



**SOUTH-SOUTH TECHNICAL COOPERATION STRATEGY**  
**Office of the Presidential High Counselor for Reintegration**

**1. Introduction**

Colombia is a democratic republic that in the past 40 years has been affected by a violence situation, caused by illegal armed groups and terrorist organizations that have interfered with and harmed Colombia's socioeconomic development.

The **GOC Reintegration program** offers to the demobilized and their families

**Psycho-social Attention**, access to the **Health Care System**, **job readiness training**, **Education**, **income generation** programs and participation on **cultural** and sport oriented projects.

The GOC offers a **conditioned monthly stipend** as an Incentive for Reintegration.

The ACR has a **Call Center** available to all participants and their family members.

The Office of the Presidential High Commissioner for Peace and Reintegration (ACR) has sought to internationalize the Colombian DDR process and believes that a continuous international involvement guarantees its openness and transparency, thus contributing to improving our program's quality. The South-South Cooperation Strategy is a valid tool in order to support this goal.

Colombia has a long history of DDR.<sup>1</sup> The most recent process began in 2005, when the Government of Colombia launched the negotiations with the *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC). The Justice and Peace Law of 2005 called for the demobilization of the paramilitary and other illegal actors. While DDR is traditionally undertaken following the cease of hostilities and peace agreements, Colombia has implemented DDR in the midst of an ongoing violence situation. In this context, DDR is best seen not as a post-conflict consolidation tool but as a humanitarian and social program that offers illegal groups an opportunity to re-enter society, and enables them to rebuild their lives and their communities. In effect, DDR has provided Colombia with a new and powerful tool to reduce protracted violence. It is recognized among DDR practitioners that demobilization and disarmament are short-term processes, while reintegration (and the related issue of reconciliation), is a significantly more extended and complex process.

Recent ESW led the Government of Colombia to request Bank assistance in designing its National Reintegration and Reparation programs.<sup>2</sup> While Colombia has successfully demobilized **over 50,000 members of illegal armed groups**, reintegration programs have been more complicated to pursue, and the ACR was created only in 2006. However, there is the need to produce data and knowledge on community based reintegration programs led by the Government of Colombia and NGOs. Practitioners recognize that **Community Based Reintegration** programs play an increasingly important role in DDR, considering that local ownership of the process is critical for peace sustainability. While community based programs are complicated they are also innovative and practical. It is critical to include victims, demobilized individuals and communities in the reintegration process, in order to reduce their perception of being excluded from benefits, a feeling that could become a factor of conflict.

<sup>1</sup> This history includes amnesty for those who took up arms against the state in 1953 and 1958, peace processes in the 1980s and 90s with members guerrilla groups, the formal talks and demobilization of the AUC from 2004-2006, and most recently a program of individual demobilization of members of the illegal armed groups. See Peace Programmatic I: Demobilization and Reinsertion of Ex-Combatants in Colombia, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> ESW included "Peace Programmatic I: Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Fighters (P095711)" and "Peace Programmatic II: Reparation and Reconciliation (P101276)".



The ACR's Community Based Reintegration program is executed in 4 phases:



1. *Diagnostic and Baseline.* A qualitative and quantitative diagnostic is being undertaken to: (1) gather information on potential communities (based on the number of demobilized individuals per municipality, the number of IDPs per municipalities, and security rates); and (2) gather data on the diverse community-based strategies being implemented by NGOs, international organizations, and the status of current Colombian Government programs.
2. *Citizenship Formation.* In this phase, workshops are held in communities about human rights, participatory planning, conflict resolution, recruitment prevention, and community-development projects.
3. *Community Project.* In this phase the design of the community-development project is formally reviewed, technical assistance will be provided, and implementation will begin. Usually these projects are micro-infrastructure improvements aimed at having a quick impact on the community, such as: paving access-roads to a small town or a neighborhood, renovating schools or local health care centers, or building small playgrounds for children. All project beneficiaries decide, plan and execute the project themselves.
4. *Symbolic Acts.* Visible symbolic acts are undertaken in the communities in order to demonstrate the advances in the reintegration process, to support the construction of a historical collective memory, and to generate conditions that promote peaceful coexistence in these communities,.

**The Community Based Reintegration Strategy**

has trained over **20,000 community members and 4,000 demobilized leaders** that together developed **101 micro infrastructural projects**, improving life conditions in **69 municipalities**.

More than **3,000,000** community members have gained from this joint effort.

**2. South-South Technical Cooperation Strategy (SSTCS)**

In May 2009 the ACR held the First International Congress on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (CIDDR) in Cartagena, Colombia. The CIDDR contributed to consolidate the international cooperation strategy and it was a valuable space to share best practices and challenges, based on real experiences led by local actors. During the course of this event, it was particularly felt that the extensive know-how and lessons learned from Colombia's own experience could benefit countries emerging from violent situations.

**The SOUTH-SOUTH Cooperation Strategy**

Over **2,000 DDR practitioners** from all over the world participated in the CIDDR.

Colombia is currently exchanging its peace building experience with countries such as the **Philippines, Sri Lanka, Haiti and Brazil**.

The Philippines will hold the next CIDDR congress.

**Sri Lanka** has started a knowledge exchange of the **transitional justice legal framework**.

Following this experience the ACR developed a SSTCS with the following objectives:

- I. **Research and investigate** DDR and peacebuilding **best practices** in Colombia and other countries affected by similar **situations** of violence.
- II. **Exchange** DDR and peacebuilding **experiences** between Colombia and countries that live similar situations and/or organizations that collaborate and finance DDR processes.



- III. **Develop** DDR and peace building **skills**.
- IV. Produce, publish and disseminate a **document on Best Practices** for DDR and peacebuilding.

The ACR has hosted two technical cooperation tours in which over **60 practitioners** from countries with similar situations had the opportunity to exchange experiences while sharing with beneficiaries and local practitioners in the field. During these tours the participants gained from the Colombian experience in DDR and Peacebuilding, aiming to learn from and contribute to the existent global knowledge in the matter.

While identifying and highlighting the progress and challenges for the Colombian experience in DDR, these tours enhanced the networks of academies and practitioners in order to promote the achievement of specific commitments. The tours provided practical knowledge to the existent theory on the aggregated values in a DDR process, such as communication strategies, relations with private sector, financial management of the process, security, among others.

These two courses contributed to DDR initiative through the national ownership of the process in terms of coordination and inter-institutional relations. This was particularly seen in the case of social networks, such as NGOs (both national and international), universities, think tanks, the private sector, and the media, among others. This type of initiative enables the regionalization and the local appropriation of the National Reintegration Policy. Participants to **the courses debated over the “Best Practices” and produced a complete set of memoirs that provide contributions to issues related to DDR, with a strong input from practitioners**. On the whole, the courses were both theoretical and empirical, and were provided through workshops, conferences and field trips.

### **3. Link to CAS and Bank ESW/Operations**

Over a decade ago a consensus emerged among Colombian government officials, NGOs, and the World Bank that the reduction of violence and the achievement of lasting peace was a strategic objective and represented Colombia’s number one development priority. Since the late 1990s, the Bank has sponsored and implemented several innovative peace-related analytical works and programs. During the year 2005, CAS review the Government of Colombia asked the Bank to consolidate its programs under a strategic peace pillar. This peace pillar includes the scaled-up 2004 APL “Peace and Development Project” (P101277), and several grants related to subjects of youth, patrimonial assets, and education. In addition, “Peace and Security” is one of the Government of Colombia’s six main pillars outlined in the 2006-2010 National Development Plan, which constitutes the basis for the Bank’s Country Partnership Strategy for 2008-2011. Also at the GOC’s request, the Bank conducted Economic and Sector Work on the topics of demobilization, reconciliation, reparation and reintegration to evaluate the current national Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) program. Finally, in May 2009 the Bank was among the sponsors of the first International Congress on Demobilization Disarmament and Reintegration, hosted by the Government of Colombia and held in Cartagena. Bank staff moderated several discussions and assisted in bringing over 2,000 attendees from 52 countries to the event. At the event, World Bank Managing Director Juan Jose Daboub affirmed his commitment to supporting DDR activities in Colombia. The Bank has extensive experience with DDR, most notably through the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program – MDRP – for the greater Great Lakes region of Africa. With IDA contributions totaling US\$ 191 million, and other donor contributions amounting to US\$260 million, the MDRP was the largest DDR program in the world.