

In this issue

- The Humanitarian crisis in Chocó continues P.1
- To start again P.4
- Cash transfers, an innovative practice for humanitarian response in Arauca P.5
- Colombia overcomes El Niño and now faces the rainy season P.6
- Humanitarian partners in Colombia respond to Ecuador Earthquake P.7

HIGHLIGHTS

- Indigenous and afro-Colombians communities face displacement and movement restrictions in Chocó
- Humanitarian organizations support vulnerable communities in Chocó and Arauca, by Fundación Plan and LWF
- El Niño ends while la Niña may start soon, UNGRD
- Colombia humanitarian partners show solidarity with Ecuador

FIGURES

# IDPs in mass events (April 2016)	1.006
#people affected by access and mobility constraints (April 2016)	8.921
# people affected by natural disasters (April 2016 UNGRD)	21.479

FUNDING

US\$ 46,680,363
2016 humanitarian funding being implemented as of 17 May 2016 (OCHA 4W)



The humanitarian crisis in Chocó continues

Chocó department has historically been impacted by the armed conflict and natural disaster. For years, civilians in Chocó have been suffering from a double affectation, increasing risks and vulnerability. Chocó is also impacted by a structural crisis in terms of poverty and human rights; additionally, civilian State's institutions face a number of difficulties to make presence in areas of difficult access affected by the conflict. The confrontations between the armed forces and non-state armed groups, as well as the presence and action of post-demobilization armed groups, have led to serious humanitarian consequences, including forced displacement and movement restrictions. At the same time, natural disasters, particularly landslides and flooding have increased humanitarian emergencies in Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities.



Mass displacement affects more than 5,000 people

According to OCHA's monitoring, in coordination with members of the Local Coordination Teams (LCT) of Valle del Cauca and Chocó, and the Comité Interinstitucional Humanitario de Buenaventura (CIH), between February and May 2016¹ more than 5,000 people have been displaced in 13 mass events. Displaced persons mostly come from Wounaan and Embera Indigenous communities from the municipalities in Bajo,² Medio³ and Alto Baudó⁴ and along the San Juan River between Litoral de San Juan⁵ and Buenaventura.⁶

¹ OCHA Monitor (18/05/16)

² See: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/es/operations/colombia/document/flash-update-no-1-desplazamiento-masivo-en-bajo-baud%C3%B3-choc%C3%B3>

³ See: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/es/operations/colombia/document/flash-update-no1-desplazamiento-masivo-en-medio-baud%C3%B3-choc%C3%B3>

⁴ See: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/es/operations/colombia/document/flash-update-no-1-25022016-desplazamiento-masivo-y-restricciones-la>

To the date of this Bulletin, more than 1,000 people continue displaced, and more than 4,000 have returned without adequate security guarantees due to the difficult conditions in the recipient communities. More than 3,000 returnees are currently facing mobility restrictions in their community of origin. Several Indigenous communities manifested that the pressure by non-state armed groups and military operations are the main risks that could lead to new displacements. For example, the Pichima Quebrada community, integrated by 466 Wounaan people displaced for a second time to the municipal seat of Litoral de San Juan on 9 May (See Table1).

In this context, on 12 May the UNHCR and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights-OHCHR issued a joint communiqué expressing concern around the violation of human rights in Chocó, and called for urgent measures to guarantee protection of civilians.⁷

NO	Date of displacement	Municipality	No. of people	No. of Families	Population	Recipient Municipality	Status	Date of return
1	22/02/2016	Alto Baudó	636	130	Embera	Alto Baudó	Returned	03/06/2016
2			299	63	Embera	Alto Baudó	Returned	03/01/2016
3			31	17	Afro	Buenaventura	Active	
4			56	14	Wounaan	Buenaventura	Active	
5			1.130	250	Wounaan	Litoral de San Juan	Returned/ movement restrictions	
6	13/03/2016	Litoral de San Juan	682	191	Afro	Litoral de San Juan	Returned/ movement restrictions	
7			216	21	Afro	Litoral de San Juan	Returned/ movement restrictions	19/03/2016
8			28	7	Afro	Litoral de San Juan	Returned/ movement restrictions	14-15/04/2016
9	22-23/03/2016	Medio Baudó	559	137	Embera	Medio Baudó	Returned/ movement restrictions	Between march and april
10	07/04/2016	Bajo Baudó	92	15	Wounaan	Bajo Baudó	Active	
11	10-13/04/2016	Bajo Baudó	418	86	Wounaan	Bajo Baudó	Active	
12	11/04/2016	Litoral de San Juan	466	94	Wounaan	Litoral de San Juan	Returned/ movement restrictions ⁸	26/04/2016
13	09/05/2016	Litoral de San Juan	466	94	Wounaan	Litoral de San Juan	Active	
TOTAL			5.079	1.025				

More than 4,000 people have returned without adequate security guarantees due to the difficult conditions in the recipient communities

More than 7,000 face movement restrictions

The presence and actions of armed actors and the constant military operations carried out in the area have also led to movement restrictions for more than 7,000 people in Riosucio, the Baudó and Litoral de San Juan areas in Chocó and Valle del Cauca, between February and May 2016. In addition, communities from lower San Juan in Buenaventura such as Chachajo, Chamapuro, Agua Clara and Cabeceras continue to suffer from movement restrictions, as confirmed by a recent MIRA mission in April.⁹

Indigenous communities, the most vulnerable

Indigenous communities in Chocó are most adversely affected by the armed conflict that erodes their structural vulnerabilities in terms of healthcare, water, education, housing, and lack of support networks when they are forced to displace to the municipal centres.

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/es/operations/colombia/document/flash-update-no-2-01032016-desplazamiento-masivo-y-restricciones-al>

⁵ See: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/es/operations/colombia/document/flash-update-no-1-desplazamiento-masivo-y-restricciones-la-movilidad--1>

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/es/operations/colombia/document/informe-de-situaci%C3%B3n-no-1-desplazamientos-masivos-en-litoral-de-san-juan>

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/es/operations/colombia/document/informe-de-situaci%C3%B3n-no-2-desplazamientos-masivos-en-litoral-de-san-juan>

⁶ See: OCHA published several sflash updates and sitreps on these events see

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/es/operations/colombia>

⁷ AGENCIA DE NACIONES UNIDAS PARA LOS REFUGIADOS (ACNUR). ACNUR y la Oficina de la ONU para los Derechos Humanos solicitan protección para población civil en Chocó. Julio 12 de 2016. En: <http://www.acnur.org/t3/noticias/noticia/acnur-y-la-oficina-de-la-onu-para-los-derechos-humanos-solicitan-proteccion-para-poblacion-civil-en-choco/> (17/05/2016)

⁸ This community were displaced on 11/04/2016 for the first time and returned on 26/04/2016, however were displaced again on 09/05/2016. Currently is located in Docordó, municipality of Litoral de San Juan

⁹ See: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/colombia/assessment/actualizaci%C3%B3n-informe-final-mira-160416-comunidades-de-los-municipios>

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/colombia/assessment/actualizaci%C3%B3n-informe-final-mira-13042016-seguimiento-la-crisis>

Community leaders suffer constant threats; communities face constraints in access to livelihood and healthcare. Children and adolescents are at constant risk of forced recruitment. Communities expressed concern about reiterative suspensions of classes due to teachers' displacement.

In this context, the Ombudsman's Office issues a Risk Report in April 2016,¹⁰ alerting on the risks faced by the Indigenous Embera communities and Afro-colombians in Medio Atrato and Bojayá in Chocó, and in Vigía del Fuerte in Antioquia. The presence of non-state armed groups, and the expansion strategy by post-demobilization armed groups would impact a large number of people in these municipalities where live more than 38,000 people.

Local, national and international institutions respond to the crisis

Local authorities with the support of the Victims Unit (Unidad para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas-UARIV), provided immediate response, distributing food, hygiene kits and shelter to the majority of affected communities.¹¹

Despite local efforts, the magnitude of the events overwhelmed local capacity, particularly in terms of shelter, healthcare, food and protection.

Members and observers of the Local Coordination Teams in Quibdó and Valle del Cauca, and the Comité Interinstitucional Humanitario of Buenaventura have complemented local response and continue monitoring the emergency.

Despite the likelihood of new emergencies, major gaps remain in terms of shelters; IDPs stay in poor conditions without access to basic services and safe water, facing risks of diseases. Local infrastructure is not equipped to receive a large number of IDPs; gender and ethnic approaches also need to be strengthened during the response.

The Humanitarian Fund Colombia (CBPF) is mobilizing resources to respond to the emergencies in the municipalities of Litoral de San Juan, Bajo, Medio and Alto Baudó. An inter-agency mission (23-28 May) will compile additional information for funding requests and the definition of actions to complement State's response.

Protracted crisis

This situation in Litoral de San Juan is not new; the LCT has been responding to emergencies in the area since 2014. This year, more than 920 Wounaan people of the lower part of San Juan were displaced¹² to the municipal seat of Buenaventura and remained in the district for nearly a year in poor shelter conditions.¹³ During the same period, around 4,000 Afro-Colombians and Indigenous people of the same area remained in their territories with serious movement restrictions, at high risk of confinement and displacement. CERF¹⁴ funds were mobilized to respond to these emergencies, complementing State's and other partners' assistance.

The rainy season increases vulnerability in communities affected by violence

The first rainy season has increased the vulnerability of the communities already affected by the conflict, exposing its inhabitants to flooding and landslides. The Instituto de Hidrología, Meteorología y Estudios Ambientales (IDEAM) issued an orange alert due to likely landslides on highly inclined terrain in 20 municipalities of Chocó; a yellow alert was also issued for possible flash floods of the Atrato river, which could affect the city of Quibdó.¹⁵

Indigenous communities in Chocó are most adversely affected by the armed conflict that erodes their structural vulnerabilities in terms of healthcare, water, education, housing, and lack of support networks when they are forced to displace to the municipal centres

¹⁰ DEFENSORÍA DEL PUEBLO. Informe de Riesgo No. 015-16A.I. Abril 29 de 2016

¹¹ Communities such as: Chagpien Medio, Chagpien Tordod and Durakdurk (Wounaan) and Las Peñitas, Las Brisas and Bella Victoria (afro-colombian), in Litoral de San Juan, and Playa de Sivirú, in Bajo Baudó did not receive assistance.

¹² Unión de Agua Clara Chachajo, Buenavista, Chamapuro, Tío Cirilio, Unión San Bernardo and Balsalito communities

¹³ See: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/150326%20Informe%20INAL%20MIRA%20Bajo%20San%20Juan.pdf>

¹⁴ UNITED NATIONS CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND (CERF) is one of the fastest and most effective ways to support rapid humanitarian response for people affected by natural disasters and armed conflict. See: <http://www.unocha.org/cerf/about-us/who-we-are>

¹⁵ INSTITUTO DE HIDROLOGÍA, METEOROLOGÍA Y ESTUDIOS AMBIENTALES (IDEAM). Pronósticos y Alertas. Alertas a nivel nacional. See: <http://www.pronosticosyalertas.gov.co/alertas> (20/05/2016)

According to the national disaster risk management unit, Unidad Nacional para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres (UNGRD), in April 2,750 people were affected by floods in Chocó and another 30 by landslides. This represents an important increase compared to the same period of the previous year when only 10 people were affected by these events.¹⁶

National and international partners should be ready for a timely and coordinated response given the persistent risk of humanitarian emergencies caused by the armed conflict and violence; and the growing impact of the rainy season in Chocó.

To start again

To date, more than 1,200 people from 13 Indigenous communities have participated in the project. These families received training to improve their sanitary conditions and health and counted on specialized nutritional monitoring to fight against malnutrition, particularly in children

By Fundación Plan Chocó is one of the 32 departments of Colombia; it's known for its beauty and its tough inhabitants, in their majority afro-colombians, although there are also mestizos, whites and indigenous peoples, including the Embera, Waunaan and Katío peoples. The Pacific Ocean, along its western border, contrasts with the Andean mountains, making of Chocó a place rich in biodiversity and fauna with both Pacific and Atlantic coastlines.



Credit: Fundación PLAN

Contrasting with its abundant nature, Chocó is one of the poorest departments in Colombia, marked by the armed conflict, a lack of Government investment, corruption, unemployment, forced displacement and thousands of life stories that highlight the difficult conditions but also the courage of its people, their strength and their desire to move forward.

This is the case of Celmira Ochoa, a 26-year-old Indigenous girl who participates in PLAN's projects, and who dreams with giving a better future to her Embera Citará community, from the Baudó mountain ridge. The living conditions of Indigenous communities in general have not been easy; Celmira and her family had to leave their native lands, displaced by violence, in search of a new home in Quibdó, where she has now lived for five years.

A few months ago, Celmira joined PLAN's project, financed by the Colombia Humanitarian Fund, which provides humanitarian aid to Indigenous families displaced by violence and victims of the armed conflict. The project implements actions in food security and nutrition, basic sanitation and hygiene. To date, more than 1,200 people from 13 Indigenous communities have participated in the project. These families received training to improve their sanitary conditions and health and counted on specialized nutritional monitoring to fight against malnutrition, particularly in children.

Celmira is committed to the trainings and wants to take advantage of all this support to improve the living conditions of her two children. For the past two years, Celmira has been a teacher in her community; her work goes beyond teaching, as she contributes to create ties of friendship, teamwork and respect for others. "I want Indigenous

¹⁶UNIDAD NACIONAL PARA LA GESTIÓN DEL RIESGO DE DESASTRES (UNGRD). Balance primera temporada de lluvias. (13/05/2016) See: <http://portal.gestiondelriesgo.gov.co/Paginas/Noticias/2016/Balance-primer-temporadadeluvias.aspx>

communities to be represented by these boys and girls, who are the future of our country”, said Celmira.

“I thank PLAN and the Colombia Humanitarian Fund for this project, they supported us and taught us basic principles of hygiene and nutrition that serve us both individually and for our children and community”, she added.

To read more on these life stories, see the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CLfkA8twOa4>

Cash transfer, an innovative practice for humanitarian response in Arauca

By Gloria Miranda, Lutheran World Federation

In mid-2015, flash flood of the Arauca river and its estuaries increased the vulnerability of communities of this area of Arauca, already impacted by the armed conflict and subject to the impact of delicate dynamics along the Venezuelan border. In this context, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) through its Colombia programme, decided to use its local presence and its experience, in other parts of the world, with cash transfers in humanitarian response, to include in the MIRA assessment the possibility of responding through vouchers.

The viability of the use of voucher for non-food items was determined based on the evaluation on humanitarian needs, conducted in a participatory fashion with affected populations and local organizations; the use and customs in cash management; the presence of local markets, distances traveled and the availability of certain goods and distributors. The vouchers delivered in the framework of this strategy, defined as “conditional”, cannot be utilized for the acquisition of products such as tobacco or agrochemical contaminants. LWF included these vouchers as a complementary response to sectoral interventions, taking into account in-kind food aid, and in line with the national policy of the Unidad de Gestión de Riesgo, providing a comprehensive response.

Cash transfers were thus proposed as a route to respond to specific needs with a right-based focus. The positive effects of this modality of humanitarian aid far surpassed initial expectations. Women and men could freely decide on which items to acquire; this stimulated their active participation, created empowerment and encouraged the capacity of the local community to reclaim their rights.

Cash transfer put affected people at the centre, as active agents of their recovery and not as mere beneficiaries of decisions taken by others regarding their needs.

LWF recognizes its responsibility to adapt to changes in the context of operations, and for this reason continues to be committed to innovation, to improve its support to the most vulnerable populations. The response with vouchers in Arauca left numerous lessons learned that can provide constant improvements for future response.

The positive effects of this modality of humanitarian aid far surpassed initial expectations. Women and men could freely decide on which items to acquire; this stimulated their active participation, created empowerment and encouraged the capacity of the local community to reclaim their rights

Colombia overcomes El Niño and now faces the rainy season

By *Unidad Nacional para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastre (UNGRD)*

During the last week of May, el Niño event passed to a weak phase with neutral conditions bringing this phenomenon to its ending, as reported by IDEAM. At the same time, the IDEAM reported an increased likelihood of 76 per cent for a La Niña phenomenon in late 2016.

The effects of El Niño are of high impact, although less serious than those of La Niña in 2010-2011. Social investment and risk management actions carried out since the approval of the National Policy in 2012, have contributed to advance in risk reduction and impact mitigation of El Niño. Although sectoral information is in the process of being consolidated, the number of Colombians impacted by El Niño could be close to 2 million equivalents to 4.3 per cent of the population.

During El Niño, a total of 358 public calamities were declared, 187 of those due to partial lack of water and rationing, 71 due to forest fires and 100 due to agricultural impact. In terms of water, 495 municipalities were affected, 308 due to rationing of water services and 187 due to partial lack of water supply (October 2014-April 2015).

In agricultural terms, 149,239 families were affected by El Niño, totaling 443,355 people. The agricultural impact was concentrated in 14 of 32 departments, including Nariño (16 per cent), Córdoba (15 per cent), Antioquia (15 per cent) and Bolívar (6 per cent), for a total of 630,275 affected hectares. The crops most impacted were pasture (44 per cent) followed by coffee (16 per cent) fruits and vegetables (15 per cent) cereals (9 per cent) and plantain (9 per cent).

National Government response included a variety of strategies to face El Niño, including reinforcing technical, logistical and operational capacities; early preparation of the National Contingency Plan in May 2014, and sectoral contingency plans.

In the preparedness phase equipment was made ready, including well drilling equipment, water tankers, maintenance, well improvements, implementation of departmental water plans, building of water lines and sewage lines and early distribution of food for livestock.

Guidelines were disseminated and local officials trained to prepare contingency plans to ensure their appropriation by Governors and Mayors; more than 10 Ministerial Councils and 32 meetings of the National Committee for Disaster Management were carried on, with the participation of Ministers, Directors of operational entities, Military and Police.

To date, the investments carried out amounts to USD\$530 million including the National Contingency and Sectoral Plans; more than 60 per cent of resources were invested in prevention, preparation and risk reduction. Very soon Colombians will be able to access detailed information on these investments and in the coming months they will learn the results of an evaluation to be carried out by the Departamento Nacional de Planeación.

In relation to the rainy season and a possible La Niña, since February guidelines were established including specific recommendations that can be seen at the following link: <http://portal.gestiondelriesgo.gov.co/Paginas/Noticias/2016/Primera-Temporada-de-Lluvias-2016.aspx>. Preparedness is key also in the case of La Niña. Actions such as maintenance of creeks; monitoring of river levels; follow up to construction works have



Credit: UNGRD. April 2016
Photo: South Korea Government giving water a treatment plant in Manauere, La Guajira.

already started together with support to the municipalities most vulnerable to hydrometeorological events.

Humanitarian partners in Colombia respond to Ecuador Earthquake

On April 16 2016, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake shook northern Ecuador leaving over 250,000 people most adversely affected throughout six provinces. The strongest quake in decades claimed over 660 lives, thousands of injured and left close to 30,000 homeless. The international response in support of national efforts has been extensive. An international appeal has so far collected over 11 million (15 per cent covered) in food security, water and sanitation, shelter and health to provide assistance for 350,000 people for three months. Despite these efforts, unmet needs remain in the areas with major impact, especially rural zones.

Colombia humanitarian partners have shown immediate solidarity. Several Colombia-based NGOs (ACF, Diakonie, Mercy Corps, MSF, NRC, Plan, RET), United Nations (FAO, OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women) as well as IOM, National Red Cross and the Swiss Cooperation dispatched support teams and relief items to the neighboring stricken country.¹⁷ Partners' experience and capacity in border areas was invaluable when deploying staff to the Esmeralda province.

The support from humanitarian partners in Colombia proved essential on sectoral needs assessments, relief distribution, policy advice, gender mainstreaming, and information management support

As the OCHA Nariño Coordinator - deployed for 3 weeks to Esmeralda to support coordination – highlighted: *“The fact that I knew many humanitarian partners, such as HCR or NRC colleagues deployed to Esmeralda, and that we have common procedures and practice in emergencies made our coordination easier in times of stress and heavy pressure!”*

Ecuador response has provided good insights for Colombia-based partners in terms of preparedness actions and applying response protocols, using of standardized assessments methodologies and information management.

The support from humanitarian partners in Colombia proved essential on sectoral needs assessments, relief distribution, policy advice, gender mainstreaming, information management support just to mention a few of the hundreds of activities in support to emergency response. Together with the efforts provided by the Colombian government through the [SNGRD](#) in terms of Search and Rescue teams, emergency relief assistance (621 MT) and repatriation efforts, helped saving many lives and preparing us better.

More detail is available on www.salahumanitaria.co

¹⁷ This report includes only the information that partners shared with OCHA. Other organizations and donors may also have contributed to relief efforts in Ecuador.