

# Colombia

## Contested spaces briefing paper

### SUMMARY

Colombia has one of the longest-running armed conflicts in the world, as well as the highest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Oxfam research in the department (province) of Nariño and in the Montes de María area in the department of Bolívar found that the Colombian government's stabilization program (the National Consolidation Plan, or NCP) has not promoted peace, good governance, or sustainable development, as intended. The United States is one of the leading donors to NCP, along with Spain and the Netherlands.

We found that NCP's "civil-military" approach tends to be more military than civilian, which forces beneficiaries to take sides in the conflict. In addition, Colombian military forces have taken over civilian tasks. NCP investments have propped up corrupt, unaccountable, and repressive local governments, some of which include leaders of illegal armed groups. Stabilization has also failed to recognize that women are often treated as spoils of war and that conflict increases gender-based violence.

Colombia is one of the world's largest producers of cocaine, and reduced drug crop production is an important goal of NCP. But anti-drug efforts have failed to halt trafficking and have put communities at risk. Farmers who have participated in crop substitution charge that herbicide spraying destroyed their legal crops, which in any event generate much less income than coca. Community leaders who support substitution say they feel betrayed by aid agencies, have lost credibility with their constituents, and face violent reprisals from drug lords and armed groups.

Colombia's constitution and laws require the government and all development and humanitarian actors to consult beneficiaries before implementing programs. Donors have made some serious efforts to do this, but people whom we interviewed felt that most development projects are conceived in far-away donor-country capitals or in Bogotá. Without an understanding of local cultures, needs, and aspirations, or beneficiary buy-in, projects cannot support broad-based growth and sustainable development.

The return of IDPs to their farmland is a key government objective. Previous Oxfam research has found that land restitution faces impediments such as the presence of illegal armed actors, poorly defined property rights, and a lack of local implementation capacity. We learned that because poor farmers tend to have high debt burdens, when they receive title to the land, they often use it as collateral, and wind up losing their land when they cannot repay their loans. As a result, land restitution can actually pave the way for large-scale commercial farmers and agribusiness to acquire the land for cultivation of cash crops rather than food crops for local markets. This not only creates food insecurity but also disempowers women food producers. Finally, restitution and titling activists often face violence.

We also found that humanitarian and development efforts are not integrated. Humanitarian assistance and short-term early recovery programs have led to chronic dependence on aid resources that do little or nothing to support sustainable livelihoods.

To improve both security and development in Nariño and Montes de María, the Colombian government, with the support of donors, should:

1. Ensure that humanitarian and development programs engage the intended beneficiaries in program design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
2. Better integrate humanitarian and development programs in order to prevent further forced displacement, provide protection and assistance to IDPs and those at risk of displacement, and foster equitable and sustainable development.
3. Carry out appropriate pre-program vetting and ongoing monitoring so that stabilization does not inadvertently provide resources to armed groups, human rights abusers, or corrupt entities and individuals.
4. Ensure that government civilian agencies lead development efforts.
5. Verify that land restitution programs provide former IDPs and rural poor people, including women, with secure access to resources, and avoid contributing to further concentration of landownership.
6. Avoid harm to civilians and their livelihoods when carrying out anti-drug efforts, and ensure that these activities do not fuel conflict.
7. Carry out crop substitution programs that provide beneficiaries with a decent livelihood.

8. Provide assistance to IDPs and other people affected by conflict in ways that promote secure and sustainable livelihoods and the full rights of citizenship, without fostering dependency.

## INTRODUCTION

Colombia has one of the longest-running armed conflicts in the world. As a direct consequence, it is also the country with the highest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs).<sup>1</sup> Between 2002 and 2010, armed violence uprooted an average of 269,000 people each year, and today, one in 10 Colombians remains displaced. Only about 10 percent of IDPs have access to the shelter, income, and emergency aid to which they are entitled under Colombian law. About half of all displaced people are women, and they face sexual and labor exploitation, in addition to the loss of their land.<sup>2</sup>

The armed conflict has had a far-reaching effect on Colombian society, and poses serious challenges to donors in implementing humanitarian and development programs. Humanitarian aid must respond to a “chronic emergency” centered on several million IDPs. Development assistance should take into account the context of ongoing violence, narcotics cultivation and trafficking, and unequal access to resources.

Oxfam’s research focused on two regions of the department<sup>3</sup> of Nariño and on the Montes de María area in the department of Bolívar<sup>4</sup> (see accompanying map).<sup>5</sup> In Nariño, one part of the work took place in the capital, Pasto, in the Andes Mountains, near the border with Ecuador. The people of this area are predominantly indigenous and of Caucasian descent. We also carried out interviews in the port city of Tumaco in Nariño’s Pacific region, where a majority of the residents are Afro-Colombian. Nariño’s economy is mostly agricultural, with subsistence and commercial fishing also important on the coast.

Conflict has long affected Nariño, with anti-government guerrillas, older paramilitary groups and new illegal armed groups (NIAGs), and armed groups related to narcotics trafficking all active in both rural and urban settings. Violent crime is rampant: locals call Tumaco Colombia’s murder capital. Nariño faces a humanitarian crisis, with Tumaco hosting a large IDP population. The international aid donor community is very active in the department, and Tumaco is also considered the Colombian foreign aid capital. The departmental government has made efforts to align aid with local development plans,<sup>6</sup> has established an office for international aid coordination, and is often cited as a model for effective aid use.

The Colombian government classifies Montes de María on Colombia's Caribbean coast as a post-conflict zone,<sup>7</sup> although many armed groups continue to operate there.<sup>8</sup> The national government, with substantial donor support, has undertaken major "stabilization" efforts, including resettlement and land restitution programs for IDPs.



Stabilization is a complex process that links security and development in order to move a country or zone from war to peace. In addition to seeking an end to violent conflict, stabilization emphasizes conflict-sensitive development. This approach stems from the idea that broad-based economic growth and sustainable livelihoods give people a stake in enduring peace.<sup>9</sup>

The prospects for stabilization in Montes de María are mixed. It has fertile land and abundant water supplies, but the area's people have very unequal

access to them. Agribusiness firms control large tracts of land dedicated to oil palm and teak production.

Until the late 1990s, the region was the scene of intense fighting between the rebel Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, best known as FARC) and paramilitary groups linked to the government.<sup>10</sup> The conflict led to civilian deaths, forced displacement, disappearances, and other human rights violations. The region's departmental and municipal governments are widely considered corrupt, with ties to drug trafficking, old paramilitary structures, and NIAGs.

In the remainder of this paper, we use the data from our interviews to explore how stabilization's twin themes of security and conflict-sensitive development have played out in these two areas.

## **COLOMBIA NATIONAL CONSOLIDATION PLAN: CONFLICT-SENSITIVE OR MILITARIZED DEVELOPMENT?**

Beginning in the mid 2000s, the Colombian government launched its current stabilization program, the National Consolidation Plan (NCP).<sup>11</sup> Its stated objective is to rid highly disputed regions of illegally armed actors by winning the hearts and minds of the local populations.

Between 2007 and 2011, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) provided more than \$30 million to support NCP programs, including productive activities and infrastructure development, as well as technical assistance to the government's Center for Integral Action and Coordination (CCAI), which manages the NCP.<sup>12</sup> The US government, along with Spain and the Netherlands, is one of the main donors supporting NCP.

### **LAND A KEY FACTOR IN CONFLICT-SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT**

More than 90 percent of Colombia's IDPs come from farming-based rural areas so any effort to achieve conflict-sensitive development and an equitable resettlement of displaced people must focus on agricultural livelihoods. However, Colombia has an exceedingly unequal pattern of landownership, and this has contributed to the country's long history of conflict.<sup>13</sup> Human rights lawyers and community leaders whom we interviewed argue that comprehensive land reform would be a first step toward solving the problems not just of IDPs but also of low-income farmers and landless rural people who have remained in their communities. To date,

though, neither the government nor donors have put this issue on the stabilization agenda.

### **MILITARY MISSION CREEP**

Our research found that NCP has failed to promote peace, good governance, or sustainable development in the study regions. In theory, the CCAI coordinates military efforts to ensure security with public service delivery provision by the government's civilian agencies.<sup>14</sup> But according to the people we interviewed, in practice NCP's "civil-military" approach tends to be more military than civilian.<sup>15</sup> Local community leaders and academic sources with whom we spoke said that the NCP looks more like a counter-insurgency exercise than a conflict-sensitive development program. These critics claim that the program blurs the boundaries between the civic and the military. This forces beneficiaries to take sides in the ongoing conflict, thus putting them at great risk.<sup>16</sup>

Interviewees identified another aspect of this problem: Colombian military forces have taken over tasks that should be civilian responsibilities. For example, in Montes de María, the navy engages in road building and other community development activities that government civilian agencies would normally manage.

### **FUNDING ARMED GROUPS**

USAID has provided funds to an NCP government development initiative called Colombia Answers. It is investing in regions where many of our interview subjects consider the local administrations corrupt, unaccountable, and repressive. A community leader in Montes de María told us:

*Politicians known for their connections with warlords and paramilitaries, and even family members of known war criminals, are today part of the political structures of several of the municipal areas covered by the USAID-sponsored National Consolidation Plan.*

### **GENDER-BLIND PROGRAMMING**

Human rights groups and grassroots women's organizations in the study sites criticize NCP for failing to address gender inequality. In particular, they say, the government and aid agencies must take into account the different ways in which women and men experience war. As a civil society activist in Montes de María told us, "Illegal as well as legal armed groups have treated women and their bodies as war trophies, dolls for the use of the boys with guns." She went on to explain that women are expected to provide support to family

members, neighbors, and community peers who have become war victims. However, women seldom receive assistance either from their families or the government to fulfill this important caregiving role.

Moreover, the conflict has led to rampant gender-based violence, particularly against women IDPs. Oxfam research found that in 407 municipalities in which armed groups were present, nearly 18 percent of the women—almost half a million women—were direct victims of sexual violence between 2001 and 2009.<sup>17</sup> A government official in Nariño told us that illegal armed groups had murdered and dismembered several women IDPs. Colombian law and court decisions require the government and aid agencies to provide protection to women—especially displaced women—against such abuses.

Women's organizations are insisting on enforcement of these laws.<sup>18</sup> Yolanda Becerra, leader of an anti-war women's organization, the Organización Femenina Popular, emphasizes that conflict in Colombia has harmed women, but women do not want to be seen merely as victims: "We, Colombian women, want to be viewed as what we are, active peacemakers, social activists, and promoters of social movements, justice, and change." But women who speak out against violence may find themselves subjected to death threats, such as those that the anti-war group Mothers of Soacha in the Bogotá suburbs have received.

## WAR ON DRUGS: FUMIGATION AND CROP SUBSTITUTION

Colombia is one of the world's largest producers of cocaine, and reduced drug crop production is an important goal of the NCP.<sup>19</sup> The government, with US support, encourages farmers to grow legal crops instead of coca, and fumigates coca fields. Crop substitution efforts have ultimately made people in Nariño less safe, while failing to curtail the trafficking of illegal substances. For example, in 2012, an organization representing the Awa people in Nariño criticized crop substitution for endangering indigenous communities.<sup>20</sup> A United Nations representative in Tumaco told us:

*In 2008, there were fumigations right after we had negotiated and implemented a crop substitution program. It destroyed the trust that we had built with the communities.... People would not see the difference between the anti-narcotics and us. We were blamed for the fumigations.*

Fumigation in the neighboring Putumayo department in the mid 2000s triggered a wave of displaced coca farmers and pickers to Nariño. This

sparked the ongoing humanitarian crisis, as well as migration of the cocaine business and conflict. Fumigations continue in both departments. Today, according to the UN Office of Drug Control, the municipality of Tumaco is the country's leading coca production zone.<sup>21</sup>

In Nariño, the US government plays a significant role in promoting crop substitution, while also sponsoring aerial fumigation of coca bushes. Farmers who participated in the crop substitution program charge that herbicide spraying has destroyed their legal crops along with the coca. They also complain that the alternative crops, such as cacao, plantains, and avocados, generate much less income than narcotics cultivation. In addition, the Free Trade Agreement between Colombia and the United States will likely have a negative effect on small-scale producers' income.<sup>22</sup> In the absence of public policies that favor sustainable local development, illegal crop production and other activities related to cocaine trafficking remain attractive to local people.<sup>23</sup>

Because of the fumigation in "alternative development" areas, local communities have expressed a lack of confidence in US<sup>24</sup> and other donor efforts to promote crop substitution. Community leaders who put their reputation on the line to support these efforts say that they feel betrayed by aid agencies, and that they have lost their credibility vis-à-vis their communities.

The crop substitution approach has greatly exacerbated local tensions, generated disputes among neighbors, weakened the social fabric, and put participating communities at risk of violent reprisals from drug lords, illegal armies, and legal armed groups acting illegally. For instance, in Nariño, we received reports of several murders of community leaders who had promoted crop substitution.

## PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT OR PRE-COOKED PROJECTS?

*The agencies promoted prepackaged projects, which were removed from local customs and traditions.... There was no background work done with the communities to understand what people wanted and what were the real necessities.*

—Government employee, Tumaco

Colombia's constitution and laws require the government and all development and humanitarian actors to respect the traditional customs of Afro-Colombian

and indigenous communities. For instance, a process of “prior consultations” and vulnerability assessments is supposed to precede all development activities. The donor community in Colombia has made many serious efforts to carry out these beneficiary consultations. For example, the Inter-Agency Coordination in Dialogue (DIAL), an advocacy association of international nongovernmental organizations, facilitated discussions between its partner Colombian civil society organizations and USAID. USAID says that it bases its programs in Tumaco on priorities set during intensive discussions with “beneficiaries and Afro-Colombian organizations such as community councils, networks of Afro-Colombian elected officials, producer associations, and other civil society leaders, especially women.”<sup>25</sup> USAID implemented a number of recommendations that emerged from the DIAL-facilitated dialog about alternatives to coca production, creation of a fund to promote Afro-Colombian initiatives, and support for efforts to verify property ownership. However, the agency chose not to accept most of the recommendations.<sup>26</sup>

Contrary to USAID’s description of its processes, our interviewees felt that development projects are too often conceived in offices in donor-country capitals or Bogotá, far from the supposed beneficiary communities. Development plans seldom incorporate the results of serious anthropological work aimed at understanding local cultures, needs, and aspirations. Yet without the understanding and consultations that lead to beneficiary buy-in, it is difficult to see how the projects will lead to the kind of broad-based growth and sustainable development that is an integral part of stabilization.

Moreover, spokespersons for indigenous Colombians whom we interviewed argued that development is not a commodity that industrialized countries can deliver to impoverished communities, or a “donation,” which implies a one-way relationship between giver and receiver. Rather, they view development as a relationship that, through the braiding together of multiple types of knowledge, transforms the parties involved. These indigenous community advocates insist that any other way of delivering development is colonialism—of minds and territories. They consider that a one-way, donor-recipient approach to development is a pointless exercise in areas where an extractive economy (oil and coal for example) and the production of coca are the predominant activities.<sup>27</sup>

Projects designed without an understanding of local realities are often rooted in agendas that are alien to the communities, suffocate local potential, undermine local productive capabilities, disrupt local leadership, and weaken communities instead of strengthening them. Beneficiaries say that they end up feeling abused and that their dignity is violated. As an Afro-Colombian

Development organizations descend upon the communities with pre-designed projects formulated in capital cities.

Afro-Colombian activist

gender justice activist on the staff of an international aid agency in Tumaco put it:

*International aid is a violent incursion into a people's identity. It creates stigmas; it transforms us into: rural poor, urban poor, victims, beneficiaries; it turns our homes and families into "vulnerable communities." ... Development organizations descend upon the communities with pre-designed projects formulated in capital cities. They call a community meeting and allow people to choose (and mildly modify) a readymade ... project. This modus operandi is "mock-participation"; an imposition, which responds to agendas that don't serve the interests of the communities.*

Despite these kinds of reservations, as community leaders in Montes de María said, local people accept most of the humanitarian and development projects provided, because they are poor and have no alternative sources of assistance. This needs to change: A lawyer from the state Reparation and Restitution Commission in Montes de María, along with other sources both there and in Nariño, argued that the strengthening of communities and local organizations is the single most important type of intervention aid agencies can undertake. Only programs based on strengthening community and the transfer of capacities can generate the conditions for sustainability that will bolster lasting peace.

All of our sources strongly emphasized that effective community strengthening and capacity building have to be conceived as truly participatory processes. They cited the guarantees of the Colombian Constitution of 1991, international law, and orders of the Colombian Constitutional Court<sup>28</sup> on consultative development process.

The people who were interviewed also pointed out that when development agencies leave, their projects tend to collapse, because they are based on incorrect premises and a failure to understand and incorporate local realities. Hence, consultation of beneficiaries is not just a matter of respecting constitutional rights; it is also a crucial pathway to effective, sustainable development.

Ultimately, projects that fail to produce the expected results make communities more vulnerable to the armed actors, thus exacerbating safety problems and the risk of displacement.

## LAND RESTITUTION OR REVERSE LAND REFORM?

The return of IDPs to their farmland is a key objective of the government's stabilization efforts.<sup>29</sup> The Victims and Land Restitution Law, signed by President Juan Manuel Santos in June 2011, provides for reparations to 4 million people affected by the prolonged conflict.<sup>30</sup> Previous Oxfam research in the Department of Chocó has found that restitution faces structural impediments, including the presence of illegal armed actors, poorly defined property rights, and lack of local enforcement of the law.<sup>31</sup>

We found other factors that keep land restitution and titling efforts from giving IDPs secure access to land. Poor farmers tend to have high levels of debt, and conveying land titles facilitates the use of land as collateral, which may lead to the farmers' losing their land when they default on loans. This in turn paves the way for large-scale commercial farmers and agribusiness to acquire the land. A lawyer at a think tank in Bogotá told us:

*Land restitution to victims of the conflict has paradoxically generated a trend where powerful landowning enterprises are legally acquiring large tracts of land. These lands are used to cultivate African palm and sugar cane (for biodiesel feedstock) and for cattle farming.*

Community leaders from Montes de María expressed similar concern over land restitution programs that ultimately only facilitate consolidated control of the land by powerful agribusinesses companies. As one local community leader from Bolívar put it:

*In the 1980s the guerrillas took the land from the landowners and distributed it to landless peasants; in the 1990s through the "land recuperation movement," peasants achieved titles and ownership; then came the paramilitaries, brainchild of rich cattle ranchers allied with the state, that, using terrorist tactics, forcefully evicted thousands of peasants; and at present, via the restitution programs, new businesses and landowners are acquiring legal control of the land.*

People whom we interviewed in Montes de María also pointed out that the commercial farming interests that are acquiring land do not use it to promote local food security. Cash crops such as oil palm and teak have displaced the cultivation of rice for local markets. This has led to food insecurity and the disempowerment of local women. "We can't eat [oil] palm dates or teak wood," one interviewee commented, adding that whereas women play a

central role in rice farming, it is mostly men who are involved with the new cash crops.

Moreover, the restitution program has proved to be risky business throughout Colombia. Since the start of the Santos Administration in 2010, 28 land restitution and titling activists have been killed, and many others face threats of violence.<sup>32</sup>

Although the restitution programs are seriously flawed, the one in Montes de María has considerable backing. It was conceived by the Colombian state and financed by USAID, and is executed by the International Organization for Migration.

## HUMANITARIAN AID VERSUS DEVELOPMENT

Many of the people we interviewed pointed to a lack of integration between humanitarian and development efforts, even though the humanitarian “emergency” has lasted more than 15 years. An employee of an international NGO told us, “[T]he Presidential Agency for Social Action is disbursing as much as five hundred thousand dollars every day in humanitarian aid.” She called this “chronic emergency aid.” A government peace advisor added that aid interventions (both humanitarian and development) are uncoordinated and lack a defined long-term strategy. There is insufficient attention to structural and sustainable solutions. According to our interview respondents, humanitarian assistance and short-term early recovery programs have led to chronic dependence on aid resources that do little or nothing to facilitate sustainable livelihoods.

At the same time, interviewees told us that because aid agencies have provided extensive assistance to IDPs and others affected by conflict, they have ironically gained more rights as Colombian citizens than other extremely poor people outside the conflict zones. There is a legal framework to guarantee the rights of those affected by conflict, although the Colombian Constitutional Court has found that the state has failed to uphold these rights.<sup>33</sup> A Colombian working for an international aid agency told us that IDPs are willing to go to court to ensure that they receive the benefits to which they are entitled. People should not have to experience forcible displacement to achieve full citizenship and exercise their full rights.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the areas where we carried out our research, our interviewees clearly indicated that the NCP and other stabilization efforts had failed to make communities more secure, often leaving them less safe. We found severe limitations in current attempts to promote conflict-sensitive development. The following recommendations would improve both security and development in Nariño and Montes de María.

The Colombian government, with the support of donors, should:

1. Ensure that humanitarian and development programs in conflict and post-conflict zones engage the intended beneficiaries in program design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation, so as to take full account of local culture, practices, needs, and aspirations.
2. Use sound conflict analysis and poverty assessments to better integrate humanitarian and development programs in conflict and post-conflict zones, and thus prevent further forced displacement, provide protection and assistance to IDPs and those at risk of displacement, and foster equitable and sustainable development.
3. Carry out appropriate pre-program vetting and ongoing monitoring so that stabilization programs do not inadvertently provide resources to armed groups, human rights abusers, or corrupt entities (such as corporations that collaborate with illegal armed groups) and individuals.
4. Ensure that government civilian agencies lead development efforts.
5. Make sure that land restitution programs provide former IDPs and rural poor people with secure access to resources, and do not contribute to a further concentration of landownership or exclude women from sustainable livelihoods and landownership.
6. Avoid harm to civilians and their livelihoods during anti-drug efforts such as coca fumigation, and ensure that these activities do not fuel conflict.
7. Carry out crop substitution programs that provide beneficiaries with a decent livelihood. This can only be achieved via policies aimed at reversing trends of land acquisition by large agribusiness in Colombia, and seeing to it that international agricultural trade regulations avoid bias against small-scale producers.

8. Provide assistance to IDPs and other people affected by conflict in ways that promote secure and sustainable livelihoods and the full rights of citizenship, without fostering dependency.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The exact number of IDPs is disputed, and estimates range from 3.6 million to 5.5 million, out of a total population of 45.7 million. See [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpCountries\)/CB6FF99A94F70AED802570A7004CEC41?opendocument&count=10000](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpCountries)/CB6FF99A94F70AED802570A7004CEC41?opendocument&count=10000)

<sup>2</sup> International Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Colombia: Property Restitution in Sight But Integration Still Distant* (Geneva: IDMC, 2011). [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/D46F6EF1CC3666AEC1257975005F3FC6/\\$file/Colombia+-December+2011.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/D46F6EF1CC3666AEC1257975005F3FC6/$file/Colombia+-December+2011.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Colombia's departments are an administrative unit equivalent to provinces or states in other countries.

<sup>4</sup> Montes de María is a region of Colombia that overlaps the departments of Bolívar and Sucre.

<sup>5</sup> In these sites and in Bogotá, Colombia's capital, we interviewed a total of 33 people, including Colombian government officials (10); donor representatives (1); civil society organization representatives and representatives of aid beneficiaries (11); international nongovernmental organization (NGO) staff (5); academic and think tank scholars (2); and representatives of United Nations and other international organizations (4). These semi-structured interviews were based on guides that we developed to address a set of research questions about how donors deliver aid in persistently contested areas; whether that aid effectively meets humanitarian needs and promotes conflict-sensitive, equitable, and sustainable development; and whether the aid contributes to peace and security or makes the beneficiaries less safe.

<sup>6</sup> See Regional Document for Accelerating Progress Towards the MDGS, Department of Nariño, Colombia. [http://www.odm.pnudcolombia.org/pdf/NARINO\\_UK%20v4.pdf](http://www.odm.pnudcolombia.org/pdf/NARINO_UK%20v4.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> See "Land Restitution and the 'Black Hand' (Montes de María)." <http://justf.org/blog/2011/10/27/landrestitution-and-black-hand-sundays-local-elections-colombia>

<sup>8</sup> The Zones of Rehabilitation and Consolidation were created by Presidential Decree number 2002 in September 2002. These zones were declared unconstitutional by the Colombian Constitutional Court in 2003, as they violated the rule of law and infringed on several specific rights of the population living in these areas. Information on the actual conflict status of Montes de María provided by Dana Brown, US Office on Colombia.

<sup>9</sup> US Institute of Peace and US Army Peace-Keeping and Stabilization Operations Institute, *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction*. Washington, DC: USIP, 2009. See also Sarah Collinson, Samir El Harawy, and Robert Muggah, "States of Fragility: Stabilisation and Its Implications for Humanitarian Action," *HPG Working Paper*. London: Overseas Development Institute, May 2010.

<sup>10</sup> ABColombia, *Colombia the Current Panorama: Victims and Land Restitution Law 1448*. London: ABColombia, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> For more detail, see Abigail Poe and Adam Isaacson, "Stabilization and Development: Lessons of Colombia's 'Consolidation' Model," *International Policy Report*. Washington, DC: Center for International Policy: April 2011). NCP is the successor to the earlier Plan Colombia program.

<sup>12</sup> See "Transition Initiatives: Colombia," [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/cross-cutting\\_programs/transition\\_initiatives/country/colombia2/index.html](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/transition_initiatives/country/colombia2/index.html).

<sup>13</sup> Marc Chernick, "Economic Resources and Internal Armed Conflicts: Lessons from the Colombian Case," in *Rethinking the Economics of War: The Intersection of Need, Creed, and Greed*, ed. Cynthia J. Arns and I. William Zartman. (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2005), 178-205.

<sup>14</sup> Poe and Isaacson, "Stabilization and Development."

<sup>15</sup> Other sources confirm this view. See Ricardo Vargas, *Alternative Development in Colombia and Social Participation: Proposals for a Change of Strategy*. Bogotá: DIAL, 2010.

<sup>16</sup> See also the 2011 position paper endorsed by Oxfam and 14 other international NGOs working in Colombia, "The Humanitarian Crisis in Colombia: Caused by the Conflict," [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/7C6B5E44F9918459C125797600398E72/\\$file/colombia-humanitarian-crisis-17nov2011-eng.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/7C6B5E44F9918459C125797600398E72/$file/colombia-humanitarian-crisis-17nov2011-eng.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Intermón Oxfam et al. "Primera encuesta de prevalencia: Violencia sexual en contra de las mujeres en el contexto del conflicto armado colombiano 2001-2009," January 2011.

<sup>18</sup> Notably Constitutional Court Order Number 092 of 2008 and Law 1257 concerning violence against women and the right to truth, justice, and reparation.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> See the February 2012 communiqué on this topic by the Awa organization Unidad Indígena del Pueblo Awa, posted at <http://www.awaunipa.org/actualidad/comunicados/101-nunca-evadiremos-la-responsabilidad-de-proteger-nuestro-territorio-por-mas-cruda-que-sea-esta-guerra-lucharemos-por-pervivir.html>.

<sup>21</sup> UNODC (UN Office of Drugs and Crime/Oficina de las Naciones Unidas Contra la Droga y el Delito), *Cultivos de coca, estadísticas municipales, Censo 31 de Cisiembre de 2010*, Bogotá: UNODC, June 2011.

<sup>22</sup> An analysis carried out for Oxfam found that 70 percent of the Colombian small-farm producers would lose 16 percent of their income under the agreement, equivalent to \$160 million annually. For the 14 percent of producers who only produce goods that would entirely compete with imports, the FTA would bring a reduction in total agricultural income of \$111 million, or 37 percent in relative terms. See L.J. Garay S., F.B. Gómez, and I.C. Landínez, "Impact of the US-Colombia Free Trade Agreement on the Small Farm Economy in Colombia," <http://www.usofficeoncolombia.org/uploads/application-pdf/Colombia%20FTA%20impact%20on%20Small%20Farmers%20-%20Final%20English%20Small.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> Oxfam research carried out in Nariño and the Department of Cauca in 2009 had similar findings; see <http://prensarural.org/spip/spip.php?article2736> for a summary.

<sup>24</sup> See [http://www.usaid.gov/locations/latin\\_america\\_caribbean/issues/narcotics\\_issue.html](http://www.usaid.gov/locations/latin_america_caribbean/issues/narcotics_issue.html) for details on USAID's regional Alternative Development Program.

<sup>25</sup> Olivia Lopez, "For Afro-Colombians, It Pays To Conserve," *Frontlines*, March/April 2012.

<sup>26</sup> Information provided by Oxfam staff in Colombia.

<sup>27</sup> See Quito Declaration on "Living Well and Living in Coexistence," October 12, 2009. <http://museo-aja.blogspot.com/2009/10/quito-declaration-october-12-2009.html>

<sup>28</sup> Specifically by Court Orders Number 034, 092, and 005, among others.

<sup>29</sup> Poe and Isaacson, "Stabilization and Development."

<sup>30</sup> US State Department, "Background Note: Colombia," March 6, 2012. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35754.htm>

<sup>31</sup> Information provided by Oxfam staff in Colombia.

<sup>32</sup> Figure provided by Dana Brown, Washington Office on Colombia.

<sup>33</sup> Information provided by Oxfam Great Britain Colombia staff.

**Oxfam America has carried out research in Afghanistan, Colombia, and Sudan aimed at improved knowledge about how the United States and other international aid donors can provide humanitarian, recovery, and development assistance in what we call "contested spaces" in ways that do not leave these areas even less safe. We define contested spaces as areas of persistent low-intensity conflict.\***

\*We adopt the definition of "low-intensity conflict" used by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program: armed violence that results in more than 25 but fewer than 1,000 deaths in a year (see <http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/#Location>)

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