After several years of improvements, particularly during the last two years of the peace talks between the Colombian government and FARC-EP, 2017 confirms a deterioration of several humanitarian indicators that began in mid-2016. Despite expectations about relief for civilian population, according to OCHA monitoring with UMAIC support, there is an increase in trends in different categories of armed violence compared to 2016 and even earlier years. The departments with the greatest impact were concentrated in the Pacific region and the border with Venezuela. Likewise, there are important records in other areas, such as the Northwest, the center of the country and the border with Ecuador.

In addition to these multiple emergencies triggered by both the conflict and natural disaster events, even the increased migratory flow of Venezuelan citizens to Colombia, exacerbated...
the living conditions and risks in protecting vulnerable communities which survive amid unmet basic needs and with the weak presence of the State in many territories.

The peace accord is a historic opportunity for many victims of the conflict. In this sense, 2018 represents a challenge for the central government to guarantee the continuity of rapid implementation with strategic actions, given the fragility of existing factors. In the midst of the polarization in the country, electoral periods, other intermittent peace dialogues with the ELN\(^2\) and the presence of different and new armed groups, human rights and international humanitarian law violations persist.

The presence of the international humanitarian community must be part of the efforts to build peace and sustainable development by implementing the new-way-of-work model.\(^3\) In such a sensitive transition period, it is essential to guarantee assistance to people who continue to have humanitarian needs due to different victimizing events, given the widespread violence and natural disasters, in coordination with the different international and national actors, in order to yield the expected result.

Mass Displacements Exceed 2014, 2015 and 2016 Figures

According to OCHA-UMAIC monitoring, 2017 ended with a total of 17,918 people displaced in 63 massive events\(^4\), with a significant 64 per cent increase in affected population against the previous year. The figure even exceeds that of 2015 and 2014, years in which there was still one of the most representative armed groups in the Colombian conflict. Afro-Colombian (over 7,300 people) and indigenous communities (over 5,700 people) represented 73 per cent of the total population displaced in mass events.

Among the main causes of this victimizing event are threats (48%), confrontations between different armed groups (22%) and combats (19%) which involve the Armed Forces. At the same time, 11 per cent of these events showed restrictions on access, limitations on mobility and/or confinement, all of which had a great impact on civilian population due to protection risks and the humanitarian needs generated.

\(^{2}\) Acronym for National Liberation Army in Spanish.

\(^{3}\) http://www.unocha.org/story/new-way-working

\(^{4}\) A displacement is massive when it affects 50 people/10 families or more.
Considering the changes in the dynamics of widespread violence and the reconfiguration and expansion of the different armed actors in the last year compared to 2016, there was an increase in responsibility for the number of displaced persons, especially those armed actors who previously had a smaller proportion.

Unilateral actions by ELN stand out, which caused more displaced persons (473%), unknown armed groups (212%) and armed groups linked to organized crime with 169 per cent more displaced people in mass events. The departments of Chocó and Nariño (Pacific) and Norte de Santander (border with Venezuela) were the most impacted by these events.

Civilian Population at Risk from Increased and Persistent Attacks

There is evidence of an increase in attacks against civilian population in 2017 against those of the previous two years. There is also some concern about the growing dynamics and expansion of these events in the national territory. Although the regions most affected by the number of attacks against the civilian population are the Pacific (42%), the Northwest (19%), the border with Venezuela (18%) and central/southern (14%), 30 of the country’s 32 departments have had at least one attack on civilians according to OCHA-UMAIC monitoring.

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5 Known as Post-Demobilization Armed Groups (PDAG), which include the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (AGC), also called by the government as Organized Armed Groups (GAO) or Gulf Clan.
Disproportionate increase in attacks, intentional wounding and killing of protected persons

In 2017, there was an unprecedented increase in the number of events that are an assassination attempt on civilians. This represents a challenge for the authorities in terms of protection and prevention measures, especially in the regions most impacted by the conflict and where actions associated with the implementation of the peace accord, following the departure of FARC-EP, are being carried out. Intentional killings and wounds of protected persons increased by 187 per cent and 196 per cent respectively those of 2016 and, to a lesser extent, attacks (26%). Five municipalities stand out, namely Tumaco (Nariño), Saravena (Arauca), Tibú (Norte de Santander), Medellín (Antioquia) and Valle de Guamuez (Putumayo), which account for 34 per cent of intentional killings and 21 per cent of intentional wounding of protected persons in the country.

Within these events, the situation of social and community leaders and human rights defenders is striking. According to a communiqué from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 73 per cent of the killings of male and female leaders were perpetrated during the previous year and at December 20, 2017. According to OCHA monitoring, 48 per cent of the killings of leaders was perpetrated in the Pacific region and 31 per cent in the northwestern region, in which 23 per cent and 7 per cent were Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations respectively. It is a matter of concern that, in 89 per cent of the cases of threats against leaders, the perpetrator was not determined, which poses a challenge for authorities so that these victimizing acts do not go unpunished.

Events such as kidnappings (46%), child forced recruitment/disengagement (49%) and the wounding or death of civilians within the framework of armed actions (38% and 9% respectively) also increased, which is consistent with the trends evidenced during 2017. Hostage-taking, a subcategory that had a significant increase compared to 2016, usually takes place within the framework of threats and the presence of new armed actors in the territory, or as a mechanism of intimidation within the framework of other types of attacks (armed actions or attacks against infrastructure/civil goods).

Threats persist, representing a significant portion of attacks on the civilian population

Although threats remained virtually stable between 2016 and 2017, the historical trend of such type of events is increasing.

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Threats are reported in 27 of Colombia’s 32 departments, mainly affecting the Pacific, Northwest and, to a lesser extent, the border with Venezuela. In these regions, there is evidence of the presence of PDAGs (35%), which is the main perpetrating actor identified in the threats. It should be considered that the perpetrator is unknown in 42 per cent of the events.

Threats are expressed in several ways, some of which are indirect and communicated through pamphlets as part of social control and many times frighten entire communities (e.g., psychoactive substance users, people from outside the region, sex workers, thieves, etc.), whereas direct threats by armed groups have a general "target" against leaders, weakening the social and community fabric. The mere presence of armed groups in the territories also poses a threat to communities, especially where the presence of the state is weak.

According to OCHA monitoring, most threats against leaders occurred in the Pacific region (57%), followed by the northwestern region (13%) and the border with Venezuela (13%). Afro-Colombian and indigenous leaders account for at least 33 per cent of threats and 23 per cent are female leaders.

Restrictions on Access, a Challenge for Monitoring the Humanitarian Situation

Restrictions on access and limitations on mobility due to armed violence persisted throughout 2017

Between January and December 2017, at least 138,532 people were affected by restrictions on mobility and access to goods and services due to violence in various regions of the country. In 2017, the number of events had a significant increase (82%) against that of 2016, according to OCHA monitoring. Although the number of persons affected recorded is lower against that of 2016 (58%), it does not mean that the impact of violence has been smaller. This is due to under-recording because of gaps in monitoring that make it possible to identify people with restrictions and have more accurate data.

OCHA’s analysis of the information on this dynamic considers threats, clashes between different armed groups and even attacks against humanitarian actors to be the main causes of restrictions on access and mobility of affected communities. Unlike previous years, humanitarian access by international agencies was at risk in 2017 due to changes of context in terms of security. The main restrictions were identified in Antioquia, Norte de Santander, Chocó, Nariño and Cauca.

At least 25 restrictions that caused interference in field operations of humanitarian actors were identified, which hindered continuity of their actions, particularly in Chocó, Meta, Guaviare and Nariño,
thus impacting communities with respect to access to assistance and response to humanitarian needs.

### Increase in the trend of armed actions

**Historical Trend: Concern about a Regression of Humanitarian Relief**

Since 2012, there has been a decrease in armed actions. However, from 2017 onwards, these armed actions increased by 31 per cent against those of 2016. This increase is taking place in a scenario of a peace accord, with one armed actor less involved in the conflict, in the midst of negotiations with another traditional armed actor and a temporary cessation of hostilities during the last quarter of the year.

Combats and harassment, which involve the Public Force, are the most recurrent subcategories and show the highest number of events during 2017, despite a slight increase with respect to 2016. However, the disproportionate increase in incursions and confrontations among non-state actors confirms once again the reconfiguration in both presence and action of existing and new armed groups in the territories, as part of the disputes to control strategic regions and the interest in illicit economies, where the former FARC-EP armed group had historical control. A decrease in road blockades could be a response to a decrease in "armed strikes" that usually include this type of actions.

Among the main causes of these actions are confrontations between the different armed groups (31%). It should be noted that ELN, compared to the number of unilateral actions, decreased its participation in the total number of events. However, it also participated in clashes with other armed actors. In contrast, post-demobilization armed groups have increased their unilateral actions (141%). The increase in armed actions by unknown actors (103%) is highlighted and of concern, a situation that could also be associated with changes in the dynamics of violence due to the presence, expansion and formation of new armed groups.
Affectations due to natural disasters in 2017

According to figures from the National Disaster and Risk Management Unit (UNGRD for its acronym in Spanish), in 2017 there were at least 603,302 people affected by natural disasters, 79 per cent of which were due to flooding, typical from this season’s heavy rains in the country. Many of these emergencies occur in areas with vulnerable and high-risk populations, who have also been victims of victimizing events due to the armed conflict, thus resulting in a double affectation in most cases.

The May, June and July quarter accounted for 55 per cent (+325,000 people) of those affected in 2017, with May being the month with the greatest impact of the first rainy season in the country, with nearly 163,000 people affected.

One of the biggest emergencies occurred in December, between the departments of Antioquia and Chocó, where at least 30,260 people (+6,000 families) were affected by severe flooding in six municipalities. In response to the emergency, the Office of the Governor of Chocó, with the support of UNGRD and in coordination with local authorities and the public force, delivered emergency humanitarian aid kits to affected families.

Likewise, the Local Coordination Teams (LCTs) followed up on and responded in a complementary manner to the State’s response to the events that had a great impact and in the areas where there is presence thereof. In 2017, emergencies were mainly focused on Córdoba, Chocó and Antioquia. However, the emergency in Mocoa (Putumayo) in April stands out due to heavy rains and the resulting avalanche that destroyed a large part of the city and left more than 300 people dead, among multiple sectorial affectations, where LCTs and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) coordinated the respective support with the government.

The border situation attracts the attention of humanitarian actors

Due to the dynamism in the flow of Venezuelans across the border with Colombia, through both official points and informal crossings (non-formal crossings), the humanitarian situation in the border departments has been a matter of concern in 2017.
According to figures from Migración Colombia, it is estimated that at least 600,000 Venezuelan citizens, both regular and irregular, would be in the national territory with a vocation to stay. However, the projection of the Information Management and Analysis Unit of Colombia (UMAIC for its acronym in Spanish), which also contemplates the pendular steps through the figures of the Unified Command Post (UCP) in Cúcuta, points to even higher figures\(^7\). The constant flow of population between the two countries\(^8\) remains linked to humanitarian needs due to the shortage of food and medicine in Venezuela, the search for employment opportunities, access to health services and education, as well as specific cases of applications for international protection.

The Local Coordination Teams of the departments of Norte de Santander, Arauca and La Guajira have monitored the situation in complementarity with the action of national authorities, such as Migration Colombia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNGRD. In this sense, the following messages stand out:

i) At present, there are still difficulties in accessing goods and services due to the lack of personal documentation to regularize the situation of Venezuelans and returning Colombians,

ii) Border cities – and especially some of the interior – have experienced an increase in Venezuelan population in a status of irregularity that is being subjected to labor exploitation and the inability to access regular health services,

iii) Recent migratory flows have sought to settle in territories where there are complex dynamics of armed conflict, exposing them to protection risks, which have materialized in events such as kidnappings, forced recruitment, threats through pamphlets, intentional killings of protected persons, among other things.

iv) Families (mixed, returnees and people of Venezuelan nationality) settled in these peri-urban territories are exposed to risk factors in humanitarian terms, specifically in terms of protection, food and nutritional security, as well as shortcomings in Early Recovery scenarios, and

v) Last but not least, the irregular situation of the Venezuelan population particularly affects boys, girls and adolescents (BGA) and women in access to rights.


\(^8\) Según las minutas diarias de flujos migratorios suministrados por el PMU, entre el 31 de julio y el 28 de diciembre de 2017 se registra un ingreso neto de al menos 500.295 venezolanos, algunos de los cuales estarían quedándose en Colombia con intención de permanencia.
THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN/ HRP 2018

AT A GLANCE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1
Save and protect lives

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2
Prevent and mitigate protection risks

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3
Ensure early recovery and durable solutions

PEOPLE IN NEED

Women: 1.4 M
Men: 1.3 M
Girls: 1.0 M
Boys: 0.9 M

TOTAL PEOPLE IN NEED: 4.9 M

IDPS: 487 K
Venezuelan Population with intent to stay: 700 K
Communities: 2 M
Host Communities: 1.7 M

487 K
Affected by conflict and natural disasters

1.1 M

1.7 M

TARGET POPULATION

TOTAL TARGET POPULATION

1 M

IDPS: 10%
Venezuelans with intent to stay: 14%
Other affected populations: 0.3%

180,000
700,000
900,000

360,000
410,000
350,000

Affected by natural disasters
Affected by conflict
Other affected populations

*Other affected populations include: mine victims, victims of sexual violence, confinement and attacks against civilians.
In brief

*Ratification of Mr. Martín Santiago as Humanitarian Coordinator*

Based on IASC³ partner recommendations, Mr. Martín Santiago, UN Resident Coordinator in Colombia was ratified by OCHA Deputy Secretary General Mark Lowcock as Humanitarian Coordinator for the period January-September 2018.

The continuity of the Humanitarian Coordinator role is of vital importance since this leadership recognizes the need to give continuity to the work carried out within the framework of the humanitarian architecture in Colombia. Likewise, it will facilitate new forms of work by engaging in peacebuilding actions to provide humanitarian relief to the people most affected by the phenomena of violence and natural disasters in the country.

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³ Inter-Agency Standing Committee. For further information, please refer to: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/
Map 1: Number of war-like actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th># Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nariño</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norte de Santander</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antioquia</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocó</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arauca</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>515</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OCHA. Cutoff Date: January 13, 2018

Map 2: Number of attacks on civilian population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th># Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nariño</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antioquia</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norte de Santander</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauca</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valle del Cauca</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1530</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OCHA. Cutoff Date: January 13, 2018

Map 3: Number of Restrictions on Access due to Armed Violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th># Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chocó</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nariño</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valle del Cauca</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guaviare</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antioquia</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>167</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OCHA. Cutoff Date: January 26, 2018

Map 4: Willful Killings of a Protected Person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th># Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chocó</td>
<td>6,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nariño</td>
<td>5,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norte de Santander</td>
<td>2,478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauca</td>
<td>1,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risaralda</td>
<td>816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,918</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OCHA. Cutoff Date: January 26, 2018