

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

COLOMBIA

0. Major changes since previous version of the HIP

In 2012 the intensification of the conflict in certain areas of Colombia in combination with serious delays in the delivery of governmental assistance to newly displaced IDPs, as a consequence of the reorganisation of the institutional set up, has increased the humanitarian gap. This situation is likely to continue in 2013. The scarce interest of the international donor community in this forgotten crisis, now aggravated by the economic crisis, justifies additional DG ECHO funding during a transitional period.

The implementation of the recently adopted law on victims entails major institutional changes of the Colombian bodies responsible for social support. The creation of a new institution in charge of the assistance to internal displaced people, "Special Administrative Unit for Assistance and Reparation for Victims" (UARIV according to its acronym in Spanish), has resulted in considerable delays in the registration and assistance of new IDPs.

Inclusion in the official registration system is the basis for the attribution of rights and assistance to IDPs. According to the UARIV¹, as of 30 June 2012, 167,000 declaration forms have been received countrywide, 94,850 have been filled and sent for assessment, 24,481 have been assessed, and only 14,927 cases have been included in the national victims' registry. There is no information regarding the number of people that have received assistance so far.

These delays have been corroborated by DG ECHO and its partners in the field. They reported important gaps in government humanitarian response due to low capacity and resources availability of local authorities, both in cases of mass displacements and individual cases. Among the gaps identified are: i) insufficient assistance to cover affected and recipient population, ii) obstacles to access health services, iii) lack of adequate shelter infrastructure, iv) inadequate access to water and sanitation and v) lack of support to recovery of livelihoods.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), humanitarian trends remained dire during the first six months of 2012 in Colombia. Civilian deaths and injuries during armed confrontations have increased considerably.

Mass displacements per department have also increased, mainly due to armed clashes between State and non-State groups, and attacks by non-State armed groups against military personnel in areas inhabited by civilians. UN-OCHA has recorded 57 massive displacements in the first half of 2012, accounting for more than 16,000 IDPs. OCHA also highlights that nineteen mass displacement events forced an estimated 8,200 people from their homes solely in July 2012, the highest figure recorded since 2009. The

¹ <http://www.atencionyreparacion.gov.co/138-rendicion-de-cuentas-sobre-la-ley-de-victimas>

number of people assisted by the ICRC as a consequence of mass displacements from January to July 2012 (11,103), equalled the total number of people displaced massively during the whole year 2011².

The number of accidents involving anti-personnel mines (APM) and unexploded ordnance (UXO) dropped slightly, but the average number of victims per month is still high. Hostilities and contamination by explosive devices continue to be major constraints for communities' access to basic services³.

To address the situation and the needs of the beneficiaries in the field, the total amount allocated to this HIP is increased by EUR 1,000,000 under the Humanitarian Aid budget line.

1. CONTEXT

There has been a clear change in politics in Colombia since President Santos took power. Diplomatic ties with Ecuador and Venezuela were restored. In early May 2011, for the first time in Colombia, President Santos acknowledged the prevalence of an armed conflict in Colombia "since many years". One month later the Victims Law⁴, aimed to restore land and seeking compensation for those affected by the conflict, was endorsed.

Despite the widened political aims and economic growth, Colombia still faces the consequences of the armed conflict involving several illegal armed groups and the Colombian armed forces. No clear prospects for a negotiation with the main guerrilla groups (FARC-EP and ELN) are in sight, while at the same time there is also a growing number of criminal gangs⁵ countrywide (allegedly integrated by former paramilitaries). All those illegal armed groups are largely self-financed through drug trafficking, extortion, kidnapping, and illegal mining. While military advances of the Colombian armed forces have been undeniable during the past decade, the conflict continues to trigger serious humanitarian consequences for the civilian population.

The main humanitarian consequences are forced displacement (Internally Displaced Persons –IDPs- and refugees) and temporary restriction of mobility, goods and services⁶.

Intimidation, violence, fear of forced recruitment and threats are the main triggering factors behind forced displacement. In 2010 alone, between 125,000 according to the government and 280,000 according to local NGO⁷, new people became internally displaced and similar figures may be expected for 2011. Accumulated IDP figures are amongst the highest in the world: 3.7 million according to the government, and 5.2 million according to local NGOs⁸. During the first half of 2011, 193,409 Colombian

² Humanitarian Emergency Assistance Statistics: January-December 2011 and January-July 2012.

³ OCHA, Monthly Humanitarian Bulletin, June 2012. (Published: July 26, 2012).

⁴ Ley por la cual se dictan medida de atención, asistencia y reparación integral a las víctimas del conflicto armado interno y se dictan otras disposiciones (Ley 1448/2011).

⁵ Commonly named in Colombia as *Bandas Criminales* (BACRIM)

⁶ Usually named in Colombia as confinement (*confinamiento*).

⁷ Colombian NGO: *Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento*, estimates 90,000 new IDPs during the first half of 2011.

⁸ Registro Único de Población Desplazada, RUPD.
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citizens requested formal inclusion in the governmental IDP registration systems; 48,142 were admitted by the end of June 2011. The rate of rejection has risen significantly in the past years, from 12% in 2002 to 45% in 2010. It is estimated that 20% of IDPs do not even apply for registration due to fear or just because they ignore the process.

Colombian civilians also continue seeking asylum in neighbouring countries, in particular in Ecuador and Venezuela. An average of almost 1,400 Colombians per month requested asylum in Ecuador during the first half of 2011. Venezuela registers less asylum requests (250 per month) mainly due to long delays to obtain response from the authorities.

Armed groups frequently impose restrictions on civilian populations to keep a tight control on territories or to avoid any possibility of exchange of information between civilians and potential enemy units. Restrictions on mobility, as well as on access to goods and services (health or education) for civilians living in rural zones, cause serious humanitarian consequences⁹. Use of landmines often makes access to land and subsistence agriculture impossible, affecting livelihoods of civilian populations in rural zones.

Shrinking of humanitarian space through the blurring of civil-military lines (the government has established mixed brigades of military personnel and civilian health workers) has increased risks for humanitarian workers. Repeated violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) committed by all parties to the conflict have been recorded.¹⁰

Colombia suffered heavy floods in 2010 and in the first half of 2011 due to the La Niña phenomenon. More than 3.9 million people were affected. Despite a large-scale response in funding terms from the Government of Colombia, implementation of relief and rehabilitation has suffered delays due to complex administration of resources between central and local governments.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

1) Affected people/ potential beneficiaries:

Generally speaking, affected people are primarily those affected by the conflict and can be divided into the following groups: a) Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), b) population affected by the conflict but not displaced yet (including confined population) and c) asylum seekers and refugees in neighbouring countries.

⁹ An assessment conducted by OCHA in 2010, covering only 17 municipalities, reported restrictions to goods, services and mobility for some 30,000 people. Restrictions varied in their intensity and time (from some days to several months).

¹⁰ ICRC reports 768 violations to IHL in 2010.

Approximately, an average of 250,000 IDPs/year has been registered during the last 10 years in Colombia. Population affected by the conflict but not forcibly displaced (“confined” or affected somehow by combats or threatened by armed groups) is difficult to estimate. New asylum seekers/refugees in neighbouring countries expected in 2011 could be estimated at 20-25,000. Indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations are particularly affected by the conflict, as reported by the UN High Commissioner for refugees (UNHCR)¹¹.

An average of 160,000 people has been assisted annually by the European Commission under the DG ECHO Global Plans for Colombia. Under the HIP 2012, the European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) expects to be able to assist:

- 70,000 people benefitting from emergency assistance in Colombia.
- Approximately 30,000 benefitting from early recovery assistance and protection.
- In neighbouring countries (Ecuador, Venezuela) some 40,000 people will benefit from protection and emergency assistance actions.

IDPs

Newly displaced people usually have lost their assets and all they possess (in particular land) overnight, often as a result of threats, and have been obliged to flee to other regions of the country for their own safety. A vast majority is not adapted to their new context (frequently from rural areas to marginal urban zones). Protection is considered as the main humanitarian need in Colombia¹². In addition, the IDP population needs:

- Food assistance for all family members.
- Access to health services.
- Access to safe water.

Confinement - blockades - restrictions on movement and on access to basic services.

Despite the serious humanitarian consequences, the phenomenon of confined and blocked populations remains largely invisible. Armed groups' needs to protect drug production areas and drug/arms trafficking routes are some of the reasons behind confinements. The phenomenon is characterised by mobility restrictions and limitations to access to basic services, mainly for rural communities¹³. Weapon contamination in certain communities (land mines and Remnants of War) also leads to inability to cultivate land or do fishing.

¹¹ The rights of indigenous peoples and Afro-Colombian communities are still disproportionately violated in the context of armed conflict. In particular, their rights to life, territory and culture are being threatened by the presence of armed actors on their lands (UNHCHR report on the human rights situation in Colombia 2010, 3 Feb 2011).

¹² ECHO questionnaire addressed to 27 international humanitarian organizations working in Colombia (UN, RC Movement and INGOs) conducted in August 2011.

¹³ In some large cities as Medellin, mobility restrictions for civilian population are also commonly reported, hampering, for instance, children access to education services.

Refugees-asylum seekers, situation in neighbouring countries. According to UNHCR¹⁴, there are 115,000 refugees and asylum seekers from Colombia in neighbouring countries, mostly in Ecuador and Venezuela. In addition, UNHCR estimates 150,000 to 250,000 to be in a refugee-like situation (commonly named *invisible* refugees). Nearly 29,000 Colombians requested asylum in 2010 and a similar figure is expected for 2011. 40-60% of the asylum seekers and refugees stay in border zones with Colombia. Afro-Colombians and indigenous people account for approximately 33% of the refugee and refugee-like population.

The main protection challenges for Colombians in need of international protection (PNIP) in Venezuela and Ecuador are: the process of recognition of the refugee status, proper documentation, restrictions on freedom of movement, arbitrary detention, exploitation, poor access to basic goods and services, no access to formal employment during the process of their request, and insecurity due to violence, intimidation and fear (particularly in border zones).

2) Description of most acute humanitarian needs

Protection: Direct threats, violence including sexual violence, restriction on free movement, and forced recruitment continue to affect the civilian population and cause new displacements. Protection is not only understood by DG ECHO in terms of ensuring basic physical security, but also as: a) preparedness measures for population at high risk of displacement, b) continued humanitarian presence in remote conflict-affected areas, c) weapon contamination awareness¹⁵.

Emergency food and non-food assistance - Immediately after displacement, people often arrive with only the bare goods they could transport. Hence, their most basic needs remain uncovered. Also restrictions on movement and on access to basic goods and services imposed by armed actors on rural communities impact negatively on their food security and nutritional situation. Non-food assistance refers to the replacement of basic household items (hygiene or kitchen sets, mosquito nets...) which IDPs have been obliged to leave behind.

Health Care - Registered IDPs have some access to the health system although the system is not always operational in rural areas. Non-registered IDPs can only access the system through payments which they often cannot afford because their income and savings have been depleted. Access to primary health care is limited for rural conflict-affected populations due to prevailing insecurity for medical personnel or shortcomings of the health structures. Displacement is a traumatic experience, in spite of this only limited psychological assistance is provided to populations affected by the conflict.

¹⁴ Figures presented at the UNHCR regional briefing/update with humanitarian donors, Bogota, May 2011.

¹⁵ Colombia is ranked as the second country after Afghanistan in number of accidents by anti-personal mines and remnants of war (ROW) or unexploded ordinances (UXOs). In 2010, 535 victims were reported by the Government, 32% of the victims were civilians. During the first semester of 2011, 287 victims accounted in 69 different municipalities. Source: *Programa Presidencial para la Acción Integral Contra Minas Antipersonal (PPAICMA)*. PPAICMA reports on anti personal mines, and on accidents related to ROW or UXOs.

Despite efforts made in Colombia to ensure health assistance for IDPs, 25% of the IDP population is not affiliated to the health system. Only 43% of those displaced in 2010 managed to get an affiliation¹⁶.

Access to safe water and sanitation - Water borne diseases are very common in rural settings. Diarrhoeal diseases are one of the most frequent pathologies in Colombia. Water systems may have deteriorated as a result of the conflict or lack of maintenance in remote rural zones. Small scale sanitation works are a prevailing need for population affected by the conflict (either IDPs or residents). It is reported that 90% of the IDP population lives in dwellings below minimum dignity levels¹⁷.

Natural disasters - Colombia is a highly disaster-prone country, the vast majority of damage being caused by hydro-meteorological events, notably floods and landslides. Despite a comprehensive emergency response legal framework, local or national response capacity is not sufficient and international assistance may be required, including for reasons of access. In addition, populations affected by the conflict are at risk to be also hit by natural disasters, as they usually settle in zones of high risk.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

1) National / local response and involvement

Colombia has a sound and sophisticated legal protection framework aimed at providing humanitarian assistance to IDPs. During the last years, the government has made progress in its policy towards IDPs and increased the corresponding resources¹⁸

The situation is somehow paradoxical: while the country has a sophisticated legal protection framework and considerable financial resources earmarked for assistance to IDPs, the emergency humanitarian and protection needs of many victims of the conflict remain uncovered, mainly outside the major cities, where services of state institutions are weak or not present due to the armed conflict.

The lack of assistance is also due to under-registration. Inclusion in the official registration system, which is the basis for the attribution of rights to IDPs, needs to be improved in order to decrease the number of displaced populations who are left out of the system (the Government admits that approximately 23% of IDPs don't declare due to fear or just because they ignore the procedure).

¹⁶ Source: III National Verification Survey (National Commission for the follow up of the public policy towards displaced population) conducted in 2010.

¹⁷ Source: III National Verification Survey (National Commission for the follow up of the public policy towards displaced population) conducted in 2010.

¹⁸ Estimated allocation of €202 million through *Accion Social* for emergency humanitarian aid to IDPs under the Colombian budget 2011. Source: *Ministerio de Hacienda*, 2011.

2) International Humanitarian Response

ECHO considers Colombia a forgotten crisis, given the scarce international attention on its humanitarian crisis and low funding for humanitarian actions.

An Inter Agency Standing Committee is in place, with the participation of UN agencies and international NGOs, as well as some observers: International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Médicos sin Fronteras (MSF) and DG ECHO. The international donor community's support is mainly focused on development, although there is still a part of support directed to humanitarian aid. ECHO plays a significant role in overall international humanitarian aid effort to Colombia.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking System¹⁹, the total of international humanitarian aid to Colombia in 2010 amounted to USD 75 million, with Colombia (25%), ECHO (19.6%), Norway (10.6%), Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) (8.1%) and Germany (6.5%) being the top five donors. In 2011, the OCHA Financial Tracking System reported a total of USD 47.3 million with DG ECHO (42.5%), Norway (9.7%), Canada (9.3%), CERF (7.2%) and Netherlands (6.8%) as the top five donors.

Other than the European Union, which provides both social and economic assistance to Colombia, the United States remains the most influential foreign actor in Colombia. US assistance under the Economic Support Fund and International Narcotics Control and Law enforcement chapters is approximately USD 437 million in 2010. The assistance consists primarily of military and police aid.

3) Constraints and DG ECHO response capacity

i) **Access/humanitarian space** - Although insecurity is a major problem in rural conflict areas and marginal urban zones in Colombia, the humanitarian community has rarely been targeted in the past and there is a general respect for international humanitarian actors. Access to the civilian population in areas in which the conflict is most acute is difficult and usually depends on local commanders. In spite of these difficulties, actions funded under past ECHO Global Plans have generally achieved satisfactory access to the beneficiary population.

Armed groups continue committing violations to IHL, usually with high levels of impunity. Blurring of lines between civilian and military actors in conflict areas is a worrying development. Since March 2009, a new presidential Directive is in force mandating several governmental agencies, including the armed forces, to coordinate and develop activities with humanitarian organisations in the field. This may increase risks for humanitarian organizations.

ii) **Partners** – DG ECHO's partners in Colombia are present in the departments most affected by the conflict. In the neighbouring countries DG ECHO's main partner,

¹⁹ As of 8 Sep 2011.

UNHCR, is providing assistance and protection to Colombian refugees along the borders in Ecuador and Venezuela.

iii) **Absorption capacity on the ground and efficiency of operations** – The absorption capacity is significantly high²⁰. A careful selection of the partners will be conducted, based on quality of proposals, capacity on the field and performance in previous ECHO funded operations.

4) Envisaged DG ECHO response and expected results of humanitarian aid interventions, DG ECHO's four priority criteria for its engagement in Colombia are: a) to focus on newly displaced populations (less than 12 months), b) to identify conflict-affected areas and/or communities inaccessible or difficult to reach for other humanitarian actors or for government institutions (including confined population), c) Colombian asylum seekers and refugees in neighbouring countries, and d) population affected by natural disasters. Protection will be the overarching element of the intervention.

Particular emphasis will continue to be placed on the most vulnerable groups, i.e. women, children, elderly people as well as ethnic groups (indigenous and Afro-Colombian population). Additionally, promotion of good coordination will be sought with local and national bodies as a step towards exit/handover strategies and to avoid substitution of government activities. Sectors to be considered will be those related to the needs described in section 2 above.

4. LRRD, COORDINATION AND TRANSITION

Opportunities for LRRD focus mainly on Government institutions. Given the increased aid efforts by the Colombian Government, the continued involvement of the relevant state institutions should be sought by ECHO and its partners, without prejudice to the humanitarian principles defined in the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid. In past years, some DG ECHO interventions have already been handed over to state or local institutions, for instance health care brigades and accelerated learning cycles for IDP children in some municipalities.

LRRD is also sought through existing complementarities between DG ECHO and interventions under other Commission aid instruments such as the Development Cooperation Instrument for Latin America. To ensure coordination, there are regular meetings between the EU Delegation and the DG ECHO office in Bogota and a continued dialogue in Brussels between relevant services. Furthermore, synergies are sought with other EU funded programmes such as the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, the DCI thematic programmes and the Instrument for Stability.

5. OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL DETAILS

The provisions of the financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2012/01000 and the general conditions of the Partnership Agreement with the European Commission shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

²⁰ ECHO normally receives a total funding request from partners above €18 million every year.

5.1. Contacts²¹

Operational Unit in charge: ECHO-B5

Contact at HQ level

Eduardo Fernandez-Zincke	Desk Officer	Eduardo.Fernandez-zincke@ec.europa.eu
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Contact in Colombia

Pedro Luis Rojo Garcia	Technical Assistant	Pedro-Luis.rojo@echofield.eu
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5.2. Financial info

Indicative allocation: EUR 13 million

Man-made crises: Hum. Aid: EUR 12 million Food Assistance: EUR 1 million

5.3. Proposal Assessment**Assessment round 1**

a) Description of the humanitarian aid interventions relating to this assessment round: All interventions as described under section 3.4 of this HIP.

b) Indicative amount to be allocated in this round of proposals: up to EUR 12,000,000 (Hum. Aid: 11,000,000; Food Assistance: 1,000,000)

c) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2012²²

d) The expected initial duration for the Action is up to 12 months

e) Potential partners: All DG ECHO Partners

f) Information to be provided: Letter of intent²³ based on the Single form format and including at least: area of intervention, sector, duration, beneficiaries, context/needs assessment, proposed response (results, activities), estimated costs, requested contribution, contact details.

²¹Letters of intent should be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL. Instructions on how to submit Letters of intent using APPEL are available at http://www.dgecho-partnershelpdesk.eu/preparing_an_action/financing_decision/intention_letter.

²² The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single form or the eligibility date of the HIP, what ever occurs latest.

²³In case letters of intent are requested an initial analysis will be done on the basis of the information received, Single Forms and other sources, such as humanitarian programmes and appeals (CAPs or CHAPs). For the retained letters of intent, partners will be requested to submit a Single Form, which will be the subject of a more detailed assessment. Only accepted Single Forms can lead to the signature of an agreement.

g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by 16/12/2011²⁴

h) Commonly used principles will be applied for the assessment of proposals, such as quality of needs assessment, relevance of intervention sectors, knowledge of the country / region and capacity of the organization in the field.

Assessment round 2

a) Description of the humanitarian aid interventions relating to this assessment round:
All interventions as described under section 3.4 of this HIP

b) Indicative amount to be allocated in this round of proposals: up to EUR 1,000,000.

c) Costs will be eligible from 1/10/2012²⁵.

d) The expected initial duration for the Action is up to 12 months.

e) Potential partners: All DG ECHO partners.

f) Information to be provided: Single form OR modifications request for on-going Actions0.

g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by 1st October 2012.²⁶

h) Commonly used principles will be applied for the assessment of proposals, such as quality of needs assessment, relevance of intervention sectors, knowledge of the country / region and capacity of the organization in the field.

DG ECHO visa

²⁴ The Commission reserves the right to consider letters of intent transmitted after this date, especially in case certain needs/ priorities are not covered by the received letters of intent

²⁵ The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single Form or the eligibility date of the HIP, what ever occurs latest. Amendments to existing agreements will retain their initial eligibility date of the Action.

²⁶ The Commission reserves the right to consider Single Forms transmitted after this date, especially in case certain needs/priorities are not covered by the received Single Forms.