

HIGHLIGHTS

- Confinement situations arise during protests against coca eradication
- Trends in number of IDPs are steady from last year as the peace process continues
- World Refugee Day highlights the plight of Colombian refugees around the world
- Report on Children and Armed Conflict shows that children continue to suffer as victims of the country's conflict
- Urgent needs in Education in Emergencies, Protection, Mental Health

FIGURES

# of Confined 2013	91.002
# of refugees total 2012	394,100
# of IDPs in mass events I Sem 2013	15.784

FUNDING

US\$35,619,837
2013 total humanitarian funding received as of 25 June



OCHA/Felinto Córdoba

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Coca eradication efforts spark major tensions

Nearly 18,000 confined people in wake of protests in Norte de Santander and Nariño

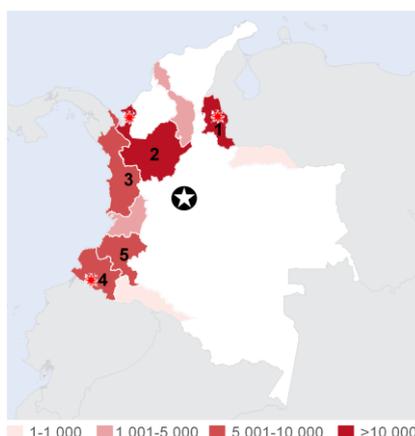
A major coca eradication campaign sparked mass protests on the border with Venezuela in the Catatumbo region (Norte de Santander) in June, leading to violent clashes between rural farmers and the Armed Forces. As a result, the main roads in the area have been closed for over a month, leaving an estimated 17,800 confined and with humanitarian needs. Over 1,000 tons of food deliveries have failed to reach the region, leading to a sharp rise in food prices and food insecurity. Medical missions have also been turned back, and serious protection concerns have emerged. In a separate incident, similar protests broke out in Nariño along the Ecuador border later in June. The ensuing tensions left 8,000 people without access to basic services in the Pacific coast port city of Tumaco, a major coca growing centre.

Opposition to coca eradication program es is rooted in long-standing perceptions among rural residents that the Government has not invested sufficiently in their regions. Local farmers fear that coca eradication will leave them without alternative livelihoods. As a result, tensions flare periodically, leading to protests and counter-measures that can leave people cut off from basic services for extended periods.

Over 91,000 people estimated confined thus far in 2013

According to OCHA estimates, in 2013 over 91,000 people faced confinement in nine departments. Confinement is defined as a limitation on mobility that generates humanitarian needs that require attention from the humanitarian community. Confined people are counted as part of the humanitarian caseload in the country. The number of confined people rose steadily throughout the year, with June alone accounting for nearly 20,000 confined people. In January 2013, OCHA introduced a confinement tracking system for the first time. The system monitors confinement in nine departments and allows partners to follow trends over time, thereby supporting humanitarian planning and advocacy efforts.

Confined population January - June 2013



Department	# People affected
1 Norte de Santander	42.931
2 Antioquia	23.462
3 Nariño	8.159
4 Chocó	6.361
5 Cauca	6.110
Otros	3.979
Total	91.002

Source: SIDIH-Monitor/OCHA

Colombia is the only country in the world to use aerial fumigation as a main focus of drug control efforts, which has a humanitarian impact

25 per cent decrease in land used to grow coca, but concerns persist over risks associated with eradication efforts

According to the [UN Office on Drugs and Crime \(UNODC\)](#)¹, the land area used for coca cultivation has dropped by over 25 per cent in Colombia, from 64,000 to 45,000 hectares. Coca is one of the main cash crops in several remote areas, particularly where infrastructure is weak and access to major markets is limited. Areas under cultivation are commonly defended with anti-personnel mines (APM), meaning that surrounding communities often suffer from restricted mobility or lack of services. APMs place manual eradicators – mostly from poor rural families – at great risk as they pull up deep-rooted coca crops by hand. Colombia is also the only country in the world to use aerial fumigation as a main focus of its drug control efforts. This approach destroys illicit coca crops but also kills licit crops, leading to food insecurity, water contamination and skin diseases. With the stated Government goal of zero hectares of coca in 2016, it is likely that the intensity of confrontations over this policy increases in coming months and years. Protests against eradication campaigns, such as those reported here in Catatumbo and Tumaco, have also led to cases of confinement in which people face food shortages and lack of basic services.

No reduction in humanitarian needs despite ongoing peace talks during semester

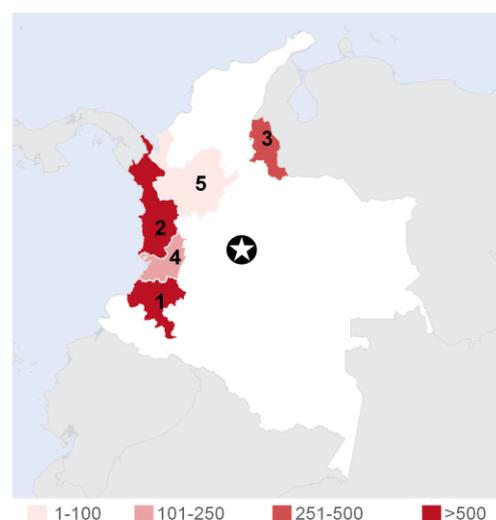
Colombian civilians continue to face serious consequences of conflict

Although encouraging, peace talks between the Government and FARC-EP guerrillas have failed to translate into meaningful improvements for Colombia's conflict-affected civilians. During the first semester, aside from a brief FARC-EP ceasefire in January, the conflict continued steady in the first half of the year, with the measured impact on civilians roughly the same as during the first half of 2012. The actors behind the events causing humanitarian needs have shifted somewhat – particularly with the expanding operations of post-demobilization armed groups (PDAGs) and ELN guerrillas – but the overall humanitarian impact remains largely unchanged.

Roughly 3,100 people displaced in June – 170 per cent more than in May

With an estimated 3,090 displaced from their homes due to conflict in June, total displacement for the month was 170 per cent higher than in May. However, overall displacements in the second quarter of 2013 decreased by 57 per cent compared to the first quarter. Clashes between the Armed Forces and FARC-EP guerrillas continued to be the main cause of displacement in June, particularly in Cauca and Nariño departments. June was a relatively complicated month for mass displacements due an intensification of the conflict in Cauca, which aside from the month of June was also the most affected by mass displacements during the semester overall. For the first semester 2013, displacement levels in Colombia remain

IDPs June 2013



Department	#. of IDPs
1 Cauca	2,346
2 Chocó	526
3 Norte de Santander	120
4 Valle del Cauca	60
5 Antioquia	38
Total	3,090

Source: SIDIHMonitor/OCHA

¹ World Drug Report 2013

An increase in intra-urban displacement, as well as changes in the perpetrators of displacement, were part of a changing dynamic of displacement in the First Semester 2013.

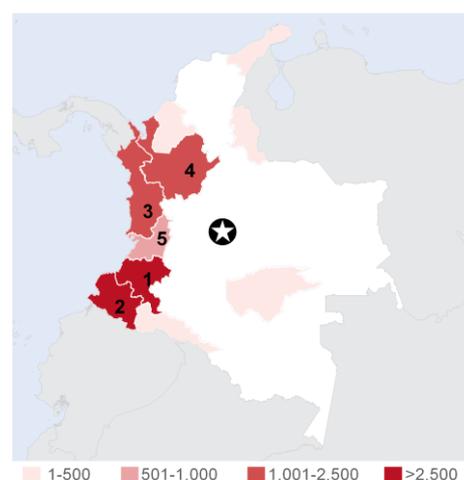
extremely high, with the most recent CODHES data estimating that 5.7 million people are currently displaced due to conflict and official data registering 4.7 million IDPs on the official register.

Displacement within urban areas up 15 per cent in the first half of 2013

Approximately 15 per cent of the displacement events recorded by OCHA in the first half of 2013 were intra-urban, meaning people were forced from their homes but remained in the same urban area. PDAG operations were the primary cause, particularly in Medellín. For comparison, during the first half of 2012, only 6 per cent of displacement events were intra-urban. This apparent trend towards increasing intra-urban displacement presents a challenge to humanitarian partners due to the fact that many of these displacements are caused by PDAGs, meaning that there is a gap in response since the GOC will still not attend many of these victims. The trend is also of concern since typically these events did not occur as 'mass' events, but rather family by family. A rise in mass events probably coincides a rise in family-by-family displacement as well.

OCHA also recorded an 11 per cent drop in the number of mass displacement events (at least 50 people displaced at once) in the first half of 2013 compared to the same period in 2012. Ten mass displacement events forced nearly 3,100 people from their homes, mostly as a result of clashes between the FARC-EP and national Armed Forces. The worst event occurred in Guapi municipality in department of Cauca (see recent [Flash Update](#), [Sitrep](#))², in the Pacific Coast, the worst affected region throughout the first half of the year. Altogether, [NGO CODHES estimates](#)³ that 18.1 per cent of mass displacements were intra-urban in 2012.

IDPs – I Semester 2013



Department	# of IDPs
1 Cauca	5.683
2 Nariño	4.020
3 Chocó	2.404
4 Antioquia	1.700
5 Valle del Cauca	745
Otros	1.232
Total	15.784

Source: SIDIHMonitor/OCHA

Armed clashes fall 63 per cent in June – with little effect on consequences for civilians

Although displacement rose substantially from May to June, reported armed actions fell by 63 per cent, revealing a potentially surprising discrepancy. Apart from January – when the FARC-EP declared a unilateral ceasefire – June had the lowest number of armed actions in 2013. This may be due to a concentration of the conflict during the month in the area of Cauca department, where the largest number of IDPs was also recorded. Throughout the first half of 2013, the worst-affected areas were on the border with Venezuela (Arauca department) and in north-west Colombia (southern Córdoba and northern Antioquia departments). Caquetá (central Colombia), the Pacific coast and areas along the Ecuador border also experienced frequent clashes. While the general trend remains unchanged compared to 2012, the number of individual municipalities experiencing clashes has increased.

ELN guerrillas roughly doubled their armed operations in June, rising to 10 per cent of total observed armed actions, from 5 per cent in May. ELN accounted for just 1 per cent

² Flash Update 1, 2: Mass displacement in Argelia, Guapi and Suarez (Cauca)
Sitrep 1, 2: Mass displacement in Guapi (Cauca)

³ The humanitarian crisis in Colombia persists. The disputed Pacific. Report forced displacement in 2012.

The intense use of anti-personnel mines in Colombia, the most affected country in the world last year by APM, is an important dimension to the humanitarian crisis in the country.

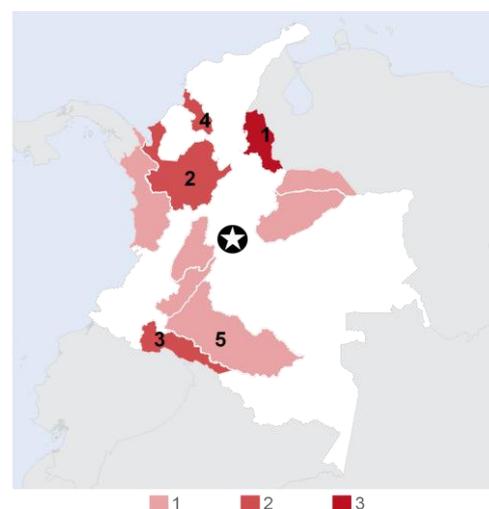
of armed clashes in the first half of 2012. This steady increase has given rise to concerns that the ELN is seeking demonstrate its power in light of possible peace talks with the Government. In June, ELN attacks in Sipí municipality (Chocó department) killed one child, displaced 470 people and left 1,100 confined (see [Flash Update](#))⁴.

Reports of increased use of APM by post-demobilization armed groups

OCHA recorded 15 accidents due to anti-personnel mines (APM) and unexploded ordnance (UXO) in June, leaving 15 victims (11 civilians). The border with Venezuela in Norte de Santander department was the most affected, followed by Antioquia and Putumayo. The Government anti-mine programme (PAICMA) reports that 181 people were victims of AMP/UXO incidents (63 civilians, including 27 children) from January to May. This represents a 27 per cent decrease than the same period in 2012. These figures are still being updated and are likely to increase.

FARC-EP and ELN guerrillas were historically the most frequent users of APM, but recent reports indicate that PDAGs are using mines to protect coca crops and illegal mining operations, particularly in north-west and central Colombia, along the Pacific coast and along the border with Ecuador. APM have wide-ranging effects on surrounding civilian communities and in 2013 have had a particularly strong impact on humanitarian needs faced by the Awá indigenous community in Nariño department along the border with Ecuador (see earlier Humanitarian Bulletins).

APM / UXO victims June 2013



Department	# APM/UXO Victims
1 Norte de Santander	3
2 Antioquia	2
3 Putumayo	2
4 Sucre	2
5 Caquetá	1
Other	5
Total	15

Source: PAICMA

Conditions worsen for Cauca indigenous people a year after issuing demands that all armed actors leave their territory

It was almost one year ago when, in July 2012, facing long-running hostilities in the department, the indigenous communities of Cauca banded together to protest their situation. The indigenous groups demanded that both the Government and FARC-EP withdraw from their territories and commit to respect indigenous communities. After an escalation in protests, negotiations began with the Government, however the news soon thereafter of a peace process between the Government and FARC-EP precluded these discussions and meanwhile the humanitarian situation in the zone has worsened as the conflict intensifies. As can be seen in the above data, during the first semester of 2013, Cauca is clearly a focal point of the conflict and the displacement situation in Colombia.

Roughly 394,100 Colombian refugees living outside the country

An estimated 394,100 refugees from Colombia are living in different countries around the world, mostly in neighbouring countries. According to [UNHCR](#)⁵ in Ecuador, these refugees need additional assistance, despite aid from Ecuador, Colombia and the

⁴ Flash Update 1: Mass displacement in Sipí (Chocó)

⁵ UNHCR Global Trends 2012

Analysis in the response to individual IDPs, as opposed to massively displaced IDPs, is one particularly important expected result to the study by the Food Security and Nutrition and Protection Clusters.

international community. UNHCR marked World Refugee Day on 20 June, with offices in the region using the event to draw attention to the status of Colombian refugees.

First rainy season affects over 180,000 people

Challenges remain for early recovery in Chocó

The Government department responsible for natural disaster response (UNGRD) reports that the first rainy season of the year affected over 180,000 people in 35 per cent of the country (398 municipalities). Over 20,000 homes were damaged and nearly 1,000 destroyed between 15 March and 28 June. Almost all disaster events were caused by flooding, wind storms or landslides. The most affected area was the Pacific coast, where Chocó department made up 39 per cent of those affected nationwide. The bulk of flooding in Chocó occurred in March (see [OCHA Situation Reports](#))⁶.

Despite strong response by national authorities, challenges remain in terms of supporting the early recovery of flood-affected communities in Chocó – already among the poorest communities in the country. Infrastructure damage in several areas remains severe. Aside from Chocó, damage in Cundinamarca and Nariño reportedly also needs attention.

Oil spills threaten water supply for 35,000 in Catatumbo

A series of bombings has left oil spills in the Catatumbo River in Catatumbo region on the border with Venezuela. The resulting spills are threatening the water supply for nearly 35,000 people living in the area, and clean-up operations have proved difficult.

Food Security and Nutrition and Protection Clusters analyze response gaps in the implementation of the Victims' Law

The implementation of the Victims' Law has implied legal, institutional and operational changes that have caused delays in the registration and provision of assistance to new victims. In this context, the food security and protection clusters identified the need to assess response gaps caused by these changes and delays and their impact on affected populations.

For this purpose, with OCHA support, Local Humanitarian Teams implemented more than a hundred surveys in 9 departments of the country to collect information from key stakeholders including the Public Ministry, the Unit for Victims' Assistance and Reparation and victims' organizations. Preliminary findings indicate that there are important delays in the declaration process; the capacities of the Public Ministry are overstretched and it lacks sufficient resources to comply with its responsibilities under the Victims' Law; the provision of humanitarian assistance by local entities is not occurring in the time frame established by the Law; there are delays in the remittance of the declarations from the local to the national level; while there is also a knowledge gap in both communities and authorities regarding institutional responsibilities in the provision of State assistance.

These clusters are preparing an extended analysis on the impacts and response gaps caused by these factors and will prepare recommendations for State and humanitarian partners.

⁶ Sitreps 1, 2, 3: Floods in Chocó

The continued use of children by non-State armed groups continued throughout 2012, according to the UNSR for Children and Armed Conflict.

Child protection concerns must be integrated into peace talks

Around 300 cases of child use or recruitment by non-State armed groups observed in 2012

According to a report by the UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict⁷, around 300 cases of child use or recruitment by non-State armed groups were reported in 2012, covering 23 of Colombia's 32 departments. In the same period, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF) documented at least 263 cases of children separating from these groups, including FARC-EP (71 per cent), ELN (14 per cent) and others – including PDAGs. Unconfirmed numbers of children were killed or maimed during hostilities in 2012. APM and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) injured at least 52 children and killed 13.

The report identifies several other major concerns in Colombia, principally the persistence of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) against girls committed by non-State armed groups; impunity for children's rights violations; violence and threats by non-State armed groups against teachers and students for preventing the recruitment of children; and military use of schools. The report again lists the FARC-EP and the ELN as parties that recruit or use children, kill or maim children, commit rape and other forms of sexual violence, or engage in attacks on schools and hospitals.



Credit: WHO/PAHO. Piedad Sánchez. Jambaló, Cauca (July 2012) – These girls walk to their school in an area that suffers frequent armed confrontations. Walking in line carrying white flags is their protection mechanism.

Including child protection issues in peace talks could improve child safety

Child protection issues have not been addressed through the peace talks currently under way in Havana. According to the report, their inclusion could help strengthen armed groups' compliance with their international obligations to respect children's rights. Among the key elements to consider in peace agreements are family tracing and reunification, the need to address sexual abuse of children, and the principles that no amnesty should be granted to adult perpetrators of violations against children and that children associated with armed groups should be regarded as victims (not perpetrators).

Up to 65,000 minors near Bogotá put at risk by armed groups in June

The Ombudsman's Office issued an alert to residents of Soacha, a deeply marginalized city neighbouring Bogotá with a large number of IDPs, on the risk of use and recruitment of minors by non-State armed groups. The Early Warning System projected in June that up to 65,000 children and adolescents between 11 and 17 years of age in the city are at risk due to the heightened activities of PDAGs and FARC-EP urban militias. This estimate of 65,000 is in accord with population projections by DANE for 2013, given that the EWS projects that all children and adolescents in the municipality are at risk. Education, health, protection and psychosocial assistance were identified as the top needs. The Ombudsman's Office warned against authorities failing to link these needs to the conflict, which could result in an approach that would simply increase police presence.

⁷ Report of the Secretary General on Children and armed conflict

Events during the month continued to show dramatic link between increased APM placement and reduced access to education.

Stronger support needed to ensure access to education in conflict-affected areas

Nearly 18,000 students lost most of 2013 school year in southern Córdoba

Around 600 teachers have stopped reporting to work in six municipalities of southern Córdoba around the mountainous Nudo de Paramillo region. Systematic threats, extortion schemes, poor infrastructure and hiring delays are keeping the teachers out of class, depriving nearly 18,000 students of most of the 2013 school year. As in Putumayo, widespread APM contamination on footpaths to schools further discourages attendance, as does a lack of drinking water. The affected area is close to several major hydroelectric projects and has for decades been a centre of non-State armed groups. The area is currently a top priority in Government efforts to consolidate control over all of Colombia's territory. Rigorous contingency plans are needed as part of efforts to provide adequate access to education in the area.

Growing impact of conflict for 1,200 children in Putumayo, with response to date judged inadequate by Local Humanitarian Team

Officials and humanitarian partners issued frequent warnings in the first half of 2013 on the risks faced by over 1,200 students of 12 schools in six conflict-affected municipalities of Putumayo along the border with Ecuador. Affected schools are located near military installations, and paths taken by children to school are often contaminated with landmines. Children in these areas also face high risks of forced recruitment into armed groups or of being caught in the crossfire of violent clashes. Their schools have also been repeatedly occupied by troops during the school year. In the first half of the year, six children were victims of APM/UXO in Putumayo – more than half the number victimized in all of 2012. In the same period, OCHA recorded that over half of all civilian victims of conflict in the area were children.

Response to date has included the temporary relocation of children to nearby schools, often leading to overcrowding. Alternatives included river transport to avoid mined paths, but high fuel costs made this unsustainable. The Local Humanitarian Team determined that these measures only marginally reduce risk and are inadequate. Urgent political decisions are necessary to ensure all students' safe, reliable access to quality education.

Documentary on NRC education project in Nariño captures the attention of IASC

The documentary, "Stopping the Shakiro: How an Ethno-High School, in rural Colombia, stands up against the armed conflict,"⁸ was shown in June at the UN Secretariat as part of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Weekly Meetings. The documentary, produced as part of a project at New York University, tells the story of two female students who attend the Ethno-High School in the rural village of Chajal, outside the Pacific port city of Tumaco near the border with Ecuador. The village of Chajal is primarily composed of Afro-Colombians who are disproportionately affected by Colombia's five decade-long armed conflict. As a result of the conflict and ethnic-sensitive curricula taught at the high school, the two students share their transformative experience as the audience learns what it is like living alongside armed conflict and receiving an education in an emergency setting. The film weaves in key stakeholder interviews from UNICEF, Save the Children, European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE).

⁸ Video: "Stopping the Shakiro: How an Ethno-High School, in rural Colombia, stands up against the armed conflict"

MSF—Spain's report on trauma among civilians affected by the conflict in Colombia sparked great interest in gaps in existing assistance to many victims of the country's armed conflict.

A mental health crisis among victims of the conflict

MSF: Conflict has a serious impact on civilian mental health

Médicos sin Fronteras – Spain has [published a report](#)⁹ drawing on their experience treating over 4,000 patients in Cauca, Caquetá, Nariño and Putumayo to demonstrate the pervasive effects of the conflict on mental health. According to the report, 67 per cent of conflict victims were considerably more likely to suffer from symptoms of depression and anxiety, including post-traumatic stress disorder. Direct and indirect exposure to the conflict's violence were identified as causes of these mental health problems. Conflict-associated violence included domestic violence (more likely in conflict settings), testimony of physical violence, the loss of family income and forced displacement.

An urgent need for a response to mental health problems

Over the past several years, Colombia has seen several advances in the legal framework to treat mental health problems, including the 2011 Victims' Law, which directs the Government to provide psychosocial and other specific support to victims of the conflict. However, MSF found that the legal framework for mental health response remains weak and needs improvement in scope and implementation. Weak funding for these programmes is particularly acute, further undermined by unclear procedures, roles and responsibilities. Generally, mental health services are only available in larger hospitals, to which many rural people are less likely to have access.

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OCHA humanitarian bulletins are available at www.unocha.org | www.colombiassh.org | www.reliefweb.int

All the information reflected in this report has been processed by OCHA from official and secondary sources. Data for mass displacement and protection of civilians has been processed by OCHA Colombia through the Integrated Humanitarian Information System.

Sources: Unidad para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas (UARIV); Programa Presidencial para la Acción Integral contra Minas Antipersonal (PAICMA); UNHCR; CODHES; Sistema Integrado de Información Humanitaria (SIDIH/OCHA).

⁹ Las heridas menos visibles: Salud mental, violencia y conflicto armado en el sur de Colombia