

DDR & CHILDREN'S ISSUES: A BI-MONTHLY REVIEW

JAN-FEB 2016

1. BACKGROUND

The DDR initiatives of the **Colombian Reintegration Agency (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, 3) Promote reconciliation.

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

USAID supports the International Organization for Migration (IOM) through the **Recruitment Prevention and Reintegration (RPP)** Program, which 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.

CONTENT

1. Background	1
2. Key developments	1
3. Progress report	2
4. Peace Process	3
5. Diversity Issues	3
6. Institutional Advances	4
7. Further reading	4

2. KEY DEVELOPMENTS

VERIFICATION MISSION IN COLOMBIA UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY UN SECURITY COUNCIL

The GOC and the FARC issued a joint statement on January 19, requesting that the UN establish a verification and monitoring mechanism composed of representatives of the GOC, FARC and an international component.¹ A resolution was promptly passed by the UN Security Council (Resolution 67 of 2016). On January 26, the GOC and FARC thanked the UN Security Council members for the “historic and fast” approval of the 12-month UN-coordinated political mission for monitoring the laying down of weapons and verification of the ceasefire.² The mission will be composed of international unarmed observers from the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), selected by the UN, with presence in 8 areas of Colombia.³ The resolution requested that the UN General Secretary start preparations for the mission immediately, and present “detailed recommendations” on its size, mandate and operational aspects in less than 30 days, so that the mission is prepared to begin following signing of the final peace accords. The mission will resolve controversies, make recommendations and present periodical reports.⁴

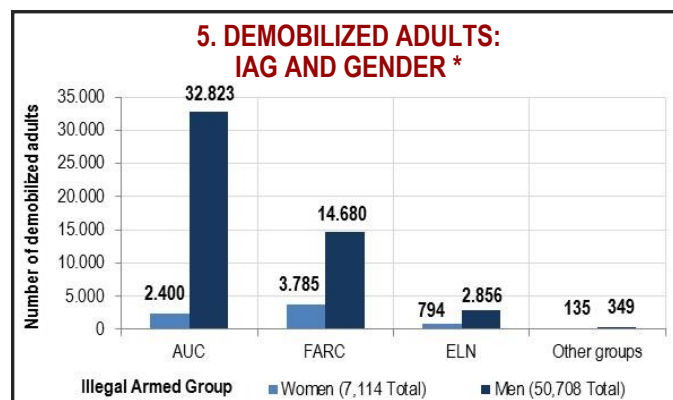
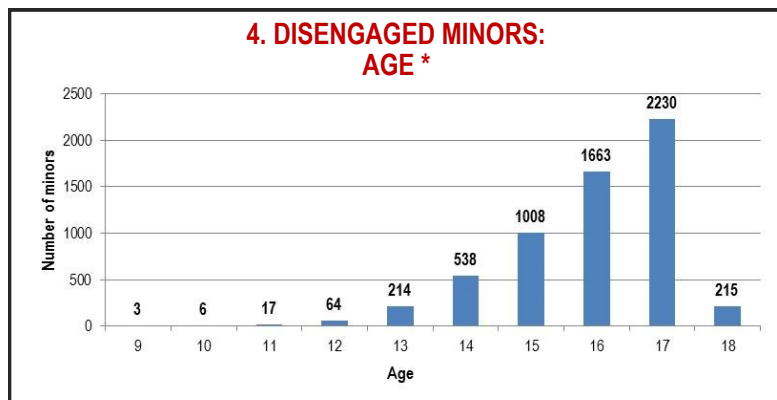
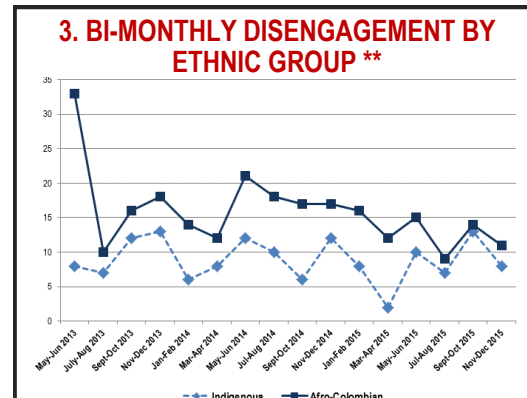
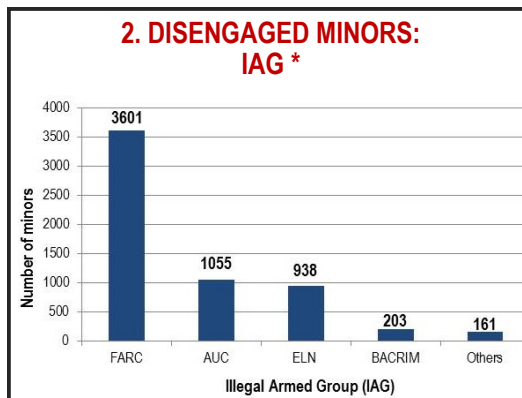
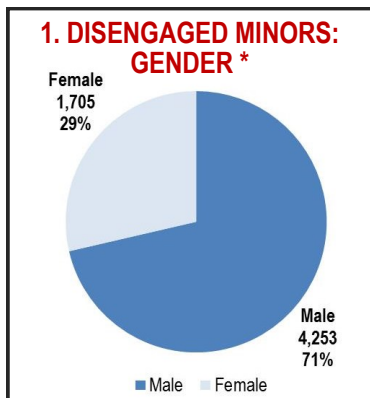
GOC AND FARC REACH AN ACCORD TO ACCELERATE THE SIGNING OF THE PEACE ACCORDS

President Santos, the GOC negotiating team and international advisers met at the beginning of January to discuss the end of the conflict, including setting aside arms and “reincorporation,” as well as the referendum mechanism. Peace talks resumed on January 13 and were planned to continue without any breaks, with the goal of reaching a final agreement in March.⁵ On January 22, in a joint statement, the GOC and FARC created an executive commission to accelerate and supervise the accords on the two remaining agenda points, “Ending the Conflict” and “Implementation, Verification and Countersignature.” The statement also requested that the UN and Colombia’s National University organize a forum about these two points.⁶ The GOC insists upon the mutually agreed upon deadline of March 23 for reaching a final agreement,⁷ although FARC leader Iván Márquez stated that it is “naïve” that the GOC insists that a final accord is reached before March 23.⁸

3. PROGRESS REPORT: DISENGAGED MINORS & DEMOBILIZED ADULTS*

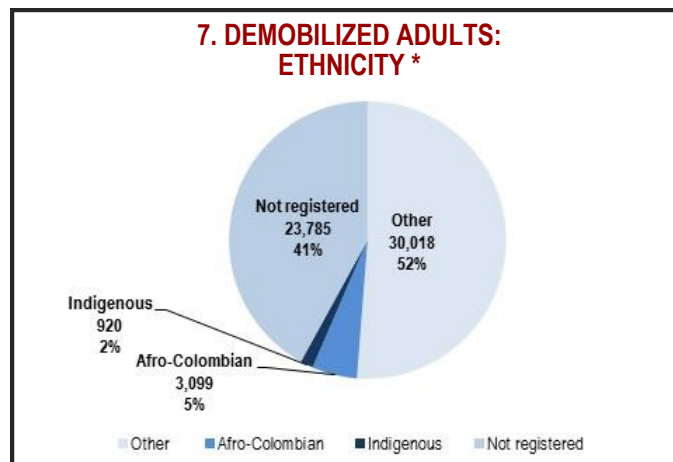
Total disengaged minors: 5,958

Total demobilized adults: 57,822



6. TOP 8 DEPARTMENT FOR ADULT RELOCATION *

Department	Number	%
Antioquia	11,847	20.5%
Bogotá D.C.	5,714	9.9%
Córdoba	3,380	5.8%
Meta	3,146	5.4%
Cesar	3,062	5.3%
Valle del Cauca	2,673	4.6%
Santander	2,243	3.9%
Magdalena	2,063	3.6%



*Data up to February 29, 2016 / **Data up to December 31, 2015

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 of 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)

4. PEACE PROCESS

FINAL PUBLIC FORUM ON PEACE PROCESS WITH THE FARC

At the request of the GOC and FARC negotiation teams, a final public forum was held on from February 8-10 on the peace process to facilitate participation of civil society and the general public in the development of solutions and concrete proposals on the remaining two points on the agenda: ending the conflict (point 3) and referendum, implementation, and verification (point 6). Over 500 participants were invited from civil society and the private sector, including representatives of victims of the conflict, indigenous groups, afro-Colombians, women, LGBTI, ex-military and ex-combatants, farmers, labor unions, youth and others. Efforts were made to ensure that at least 50% of participants are women and that regions most affected by the conflict were represented. The event was organized by the United Nations and the National University's Center for Reflection and Monitoring of the Peace Dialogues, who were also responsible for convening the previous forums on the first four points of the agenda: comprehensive rural development, political participation, illegal drugs and victims.⁹

"TIME IS RUNNING OUT" FOR PEACE TALKS WITH THE ELN

As the timeline for the peace process with the FARC nears its end, concern is growing that the ELN will be left out of the process. The lead negotiator for the GOC in the exploratory talks has stated that "time is running out" and President Santos has said that the "peace train is leaving."¹⁰ The preliminary talks finally resulted in an agreement on a six-point agenda in November, but a roadblock was posed by ELN insistence on holding talks in Venezuela.¹¹ The ELN insists it has been ready and willing since November to move forward; the GOC denies this, stating that the ELN has not responded to any options offered to continue the talks and that more meetings are needed before public negotiations can begin.¹² Meanwhile, the ELN has continued to carry out attacks and President Santos ordered an intensification of operations against the group, demanding the release of hostages as a precondition for restarting talks and stating that "the ELN is mistaken if they think that attacks pave the way for peace."¹³

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT SETS CONDITIONS FOR ENDORSING THE PEACE AGREEMENTS

On February 10, the deputy prosecutor of the International Criminal Court stated that the peace accords should include issues of accountability for those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity. He added that States can exercise discretion when designing transitional justice measures that align with the objectives of the Rome Statute, but the key is to establish punishments that are proportional to the crimes and to guarantee non-repetition.¹⁴ President Santos responded that there will be no amnesty for crimes against humanity, serious war crimes and serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Santos explained that restorative justice will apply only to FARC members that recognize their participation in these kinds of crimes.¹⁵

CONTROVERSIAL VISIT BY FARC LEADERS TO LA GUAJIRA

A controversial visit was made by the FARC negotiation team to the department of La Guajira on February 18, accompanied by several armed men. The established protocol, according to the GOC, was that FARC commanders can visit their camps but may only meet with their guerrilla units, not with the civilian population.¹⁶ The GOC called for the suspension of visits of FARC leaders to their camps, and demanded that they return as soon as possible to Cuba.¹⁷ On the day of the visit, the local army commander withdrew soldiers from the area in order to prevent violence.¹⁸ The FARC called on the GOC to overcome the impasse, stating that they were explaining the progress made in the peace process to the civil population.¹⁹

5. DIVERSITY ISSUES

RECRUITED CHILD RELEASED BY FARC

A 15-year-old boy, was released by the FARC in the northeastern department of Arauca on February 21, after having been recruited 11 months before. The child, received by a humanitarian mission composed of the International Red Cross, Colombia's National Ombudsman's Office and the Catholic Church,²⁰ entered the ICBF's Specialized Assistance Program for disengaged children.²¹

6. INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCES

ROLL OUT OF A RAPID RESPONSE STRATEGY

Colombia's Minister for Post-Conflict, Rafael Pardo, presented elements of the GOC's rapid response strategy aimed at building build confidence in the peace process in the short term. The strategy includes accelerated reparations for victims and humanitarian demining in 20 municipalities.²²

6. FURTHER READING

POST-CONFLICT CRIMINAL ECONOMIES: CURRENT TRENDS AND PROPOSALS TO ADDRESS THEM

The Ideas for Peace Foundation (*Fundación Ideas para la Paz*) analyzes criminal economies in Colombia in order to identify the challenges for the State in the post-conflict and institutional capabilities to address them. One of the main findings is that while organized criminal groups are preparing for the post-conflict, the State is focusing on offensive operations rather than a comprehensive response. This approach is creating an unfavorable context for consolidation of rule of law and peacebuilding.²³

CRIMINAL GROUPS: THE THREAT TO PEACE

The Reconciliation and Peace Foundation (*Fundación Paz y Reconciliación*) presents research on organized criminal groups in Colombia. The study describe the recent activity of these groups, the increasing threat they pose to the peace process and human rights defenders, their relationship with extortion, illegal mining and drug trafficking, and finally their involvement with local police and public authorities.²⁴

1. "Gobierno y Farc sellan acuerdo para establecer mecanismo de verificación de la ONU en dejación de armas". *El Espectador*, January 19 2016, <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/gobierno-y-farc-sellan-acuerdo-establecer-mecanismo-de-articulo-611481>
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3. "El espaldarazo de la ONU al proceso de paz en La Habana". *El Tiempo*, January 26 2016, <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/proceso-de-paz-espaldarazo-de-la-onu-a-negociacion-en-la-habana/16492080>
4. "Así será la verificación que dará paso al fin del conflicto con FARC". *El Tiempo*, January 20 2016, <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/proceso-de-paz-verificacion-de-cese-de-fuego/16485799>
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6. "Gobierno y Farc llegan a acuerdo para agilizar firma de diálogos". *La F.M.*, January 22 2016, <http://www.lafm.com.co/nacional/noticias/gobierno-y-farc-llegan-acuerdo-198517>
7. "Fecha para firma de paz no fue inventada por Santos: Juan Fernando Cristo". *El Espectador*, January 13 2016, <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/fecha-firma-de-paz-no-fue-inventada-santos-juan-fermand-articulo-610420>
8. "Farc califican de ingenuo al Gobierno Nacional" *La F.M.*, January 13 2016, <http://www.lafm.com.co/pol/C3%ADtica/noticias/farc-califican-de-ingenuo-al-g-197854>
9. "Hoy inicia el Foro sobre refrendación y Fin del Conflicto". *Rcn Radio*, February 8 2016, <http://www.rcnradio.com/nacional/este-lunes-se-realizara-foro-mecanismos-refrendacion-fin-del-conflicto/>
10. "Para Santos, al ELN 'lo está dejando el tren de la paz'". *Noticias Caracol*, February 6 2016, <http://www.noticiascaracol.com/colombia/para-santos-al-eln-lo-esta-dejando-el-tren-de-la-paz>
11. "La sede de los diálogos, la diferencia entre el Gobierno y el Eln". *El Espectador*, February 6 2016, <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/sede-de-los-dialogos-diferencia-entre-el-gobierno-y-el-articulo-615074>
12. "Al ELN se le está acabando el tiempo: Frank Pearl". *Semana*, January 2 2016, <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/frank-pearl-desmiente-que-el-eln-este-listo-para-continuar-fase-exploratoria/458984>
13. "Santos ordenó intensificar operaciones en contra del ELN". *Semana*, January 8 2016, <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/juan-manuel-santos-ordeno-intensificar-operaciones-en-contra-del-eln/459872>
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16. "Farc violaron las reglas de juego: De la Calle". *El Espectador*, February 19 2016, <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/farc-violaron-reglas-de-juego-de-calle-articulo-617428>
17. "Gobierno ordena suspender visitas de delegados de las Farc a sus campamentos". *El Espectador* February 18 2016, <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/gobierno-ordena-suspender-visitas-de-delegados-de-farc-articulo-617457>
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19. "Farc dicen que no se violaron protocolos en visita a La Guajira". *El Tiempo*, February 22 2016, <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/farc-visita-la-guajira/16516517>
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21. "Las Farc entrega menor de edad a misión humanitaria". *El Universal*, February 22 2016, <http://www.eluniversal.com.co/colombia/las-farc-entrega-menor-de-edad-mision-humanitaria-219813>
22. "Etapa final de diálogos se haría en sesión permanente". *El Colombiano*, January 8 2016, <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/dialogos-de-paz-etapa-final-se-haria-en-sesion-permanente-ME3402961>
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24. "Bandas criminales: la amenaza para la paz". *Fundación Paz y Reconciliación*, February 2016, <http://www.pares.com.co/paz-y-posconflicto/bandas-criminales-la-amenaza-para-la-paz/>