

European Union 

Recipient of the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize®



PROJECT FACTSHEET

EU Children of Peace in Colombia & Ecuador

Facts & Figures:

- 1 billion children live in conflict-affected areas, of which 300 million are under the age of five
- 7 million children are refugees
- 12.4 million children were displaced in their country in 2011
- There were 28 million conflict-affected children out of primary school in 2011
- There were 250 000 child soldiers in 2009
- Three out of the five countries with the highest child mortality rates in 2011 were conflict countries

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**FUNDED
PROJECT:**

**IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATION
FOR CHILDREN IN CONFLICT
IN COLOMBIA AND ECUADOR.**



EU Children of Peace
EUROPEAN UNION
RECIPIENT OF THE 2012
NOBEL PEACE PRIZE®



The EU dedicates its Nobel Peace Prize to
education projects for children in conflict.
ec.europa.eu/echo/EU4children



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Key messages

- Receiving the **2012 Nobel Peace Prize** for its achievements in peace on the European continent, the EU decided to dedicate the prize money to the most vulnerable who are often the hardest hit by wars: **the children of this world**.
- Because each and every girl and boy in the world should have the opportunity to develop their talents and grow up in peace, just like European children, **the EU has invested the prize money in projects providing 28 000 conflict-affected children with education**, in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.
- Promoting education is also giving peace a chance to be a lasting peace. **We want "children of war" to become "children of peace"**.

Humanitarian situation and needs

Civilians in Colombia continue to be affected by the humanitarian consequences of a decades-long internal armed conflict: forced recruitment, sexual violence, murder, disappearances, lack of access to goods and services and forced displacement.

The conflict generates massive displacement within the country. Government figures registered over 5 million people displaced in Colombia between 2000 and 2013. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) May 2013 world report, Colombia is now the country with the highest number of Internally Displaced Population in the world, surpassing Sudan.

In Colombia, children and teenagers are at risk of being recruited by armed groups, and of being injured by land mines. These threats as well as the reality of displacement can disrupt their education.

Violence has also forced civilians to flee to neighbouring countries, mainly Ecuador and Venezuela, where, according to UNHCR, 396 000 Colombians are in need of international protection.

In Ecuador, the government has registered a total of 55 480 refugees up to December 2012, 98% of whom are of Colombian origin. About 23% of these refugees are children, according to UNHCR Ecuador. For many of them, fleeing means abandoning their education. 60% of the refugees live in urban settings, while 40% remain in areas near the border with Colombia, often in isolated and remote regions with very limited basic services such as education and health. Colombian refugees also face the threat of discrimination and stigmatisation, making it difficult for them to get jobs and make a living.

The European Union's Humanitarian Response

The EU's humanitarian aid is committed to addressing the specific needs of children affected by conflict. The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department, ECHO, dedicates more than half of its funding to conflict-affected areas and 12% of its budget to child-focused relief organisations, much more than the global average. In 2011, it gave over EUR 100 million to projects implemented by UNICEF and Save the Children alone. The EU supports children affected by conflict, namely through child protection activities, psycho-social support, mine risk education, and actions against the recruitment of child soldiers.

In the project in **Colombia** and **Ecuador** funded by the Nobel peace prize, ECHO is providing EUR 400 000 for child education and protection activities in both countries that benefit 4 750 children (3 200 in Ecuador and 1 750 in Colombia).

In action: Assisting Children Affected by Conflict



Under the EU "Children of Peace" initiative, UNHCR supports some 4,700 children and youth in Ecuador and Colombia with a wide range of activities.

In Ecuador, 521 children living in vulnerable areas received school materials and uniforms, 468 kids and teenagers gained access to the Accelerated Basic Education course. Activities to fight against discrimination and to promote tolerance are organised for more than 1 400 children, both Ecuadorian and refugees.

In Colombia, the EU's support means scholarships, school uniforms and materials for many conflict affected children. Schools in especially difficult areas have been renovated, benefitting both displaced children as well as those from the communities that host them. UNHCR works in the regions of Catatumbo, south of Tolima (in this area targeting indigenous Nasa kids) and Caquetá. Activities also include the improvement of protected spaces where educational, cultural and recreational activities can take place, protecting children from forced recruitment by armed groups, so that children can remain children.