OCHA: On WHD we commemorate humanitarian workers and solidarity to affected communities.

Four humanitarian organizations acknowledged for their good practices on WHD.

Humanitarian access—a fundamental requisite for effective humanitarian action.

Food and water crisis affects 184,000 people in Alta and Media Guajira.

### FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of IDPs in mass events</td>
<td>12,478 (OCHA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of IDPs in mass events</td>
<td>411 (OCHA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people affected by natural disasters</td>
<td>1,050,136 (UNHCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of people affected by natural disasters</td>
<td>29,825 (UNHCR)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FUNDING

- **US$58,999,621**
  2014 total humanitarian funding received as of 15 September 2014 (FTS)

- **US$90,655,622**
  2014 humanitarian funding being implemented as of 15 September 2014 (OCHA 4W)

### WHD: Reaffirming our commitment to humanitarian action

**By Gerard Gómez, Head of Office, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Colombia**

On 19 August, we celebrated World Humanitarian Day (WHD)—a day established to honour the humanitarian workers who died in the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq, in 2003. The day commemorates all those people who risk their lives performing humanitarian work to help people affected by armed conflicts and natural disasters.

In Colombia, we recognize the work of hundreds of national and international humanitarian workers, Government staff, community leaders, human rights defenders and thousands of people from throughout the country who continue to support those who suffer the effects of the conflict, violence and natural disasters. We congratulate humanitarian organizations, as well as our State counterparts, for their dedication and professionalism.

We also commemorate the valor and solidarity of vulnerable and affected communities, who in most cases are first responders. Their value and capacity allow victims to rebuild their lives. These people are an example to all Colombians at this point in the country’s history.

The current peace process with the FARC-EP guerrillas opens a door to new hope that could reduce the suffering of millions of Colombians. Nonetheless, we cannot forget that while the peace talks continue, the armed conflict and armed violence each day leave new victims in Colombia: people who are forced to abandon their homes or who cannot escape due to movement restrictions; children and adolescents who are recruited; victims of antipersonnel mines; and people who suffer sexual violence in the framework of the conflict.

Within this context, aside from commemorating humanitarian work, we should reaffirm our commitment to continue to work to help people in need, hand in hand with the communities and with our State counterparts.

This implies a commitment to continue supporting the most vulnerable communities even after an eventual agreement between the Government and FARC-EP guerrillas. Although ending the conflict with this armed group would supposedly end a large part of victimization, we cannot ignore the complexity and multiplicity of the sources of violence in Colombia. As humanitarians, we will continue to support the country, its institutions and its people, and respond to humanitarian needs and protection in a complementary manner with national response.
Recognizing humanitarian good practice

To commemorate World Humanitarian Day, OCHA and the Humanitarian Studies Institute (HSI) organized a one-day event in Bogotá, attended by representatives from the humanitarian community, academia and the international donor community, among others.

Several humanitarian organizations were recognized for their humanitarian projects that helped to improve the situation for people in need. Benposta Nación de Muchachos, Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe with Caritas Colombia, and FAO, were acknowledged in the categories of innovation, life-saving capacity, efficiency in implementing resources and rights-based protection. The projects were evaluated by members of HSI’s Board of Advisers, and the acknowledgements were presented by members of the international donor community.

Below is a summary of the awarded projects.

Recognition for contribution to the promotion and protection of all rights

“Reduction of vulnerability and increased protection factors for children, youth and families in Córdoba department, with a priority on Tierralta.”

Benposta Nación de Muchachos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation area</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Implementation period</th>
<th>Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Córdoba</td>
<td>405 children, teens and youths</td>
<td>August 2012 through February 2014</td>
<td>DIAKONIE, COSUDE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Córdoba department, particularly Tierralta municipality, has historically been affected by the armed conflict and natural disasters. Children, teens and youths from the region have been at risk of recruitment by armed groups. The project, implemented by the NGO Benposta, activated protection routes for 405 children, teens and youths, and 367 of their family members who faced the risk of recruitment and use by armed groups.

Benposta’s project was recognized for its rights-based focus. Through implementing learning strategies, recreational and cultural activities, and through the acquisition of social skills, the project promoted rights in an integral and complementary manner. All activities focus on the empowerment and autonomy of children, adolescents and youths, which was reflected in a rights-based focus. The local population’s participation in the project’s activities highlighted a shared responsibility in implementing a rights-based focus, with beneficiaries as “subjects of rights” and “subjects of obligations”.

The combination of protection, prevention and humanitarian response strategies, allowed a comprehensive response to risk situations affecting children in southern Córdoba.

Credit: Benposta Colombia, Córdoba.
Recognition for innovation

“A self-sustainable farm for the rehabilitation of APM-UXO-IED victims”

Campaña Colombiana contra Minas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation area</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Implementation period</th>
<th>Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girón (Santander)</td>
<td>150 families</td>
<td>March 2008 – to date</td>
<td>ICRC victims’ assistance programmes, Handicap International, Colombian Red Cross and CCCM funds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Santander department receives landmine victims from throughout the north-east region, and who were taken in by mid-way houses that provided food, housing and transportation assistance. These victims remained in these homes until released. The mid-way houses lacked basic hygiene conditions and were insecure, in some cases grouping large numbers of patients with terminal illness. The NGO Campaña Colombiana contra Minas (CCCM)—with the support of ICRC victims’ assistance programmes, Handicap International and the Colombian Red Cross—created this project to allow victims from several distant rural areas to stay at a ranch in the countryside—a friendlier place where they can be with other mine victims. This became a space where rural activities provided therapy.

CCCM implemented one of the most innovative strategies in the Latin America region by establishing the first farm for antipersonnel mine victims. More than 150 families have engaged in a recovery process. Occupational therapy, psychosocial counselling and emotional- and physical-recovery programmes are carried out in the open air in an agricultural setting, in accord with the families' rural traditions. The farm is also a “humanitarian safe zone”, further protecting families.

Recognition for efficient use of resources

“Attention for emergency humanitarian needs in the Afro-descendent communities of Timbiquí and Guapi municipalities affected by conflict, flooding and earthquakes”

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, implementing partner Caritas Colombia, Guapi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation area</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Implementation period</th>
<th>Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guapi, Timbiquí (Cauca)</td>
<td>1,800 people</td>
<td>November 2013 - May 2014</td>
<td>ERF (Sweden, Norway, Spain)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Pacific Coast of Cauca is one of the most affected regions by the armed conflict over the past several years. It also has precarious infrastructure, poor access and services and is prone to natural disasters. An earthquake and flooding in 2013 caused serious damage in Afro-Colombian communities in Guapi and Timbiquí municipalities. In response, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe implemented a project financed by the Emergency Response Fund, with actions in food security, water, sanitation and hygiene. The project sought to respond to the most urgent needs, but it also created community capacity in risk management.

Factors such as the adequate use of financial resources and transparency in fund management are vital to guarantee the optimal implementation of projects. Resources need to be implemented efficiently so that they promote strategies to achieve a long-term impact. The project implemented
by Diakonie and Caritas Colombia reflects efficient fund implementation. It demonstrated efficient purchasing and contracting processes, which allowed for a rapid response to people’s humanitarian needs. Materials and goods were purchased at the local market, strengthening the local economy and avoiding increased transportation and intermediation costs.

Recognition for reducing suffering and saving lives
“Food security recovery for the vulnerable population affected by violence in rural Colombia”
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation area</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Implementation period</th>
<th>Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Córdoba, Putumayo</td>
<td>1,200 families</td>
<td>July 2013 to July 2014</td>
<td>ECHO, CERF underfunded window</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This FAO project sought to rapidly restore food security to rural vulnerable people frequently affected by conflict or natural disasters in Córdoba and Putumayo areas. Food was produced within 60 days of the start of the project and production was maintained permanently.

This project merits recognition for its attempts to relieve suffering and save lives. It aimed to improve diets in confined and displaced communities in which there is a strong presence of non-state armed groups. Communities were trained in areas such as producing fertilizer, seed recovery, permanent food production, preparing and conserving food and raising awareness of the importance of a balanced diet, with a variety of food produced. This knowledge is fundamental to improving community capacity to cope with emergencies and guarantee subsistence. Mainstreaming gender and ethnicity was crucial to the success of the intervention.
Adriana Lucía: Messenger of Humanity

The World Humanitarian Day 2014 was also the occasion to launch the “Messengers of Humanity” campaign, a global community of opinion leaders called to action during crisis, by sharing inspiring content through social media.

Because of her leadership and commitment to humanitarian causes, the Colombian singer Adriana Lucía was called to join the community of “Messengers of Humanity”. Adriana Lucía’s music accompanied the event held to award best practices in humanitarian action in Colombia, on August 20th.

“...The World Humanitarian Day is an opportunity to celebrate the essence of what it means to be a humanitarian...you can also be a messenger of humanity...” was her message to the audience.

From now on, Adriana Lucía will support humanitarian organizations in Colombia to promote the visibility of humanitarian causes, the needs of the affected populations and the work done every day by thousands of Colombians to alleviate the suffering of others.

You too can become a “Messenger of Humanity”, go to http://diamundialhumanitario.org/ for more information.

Humanitarian access to vulnerable communities is vital

So far this year, humanitarian access has been limited by armed clashes, weapons contamination and roadblocks caused by protests and conflict, according to OCHA’s monitoring. These factors have made it difficult for national and international humanitarian actors and the State to deliver humanitarian assistance. Geographic features of the affected territories, such as poor road infrastructure, also limit access to communities in isolated rural areas and increase difficulty in providing assistance and basic services.

Access constraints delayed humanitarian aid to thousands of people

According to OCHA’s monitoring, at least 29 events have restricted humanitarian organizations’ access to people in need so far this year. These events created delays in providing humanitarian aid to an estimated 28,800 people (see Map 1).

Sixty-two per cent of access constraints were associated with the armed conflict. The majority of these limitations were due to restrictions imposed by non-state armed groups in Putumayo on the Ecuadorian border, Norte de Santander on the Venezuelan border and Guaviare in central Colombia, affecting health and education projects. In these same departments, access constraints affected nearly 2,900 beneficiaries of CERF and ERF projects. Roadblocks caused by mass protests were the second largest reason for access restrictions in 28 per cent of cases, leading to the halt of or the delay in humanitarian activities in Nariño, Meta, Guaviare, Arauca and Putumayo.

1 This information is regarding areas with the presence of a Local Humanitarian Team and other partners. It does not reflect the total number of events of limitations on humanitarian access in the country.
In 10 per cent of cases, weather conditions were the third most important factor. Drought caused river levels to drop and heavy rainfall caused landslides. Córdoba, Arauca and Guaviare were among the affected areas. These issues affected projects in health, food security, education and livelihoods.

Access is a fundamental prerequisite for effective humanitarian action. Armed actors must allow full and unimpeded access for humanitarian actors and State institutions responsible for emergency response to affected people.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th># Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nariño</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Arauca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Putumayo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Guaviare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Meta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OCHA-Monitor

### Restrictions for more than 330,000 people due to armed incidents, protests and geographic factors

According to OCHA’s monitoring in the nine departments where it has a presence, between January and August 2014, nearly 333,000 people have faced mobility restrictions that limited their access to essential goods and services. These were recorded in 131 events throughout the country, but largely in Arauca, Putumayo, Cauca, Nariño y Antioquia (see Map 2).

About 291,000 people suffered mobility restrictions related to the armed conflict (see Illustration 1). Attacks against oil, electricity, water and communications infrastructure affected almost 200,000 people, who suffered limited access to livelihoods, basic services and health care, mainly in Putumayo, Arauca, Norte de Santander, Cauca and Meta.

The remaining 91,471 people faced mobility restrictions due to weapon contamination, armed clashes, and threats amongst other factors. Access constraints were particularly severe for 6,500 people from indigenous communities in rural Antioquia, Bolívar and Chocó who could not access to at least three basic goods and services for one week or more, a situation that OCHA Colombia defines as confinement.

Natural disasters, in particular drought and floods, together with geographic conditions, limited access for about 30,000 people who live in vulnerable and isolated locations. Finally, about 11,000 people suffered mobility restrictions due to social protest.
Food and water crisis in Alta and Media Guajira

To monitor the humanitarian emergency affecting the Wayúu indigenous communities of La Guajira department, the WASH, Food Security and Nutrition Clusters carried out a sectoral evaluation in August in Uribia, Maicao and Manaure municipalities (see Flash Report on Alta Guajira). The results showed a food security, water and sanitation crisis for nearly 184,000 people and 23,000 homes.

Illustration 1: # People affected by mobility and access restrictions. Jan. – Aug. 2014

Source: OCHA-Monitor

This section was contributed by the Food Security and Nutrition Cluster and the WASH Cluster.

Footnotes:

2 Follow-up mission after a MIRA - EFSA mission carried out in February 2014 (see MIRA report: http://www.salahumanitaria.co/es/assessment/informe-final-mira-municipio-de-uribia-desabastecimiento-de-alimentos-en-comunidades)

3 Rural population estimated in Manaure, Maicao, Rionhacha and Uribia municipalities.
Nearly 184,000 people have limited access to water, sanitation and livelihoods, due to a prolonged drought and the closure of the Colombian-Venezuelan border.

The simultaneous combination of a prolonged drought and the closure of the Colombian-Venezuelan border created an extreme situation, affecting local people’s access to livelihood and food security. An increase in food prices reduced food consumption levels and economic income. Water and basic sanitation infrastructure were also seriously affected.

Communities reported that they were not consuming vegetables, fruits, dairy products or tubers, and they were consuming very low quantities of animal proteins. This indicates high levels of essential micronutrient deficiencies for the growth, physical movement and cognitive development of children. This can have an irreversible impact on children under age 2. Women and children have to walk up to three hours to get water, increasing their vulnerability and affecting children’s access to education.

The drought-related emergency was verified in communities already suffering from an historical situation of vulnerability caused by high poverty levels, malnutrition, poor service and infrastructure coverage and few livelihood options. These factors have led many families to resort to a negative coping strategy, including reducing the number of meals and portions and the quantities of food types in the diet, selling livestock and consuming seed stocks.

Immediate intervention needed to protect livelihoods of the Wayúu indigenous people

In remote rural areas in Media and Alta Guajira, the livelihoods of the Wayúu indigenous people are being lost due to the liquidation of agricultural assets, causing significant social and cultural effects. This is reflected in an accumulated loss of livestock of between 30 and 80 per cent, a lack of agricultural activities due to a lack of rain and a reduction in income from commercial activities and day labour in neighbouring Venezuela. This last factor is forcing families to sell handicrafts and their remaining livestock as income sources.

The evaluation identified that homes had limited access to water in adequate quantity or quality. The Government is making efforts to deliver aid to local communities, including food kits and water distribution. However, the magnitude of the crisis and the needs identified indicate an immediate need to protect livelihoods through food delivery and regular water distribution, as well as additional nutritional supplements and water for Wayúu indigenous people until the crisis ends. These interventions will help to avoid the further liquidation of family assets.

The evaluation’s results will hopefully provide inputs to prioritize national Government and international community interventions throughout this area in order to mitigate affected people’s needs. During July, the departmental authorities decreed a public calamity for the entire department. As a result, the UNGRD disaster response authorities created a crisis room for the department and are coordinating response with national and international actors.

In Brief

August the most violent month in 2014

- In August, OCHA registered the largest number of armed incidents so far this year, observing a 61 per cent increase as compared with August 2013. According to Monitor reports, combats and attacks increased by 50 per cent in August. FARC-EP guerrillas participated in 57 per cent of these incidents, including unilateral attacks and clashes with the Armed Forces. The most affected departments were Antioquia, Cauca, Arauca, Nariño and Meta.
- These actions displaced at least 400 people in the rural areas of Tumaco (Nariño), Fonseca (Guajira) and Alto Baudó (Chocó).
- Events associated with attacks against civilians continued to increase: 116 attacks were registered, primarily in Arauca, Valle del Cauca, Cauca and Antioquia.
- Threats are the more recurrent action against civilians followed by forcible disappearance and child recruitment. Some 41 per cent of these incidents had unidentified perpetrators and 26 per cent were associated with “others”. These actions could be linked to post-demobilization armed groups and other criminal groups difficult to identify.