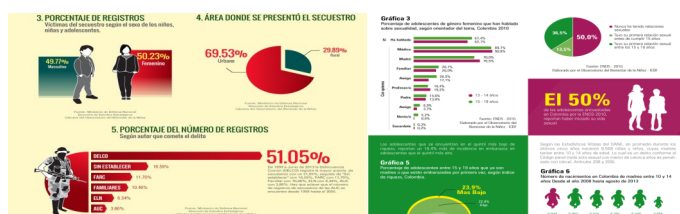
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### Monitoring and Analysis

Created additional **econometric models**, for commercial sexual exploitation and malnutrition, to estimate the probability of cross-cutting risks and vulnerabilities.

Created **monitoring dashboards** to analyze progress made across indicators in specific areas.

Published **infographics** on the ICBF website and in other media, based on the monitoring dashboards.



### Strategy and Planning

As inputs into ICBF strategic planning for 2014, a **map** was created of areas considered to be the origin of children and adolescents disengaged from illegal armed groups.

Workshops were held to assess **preparedness in a post-conflict** environment and explore the challenges that ICBF will face at national and regional levels.

Inter-institutional coordination enabled **consolidation of shared data**, strengthened analyses, and facilitated a review of the state of the art and opportunities for added value.

