

Colombia

Main objectives

- Reinforce protection and assistance, through a coordinated and comprehensive response to the IDP crisis.
- Foster viable solutions, including return, local integration and relocation for displaced people, whenever possible.
- Enhance a regional approach for Colombians in need of international protection, in coordination with UNHCR offices in the neighbouring countries.
- Strengthen international protection for 200 refugees and asylum-seekers in Colombia.
- Bring gender- and age-specific needs to centre stage in all activities.



Planning figures

Population ¹	Jan 2005	Dec 2005
Colombia (assisted IDPs)	201,000	241,200
Refugees of various nationalities	163	150
Asylum-seekers	12	20
Total	201,175	241,370

¹ The Government estimates that there are some two million IDPs in Colombia. NGOs have estimated some three million.

Total requirements: USD 7,031,686

Working environment

Recent developments

Although the overall security situation in Colombia has improved, armed conflict continues to affect large parts of the country, including sensitive border areas. In those areas, the Colombian army reported approximately 8,000 clashes with guerrillas and paramilitaries during the first six months of 2004 (20 per cent more than the previous year). Military efforts also focused on the interception of various illegal sources of finance for these groups (drug trafficking, gasoline trade, extortion, kidnapping and other criminal activities). President Alvaro Uribe Vélez's administration continues its efforts to regain control of regions of the country

where State authority has been absent for decades.

Opinion polls up to August 2004 suggest that the public supports the Government (approval ratings were between 70 and 80 per cent). This situation has allowed for positive economic developments in the country, despite stark social inequities and high unemployment rates. At the same time, there are ongoing efforts to implement a constitutional reform which may extend the President's term of office. The Government, having established an area known as *la zona de ubicación* to facilitate negotiations with the paramilitaries of the *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC), has shown its commitment to demobilize and reintegrate AUC members into civilian society. The Organization of American States (OAS) will verify and evaluate this process.

In February 2004, Colombia's Constitutional Court issued a landmark judgement, which deemed Government policy inadequate vis-à-vis existing IDP legislation. This judgement followed a series of separate petitions on behalf of 4,000 persons requesting "*tutela*" - a rapid remedy to defend their constitutional rights. This judgement brought increased attention to IDP issues in the country. However, the humanitarian crisis continues to affect a large segment of the civilian population, including more than two million IDPs.

Constraints

Access to some regions and to IDPs continues to be difficult for UNHCR and its implementing partners on account of the security situation in many areas to which the State has had no access for decades. The intensification of the Colombian conflict, and increased security measures, present a constant challenge for the international community in its efforts to help IDPs.

Strategy

Protection and solutions

The protection strategy is based upon the national legal framework, the "Guiding Principles

on Internal Displacement", which set the international standards for IDP protection, and UNHCR's Agenda for Protection. The strategy includes strengthening the application of the legal framework in Colombia, protecting displaced populations, searching for durable solutions, including return, local integration and relocation for displaced people in safety and dignity, and meeting the specific needs of IDP women and children. The Office will provide individual IDPs with legal aid and documentation, as well as supporting IDP associations to enhance their ability to mitigate the effects of displacement.

Assistance

UNHCR will focus on capacity-building activities, instead of providing emergency assistance for IDPs. The Office will reinforce civil society organizations that address IDP needs, and cooperate with IDP associations to ensure that IDPs have access to shelter and basic services, such as health and education.

Desired impact

In 2005, UNHCR will increase the impact of its activities for IDPs, by designing policies and improving collaboration with authorities responsible for IDPs, at both national and local levels. The Office will highlight the social impact of military conflict through the presentation of public reports on return, reintegration of IDPs, violence against displaced populations and their leaders, SGBV, and the overall magnitude of the humanitarian crisis.

In coordination with national authorities, UNHCR will promote mechanisms to protect land, property, and the economic rights of IDPs. UNHCR will design and implement policies to support displaced communities which have returned or are at risk, to protect threatened IDP leaders, and promote the presence of State institutions. UNHCR will continue to develop training programmes to raise awareness of the rights of IDPs, not only among government authorities and the international community, but also among the IDPs themselves.



Education for IDP children at a centre built by the Spanish Red Cross years ago, which was meant to be transitory but is still being used today. *UNHCR / B. Heger*

Organization and implementation

Management structure

During 2005, UNHCR in Colombia will have 34 staff (12 international, including one JPO, and 22

national), in addition to 16 international UNVs and three protection staff deployed under the Surge project. The UNHCR office in Bogotá is responsible for the overall management of the programme, in cooperation with the Government, national and international agencies, members of the diplomatic community and NGOs. There are also four field offices and two satellite offices coordinating local initiatives for IDPs.

Coordination

In 2005, the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator will be responsible for the coordination of the UN system, while UNHCR, with OCHA's support, will play a lead role for the Thematic Group on Internal Displacement (TGID), as an inter-agency effort to ensure a more effective and coherent response to displacement. The TGID is composed of 11 UN agencies and IOM, with observer status for ICRC, ECHO, donor countries, the Social Solidarity Network, the Joint Technical Unit, and representatives of NGOs. UNHCR also works closely with UNIFEM, and participates regularly in the UN Gender Working Group.

Others

FAO
 ICRC
 IOM
 OCHA
 UNDP
 UNFPA
 UNHCHR
 UNICEF
 UNIDO-United Nations Industrial Development Organization
 UNV
 WFP
 WHO-PAHO-Pan American Health Organization

Offices
Bogotá
Apartadó
Barrancabermeja
Barranquilla
Mocoa
Pasto
Quibdó

Partners
Government agencies
<i>Defensoría del Pueblo (Ombudsman's Office)</i>
<i>Defensoría del Pueblo (Ombudsman's Office)</i>
<i>Procuraduría General de la Nación (Attorney General)</i>
<i>Red de Solidaridad Social (RSS)</i>
<i>Registraduría (National Registry)</i>
NGOs
<i>Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular</i>
<i>Compartir</i>
<i>Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento</i>
<i>Instituto Latinoamericano de Servicios Legales</i>
<i>Liga de Mujeres</i>
<i>Mujer y Futuro</i>
<i>Opción Legal</i>
<i>Organización Indígena de Antioquia</i>
<i>Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia</i>
<i>Organización Zonal Indígena de Putumayo</i>
<i>Secretariado Nacional de Pastoral Social</i>
<i>Universidad Nacional de Colombia</i>

Budget (USD)	
Activities and services	Annual Programme
Protection, monitoring and coordination	2,067,700
Community services	692,395
Domestic needs	3,208
Education	438,748
Health	3,616
Income generation	328,934
Legal assistance	1,127,186
Operational support (to agencies)	1,061,057
Shelter/other infrastructure	37,992
Transport/logistics	6,864
Total operations	5,767,700
Programme support	1,263,986
Total	7,031,686