

**SUPPORT
PROGRAM FOR EX-COMBATANT
CHILDREN - COLOMBIA**

**23rd
QUARTERLY REPORT**

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the reporting period, the Program for Ex-combatant Children funded by USAID and implemented with the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare and other government institutions, assisted 69 new boys and girls disengaged from Illegal Armed Groups, for a total of 3,030 since the beginning of the program. A total of 3,284 have been assisted until December 31st, 2006. Out of this total, 254 are indigenous and/or Afro-Colombian Children.

Law 1098 of November 9, 2006 obtained Presidential Sanction this quarter, by which the new Childhood and Adolescence code was approved and Decree 2737 of 1989 was abolished. Through this law boys and girls are acknowledged as owners of rights as it was established in the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as in Article 44 of the Political Constitution of Colombia. The new Code establishes substantial legal regulations for the integral protection of boys, girls and adolescents, to guarantee their rights and freedom. Family, Society and State are now be equally responsible for the wellbeing and protection of children.

In the month of December, technical support was provided to the ICBF for the analysis of recommendations presented by the National Ombudsman regarding assistance and prevention actions to the recruitment of boys and girls disengaged from illegal armed groups. The progress made on each of the recommendations was determined, and follow-up indicators and short, mid and long-term projections were established in order to adequately respond to the report.

As part of assistance component activities and the rights restoration efforts of the programme, 745 health services were provided to program beneficiaries through the Profamilia healthcare and sexual and reproductive health services. The medical services rendered this quarter through the National Healthcare System amounted to 1,208 which included hospitalizations, consultations with general practitioner, consultations with specialists and emergency treatments. Likewise, 345 youths in the different modalities of the program were benefited through the psychoactive substances consumption prevention strategy.

At the end of this quarter, a joint project was structured with ONUSIDA-IOM's HIV/AIDS Program to assist program beneficiaries in the following areas: Sexual and reproductive health education, STD and HIV/AIDS prevention, and a sensitizing campaign on HIV and voluntary testing. A total of 22 staff members and 82 youths benefited through the sensitizing campaign and workshops, and 67 youths received individual counselling on the matter.

With regard to family reunification services, 35 youths were reintegrated to their families this quarter, and the family encounters strategy was also supported benefiting 24 families through workshops, 30 youths through group activities and four youths through individual interviews.

During this quarter, permanence within the education system was maintained at 96% and school desertion was 4%. Complementary support continued to be provided for transportation and school materials with a total of 370 beneficiaries throughout the program. Likewise, a total of 308 youths attended the training courses at SENA. New courses were opened in the cities of Bogotá, Bucaramanga and Cali.

For the Income Generation component, at total of 53 projects such as housing, education, clothing stores, supermarkets, etc. have been created, approved and financed through the alliance with "Asociación Tejido Humano". Regarding Reference

and Opportunity Centres - CROJ, to date, 996 youths have been contacted, and 497 of these are active and benefiting from the services of the CROJ. A total of 583 youths affiliated to mental and physical health services; 503 enrolled in formal education processes, out of which 252 received subsidies; 459 youths enrolled in training courses, and 297 of these received subsidies; 259 youths are currently employed. In addition, 221 youths received counselling for the productive projects they presented to the “Alta Consejería para la Reintegración Social y Económica de Personas y Grupos Alzados en Armas” –ACRSE- (High Council for Social and Economical Reintegration); 613 youths participated in socio-cultural activities; 363 families of the youths in the program were referred through the CROJ; 394 youths obtained legal documentation; and the total number of institutions that are part of the network at national level is 526, which shows the strengthening and consolidation of the CROJ strategy at national level.

The Prevention Component of the program provided support for the formulation of public policies on Childhood and Adolescence in Departments and Municipalities of Antioquia, Meta and Valle. Likewise, the USAID/IOM Program gave technical assistance on legal and administrative actions to a total of 263 public servants in 16 departments, from the National Ombudsman office and the Attorney General’s Office.

Likewise, technical assistance and financial support was provided to 79 recruitment prevention initiatives in six departments, benefiting 3,185 boys, girls and adolescents. The Vulnerability, Risk and Opportunity Maps methodology continued to be applied with the participation of 10 girls, 19 boys, 31 youths, and 35 public servants. In order to guarantee the sustainability of these initiatives, it is necessary to establish agreements with local governments to guarantee technical and financial support.

A consultancy is being performed for the creation of geographic indicators for the proper monitoring of context variables and risk factors, which will allow government entities to identify and implement pertinent recruitment prevention actions.

Regarding support to Indigenous and Afro- Colombian communities, 56 members of indigenous organizations were trained on the legal roadmap for indigenous boys and girls that disengage from IAG, and on common rights and recruitment prevention actions. Public servants were sensitized so that legal and administrative decisions involving indigenous youths are made taking into account the rights of the indigenous communities. During this quarter various initiatives with ethnic groups were supported in the departments of Cauca, Valle and Sucre, with 904 beneficiaries.

Out of the 12 initiatives supported by the program, 66% (eight) are part of the “strengthening ethno education model”, and the four remaining initiatives work on improving the quality of instruction in schools and on the recuperation of indigenous traditions, ways and customs.

II. CONTEXT

During the month of November, the National Ombudsman launched a report at national level as a result of a research process performed in 2005, which categorizes the situation of the rights of disengaged children before, during and after recruitment, as well as the provision of assistance by institutions members of the National System of Family Welfare (SNBF), from a social and economical insertion perspective with a Human Rights focus.

The report includes a series of strategic recommendations to government, society, family and illegal armed groups. Among these recommendations, the one referring to the SNBF is worth highlighting as it makes emphasis on the protection of the rights of disengaged children, and their sustainable articulation to the socio-productive, educational and family contexts. It also makes special emphasis on the strengthening of health services, the “Haz Paz” Policy and the institutional strengthening of the implementers.

During this reporting period, the Third Encounter of Governors took place, as part of the strategy: “Municipalities and Departments for Childhood and Adolescence”, with the participation of 32 governors, whose main interest was Policies on Childhood and Adolescence. Their goal was to establish the progress on the implementation of the strategy through work tables to address the rights of boys and girls to life and health, to an identity, to adequate nutrition, to development and education, to sexual and reproductive health, to a healthy environment and their right to protection. They expressed their concern regarding the proposal to modify the transference system, as it could imply a reduction on the resources needed to finance childhood-oriented projects and programs.

Likewise, the Secretary General of the UN presented the annual report on childhood and conflict to the Security Council of the UN. The report reflects the violations to the rights of boys and girls in armed conflicts. According to this report, Colombia is one of the 30 countries where minors are victims of the armed conflict. Children are used as combatants and collaborators, and are sexually exploited; they are also victims of forced displacement, antipersonnel mines and many other situations condemned by the international community.

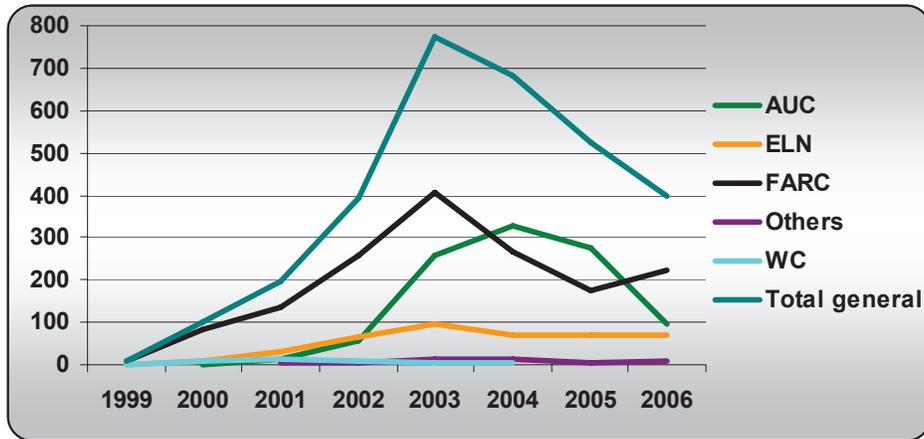
Also worth highlighting is the Presidential Sanction to Law 1098 of November 9, 2006, by which the new Childhood and Adolescence code is approved and Decree 2737 of 1989 is abolished. Through this law boys and girls are acknowledged as owners of rights as it was established in the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Article 44 of the Political Constitution is implemented. The new code establishes substantial and legal regulations for the integral protection of boys, girls and adolescents, to guarantee their rights and freedom. Family, Society and State are now be co responsible for the wellbeing and protection of children.

The Programme provided technical assistance to the ICBF Regional Office in Santander, for the elaboration of the Peace Building and Family Coexistence Plan to strengthen the national policy on child abuse and family violence prevention “Haz Paz”. The assistance was provided through a two-day workshop attended by the Police Department for Minors, the Regional Ombudsman, the Attorney General’s Office, the National Institute of Forensic Medicine, the Municipal Health Secretary, the Family Comisariata, and the Protection Center of the ICBF, among others.

III. RESULTS

Accumulated results for the Quarter October-December 2006			
Indicators	Accumulated	This Quarter	Comments
Job Creation	1.296	53	A total of 53 new employment opportunities were created part of the CROJ strategy, in different areas such as construction, commerce, and secretaryship, among others.
Employment Training	2.689	74	This quarter, 74 new youths attended the courses of the initial module at SENA, to determine their professional profile and to explore their occupational interests. Likewise, 234 youths attended the different training courses at SENA.
Access to Education	2954	75	During the reporting period, school coverage for the CAE, CJ and Foster Homes phases was of 96% (495 youths). The project gave financial support for the education and/or leveling of a total of 370 beneficiaries. It is noteworthy that 75 new youths enrolled in the school system this quarter.
Access to Health Services	3.030	69	This quarter, 69 new boys and girls were assisted by the municipal health centers in the different regions.
Family Reunification	657	35	This quarter, 35 disengaged youths were reintegrated to their families.
Ethnic Minorities (prevention)	254	0	During this quarter there were no new enrollments of children from ethnic minorities
Beneficiaries at risk of recruitment	17.374	895	Continued support and monitoring of the projects implemented in seven departments: Antioquia, Cauca, Cundinamarca Sucre, Bolívar, Santander, Putumayo and Valle
Ex-combatant children	3.284	69	Out of a total of 3.284 children assisted, 3.030 have benefited from the programs implemented by the ICBF and 254 of these are indigenous and Afro-Colombian children who benefit through the Prevention program. Also, 69 youths joined the ICBF Program this quarter and 0 indigenous and Afro-Colombians were ex-combatant.

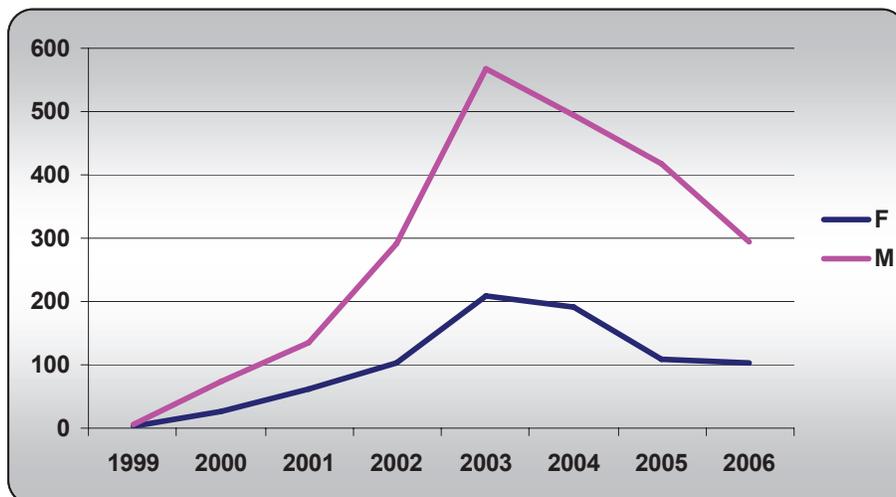
Graph #1 Número de jóvenes que entraron al programa por grupo armado



Year	AUC	ELN	FARC	Others	WC	Total general
1999		2	7		1	10
2000	1	8	84		7	100
2001	12	29	136	5	14	196
2002	57	66	257	6	8	394
2003	257	94	405	14	5	775
2004	330	72	265	14	3	684
2005	277	68	176	5		526
2006	95	69	225	7		396
Total general	1.029	4.08	1.555	51	38	3081
Percentage	33%	13%	50%	2%	1%	100%

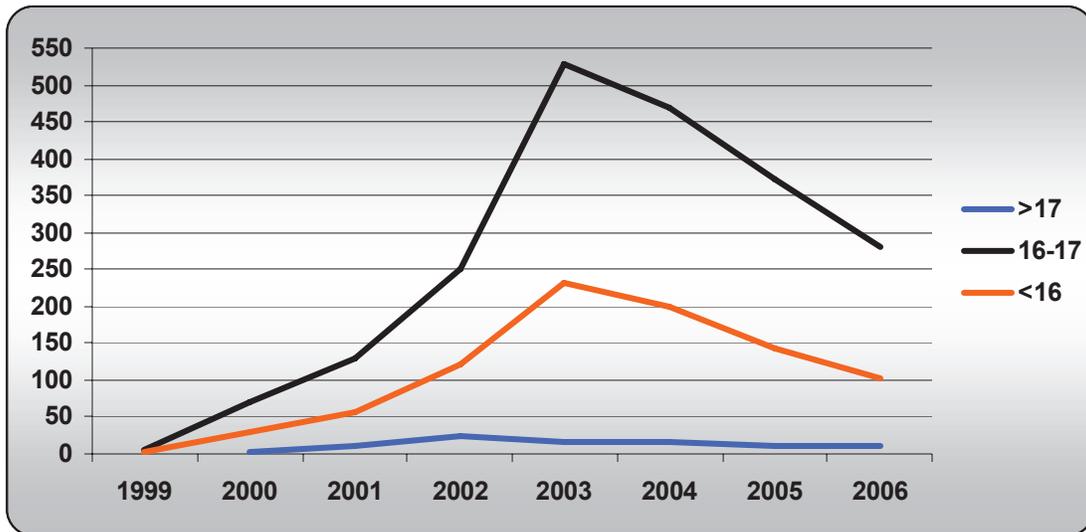
During 2006, 396 boys, girls and adolescents entered the program, which represents a 24% decrease compared to last year. This confirms the decreasing trend on the number of boys, girls and adolescents entering the program since 2004. This is mainly due to the decrease in the number of youths disengaged from the AUC (Self defense groups), which went from representing 53% of the entries in 2005 to 24% of the entries in 2006, a 66% decrease in the entries of children from this group. During last year, this trend was counteracted by a 28% increase in the number of boys and girls disengaged from the FARC

Graph # 2 - Number of Entries by Gender Vs. Date of Entry



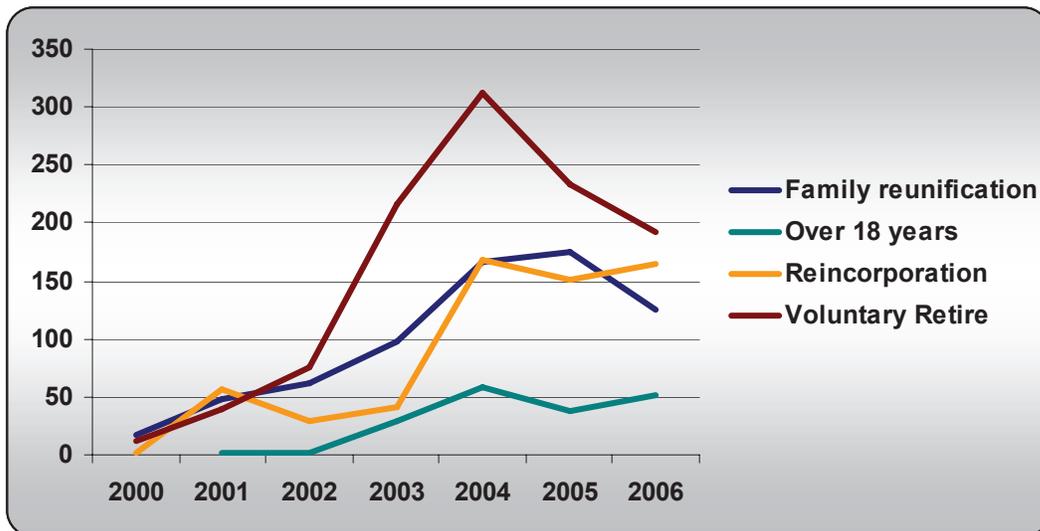
Until last year a total of 3,081 girls, boys and adolescents had entered the program, out of which 3,030 did it with support from USAID. Out of this total, 26% (804) are female and 74% (2,277) are male. The gender distribution of girls and boys that joined the program in the last quarter is consistent with historical records. This means that for every seven boys, 3 girls have entered the program. This proves that the rising or falling trends in entries to the program do not affect gender distribution significantly.

Graph # 3 - Number of Entries by Age at Date of Entry Vs. Date of Entry



A trend that was maintained throughout 2006 was that the majority of entries were of adolescents between 16 and 17 years of age, which represent 68.3% of the total number of assisted minors. Youths under 16 make up 28.7% of the Program beneficiaries. The 69 minors and adolescents that entered the Program during the last quarter have an age distribution similar to the accumulated total: 68.1% are 16 or 17 years of age and 27.5% are under 16.

Graph # 4 - Reason for Leaving the Program Vs. Date of exit



Exits from the Program decreased by 11% during 2006 versus 2005, ending the year with 533 cases. Most of those exits were classified as voluntary, and these decreased by 18% with 192 cases in 2006.

Exits due to family reunification, which were the second highest reason for exit between 2002 and 2005, were surpassed during 2006 by exits to the Reincorporation program. During 2006, family reunification registered 126 cases, a 28% decrease compared to the previous year. Reincorporation, however, registered 164 cases, showing a 9% increase versus the same period.

IV. ACTIVITIES

A. ASSISTANCE COMPONENT

2.1 RESULTS FOR THE REPORTING PERIOD – ASSISTANCE DURING THE FOUR PHASES

2.1.1 COVERAGE AND ASSISTANCE

During the reporting period, 69 new boys, girls and adolescents entered the Program and a total of 516 were assisted through the different modalities of the Program. Specialized assistance was provided as follows: Four Transit Homes (HAT) assisting 63 boys and girls in Bogotá, Cali, Medellín and Bucaramanga; eight Specialized Assistance Centers (CAE), assisting 214 minors in Bogotá, Cali, Medellín, Bucaramanga, Pereira, and Cartagena; one Youth Home in Cali, assisting 12 youths; four Foster Homes, assisting 127 youths in Armenia, Manizales, and Villavicencio; and 44 families of the “Hogar Gestor” modality in Arauca, Cali, Medellín, Villavicencio and Yopal. The Program continued providing complementary support to the houses, mainly through the education and training services. Technical assistance activities were implemented jointly with the ICBF in some regional offices, for some operators.

A beneficiary’s story - Rosa María Moreno Huertas

Rosa María is a young woman that comes from a dysfunctional family, for her parents separated due to marital difficulties. Rosa was raised in an abusive environment, suffering physical and verbal abuse from her paternal grandmother and other relatives. Because of this situation, she moves to Villavicencio and Casanare where she gets involved with a member of an illegal armed group and when they begin living as a couple she gets pregnant with a baby girl that is now 2 ½ years of age, who is cared for by Rosa’s mother. Motherhood has helped her understand some things about being a daughter.

She entered the CAE in the month of March 2006 and has gone through different stages in the program where she has learned to love and respect herself. Even though there are still some issues to be resolved like the situation with her father, which she thinks will help her reinsertion process, she needs to strengthen her role as a woman and as a mother, emphasizing on self respect and love, and on handling interpersonal relationships.

2.1.2 INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

During this quarter, the Program continued to support the National Policy of Family Coexistence “HAZ PAZ”, implemented by the ICBF, in two lines of action: the first is the development of Departmental and Municipal plans which by the end of the period amount to four departmental plans in Medellín, Cali, Villavicencio and Valledupar. These were developed through two-day, participatory workshops in each city, with the attendance of 120 ICBF and SNBF (National System of Family Welfare) staff members. The second line of action is the implementation of assistance procedures for victims of sexual abuse. Visits were made to the assistance units in the four cities, in order to perform a situation analysis, and the consultant hired for this purpose is elaborating the assistance guidelines based on the results of the analysis and the outcomes of the activities implemented during the reporting period.

Three work tables on the reestablishment of rights of disengaged minors were held with “Fundación Social”, two in Medellín, with the participation of 19 professionals and one in Bogotá, with the participation of 22 professionals. Another three pedagogical worktables were held: one in Bogotá, with the participation of 11 professionals; one in Armenia, with ten professionals, and another one in Cali with 15 professionals. The first activity for the worktables is the diagnosis of the rights reestablishment process for the boys and girls in the different assistance modalities for each city. Then, training is provided on reestablishment regulations, the Childhood and Adolescence Code, and finally, roadmaps are elaborated indicating responsibilities and procedures.

“Fundación Social” also implemented four training workshops for youths, where subjects such as youths owners of rights, the construction of coexistence spaces and of reconciliation scenarios were addressed. Two of these workshops were held in Bogotá with the participation of 30 adolescents; one was held in Cali, also with 30 adolescents and another one was held in Armenia, with the participation of 20 adolescents.

This process has pinpointed two fundamental issues to be addressed by the program:

- Reconciliation and repair for minors, taking into account their condition of victims.
- The need to strengthen teaching practices and impart lectures that promote awareness on rights and responsibilities.

During this quarter, the regional technical assistance that gives continuity to the process initiated in 2005 was implemented jointly with the ICBF for the Assistance Centers: HAT, CAE and Foster Homes of Cali, Cartagena, Medellín, Bogotá and Villavicencio, with the participation of the Technical Team of the Regional Center and National Headquarters of the ICBF. As part of the above mentioned assistance, the basic aspects of assistance and restitution of rights were reviewed, files were revised, a study of the cases was carried out, work was done around the implementation of the psychosocial component, the incorporation of family guidelines and Psychoactive Substances (SPA). Additionally, in the regions where the “Hogar Gestor” was or will be implemented (Cali, Bogotá and Medellín), a coordination workspace was included for the CROJ, Regional Center and the corresponding Support Units.

2.2 FAMILY REUNIFICATION SERVICES

2.2.1 TECHNICAL GUIDELINES

- The training process to public servants on technical guidelines was performed in coordination with the ICBF and the SYNAPSIS consultants. The main activities were:
- A total of two video-conferences, one to present the guidelines and the other to identify the implementation strategies for the Solidarity Model in the different ICBF programs and learn the progress made and the difficulties found in the implementation of the Family Model in the Regional Offices, at institutional and field levels. Among the participants there were 14 representatives from “Grupo Semilla” and from the ICBF National Headquarters.
- Training Seminar-workshop on guidelines, with the participation of 80 public officials from the ICBF and implementing NGOs.
- Second video-conference. First intervention visit and implementation exercise of the Solidarity Model in Medellín.

2.2.2 FAMILY MEETINGS

This quarter, six family encounters were held in Cali, Bogotá and Bucaramanga with the participation of 88 youths and their families, as shown in the table below:

INSTITUTION	ADOLESCENTS		FAMILIES
	BOYS	GIRLS	
CAE Puertas abiertas	21	2	23
Hogares Tutores Bogotá	13	11	24
CAE Nueva Luz	1	4	5
HT Esperanza Luz y Alegría	4	2	6
CAE José	16	2	18
CAE Semillas de Paz	9	3	12
TOTAL	64	24	88

Family encounters by institution.

The family encounters strategy is structured based on the family solidarity model, concept and methodology, which fosters coherence in the family component. To December 31, an accumulated number of 57 family encounters had been held.

Region	# of Youth Encounters During this Quarter	# Accumulated Youth Encounters through December 31st, 2006
Cundinamarca	0	4
Santander	3	18
Bogotá	2	11
Antioquia	0	6
Valle	1	5
Risaralda	0	4
Boyacá	0	3
Quindío	0	2
Bolívar	0	3
TOTAL	6	57

Regarding family reunifications, the ICBF reports 35 for this quarter for a total of 657 since November 1999.

2.3 HEALTH

2.3.1 Preventing the Consumption of Psychoactive Substances

This quarter, training and updating seminars were held on prevention and assistance guidelines for the illegal use of psychoactive substances, in the cities of Bogotá, Cartagena, Villavicencio, Cali, Manizales and Bucaramanga. These workshops were addressed to the local technical teams of the ICBF-implementers (95 participants). In these workshops, case analyses were performed, and intervention, contention, and follow-up strategies were defined for each case. This training benefited 345 youths in the different modalities of the program, as part of the consumption prevention strategy.

The first coordination activities took place to identify and summon the target population and to present the ambulatory model to be implemented with disengaged youths in the cities of Cali and Bucaramanga. In the month of December, closing ceremonies for the ambulatory assistance process of 11 youths in Bogotá were carried out.

2.3.2 Medical Services

2.3.2.1 Ministry of social protection

During this quarter, follow-up was given to the health work tables instated in the two macro regional workshops, and some coordination difficulties were identified, thus it was determined to expedite the elaboration of a procedures manual that serves as a guiding tool for the different actors on the steps that need to be followed when assisting boys and girls disengaged from the IAG. The terms of reference were developed jointly with ICBF and the hiring process can begin January 2007.

2.3.2.2 Profamilia and Medical Services

Profamilia

This quarter, the Profamilia healthcare and sexual and reproductive health services continued to receive support from the Program in all the cities where the Program operates. Among the services rendered this quarter are: 241 consultations with general practitioner and 504 laboratory tests. A time extension to the agreement was approved until February 2006.

Medical Services:

The medical services rendered this quarter through the National Healthcare System were: 12 hospitalizations, 601 consultations with general practitioner, 402 odontological treatments, 137 consultations with specialists and 56 emergency treatments.

Regarding access methods, the ICBF reports the following averages for this quarter: 134 boys and girls with ARS

	(Subsidiary System Administrador) and 280 with letter from the ICBF social worker, using a SISBEN health card.
2.3.2.3 Joint Project, HIV/AIDS Program	2.3.2.4 Psychosocial Assistance
<p>At the end of this quarter, a joint Project was structured with ONUSIDA-IOM's HIV/AIDS Program to assist the children in the program in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual and reproductive health education (Pedagogical elements). • STD and HIV/AIDS prevention. • Sensitizing campaign on HIV and promotion of voluntary testing. <p>The following activities were performed with the ICBF and the HIV Program to establish the procedures to be followed for the development of the Project in Bogotá:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitizing campaign for the institutional teams through meetings, with the participation of 22 staff members. - Workshops with the participation of 82 youths. - Individual counselling and taking of samples for tests from 67 youths. It was established that 100 % of the minors in this group had sexual encounters without protection while they were part of the IAG. 	<p>Progress was made on the elaboration of the teaching model for the implementation of the psychosocial tools in the different modules. This will strengthen the psychosocial assistance provided to youths, with the permanent participation of three staff members from the Bogotá Regional Center and five from CAE Shaddai.</p> <p>The psychosocial team of the Puente Aranda Regional Center performed a general analysis of the processes of the beneficiaries. As part of the psychosocial integration strategy, support was provided to family encounters, workshops were implemented for 24 families, and two teams gave support to two youths and their families that were in need of special assistance, thus contributing to the improvement of family relationships. Likewise, eight group activities with 30 youths and individual interviews with four adolescents were performed.</p>

2.4 EDUCATION

<p>During this quarter permanence within the education system was maintained at 96% (2% increase compared to last quarter) and school desertion was 4%. In Cali, a teacher was hired to alphabetize five youths from the CAE. Likewise, complementary support continued to be provided for transportation and school materials of the disengaged boys and girls in the program, with a total of 370 beneficiaries throughout the program.</p> <p>Regarding the strengthening of public policies, in a joint effort with the National Ministry of Education (MEN) and the ICBF, through the National Coordination Worktable, the "Macro regional encounters on Education and systematization, on lessons learned and experiences" are being implemented in the cities of Cartagena, Medellín and Cali. The purpose of these encounters is to strengthen the educational assistance system on quality and pertinence, as part of the restitution of rights process. To date, 65 people have participated (teachers, public servants and staff from the different houses), and</p>

approximately 12 disengaged youths shared their testimonies. Moreover, three permanent worktables were created for institutional strengthening, continuous evaluation, analysis of specific cases, and elaboration of proposals for improvement and creation of quality, coverage and pertinence indicators.

For the Project "Evaluation of Results of the Educational Assistance Project for disengaged boys, girls and Adolescents", this quarter 728 tests were performed as follows: Badyg tests 18, Language Communicational Skills 25 and Mathematics 8, the UNESCO test on Language and Mathematics 227, Tae 3, Attitude and Democratic Behavior 221 and Machover 226. A total of 231 youths were evaluated in the cities of Armenia Bucaramanga, Cali, Cartagena, Manizales, Medellín, Pereira, Piedecuesta, and Villavicencio, out of which 41.57% is in elementary school, 47.61% is in highschool and 10.82% is being leveled.

Regarding the Labor Competencies project, progress was made on the elaboration of the productive profiles of nine regions; the training workplan for 2007 was structured and the transference process (tool box) to the educational institutions that assist disengaged minors has already been programmed, which will strengthen the training process and will help develop specific proposals for specific competencies in coordination with SENA.

2.5 EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION

During this quarter, a total of 308 youths attended the training courses at SENA. Out of that total, 74 initiated their training through the induction module which seeks to identify the beneficiaries' interests and abilities. New courses were opened in the cities of Bogotá, Bucaramanga and Cali. The remaining 234 youths attended courses in different cities (Bogotá, Cartagena, Villavicencio, Armenia, Pereira, Bucaramanga and Cali) such as computers, enterprising, mechanics, food management, beauty and cosmetology, cooking, livestock and spices, among others.

A pilot exercise was implemented in coordination with SENA in order to identify the natural abilities of the beneficiaries to be able to certify those that master a skill, but do not have a high level of schooling and therefore cannot access SENA's traditional courses. This exercise is being implemented with three youngsters that live in Bogota and their progress will be reported on next quarter.

2.6 INCOME GENERATION

A total of 53 projects such as housing, education, clothing stores, supermarkets, etc. have been created, approved and financed through the alliance with "Tejido Humano" Association.

Through a consultancy to identify and elaborate contractual guidelines to benefit the youngsters that seek to create a new enterprise, the training process for the youths has been completed. Likewise, progress was made on the formulation of statutes for the pre-cooperative that will provide installation services for modular furniture. During the month of January, the youngsters will also go through an internship in CODELAM, a company that will be the main promoter of the youths' pre-cooperative.

The Pueblo Bello – Cesar project, designed to prevent recruitment through income generation activities, has made great progress in market research and in training 24 indigenous youths in the areas of enterprising and business plans.

2.6.1 Coordination with the PRVC

Due to the creation of the High Council for the Social and Economical Reintegration – ACRSE – and to the continuous changes in the approval criteria for the projects that the remaining team from the Ministry of Interior has been implementing, disbursements for the approved projects have taken longer than expected. To date, 77 projects have been disbursed and 12 have been approved and are pending a second disbursement. In a meeting held with the High Counsellor it was agreed that these projects would be given priority in January.

A total of 374 projects have been proposed, but only 153 of these projects have had some level of progress on the formulation stage (Project intention). The remaining projects have been classified according to their degree of progress, as follows: priority 1, those projects that are complete and pending approval; priority 2, those projects that are pending one or two documents; and priority 3, those in the process of obtaining documentation. An analysis of these classifications was requested from ACRSE to prioritize, approve and implement the projects.

Projects	Number of Beneficiaries
Disbursed Projects	77
Pending 2nd Disbursement	12
Presented Project Intentions	153
TOTAL	242
Priority 1	55
Priority 2	47
Priority 3	30
TOTAL	374

Table, National Projects Consolidate

2.7 REFERENCE AND OPPORTUNITY CENTERS

To date, 996 youths have been contacted, and 497 of these are active and benefiting from the services at the Reference and Opportunity Centers. A total of 583 youths were affiliated to mental and physical health services; 503 enrolled in formal education processes, out of which 252 received subsidies; 459 youths enrolled in training courses, and 297 of these received subsidies; 259 youths are currently employed. In addition to this numbers, 221 youths received counselling for the productive projects they presented to ACRSE; 613 youths participated in socio-cultural activities; 363 families of the youths in the program were referred through the CROJs; 394 youths obtained legal documentation; and the total number of institutions that are part of the network at national level is 526, which shows the strengthening and consolidation of the CROJ strategy at national level, currently covering six regions and 20 departments. See annexed Table with indicators by CROJ.

2.8 CULTURE AND RECREATION

In order to contribute to the youths' appropriation and to give new meaning to the Christmas celebrations, 516 Christmas bonuses were given to each of the youths assisted by the program; likewise, Christmas activities such as visits to mangers, holiday lightings and "novenas" were supported through transportation subsidies. Finally, in December 15, a Christmas party was prepared for the children of demobilized persons in Bogotá, with support from the Governor's Office. This celebration had puppets, theater plays, snacks and gifts, and the participation of 700 boys, girls and their parents.

2.9 MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

2.10.1 SIMONI	2.10.2 SAME
<p>During this quarter, adjustments were made to the information on the follow-up questionnaires so that they could reflect the suggestions made by the "Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes" (Christian Association of Youths) –ACJ-, based on their participation in the pilot test; additionally, several tests and adjustments were made to improve the module and accelerate the uploading of information.</p> <p>Consultant Alexandra Torres was hired to continue working on the Program's information system, move forward on the elaboration of indicators for the information system of the prevention component and to design the user's manual of SIMONI and the initial training module for the technical teams of the ICBF and operators.</p>	<p>SAME is working in all the CROJ and beneficiaries are being entered into the system.</p>

A beneficiary's story – CAE Semillas de Paz

"For me, being in the CAE has given me an opportunity to change my life, I don't know how to express what the program has done for me. I can say that I like it because I feel like I'm with family as they have helped me a lot even in the family aspect. Through Family Encounters, I was able to see my family reunited, specially my mother and father together. Even if they don't get back together, for three days we were a family again, and my father also met with my other sisters whom he had not seen for over 25 years. The CAE has also helped me create a life project. I though I was never going to be able to leave that group, but I thank God and everyone at the program for showing me that there are other things to do and that I can work and am useful to my family and society. This is why I want to study and be trained, because I like it. This 20 months in the program have been precious to me, and I now understand that those two years I spent in the mountains were wasted and I almost threw my life away because I did not know how to make things work, specially with my father, but today everything is well and I don't know how give thanks for this, or maybe I should do it as the "doctora" says, by being a better human being. Thanks."

2.10 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

During this reporting period, support continued to be provided through the internships of six Law students in five cities, to follow-up on the youths' documentation and to give support to the social workers in legal transactions. It is worth highlighting that out of the 516 children assisted by the program, 87% has identity documents. The number of children with CODA certificates continues to increase, as well as the number of youths with identity documents and the number of beneficiaries that have resolved their legal situation, which leads us to believe that the strategy of hiring law students as interns to give support to the social workers is a successful one.

Total Youths Dec. 2006	Legal Situation			Administrative Situation		Youths with CODA Certificates	Youths with Identity Documents
	Youths with Open Cases	Youths with Closed Cases	Youths with Cases in Progress	Youths with open Cases	Youths with Cases in Progress		
516	137	279	100	511	5	347	448
100%	26.55%	54.07%	19.38%	99.03%	0.97%	67.25%	86.82%

B) PREVENTION

Main Objective

The Prevention component gives technical and financial support to Government entities, communities, private sector and civil society organizations to strengthen public policies and programs that help develop and protect the life of the boys, girls and adolescents and prevent their recruitment by Illegal Armed Groups (IAG), an effect of the armed conflict that affects the country.

B.1 Legal Framework

B.1.1. Childhood and Adolescence Code

This quarter Law 1098 of 2006 obtained presidential sanction, through which the Childhood and Adolescence Code was approved. The Code seeks the integral protection of all boys and girls under 18 years of age. The Code also empowers departmental, regional and municipal authorities to design, implement and follow-up on public policies, thus the Program needs to adjust its recruitment prevention strategies to fit within the legal framework of the new law.

B.1.2. Formulation of Public Policies on Childhood and Adolescence in Departments and Municipalities

Progress was made on the assessment of public policies on childhood and adolescence, information systems and institutional networks in 23 municipalities of Antioquia. Priority was given to the definition of indicators to be implemented in the information system being designed for that department.

This quarter the legal and administrative roadmap for the formulation of public policies continued to be developed in the Department of Meta (29 municipalities). The roadmap is in accordance with the departmental development plan and with the new Childhood and Adolescence Code, emphasizing on recruitment prevention of children by IAG.

During the reporting period, technical assistance was provided to territorial entities in the Department of Valle (42 municipalities) on the principles and obligations stated in the new Code and their incorporation in the departmental and municipal development plans. The implementation of the legal and administrative roadmap designed by the program for the elaboration of recruitment prevention policies is in progress, as members of the “Consejos de Política Social” –COMPOS- (Social Policy Councils) are being trained on said roadmap, for they are in charge of promoting and guaranteeing the rights of children, preventing violations or threats to said rights and reestablishing them when they have been violated.

Dissemination of the Legal Framework (Public Employees)				
	Technical Processes	Departments	No.of Participating Public Servants	Institutions
Attorney General's Office	Contribute to recruitment prevention through the elaboration of integral and interinstitutional public policies with a human rights focus	Guajira, César, Magdalena, Atlántico, Bolívar, Sucre and Córdoba	53	Public Ministry Judicial Wing Government Entities
		Valle del Cauca, Cauca and Nariño	34	
National Ombudsman	Training and sensitizing public servants, leaders and members of indigenous organizations on childhood and adolescence rights, the common rights of the indigenous populations, with an emphasis on recruitment prevention.	Santander and Norte de Santander	65	Public Ministry Judicial Wing Government Entities Indigenous Representatives

This quarter, the USAID/OIM Program has given technical assistance on legal and administrative actions to a total of 263 public servants in 16 departments.

B.1.1. National Ombudsman

During this quarter, the nine workshops programmed for 2006 were completed, with the participation of 570 public servants from 25 departments of the country. As a complement to the training process, updates were given on the application of the new procedures based on the new regulations.

The need to form alliances and to get support from the Governors' Offices and Mayors' Offices was identified, in order to effectively implement administrative and judicial processes, as well as preventive actions.

B.1.2. Attorney General's Office (AGO)

The USAID/OIM Program has continued to financing and providing technical assistants to the AGO for the elaboration of conceptual and practical tools addressed to public servants in two lines of action: a. Administrative and judicial actions to complete the legal processes of boys and girls disengaged from the armed conflict; b. Supervision and control actions to ensure the fulfillment of public policies on childhood. A CD, a didactic consultation chart and a Virtual Classroom are being developed as teaching instruments for all public servants to will allow them to receive updated information on the training received.

A beneficiary's story – A Dance Group

Andrés is a young man that graduated from high school when he was 17. He lived in a precarious economical situation and had no chance of getting a university degree. Moreover, he became a father very early in his life and was exposed to risky situations such as gangs and drug consumption and dealing.

As a father, he had to provide for the family and was desperate because he could not get any money. This is why he accepted to be paid to safe keep armament for an illegal armed group. However, the relationship with the IAG became closer and he was considering the possibility of joining the group, for he thought it was the only way out of his situation. He talked to a friend and he advised him to join the IAG and was interested in joining himself. He was confused for several days and did not know what road to take, until another friend invited him to become part of a dance group. In the youth group, he met many people and these people offered cultural activities and local contacts to access employment.

The armed group continued pressuring him to join, and in spite of the dangerous threats to his family, he had the courage to say NO, with the support of the youth group. He learned he had other options and became part of the different projects that seek recruitment prevention.

Andres continues taking training courses and is now one of the coordinators of this group, which gives him a decent income and a promising future for him and his family.

B.3 Recruitment Prevention

B.3 .1 Youth initiatives and Participation

Prevention Strategy Coverage		
Region	No. Initiatives	Beneficiaries
Antioquia	6	314
Cundinamarca	1	70
Bolívar	25	679
Santander	18	1160
Sucre	22	602
Putumayo	7	360
Total	79	3185

During this quarter, technical assistance and financial support was provided to 79 initiatives in six departments. The Vulnerability, Risk and Opportunity Maps methodology continued to be applied in East Antioquia with the participation of 29 children (10 girls and 19 boys) and 31 youths (25 girls and six boys), 35 staff members of institutions of the municipality of Marinilla. The main risk factors identified were: influence of armed actors on the daily life of the population, precarious economical situation, family disintegration, lack of employment opportunities, lack of local participation scenarios. The project will continue supporting the identification process and initiatives to properly address the identified factors.

Initiatives Supported by Local Projects		
Line	No. Initiatives	Beneficiaries
Education	37	1415
Culture	24	939
Recreation and Sports	7	360
Organization and Participation	2	352
Productive	9	119
Total	79	3185

The initiatives have become alternatives and scenarios different from those offered by the IAG; the lines that have had more demand are education and culture, where the activities related to the strengthening of the “Institutos Técnicos Agropecuarios” – ITA – (Technical Agricultural Institutes) are noteworthy for they assist population in conflict areas. This quarter, the National Encounter was held in the Montes de María Region (Corozal) with the participation of 16 institutions from eight departments. In this encounter, experiences were exchanged and the institutional roadmaps to receive institutional support and cooperation from government entities were established.

Regarding culture, cultural expressions foster the development of social skills and are able to evoke, contain and promote values that differ from those of armed confrontations. In order to make sure these initiatives become lasting alternatives, it is necessary to establish agreements with local governments to guarantee permanent technical and financial support.

B.3.2. Sensitizing Campaigns

This quarter, the 21 episodes of the television series “Revelados” were retransmitted. The contents of the programs, as well as production and media coverage were evaluated. Through this evaluation, it was concluded that television allows for greater dissemination of recruitment prevention issues, and was well accepted by young audiences. The construction of strategic alliances that allow the permanence of television series like “Revelados” is a challenge for the USAID/IOM Program, for they can broadcast the problems associated to recruitment and recruitment prevention as a strategy to promote social and institutional participation.

B.3.3. Strengthening Government Institutions and Civil Organizations

Technical and financial assistance was provided to the Attorney General’s Office, the National Ombudsman, the ICBF, the Governors’ Offices of Antioquia, Meta and Valle del Cauca, as stipulated in the cooperation agreements with said entities. The definition of responsibilities that derive from the new Childhood and Adolescence Code is one of the objectives of the accompaniment provided to the above mentioned entities for the effective implementation of public policies on recruitment prevention.

The organizations in charge of the initiatives supported by the program (36 in 3 departments and 8 municipalities) have received technical and financial assistance for the strengthening of areas such as administration, management, methodology and technical and conceptual development for the implementation of initiatives in the fields of education, income generation, culture, recreation, sports, organization and youth participation.

B.3.4. Monitoring and Follow-up

A consultancy has begun for the creation of geographic indicators for the proper monitoring of context variables and risk factors, which will allow government entities to identify and implement pertinent recruitment prevention actions.

B.4 Special Support to Indigenous and Afro-Colombian Communities

Main Objective

Support Government and community entities and ethnic group organizations to promote social organization, the rights of the ethnic communities, territorial protection, cultural identity and to improve the standards of living, that contribute to protect the rights of children and adolescents, to decrease their vulnerability to recruitment and to support the return and reinsertion of indigenous and Afro-descendant boys, girls and adolescents disengaged from illegal armed groups.

B.4.1. Common Rights and Legal Roadmap

Through workshops implemented by the National Ombudsman 56 members of indigenous organizations were trained on the legal roadmap for indigenous boys and girls that disengage from IAG, on common rights and on recruitment prevention actions. Likewise, public servants were sensitized so that legal and administrative decisions involving indigenous youths are made taking into account the rights of the indigenous communities.

B.4.2. Strengthening organizations and cultures by exercising the self-determination principle

Technical assistance was provided for the implementation of initiatives of the youth program of the “Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca” –CRIC- (Regional Indigenous Council) oriented to strengthen organization for the formulation of life projects that prevent the recruitment of boys, girls and adolescents; the name of the project is “Cultivating Future”.

The main strategy of the program is the creation of spaces for communication with the communities, to formulate life projects that strengthen organizational capacities, as well as the implementation of projects that make youth protection viable within their communities.

B.4.3. Support to Social Investment Initiatives with emphasis on cultural respect and revitalization

Ethnic Groups Coverage				
Region	No. of Initiatives		Beneficiaries	
	Indigenous Communities	Afro-descendant Communities	Indigenous	Afro
Cauca	X		700	
Valle		X		150
Sucre	X		54	
Total			904	

During this quarter, various initiatives with ethnic groups were supported in three departments: Cauca, Valle and Sucre, with 904 beneficiaries, out of which 54 new beneficiaries belong to the Zenu ethnic group in Sucre. The program began actions to expand geographical coverage in order to reach ethnic groups and territories affected by the armed conflict. Projects are being formulated in Nariño, with the Pastos community and in Meta, with the Sikuaní.

Social Investment Initiatives			
Line	No.of Initiatives	Beneficiaries	
		Indigenous	Afro
Ethno education	8	560	
Education	3	140	150
Culture	1	54	
Total	12	754	150

Out of the 12 initiatives supported by the program, 66% (8) are part of the “strengthening ethno education” model, where agricultural and cultural practices of the communities are preserved, and youth participation and organization are promoted. In the four remaining projects, the quality of vocational and integral instruction in schools is improved, and a project for the recuperation of traditions, ways and customs of the indigenous populations is implemented.

ACCUMULATED RESULTS March 2001 through August 2006				
Indicators	Accumulated 2001 - 2005	Current Period	Accumulated During Phase III	Observations (How these results were obtained)
Outcome Indicators: Result 1- 2:				
1,500 public servants trained on administrative and legal procedures.	2,104	263	827	- Technical training to public servants.
Three policy issues were addressed and implementation mechanisms are in place	The issue of child recruitment included into the: - Public agenda - 10-Year Action Plan for Children - New Statutory Law on Children - Social and Youth Policy Councils in 42 municipalities in 13 departments	- Legal and administrative roadmaps. - Situation analysis on childhood - Two departments formulating policies, Meta and Valle	3 Departments: Antioquia, Meta and Valle	- Technical assistance through sensitizing workshops, formulation of departmental laws and municipal agreements.
Outcome Indicators: Result 3:				
9,000 children and 2,500 adults (27 municipalities in nine departments) participating in prevention activities (Vulnerability, Risk and Opportunity Maps – MVRO)	8,942 children 394 adults 42 municipalities 10 departments	839 youths 130 adults 1 Municipality 1 Department Cundinamarca	3.848 youths 314 adults 19 municipalities 6 Departments	- Technical and financial assistance to articulation initiatives to social services and local institutions.
500 community leaders trained	1,800	93	425 youths	- Training and leadership workshops for youth organizations in the Montes de María region.
2,000 local public servants trained	2,078	150	650 Civil society members	- Assistance to organizations in charge of the initiatives.
Awareness campaign targeting 9,000,000 people	9,368,192 people	- Retransmission of the 21 episodes of the television series "Revelados"	- Retransmission of the 21 episodes and evaluation of the production of the series.	- Coordination and formulation of strategic agreements.
Outcome Indicators: Result 4:				
250 boys and girls from indigenous and Afro – Colombian communities assisted in the last three years.	209	0	45 indigenous children demobilized from illegal armed groups were assisted.	Follow-up to projects with indigenous councils and the CRIC in el Cauca.
2,500 indigenous and Afro–Colombian children and 1,400 adults participating in prevention activities.	4,349 indigenous and Afro–Colombian children 1,550 adults	56 indigenous youths <i>0 Adultos</i>	1.029 Youths 254 Adults	- Technical and financial support for the implementation of life projects and the access to social services.
170 indigenous leaders trained.	276 indigenous leaders trained	56	305 indigenous leaders.	Training workshops on common rights.

V. LESSONS LEARNED (4P, 6L)

Coordination among the Regional Centers, the CROJ and the Support Units guarantees efficiency and clear responsibility lines in the assistance and support procedures regarding family reunification or irregular exit from the program, which are now being referred to by the support units as “self-reintegration”.

The youth initiatives oriented to promote recruitment prevention activities are more effective when they are contextualized to the local needs and address the needs of the youths. The strengthening of said initiatives depends directly on interinstitutional articulation and support at local level and on whether or not they receive social services and financial support.

VI. PRIORITIES FOR THE COMING TERM (4P.6L)

Disseminate the family assistance guidelines and complete the training of ICBF public servants and operators on the application of said guidelines

Strengthen the technical teams’ ability to deal with cases of HIV positive boys, girls and adolescents and develop sensitizing and training strategies on HIV/AIDS.

Structure the analysis protocols to work with staff members on decision making applying psychosocial criteria which will provide integral understanding and guidance to solve the situations that affect boys, girls and adolescents.

Initiate the monitoring, evaluation and follow-up phase of the departmental and municipal plans of the Haz Paz policy. Support the elaboration of four new plans and the Haz Paz Interinstitutional Operational Plan with all the entities involved in Family Coexistence initiative in the Country.

Increase the participation of youths, families and communities in the formulation and implementation of 15 municipal plans and three departmental recruitment prevention plans.

Systematize armed conflict progress indicators to determine recruitment risks for boys, girls and adolescents, and establish the route for prevention activities that protect their lives and create favorable conditions to exercise their rights, in three departments (Bolívar, Santander and Sucre), and eight (8) municipalities, in accordance with the new Childhood and Adolescence Code (Law 1098 of 2006)

A beneficiary's story

I entered the guerrilla when I was ten, because I liked it and my father was there. Training was hard and I didn't like it when they killed innocent people. When I became 12, it was time for my first battles.

It was a day in February; I was shaking all over because I had never fought before. That day I thought that it was best to wait for the moment to come; four of my friends died in battle, I was full of anger, I could not think of anything else but to shoot like crazy. We then retreated to the camp. Many years went by like this, I knew nothing about my family. My family thought I was dead.

I then spoke to my commander, who was also my father, and I was authorized a few months to visit my family. That's how my life went by, I didn't think about the people, I only thought about what I had to do, which was to follow the rules. One could not think about family, anyway, because then you got distracted and you could feel like leaving or escaping to your family.

Then the army arrived. Many people left because they worked with us. The army took over the town and I was in charge of doing intelligence work, to inform what the army was doing and where they were. Then some of my friends surrendered and we were captured. I was tied for many days and they asked me things like where the guerrilla was and I responded "If you want to know about them, go and look for them"; then I was transferred to a town called San Vicente and there I was handed over to family welfare.

I was very rude. I was transferred to Bogotá, and imprisoned and after a few months I was sent to the CAE. There, in time, I learned that the best life is not with a weapon, but with freedom and getting to really know yourself.

There I learned that family is the best gift God has given us. Now I have a good place where I feel safe. They have given me support here, as well as education and training. I didn't think I could have the freedom I have now. I am proud to have this opportunity. What I plan to do for my future is to have my own beauty parlor and to study and train for it. Life is not about having a weapon, but about enjoying freedom and getting to know many people and studying to have a career. I want to get my family back and show them what I am learning, and that wherever life takes you there are rules to follow. I also want to have a good home where my children don't go through what I went through, and their life can be easier; that they have the life I never had and I invite the people doing the process to take advantage of the opportunity life is giving us.

VII. CONSTRAINS AND ACTIONS TAKEN

The change in the project approval policies and disbursements by ACRSE has difficulted and restricted the activities of the CROJ regarding youth initiatives. Moreover, this generates lack of credibility in suppliers from different businesses, which in turn generates delays and setbacks in the beneficiaries' projects. A meeting with the High Council was held to request clarity and stability in the processes.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

As per the work plan, the Colombian government has continued to be strengthened, the ICBF in particular, to structure and improve the assistance provided to boys and girls disengaged from the IAG. Also, higher participation from SNBF institutions has been achieved; during 2006, interinstitutional work tables such as SENA, Education, Healthcare and Social Insertion were established and have fostered the integral assistance of the program's beneficiaries. There is still work to be done in components such as culture and recreation and sports and in the consolidation of the process with the Ministry of Protection regarding the healthcare component.

On prevention, the program has made progress on two strategic lines: design and implementation of youth initiatives for population at risk, and the formulation of departmental and municipal policies with emphasis on recruitment prevention.

IX. ANNEXES