Key developments:

- Violence rises in the Pacific coast of Valle del Cauca Department
- Awó Indigenous People in the midst of hostilities in Nariño Department
- New displacements in Chocó and Córdoba Departments
- Hostilities cause serious humanitarian impact in Cauca Department
Violence rises in the Pacific coast of Valle del Cauca Department

Nearly 800 Afro-Colombians displaced, and a series of homicides and cases of SGBV were registered in the town of Buenaventura, along the Pacific coast.

On 11 March, Buenaventura’s local Ombudsman reported the displacement of 215 families from six Afro-Colombian communities in the rural area (Anchicayá River). The displacement was triggered by acts of violence of the FARC in the area, including combat with the Colombian Navy, and killings. On 15 March, UNHCR reported issued a press release indicating that “local authorities have called the attention towards the increase of illegal mining in the area” with the involvement of illegal armed groups. According to the current census, there are 879 IDPs in the urban area, among which 370 are children and 46 elder persons. Sixty-two more families would have arrived on 14 March. UNHCR also alerted on an imminent risk of mass displacement along the Cajambre River, also in the rural area of the municipality, due to disappearances that would also be related to illegal mining activities.

The local Comité for IDPs Asistanse (CMAPD) met on March. Local authorities, together with social organizations and members of the community will conduct missions to the Cajambre and Anchicayá Rivers. UNHCR, Solidarity Internacional, Jesuit Refugee Service, UNHCHR and OCHA will join the missions. Acción Social is providing humanitarian assistance for IDPs and for the families that remained in the villages.

Local organizations denounced grave cases of SGBV against minors that occurred during the last week in Buenaventura. Three girls -15 and 17 years old- were raped and killed in two neighborhoods. An 18-year-old woman was also raped and resulted severely injured. In the last years, local and INGOs have been reporting cases of SGBV that indicate that it is a systematic practice within the internal armed conflict in Colombia.

Awá Indigenous People in the midst of hostilities in Nariño Department

Two years have passed after the massacre of at least 12 persons – one of the worst attacks against the Awá community - which triggered the displacement of nearly 400 people. Since then, new massacres as well as displacements and hostilities within the Awá territory have been registered.

The Army and the FARC have been conducting hostilities in two Awá indigenous reservations, in the rural area of Ricaurte Municipality. Due to the risk of cross-fire and APM/UXO, more than 1.000 persons sought safe haven in the school facilities. The indigenous people declared a “permanent assembly” as a self-protection measure. Among the affected population are some families that displaced after the massacre in 2008. Se presentan restricciones en la movilidad de las comunidades tanto por los riesgos mencionados, como por el temor de las comunidades frente a un posible desplazamiento masivo. Las condiciones de seguridad en la zona también han impedido el acceso de las entidades competentes para proveer asistencia humanitaria. El Grupo de Protección del Equipo Humanitario Local, se encuentra haciendo seguimiento a la situación y acompañando a las autoridades indígenas en el marco de la Misión Humanitaria Permanente al territorio del Pueblo Indígena Awá.

New displacements in Chocó and Córdoba Departments

During the first quarter of 2011, OCHA has registered an increase in the number of mass displacement events, as compared to the same period in
2010, revealing a worsening in the humanitarian situation, particularly in Córdoba and the Pacific region.

On 9 March, Acción Social reported the displacement of 220 persons from the Embera indigenous community, located along the Pavasa River (Bajo Baudó region). The displacement was triggered by threats against civilians by an illegal armed group. Reportedly, members of the armed group stole community’s goods and detained some members of the community for one day. Due to security constraints, access is restricted for local authorities to provide assistance. Acción Social informed its arrival to the urban area of the municipality, trying to reach the affected communities.

In Córdoba Department, civilians in the rural area of Montería have been facing a difficult situation due to the dispute for a property by illegal armed groups. A community leader, whose husband was killed in 2009, was threatened by alleged members of an illegal armed group. Following the threats, 12 families (nearly 50 persons) displaced to the urban area on 26 February. According to the Ombudsman’s Office’s Resolution No. 058 of 2010 regarding land tenure and conflict in Córdoba Department, “the dispute for territorial control constitutes the main reason for land grabbing”.

**Hostilities cause serious humanitarian impact in Cauca Department**

On 7 March, a local Afro-Colombian organization denounced an increase in small-scale displacements in the urban area of López de Micay Municipality (Pacific coast) due to the continuous attacks of the FARC against Police units. There is also the risk of a mass displacement in the area. On 12 March, a minor was killed and two more were injured during an attack of the FARC in the nearby Municipality of Timbiqui.

In the North of the Department, serious acts of violence against civilians were also reported. On 14 March, the FARC attacked the Police unit in the urban area of Caldonó Municipality, leaving a minor and a woman injured. On 10 March, attacks and occupation of school facilities by armed groups during hostilities were denounced by the community. In Santander de Quilichao Municipality, an indigenous person was killed on 17 March.