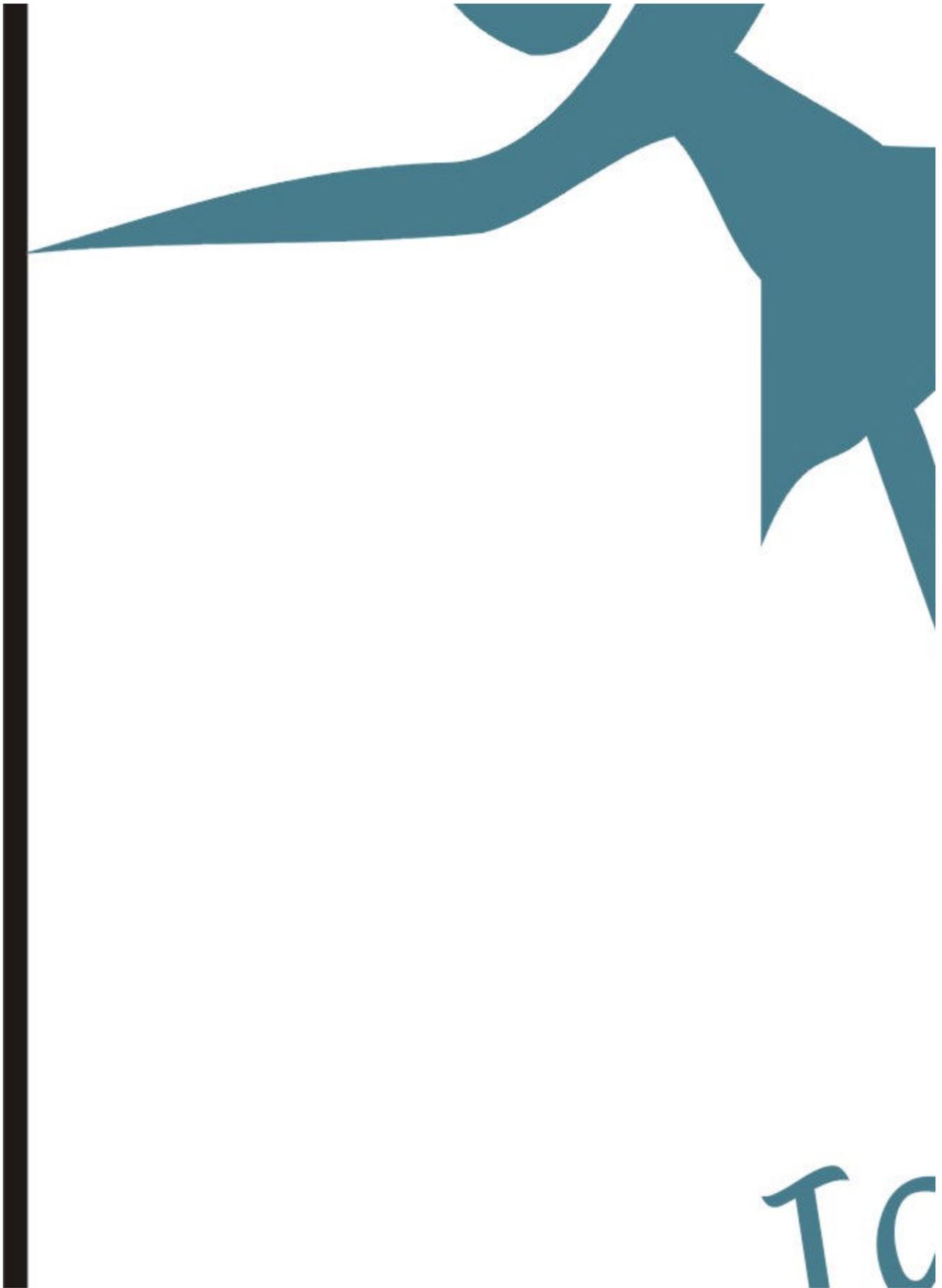
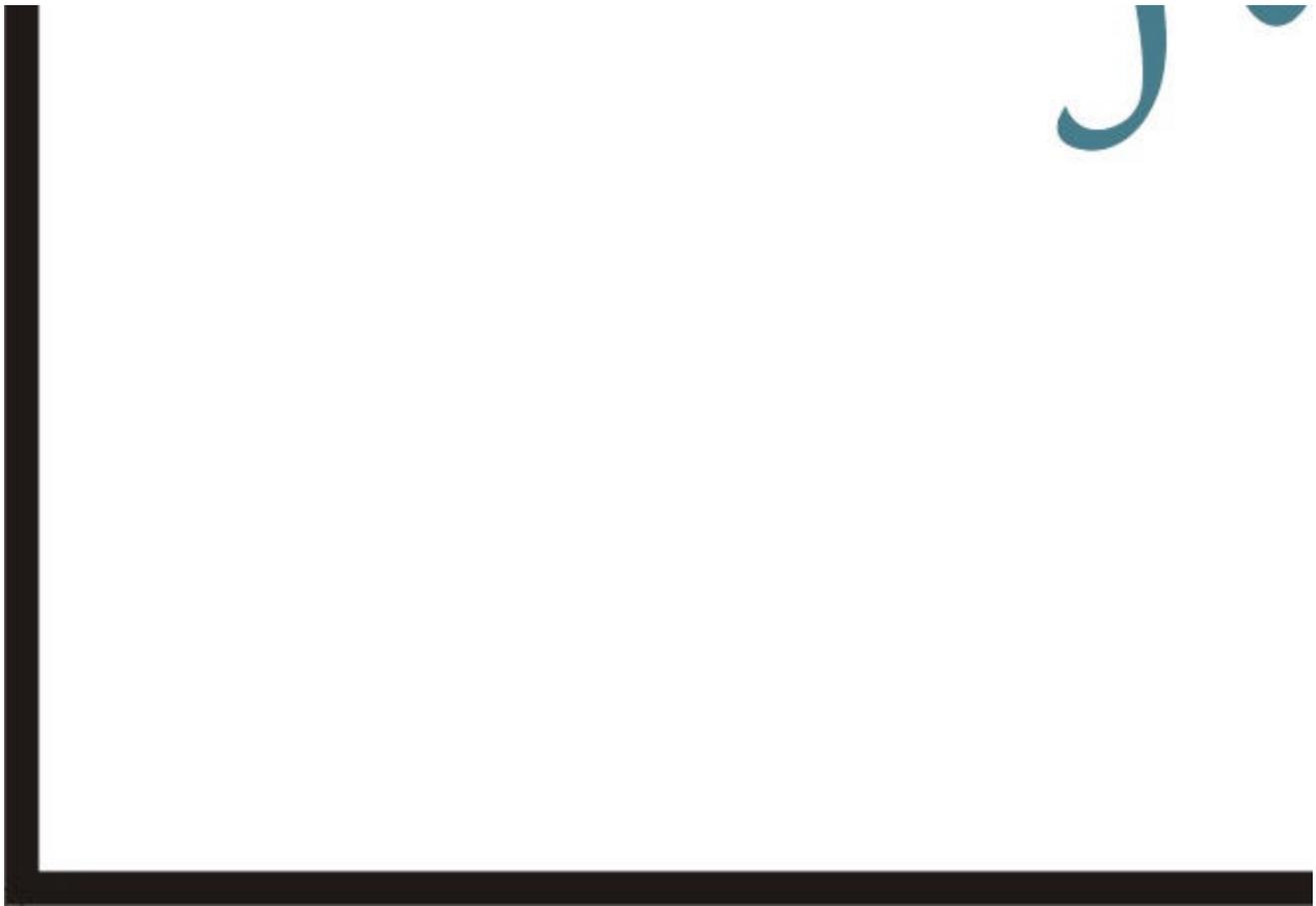




# Niños, Niñas y Jóvenes del Conflicto Armado







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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Framed within the IOM's mandate of Trafficking In Human Beings for Military Purposes, the highlights of the Support Program for Ex-Combatant Children, can be summarized as follows:

This quarter (January – March 2003) was characterized by a situation of general uncertainty. The ICBF suffer an administrative reform that implied the cancellation of at least 650 contracts and the restructuring of all the programs, including the Ex Combatant children assistance program, now directed by the Deputy Directorate of Direct Interventions. Uncertainty with the implementing NGO's was due to the new government contracting process that has been slow and only for short periods of time. A non-cost extension was approved to the Program until June 13. It is pending the approval of new funds to extend the Program for two more years. This state of affairs affected the Program ability to assist 132 youths who demobilized during this quarter. Only 84 entered the Program and the remaining 48 are on the queue. As to March 31' 2003 the Support Program for Ex Combatant Children has assisted 733 youths (529 male and 204 female).

OIM and ICBF, designed a short term action plan to cover those quotas that the ICBF has not been able to make available. Three Specialized Attention Centers were opened in Medellín, Bucaramanga and Bogotá (60 allowance/child/month). Additionally, a National Workshop was carried out, coordinated also by IOM and ICBF. 75 people attended, including ICBF members, implementing NGO's, and assisted youngsters coming from towns where the program is implemented. Also, public officials from de Human Rights Ombudsman Office, Save The Children United Kingdom (SCUK) and IOM. During the Workshop the program technical guidelines were analyzed and evaluated. Coordination strategies were established and functions and responsibilities were cleared up.

By the end of the reporting quarter, 352 children remained on two Transit Homes (HAT), nine Specialized Attention Centers, seven Half Way Houses (CJ) and other Protection Institutions. These children are receiving protection services such as: lodging, feeding, physical, psychological, sexual and reproductive health and wardrobe. Additionally, 348 scholarships have been assigned: 207 for formal education (36 during this quarter) and 141 for vocational courses (63 were granted this quarter)

Youngsters on family reinsertion processes, have been supported with scholarships and income generation projects. During the reporting quarter, 14 youths returned to their homes, and 18 family encounters were carried out at the Specialized Centers, for a total of 116 family encounters.

Two important projects concluded during the reporting quarter: I) The Institutional Strengthening project implemented by SCUK. Through this, technical teams of the implementing NGOs were trained. Also, workshops among receptor communities were carried out to disseminate ex combatant children rights and legal standing; and ii) Reading and Communication Promotion, implemented by CEREALC, to encourage reading and communication. During its development, it was identified the relevance of the art as a means to express themselves and reconcile with the society in a non violent way. Stands out the fact that the assisted youngsters come from antagonist armed groups, but no confrontations have risen among them.

One of the challenges the Program faced during the last and previous quarter is the increase of desertion cases. There were 59 during this quarter. There were also a couple of cases associated to some youths' criminal behavior. Some of them were handed over to the legal authorities and some were dismissed from the Program. The assisted youngsters profile changed with the entrance of a bigger number of youth coming from the urban militias and the Self Defense Groups (AUC). ICBF, IOM and the implementing NGO's have worked together to provide a closer psychosocial attention to prevent this cases to be recurrent.

Concerning to the “Legal Route”, 1.059 judges, family defenders and public ministry officers from all over the country have been trained. A second phase of the project to update the “Legal Route” and to continue training legal authorities in charge of the ex combatant children legal protection was approved and will be implemented by the Human Rights Ombudsman Office.

The improvements reached on the programs with descending indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities are reflected in the achieved coverings: 133 youths participating on productive projects (blackberry crops, raising of cows, pigs and hens, row sugar (*panefa*) production, a convenient store and cultural groups). These youngsters are now making a living and helping their families in the departments of Cauca and Chocó. Also, in Cauca, 550 youths have been beneficiaries of the Education, Culture and Human Rights Project. Likewise, in Chocó 115 youths have participated in Human Rights, Humanitarian International Law and Indigenous Legislation workshops, while 75 are beneficiaries of the construction of 2 *tambo*-schools (typical construction).

An assessment of the Program was started by Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs. The team was asked to conduct a process evaluation on the following: 1) IOM’s contribution to the strengthening of the ICBF Support Program for Ex-combatant Children; 2) IOM’s contribution to an increased understanding of the legal process and rights of former child soldiers; 3) IOM’s prevention activities and programs for indigenous youth; and 4) The contingency plan for future mass demobilizations of child soldiers. The Team was also asked to provide recommendations on developing an effective tracking system to follow up on children after they leave the ICBF program and to provide recommendations on the social reinsertion strategy for former child soldiers. In conducting the evaluation, the SIPA Team performed two field visits during which Team members conducted interviews with ex-combatant children residing in centers, participating in IOM’s prevention activities, and participating in indigenous prevention and reintegration programs. Several interviews were also conducted with IOM and USAID staff, attention centers staff, government officials, and other stakeholders in the program. Preliminary findings presented by the team in late March stated: **“the general conclusion was that USAID-IOM Program for ex-combatant youth is creative, multi-faceted and provide a high degree of protection and assistance to children affected by the atrocities of war”**. A final assessment report will be delivered in early May.

During this quarter the Support Program for Ex Combatant Children completed two years. 866 children have been assisted, 733 of which have been beneficiaries of the ICBF-IOM Program and 133 (88 in Cauca and 45 in Chocó) belong to ethnic minorities (Afro-Colombian and indigenous). However, it is worth mentioning that during this quarter, the number of demobilized children from the armed groups decreased by 35% in relation to the previous quarter. The explanation of this fact, is that the only children registered are those who entered the program and during this quarter it became evident the deficit of places to receive more children at the existing centers. 48 are on the queue to enter the Program.

## II. CONTEXT

### NOTES ON THE CONFLICT

#### New Tendencies

The internal conflict and the use of urban terror tactics characterized the first quartely of 2003. Three major attacks were carried out just between the 7th of February and the 6<sup>th</sup> of March. These took place in a fashionable Bogotá Club on a Friday night; in a low class neighborhood located near the airport in Neiva; and in a highly frequented mall in Cucuta<sup>1</sup>, respectively. Preliminary investigations determined that the FARC were responsible for the first two, and the ELN for the third. Less damaging explosive devises were used in smaller cities around the country.

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<sup>1</sup> The attack in Bogotá occurred on February 7; the one in Neiva on February 14; and the one in Cucuta on March 6 .

These events lead the government to tighten securing by increasing the presence of the army and the police in the city, and by increasing intelligence activities. The government is also appealing to the international community to obtain solidarity from other countries and their condemnation of the perpetrators of these acts. This diplomatic offensive of the government has achieved important results such as a number of declarations and resolutions that condemn terrorism and the organizations that have carried out terrorist act in Colombia. Moreover, a number of nations, including a few neighbors of Colombia have promised greater collaboration and cooperation in the fight against terror, and have expressed the need to enforce the existing norms against terrorism.

Among the responses of the international community are: the Panamá declaration,<sup>2</sup> the resolution of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS)<sup>3</sup>, that of the Security Council of the United Nations<sup>4</sup>, and a joint declaration of the Ministers of Defense and Exterior Affairs of the Andean Countries.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the Canadian Government announced its decision to include the Colombian illegal groups (FARC, ELN, AUC) in its list of terrorist groups.

At the same time as the attacks were testing the strength of the Colombian people, another piece of news shook life in Colombia. An American aircraft, which apparently was on an intelligence mission, had engine problems and realized an emergency landing in the woods of Caquetá<sup>6</sup>, a FARC stronghold. The guerrillas immediately killed two agents -a member of the Colombian security forces and an American- and are still holding as hostages the other three individuals on board. In a communiqué released about one week after the incident, the guerrillas requested the suspension of the search and rescue operations in the area arguing that these endangered the lives of the prisoners, and announced that their liberation would only occur when and if an exchange of captured guerrillas for Colombian and American prisoner was agreed upon in a demilitarized area<sup>7</sup>.

Though the FARC is not capable of confronting the government in a position war, it has acquired enough capacity to encircle important cities. Overall, the actions of the Farc are typical of guerrilla warfare, which avoids direct confrontation with the enemy and the concentration of its forces until what they call the “final phase of the war”. Generally, guerrillas stray away from suffering any kind of defeats, and choose tactical options that are economic in terms of resource expenditure, but powerful in terms of effect. Thus, the recently employed urban warfare tactics seem to aim at dispersing the presence of the government security forces between the countryside and the city so as to dilute their presence everywhere. Moreover, this tactic seems to aim at debilitating the image of the government and its security policy so as to improve

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<sup>2</sup> The presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panamá, and the Minister of State signed the Panama Declaration on February 11. In this declaration they condemn the Bogotá attack and express the need that the international community subscribe to and uphold the norms against terrorism.

<sup>3</sup> Resolution 837 of February 12, 2003 “condemns terror acts in Colombia”. It underlines that attack on the civilian population cannot be justified under any circumstances. It repudiates terrorism and supports the international community’s efforts against terrorism in Colombia -including capturing those responsible for these actions. The resolution also supports the war against terror of the Colombian government.

<sup>4</sup> Resolution 1465 of February 13, 2003, which was approved by the 4706th session of the Security Advisory Board condemns the events in Bogota and instigates all of the Countries to collaborate with the Colombian authorities. Generally, it expresses a strong interest in fighting against all the forms of terrorism.

<sup>5</sup> The declaration “Compromise for the strengthening and coordination in the fight against terrorism and the coordination of the fight against drugs and the crimes to it connected”, of March 12 2003 (in Bogota), was subscribed by the Ministers of the Exterior of Colombia, Perú, Bolivia, Venezuela; the Defense Ministers of Colombia, Peru y Ecuador, the Viceministers of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador y Panamá, and the Director of the Police of Panamá, along with representatives of the Minister of Defense of Bolivia and Brasil, and the delegations of the United Nations and the European Union.

<sup>6</sup> On the 13 of February in the region of Para, 60 Kilometers from Florencia, department of Caquetá.

<sup>7</sup> In a communiqué of the Estado Mayor Central of the FARC-EP of February 24 of 2003. In another communiqué, dated March 3 this guerrilla organization made clear that they are not interested in negotiating the release of the “prisoners of war” with the United States, but that they will negotiate their release as part of a prisoner exchange with the Colombian government.

their position at a future bargaining table be it for peace negotiations, be it for a humanitarian agreement in regards to a prisoner exchange.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Government Reply**

The government continues to put in place the components of its national security policy, ("policies for a democratic security" in Spanish). During this first quartely of 2003, the army of "peasant soldiers" known as "soldados campesinos"<sup>9</sup> begun to take shape. In March the army trained around 6,000 peasants trained to provide security to their hometowns. This initiative has so far encompassed 142 municipalities, 133 of which had no government presence.<sup>10</sup> The government plans to train another 11,000 peasants in 28 departments by the end of the year.

The outcome of the "Rehabilitation and Consolidation Areas" which were created under the auspices of the state of siege in September of 2002, is still unclear<sup>11</sup>. The Minister of Defense, Marta Lucía Ramírez sustains that the Arauca policy (perhaps the most important Rehabilitation and Consolidation area) is the pilot project for the government war plan against the illegal groups, corruption, and narcotrafficking.

She also stated that a balance sheet of the Rehabilitation Areas cannot be produced right away, and that it needs to be written over time as many of the initiatives put in place are long term. "We are not losing the war there-she says- rather, we are recuperating the territory through a multi-faceted plan: increase security, cut the financial supply of the illegal groups, destroy their ties with the political leaders and with locals, and capture the leaders of these groups."<sup>12</sup>

The locations of the "Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Areas" were determined by a series of factors: 1) the length of time the armed actors have been present in the area, and thus their relationship with the local people; 2) related, the level of the presence of the state; 3) the intensity of the conflict in the area; 4) the presence of resources that the government is interested in or is interested in its opponents not having access to. Though the outcome of the "Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Areas is uncertain, it is doubtless that these have exacerbated the fighting for territorial control as illegal groups present in these areas may want to keep their domain over strategic and profitable territories firm, or may want to sabotage the initiative of the Uribe government, or both.

Part of the confusion over the success of the "Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Areas" is due to the lack of reliable and unbiased information about what is happening there. A number of journalist have had to abandon these areas for security reasons while others have been intimidated into not talking about the situation. According to some, the intensity of the conflict, including selective murders<sup>13</sup> and attacks on the infrastructure<sup>14</sup>, has increased<sup>15</sup>, and the population complains of government abuse.<sup>16</sup>

The Human Rights Office of the United Nations traveled to Arauca in January. They observed a complex security situation: forced disappearances and selective homicides have increased, car-bombs are used to carry out attacks, death threats are being made to public officials, human rights advocates, and journalists.

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<sup>8</sup> El Espectador, "The FARC new war: what's behind the terrorist offensive of the guerrilla?" February 16, 2003, 2-3A.

<sup>9</sup> This program is for young peasants, who, after a period of training, patrol the area surrounding their hometowns. The objective of the program is to recover territorial control through a greater presence of security forces that are loyal to the government, and the collaboration of the local community.

<sup>10</sup> "The ABC of the peasant soldiers". Web page of the Colombian Ministry of Defense.

<sup>11</sup> These are areas where the presence of the state has increased considerably (e.g., institution, security force), and where the state of siege allows to limit certain democratic rights.

<sup>12</sup> El Tiempo, "Arauca, war lab", February 2 2003, 1-12.

<sup>13</sup> The ELN also kidnapped two NorthAmerican journalists of the Los Angeles Times for 11 days.

<sup>14</sup> El Tiempo, "Arauca, is dark and under a state of siege", February 2003, 1-5.

<sup>15</sup> El Tiempo, March 9, 10 y 11 de 2003. The newspaper offered reports of the three rehabilitation and consolidation areas, Arauca, Sucre y Bolívar.

<sup>16</sup> The decree 2002 of 2002, which establishes the Rehabilitation and Consolidation areas and the rules for the re-establishment of public order, gives law enforcement the authority to arrest without judge authorization, intercept telephone conversations, searches without warrants, and control the movement of the population.

<sup>16</sup> Office of the Commissioner of the United Nations for population control.

They recommend the adoption of an integral plan for Arauca that includes the participation of all of the social sectors, and the consideration of regional talks between the Government, the Church, civil society, and the illegal groups.<sup>17</sup> However, the government does not think that regional dialogues are a viable conflict resolution option.

The ELN carried out a roadblock in eastern Antioquia (in the municipalities of San Luis, Granada, Cocorná, San Francisco y San Carlos)<sup>18</sup> that lasted twenty days and was suspended apparently due to insistent requests of locals.<sup>19</sup>

The Ministry of Defense provides data that differs substantially from that presented above. According to government information, the level of violence at the National Level has decreased: homicides have dropped by 18% and massacres by 83%, while kidnappings and extortions have dropped by 83% and 50% respectively<sup>20</sup>, which is a big hit for the illegal groups. The Ministry of defense also reported a decrease in attacks against the energy infrastructure, which dropped by 53% and to populations, which dropped by 82%.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the number of deserters has increased by 40% during this trimester, according to the same source.<sup>22</sup>

### **Illegal Crops**

According to both the United Nations and the Drug Czar Office, the number of hectares with illicit crops diminished in 2002 for the first time in 10 years. However, according to the first source, drug cultivations dropped by 30%<sup>23</sup>, while according to the second, by 15%.<sup>24</sup>

The two sources coincide on the estimation that the most significant reduction took place in the Departments of Putumayo and Caquetá, and on a minor scale in the Departments of Bolívar, Cauca y Vichada. However, the cultivation in Guaviare and Nariño, has increased, doubling in Nariño. The biggest producers today are (in descending order): Guaviare, Nariño, Putumayo, Meta, Caquetá and Norte de Santander. These produce around 80% of Colombian coca.

The shift in coca production will imply more fumigation, the intensification of fighting in new areas, and greater displacement and need for humanitarian assistance.

### **Talks and Negotiations**

Progress on talks and negotiations with different armed groups is unequal. There have been no concrete steps forward in the talks with the ELN despite the mediation of "friendly nations" and Civil Society's Mediating Commission. In fact, this group declared it outright impossible to solve differences with the Uribe Administration after just a few meetings. The ELN complained that the Administration refused to give political stance to the guerrillas while it is willing to pardon the paramilitary forces, and is receptive to the possibility that they be legalized as a political force.<sup>25</sup>

The FARC are more interested in making progress on the negotiation of an exchange of captured guerrillas for prisoners of war, than in a peace process. In fact, in a communiqué emitted in February<sup>26</sup>,

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<sup>17</sup> Colombia Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights. Observatory mission to Arauca, February 2, 2003..

<sup>18</sup> The ELN had declared a road block in the same area at the beginning of January, but this only encompassed the municipalities of Cocorná, Granada and San Luis.

<sup>19</sup> El Tiempo, "Road Block in eastern Antioquia ends", March 29 de 2003, 2,8.

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Defense (web page), 31 March 2003.

<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Defense (web page), 1 April 2003

<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Defense (web page), 13 April 2003.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime, "Colombia, Coca Survey for 2002: Preliminary Report" March, 2003.

<sup>24</sup> El Tiempo, "Cultivations dropped by 15%", Febrero 28, 2003, 1,18.

<sup>25</sup> El Espectador, "Uribe means war", March 16 2003,. 6 A.

<sup>26</sup> Communiqué of the Estado Mayor Central of the FARC. February 8, 2003.

they state that they do not recognize the government commission that was created to advance in the negotiations, and in later communiqués<sup>27</sup> they reiterate the same position requesting that an official negotiating team be nominated and be given the capacity to negotiate. The FARC also requests that negotiations occur in a demilitarized zone inside of Colombia.

Differently from the process with the FARC and the ELN, where there have been no breakthroughs and none are in sight, the talks with the paramilitary are making some headway. Though important sectors of the paramilitary have chosen not to participate<sup>28</sup>, leaders of 34 groups have signed a press release (as did the government) stating their interest in the advancement of the negotiations<sup>29</sup>. The fact that such a high number of paramilitary groups have shown interests in negotiating contradicts allegations that Carlos Castaño, the leader of the AUC is alone in the peace process.<sup>30</sup>

However, the process is not without obstacles and challenges. First, there is the fact that the paramilitary forces are formed of largely independent groups that are dispersed in different areas of the vast Colombian territory, posing logistical challenges for demobilization. Second, these groups have different interests and priorities. Third, it is unclear at this point whether the groups are cohesive and thus whether the leaders have the authority to represent the will of important and/or numerous members of their groups. Fourth, the challenges for the government to control and secure potential demobilization sites cannot be underestimated. Fifth, it is necessary for the paramilitaries to cease the hostilities, which they have not been able to do consistently so far<sup>31</sup>, in order for the negotiations to produce any results.

### **Political and Economic Notes**

The referendum is the most relevant issue in the political arena. The referendum has already been approved by Congress but requires the support of the Constitutional Court in order to be authorized. Likely obstacles to the referendum are the “no vote” campaign instigated by certain political and social sectors, and possible legislation that might hinder its implementation.

According to a recent poll<sup>32</sup>, the referendum has not suscitated much enthusiasm on the part of society; in fact, it is unlikely that it will reach even the minimum number of votes necessary to be approved. Generally the polls show that the population is either indifferent or ignorant about the articles of the referendum. For example, 95% of Colombians have not read the text that they will be requested to vote on; 75% are either little or not interested in the subject; 55% do not know what purpose it serves; 72% do not know when it will take place, and 47% either will not vote or probably will not vote.

There are two relevant subjects in the economic front: the migre results of Uribe’s economic policy in terms of employment, inflation and economic growth, and the lukewarm feeling in regard to the National Development Plan.

Generally, unemployment has remained at the same levels as in 2002 (approximately 17%), though in the last trimester of 2002 it climbed to higher levels. There actually is a tendency of unemployment to be lower in bigger cities and higher in the countryside. One explanation for the relative increase of unemployment in the rural areas is the success of the crop fumigation<sup>33</sup>, which pushes people away from illegal crops and into unemployment. This also poses a new challenge for the reactivation of agricultural production and husbandry.

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<sup>27</sup> Communiqué of the Estado Mayor Central of the FARC . April 13, 2003.

<sup>28</sup> The Metro faction did not participate since the beginning and in January the Élder Cárdenas faction announced its abstention. Together, these factions make up 1/3 of the paramilitary forces

<sup>29</sup> AUC communiqué dated 21 March 2003.

<sup>30</sup> El Espectador, “Castaño’s loneliness: there is no consensus for negotiations in the AUC” March 9 2003, 10 A.

<sup>31</sup> El Tiempo, “The paramilitary do not give up”, February 25, 2003, 1,3.

<sup>32</sup> Semana Magazine, “The Referendum is suffering”, March 31, 2003

<sup>33</sup> Semana Magazine, “Landless. Unemployment in the cities is lower but it rises in the rural areas: fumigation is part of the explanation ” April 7, 2003.

The fact that inflation has passed 3% this quarterly alone, is worrisome. This is a sign that it will be challenging to comply with the agreements reached with the IMF. The Attorney General Office questions the economic goals of the government and does not believe that growth will be above 1.2% this year, and thus it is unlikely that the current economic crisis will be surpassed during this Administration.<sup>34</sup>

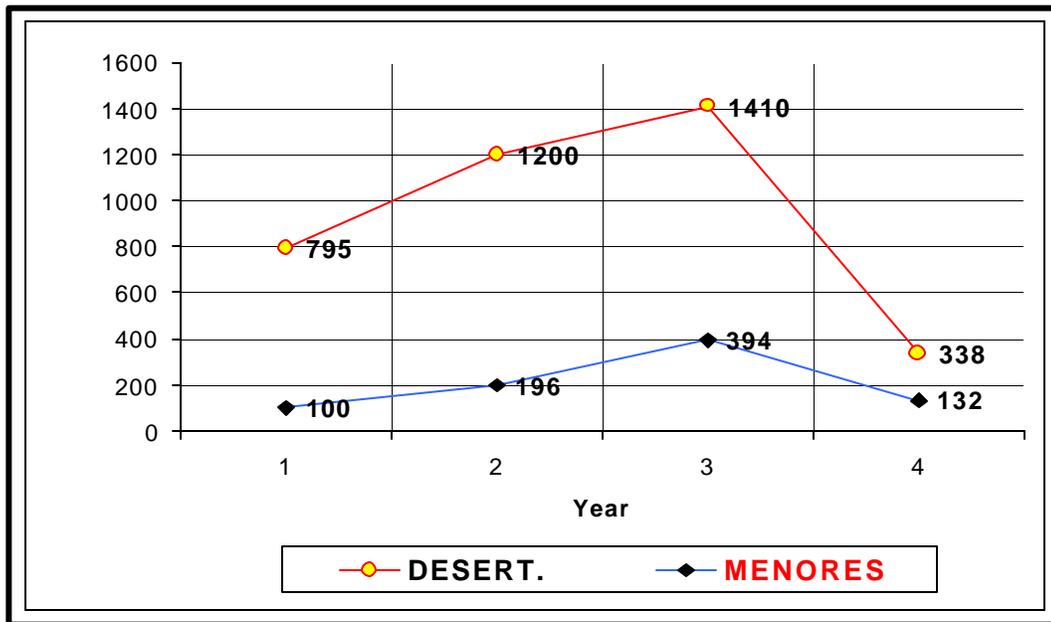
**EX COMBATANT CHILDREN**

Law 418/1999 was extended and further elaborated by Law 782 in late 2002. This contains an explicit statement of the rights and benefits that are to be accorded to those who voluntarily leave participation in the conflict and decide to reintegrate into civil life. In addition, Chapter 5 expressly addresses the particular needs and requirements of minors in the conflict. The law also fully recognizes and thereby legalizes the ICBF program and its specific protection mandate. It specifies the Ministry of the Interior and the ICBF as the governmental organs responsible for protecting the rights and meeting the needs of the child, as well as clarifying the education, health, and employment opportunities that will be accorded to each child.

Law 782 is critical as it clearly delineates the legal status of proceedings against “those who voluntarily disarm. They have the right to a sentence, conditional suspension of sentence, cessation of proceedings, and preclusion on investigation and inhibitory resolutions”. Until this law, anyone under 18 fell under the auspices of *el “Código del Menor”* – the Juvenile Code.

In Graph #1. we can see that the proportion of demobilized children from irregular armed groups had increased in a constant manner. During year 2000 children represented 12,57% of the total of demobilized people reported for military forces, during year 2001, demobilized children represented 16.33%, during year 2002 they represented 27,94%, and during the first quarter of year 2003 demobilized children represented 39% of the total demobilized combatants

**Graph #1: Demobilized People from illegal armed groups.**



<sup>34</sup> El Espectador, “The economy will only grow by 1.2%” March 16 2003, 5B.

### III. SUMMARY PROGRAM STATUS (MARCH 21, 2001 – MARCH 31, 2003)

COMPONENTS	INITIAL GOALS OF THE GRANT AGREEMENT	ACHIEVED GOALS (MARCH 21, 2001 – MARCH 31, 2003)
<i>Direct beneficiaries</i>	Support to 800 former child soldiers	733 former Child Soldiers supported through IOM-ICBF-SC UK Program 133 Indigenous and afro-Colombian former child soldiers supported through the Program's Alliance with Cauca's governorship and Chocó. Total: 866.
<b>SOCIAL NETWORK AND CONTINGENCY PLAN</b>		
<i>Workshops</i>	Development of one national workshop during the first year and another one during the second year.	Three National Workshop have been carried out. Additionally, 5 Regional Workshops and 2 Seminars have been carried out to introduce the Program to other institutions. The third National Workshop took place during this quarter, 75 people attended, including all the Institutions related with the Program.
<i>Baseline and additional opportunities</i>	Development of program's baseline.	Developed a baseline for the Program. A map of agencies that could offer assistance has been developed for 13 departments where such demobilization seems possible. Space for 965 potentially demobilized children has been identified in 36 institutions. This information has been distributed in CD-ROM to all of ICBF's Regional Offices and other relevant agencies. During January, the information about the available spaces on the Program was update.
<b>STRENGTHENING OF THE EXISTING PROGRAMS</b>		
<i>Improvement of the ICBF's Information System</i>	Building of the Program's information system, through the hiring of a specialist.	A database was designed were all information of the children assisted is systematized (gender, age, educational level, etc.). ICBF's headquarters and 5 Regional Offices were furnished with office equipment. Additionally, 16 professionals were hired (operative, legal and social reintegration strengthening). Three ICBF Zonal Centers were equipped and at the end of the quarter, four professionals were hired to support ICBF headquarters labor.

COMPONENTS	INITIAL GOALS OF THE GRANT AGREEMENT	ACHIEVED GOALS (MARCH 21, 2001 – MARCH 31, 2003)
<b>Existing Specialized Attention Centers</b>	Support to 4 existing centers.	Quotas on <i>Benposta</i> changed from 20 to 30 during the reporting quarter. Educational area was strengthened through the scholarships given to the assisted youngsters. Concerning to the Health area, an agreement was subscribed with Profamilia to give assistance on reproductive and sexual health. Regarding Income Generation and Employment area, productive projects' plans and initiatives began its development, within the context of two agreements oriented to train the youngsters on specific labor skills. Two contracts were awarded: Marketing de Ideas and Casting.
<b>New Centers (equipment)</b>	Opening of two new centers	To date, 18 centers have been opened. During this quarter no center was opened.
<b>New Centers (2001) month/child Costs</b>	Cost of 40 month/child covered	80 allowance/child/month are covered in three Specialized Attention Centers and in Transit Home (Buendía, Puertas Abiertas, Nueva Vida, Luna and Half Way House Pietro Crespi)
<b>Placement opportunities</b>	Cost of 200 year/child	During this quarter, 27 year/ child costs have been covered by the Program in Half Way Houses (27 in Cundinamarca. Also, 46 in Transit Homes and 48 in Specialized Attention Center. For a total of 121 during this quarter. The Program has also furnished 9 Half Way Houses that have been created and has assumed the monthly cost for the 1 Half Way Houses located in Bogotá. 99 scholarships were approved (63 for vocational training and 36 for formal education) Total cumulative of 207 scholarships awarded. 293 youth are benefiting from Income-generation projects. Health assistance has been provided to 50 children. During this quarter 2 new projects were formulated: a project on health with the Childhood Observatory of the National University and another on institutional strengthening with the Reinsertion Office of the Ministry of Interior.

COMPONENTS	INITIAL GOALS OF THE GRANT AGREEMENT	ACHIEVED GOALS (MARCH 21, 2001 – MARCH 31, 2003)
<b>Family Reunification</b>	Carrying out 200 family encounters and/ or family reunifications.	98 family encounters and 83 family reunifications have been carried out. (18 family encounters and 14 family reunifications during this quarter). Family encounters were held in Cundinamarca (12), Santander (3), Valle (1) and Antioquia (2)..
<b>Technical Assistance. Subgrant to Save the Children United Kingdom</b>	Technical assistance for the strengthening of the Specialized Attention Centers	Institutional strengthening for the Specialized Attention Centers and the implementation of the social network has been carried out. Additional community leaders have been trained on the existing legal framework for ex-combatant children.
<b>Information Dissemination</b>	Activities related to the improvement of the acceptance of ex-combatant children in society.	Dissemination of information has been carried out through an institutional video, seminars and publications (baseline of the Program, Program' pamphlet, institutional folder, etc.). Additionally, two cultural events have been carried out. During this quarter, the documentary "Circo para Todos" and the short film "Lúdica Macabrica", were completed. They were the final result of the covenant with the <i>Cinematoteca Distrital</i> .
<b>RESEARCH ON THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND PUBLICATIONS</b>		
<b>Research Team</b>	Hiring of 4 researchers for the evaluation of the legal framework	The Human Right's Ombudsman Office carried out the Legal Framework evaluation. A document on the legal standing for ex-combatant children was developed.
<b>Publications</b>	Publishing of 200 copies	The design, publication and dissemination of the "legal standing for ex-combatant children was carried out. To date 2,500 copies of the <i>Ruta Jurídica</i> have been published. Additionally, financial support was provided for the edition and publication of 1,500 samples of the book "Warriors Without Shadow" and "Children, Youth and the Armed Conflict". The Memories of the Forum "Childhood and armed conflict: from demobilization to the full protection of children rights" were officially presented during this quarter. 500 copies were published.

COMPONENTS	INITIAL GOALS OF THE GRANT AGREEMENT	ACHIEVED GOALS (MARCH 21, 2001 – MARCH 31, 2003)
<b>Training to Legal and Institutional Authorities</b>	Development of 11 workshops.	Support has been given to ICBF to carry out 6 workshops, in which 200 people (judges, military, community leaders, teachers and family counselors) have been trained on the contents of the "Ruta Juríca". More on this is found in the training carried out by the Ombudsman Office.
<b>OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE CONTINGENCY PLAN</b>		
<b>Training on the Legal Standing for ex-combatant children</b>	Development of 11 workshops	38 workshops have been carried out. The Human Rights' Ombudsman Office has trained 1059 public officials (public defenders and General Attorney's Office). 124 were trained during this quarter.
<b>Children's transportation and travel expenses</b>	For the second year of the project (2002) transportation for 600 ex-combatant children. (This number refers to the number of potentially demobilized children)	Support for the transportation of 26 children has been given, as requested by the ICBF. 18 of them during this quarter.
<b>Transit Homes</b>	Creation of 4 new Transit Homes for the second year.	Three Transit homes have been created, of which two are operating. Support with furniture and with the month/child cost (only for one Transit Home) has been given. Additionally, 10 extra month/child costs are financed in Transit Home Luna.
<b>Observation Centers</b>	Assistance to 400 children in case of massive demobilization.	30 extra month/ child cost have been financed in the Specialized Attention Centers as requested by the ICBF.
<b>Support to Indigenous and Afro-Colombian former child soldiers</b>	This component was not foreseen in the original Grant Agreement.	<b>Cauca:</b> A prevention project is being carried out with indigenous and afro-Colombian communities in the department of Cauca. To date, 638 children are direct beneficiaries. 88 for income-generating activities and 550 in the Education, Culture and Human Rights Project <b>Chocó:</b> A prevention project in Chocó started its implementation at the end of the previous quarter. During this quarter 45 ex-combatant children participated on Income-generating projects and 75 children became beneficiaries of the construction of 2 <i>tambo-schools</i> (typical construction). Also, 115 benefited from the training in human rights and indigenous legislation.

COMPONENTS	INITIAL GOALS OF THE GRANT AGREEMENT	ACHIEVED GOALS (MARCH 21, 2001 – MARCH 31, 2003)
<i>Prevention</i>	This component was not foreseen in the original Grant Agreement.	Within the component, access to education for children in high risk of being recruited, a project was launched in Barrancabermeja. It benefits 800 children, providing them with a free meal. Also, within the strategy of awareness raising and broad-based information campaigns, four scripts were finished and will be radio broadcasted during the following quarter. Within the income generation strategy, a project that benefits 25 children started. It trains the children to organize, build stands, and other activities to coordinate fairs and events.

#### IV. CONTINGENCY PLAN

During this quarter, the program maintained an alert position toward the announcement of a massive demobilization of children recruited or retained by the AUC and the FARC. However, the Contingency Plan developed by the Program did not have the opportunity to be implemented. Due to military interventions in the zones designed for the giving in no massive demobilization occurred..

Despite of high expectations for a massive demobilization, the reality shows that children demobilized one by one and not massively. There are neither defeated groups, nor political agreements that could lead to a massive demobilization of children. The main cause of children’s demobilization continues to be voluntary disengagement, even at the risk of their own life.

#### V. STRENGTHENING THE ICBF’s SPECIALIZED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR EX COMBATANT CHILDREN

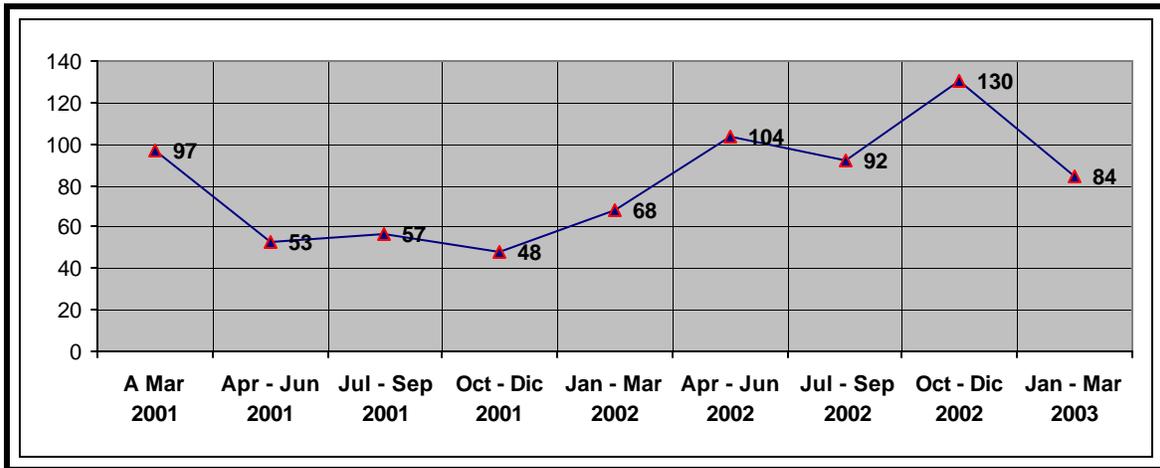
##### ASSISTANCE DATA

Between November of 1994 and March of 2003, the ICBF has assisted 1.327 ex combatant children, 733 of which were assisted through the Support Program for Ex Combatant Children, within the context of the agreement subscribed with OIM and using funds from USAID.

**Table # 1: Beneficiaries Report (Total: 1,327)**

<b>Beneficiaries Report</b>		
1994-2001	Ex-combatant Children Reported / Assisted by ICBF from November 1994 to March 20, 2001.	546
2001-2003	Ex-combatant Children Supported by the IOM-ICBF - USAID Agreement Grant from March 21, 2001 to March 31 2003	733
	Children in the queue to enter the centers	48
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1327</b>

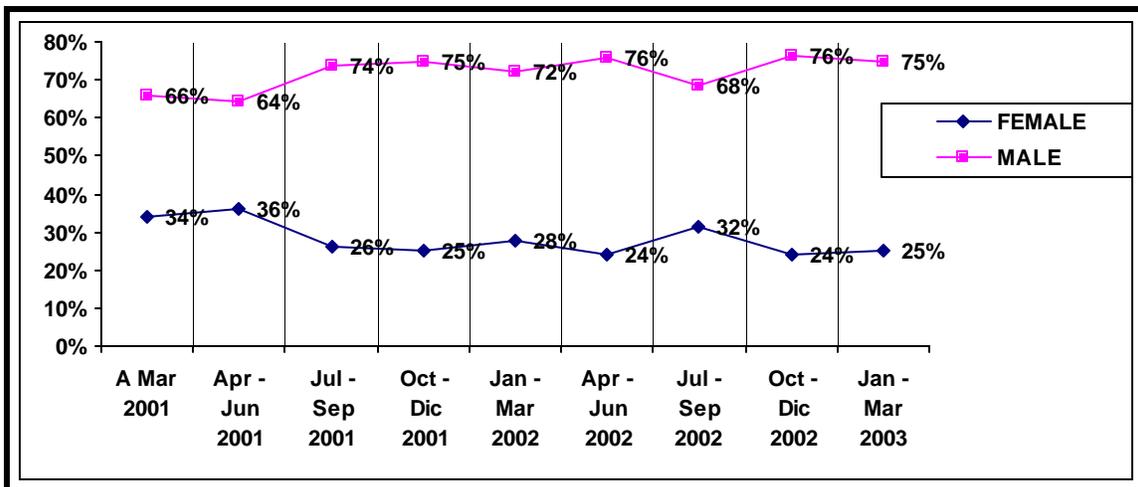
**Graph # 2: Data on Incoming Children by Quarter (Total: 733)**



Graph # 2 Shows the historic evolution of the assistance. It began with 97 young people located in the existing centers and throughout the time the capacity has been strengthened. During this quarter there was a decrease in the number of ex combatant children assisted, 84 children entered the Program compared to 130 children who entered during the previous quarter. This was caused mainly by the lack of space and accommodations to attend the demand. The lack of space is associated with the fact that the ICBF has not really initiated its contracting process with the implementing NGOs. The contracting involves a long and slow process of evaluation and renovation of the permits.

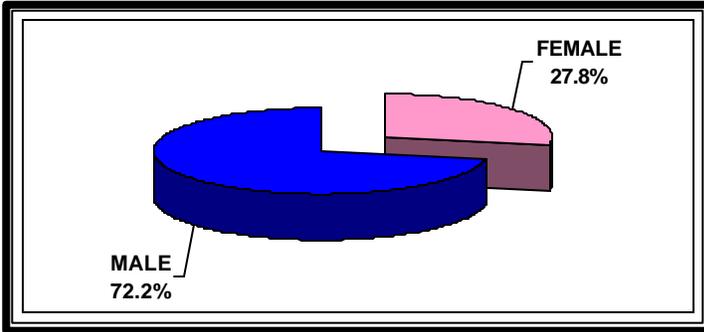
As a response to that situation the ICBF and IOM designed an immediate action plan and through a tender process, six implementing NGOs were selected.

**Graph # 3: Data on Incoming Children by Quarter and Gender (Total: 733)**



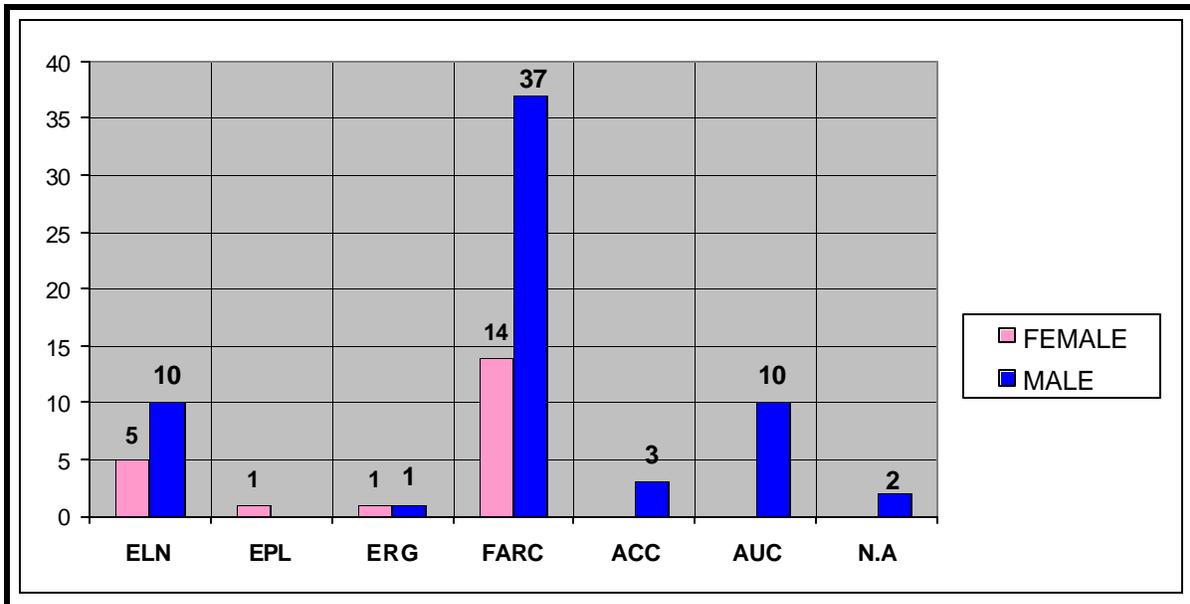
Graph # 3 shows the historic tendency of demobilization by gender. It is worth mentioning that male demobilization compared to female demobilization is 9% greater now than when the Program started. Since September 2001, the average participation of male demobilization is between 72.1% and 76.2%, compared to the average of female demobilization, which is between 23.8% and 27.9%. (Except for the July -September quarter during year 2002)

**Graph # 4. Accumulated Data on Assisted Children by Gender Distribution**



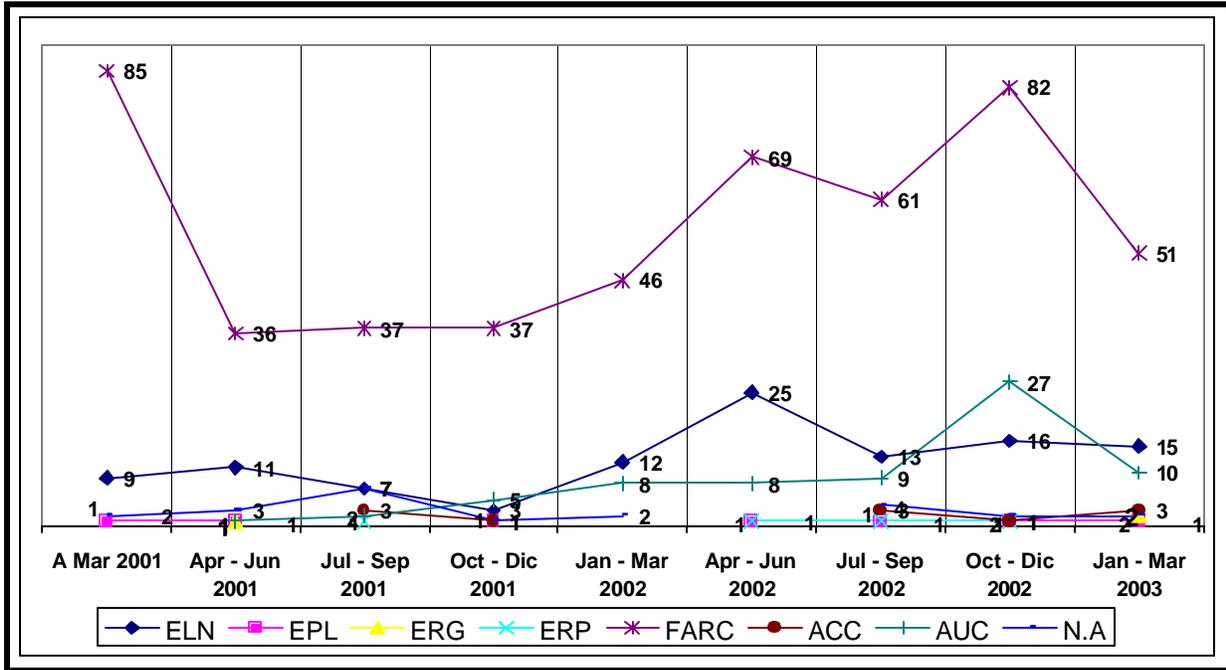
Cumulative distribution by gender, shows 27,8% females (529 out of 733) and 72,2% males (204 out of 733). This reflects the traditional break between male and female demobilization. As we will see, this situation is well explained by the increase in demobilization from the AUC, an armed group that mainly recruits males.

**Graph # 5: Demobilization by Armed Group and Gender During Reporting Quarter**



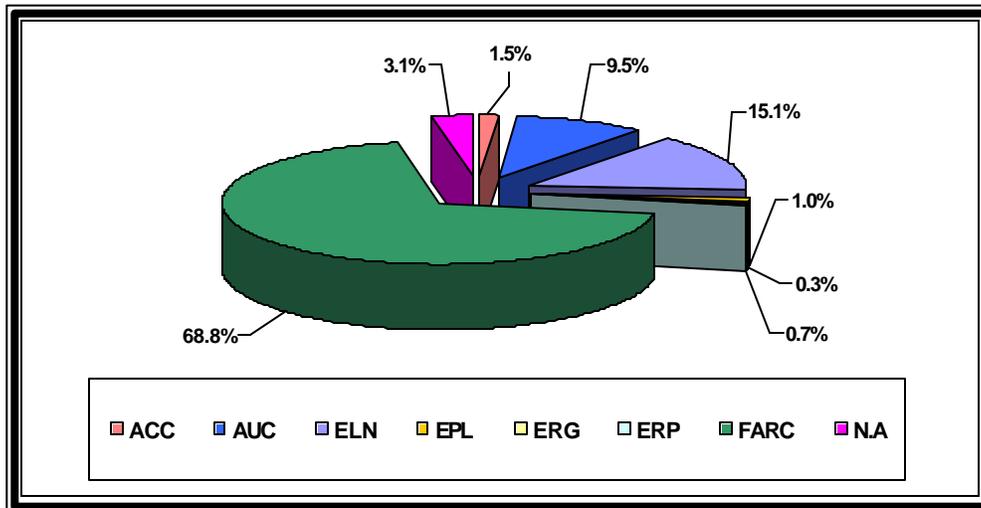
As shown in Graph # 5, there were only males demobilized from the Self Defense Groups (AUC and ACC). Most of the demobilized children are still coming from the FARC (51), followed by the ELN (15). Proportionally, most of the females are demobilized from the ELN.

**Graph # 6: Data on Demobilization by Quarter and Armed Group**



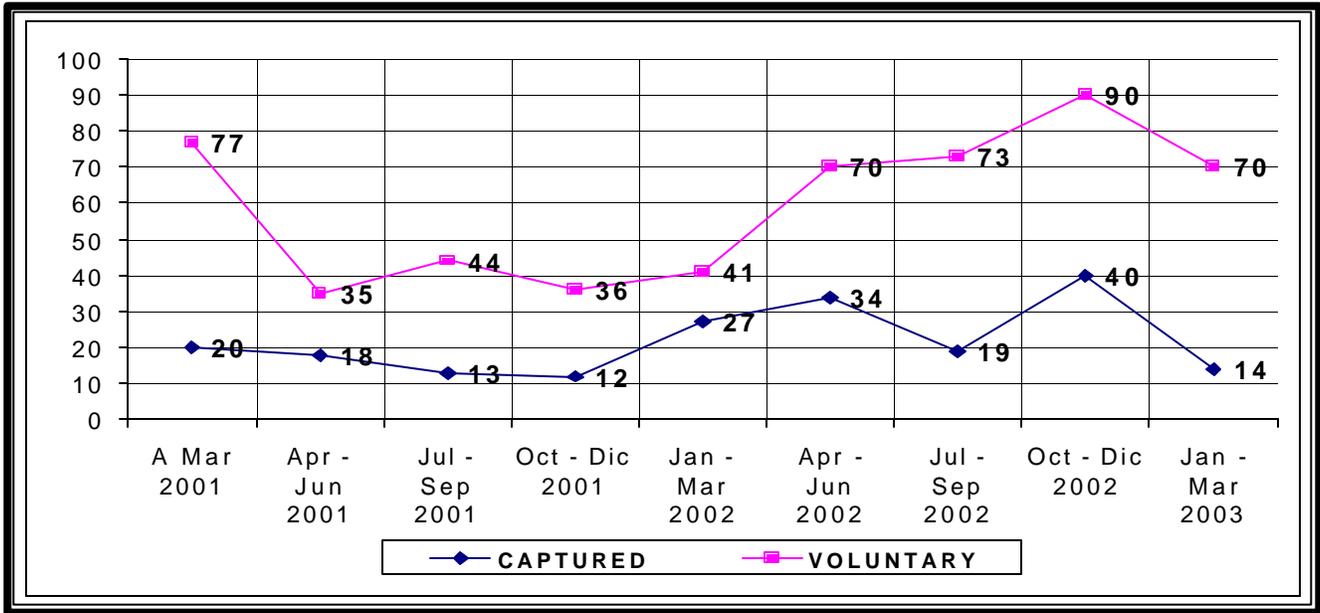
Graph # 6 reflects the demobilization trend, depending on the armed group the children came from. In spite of the fact that traditionally, most of the children came from the FARC, the number of children coming from the AUC has increased, and the number of children coming from the ELN remains the same. Also, despite that there are only few children coming from minority armed groups, this number has not decreased.

**Graph # 7: Accumulated Data on Assisted Children by Armed Group**



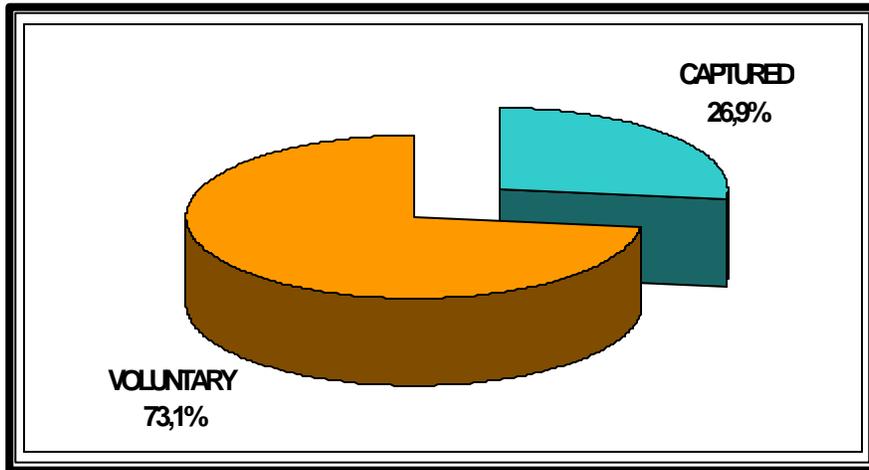
Cumulative data shows that 504 children came from the FARC (68,8%), 111 came from the ELN (15,1%) and 70 from the AUC (9,5%). These three armed groups account for 93,4% of the children.

**Graph # 8: Data on Incoming Children by Quarter and Type of Demobilization**



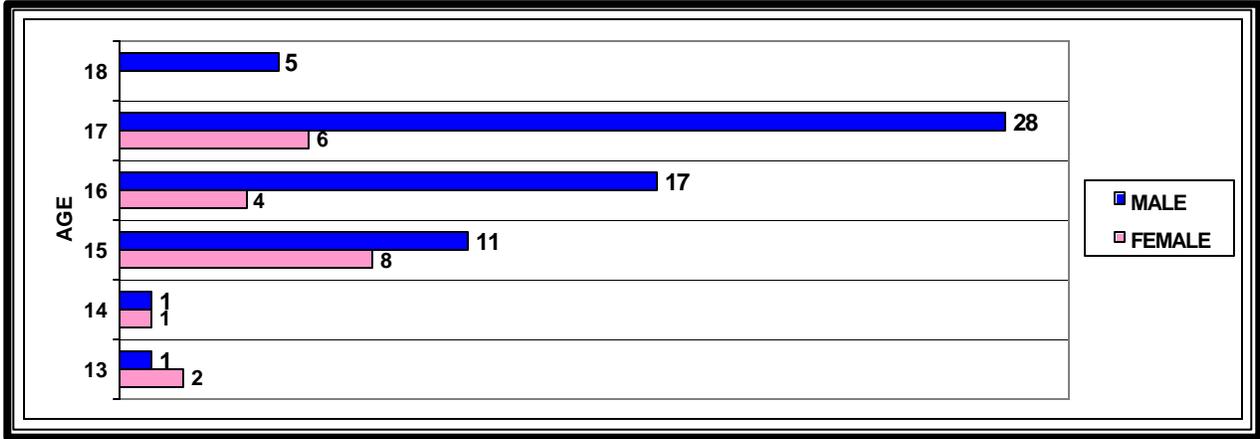
This quarter presented the greatest amount of voluntary demobilization, 83,3%, compared to 16,6% of children being captured. This confirms the tendency of increasing desertion.

**Graph # 9: Accumulated Data on Assisted Children by Type of Demobilization**



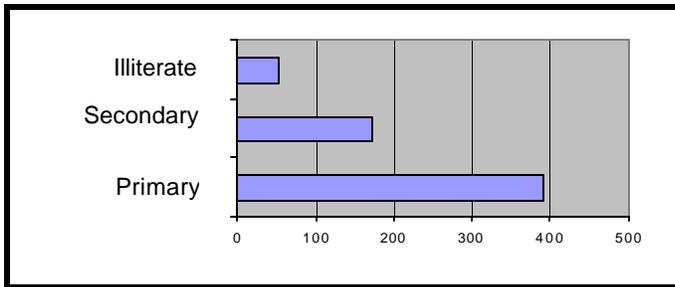
Cumulative data shows that 536 children had demobilized voluntarily (73.1%) compared to 197 children captured. When comparing the type of demobilization between this quarter and the previous one, we observe a slight variation of 1.1% (72% voluntary, 28% captured)

**Graph # 10: Data on Incoming Children by Age and Gender During Reporting Quarter**



During this quarter, the group of 17 years old accounts for the greatest number of demobilized (40%), followed by the 16 years old group (25%), and 15 years old group (23%). However, when analyzing the females participation, we see that the 15 years old group is the one that represents the greatest proportion of demobilized girls (38%).

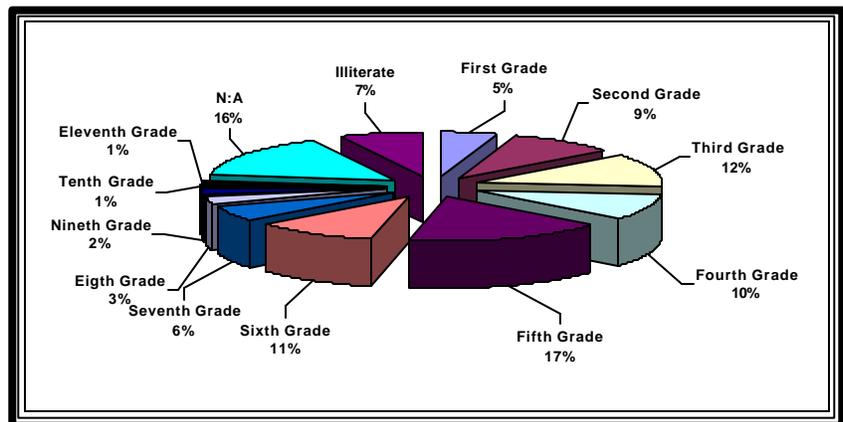
**Graph # 11: Data on Children by Educational Level**



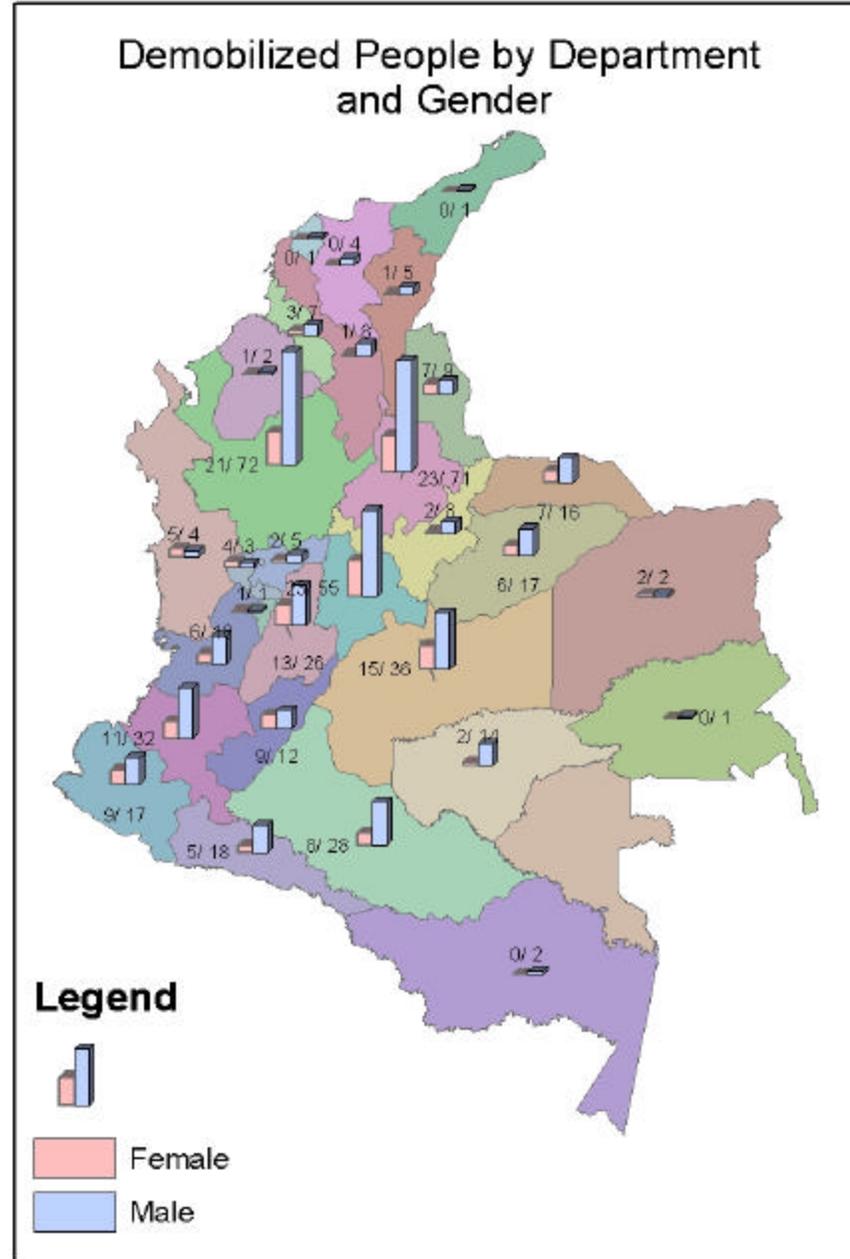
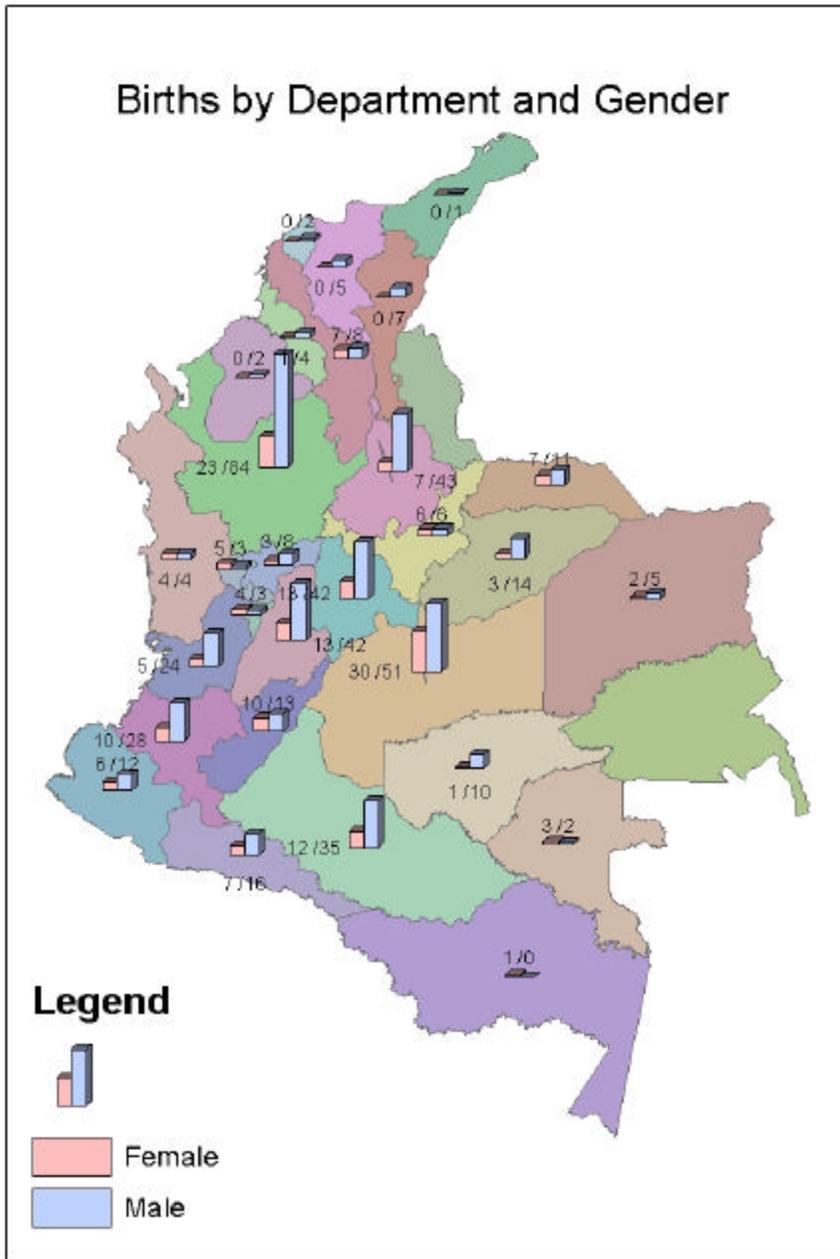
Out of the 733 boys and girls that have entered the Program, 390 (53%) have some primary education level, 173 have some secondary level (24%) and 53 (7%) are illiterate. The Program does not have information about 117 children (16%) that were part of the ICBF initial program.

**Graph # 12: Data on Children by Educational Level and Gender During Reporting Quarter**

This graph shows in detail the children educational level. Excepting for the sixth graders (78 children), most of the children only have finished some elementary school: fifth grade 126, fourth grade 72, and third grade 89. Only seven children have ended secondary school (eleventh grade), while 53 are illiterate.



# Demobilized Children ICBF



## DEVELOPMENT OF THE ASSISTANCE PHASES

### Protection Phase

#### a) Transit Homes

Transit Homes are the first stage of the protection phase. It lasts four to six weeks. The focus is to assess the children's needs and background, develop an individual life plan and familiarize the children with the program. Also it provides the children with clothing and psychosocial attention. During this quarter there was a decrease in the number of new ex-combatant children joining the Program, compared to the former period. The two centers surpassed the optimal capacity of 20 to 25 children in each center, reaching the number of 30 at the end of March, due to the high demand from children waiting to be protected. This situation was handled in a suitable way by the implementing NGOs, without any significant inconveniences.

During this quarter 46 children entered the Luna Transit Home and 32 to José. For a total of 78 children entering the Transit Homes. 57 (73%) of the children were transferred to the Specialized Attention Centers. The remaining number of children were moved to protection homes, run by the ICBF, due to special circumstances, such as security and drug addiction problems. Less than 10% of the children left the program irregularly (escaped).

There were new characteristics observed on the children during this period while establishing the profiles of the children. The number of children with drug addictions (40%) is increasing, as well as the children with experience of having lived as a street child and sometimes with some urban-criminal background. This means the children entering the program have a more urban profile than last year.

The profile of the new children, together with sexual aggressive experiences, including male chauvinist and promiscuous behavior, learnt from their previous experiences, made it necessary that the Transit Homes focus more on how to address these new behaviors. To that effect, they established regulations in relation to prevent drug consumption, develop methodologies on relaxation, offered therapeutic support, collective prevention work and individual follow up.

**Table # 2 : Children who entered the Transit Homes this Quarter**

Type of Attention	Name of the institution	Children who entered this quarter			Children who entered the previous quarter, Oct - Dec 02			Total of Children who has entered until end of March 03		
		M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Transit Home	Luna	36	10	46	43	12	55	125	39	164
	José	23	09	32	43	21	64	134	57	191
Total per quarter		59	19	78	86	33	119	259	96	355
Total of children who have entered the program										355

**b) Specialized Attention Centers (CAE)**

The Program has 9 Specialized Attention Centres (CAEs), located on five different departments: Cundinamarca (5); Santander (1); Valle (1), Antioquia (1) and Armenia (1).

The CAEs are the second stage of the Program, and its objective is to develop activities that propitiate children's physical, psychological and spiritual development. This phase also focuses on children's rights restitution (education, health, family, participation, identification, etc.). In addition, the identification of target sectors for the development of income generation projects, starts.

During this quarter, the Program focused on family contacts and the design and implementation of strategies that foster deeper community participation, in the different zones where the centers are located. Corporación *Macondo* coordinated with the municipality of Chia, community participation programs, such as sports activities, social work with smaller children in nearby schools, workshops for on weaving for neighbors, construction of housing for poor families.

The center *Agape* opened during this quarter in the Department of Quindío, made the decision to not continue due to the methodological difficulties in the implementation of the Program Guidelines. However, the Center argued that the children's profile did not fit the characteristics of a agro-pecuarian oriented center. Instead, the children had a more urban profile.

On the other hand there was a positive experience with the CAE *Semillas de Paz*, owned by the Foundation *Hogar Claret*. Due to the great demand and its good performance, another center of the same organization will be opened

**Table # 3 : Children who entered the Specialized Attention Centers this Quarter**

Type of center	Name of the institution	Children who entered this quarter in each institution			Children who entered last quarter in each institution			Assisted children until March 31 <sup>st</sup> 2003			Total
		M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	
Specialized Attention Centers	Arco Iris	6	3	9	12	1	13	74	15	89	653
	Benposta	20	6	26	8	2	10	47	23	70	
	Buendía	20	5	25	15	9	24	106	42	148	
	La Bella	15	3	18	10	3	13	84	25	109	
	Puertas Abiertas	3	1	4	5	3	8	42	13	55	
	Semillas de Paz	6	2	8	8	1	9	49	21	60	
	Melquíades	13	3	19	18	5	23	45	15	50	
	Nueva Vida	6	3	9	5	3	8	41	11	52	
	Ágape	0	0	0	17	3	20	17	3	20	

If we assume that each center has 20 children on average, in the table we can see that there was more rotation in the centers "*Buendía*", "*Melquiades*" and "*La Bella*" to maintain the # of children around 20. In the center Benposta entered more children, there was an increase of the spaces for children from 20 to 30. In the center Agape, there was no change; they continued with the same group of children, they started with at the end of last year.

## Social Integration - Alternatives

### a) Half Way Homes

This phase was designed for children unable or unwilling to reunify with their families . The restitution of rights continues, emphasizing education, income generation activities and social insertion. During this quarter there was continuity in the activities carried out in the Half Way Homes in Chía (Cundinamarca); Cali (Valle del Cauca) and Bucaramanga ( Santander). 56 children were assisted..

The experience during this quarter was centered on distinct aspects. At the Pietro Crespi home in Chía, there was concentration on the start up process for the 18 children , beginning their activities last December. Agreements on norms and coexistence were elaborated, adjustments of the individual plan for each child on education and vocational training. 10 children were transferred to Bogotá, for better accommodation and space. In the educational area the 8 children who stayed in the center entered academic studies with the Santo Tomas school.

During the quarter the need for more responsibility from the children themselves on their personal process of social integration appeared. There was intensified work on change of attitudes from some children towards the vocational activities. But in general the jewelry project is seen very positively from the majority of the participants, and is shown to be a good example on how this kind of projects should be set up.

In the area of vocational training and generation of income, a program was elevated with more relevance for these children. The area chosen was the jewelry one for the majority. Some children who chose another area, got training on an individual base. Other areas chosen to generate income in the center was starting a cultural café, handicraft, bread – and pizza making.

In the Halfway Home located in Cali, the children go to two nearby schools, both at Primary and Secondary level. Next semester there will be change to just one of them. 4 children go on with their vocational training at Don Bosco, where they started in the Specialized Attention center, situated within the area of Don Bosco. Most of them have finished their first level of training, and are now on their second one, finishing in December this year. There is a disadvantage with the courses at Don Bosco, due to their length.

**Table # 4 : Children who entered Half Way Homes this Quarter**

Type of Institution	City	# of children moved to Juvenile Homes during reporting quarter	# Of children moved to Juvenile Homes Oct – Dec. 2002	# Of children moved to Juvenile Homes until March 31 <sup>st</sup> 2002
Half Way Houses	Cali	2	16	18
	Chía	8	19	27
	Bucaramanga	2	9	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>56</b>

During this period, as observed in the table, 12 children entered the Half Way Homes.

## b) Family Reunification

The reunification phase occurs when the child goes back to his or her family, after having been separated, due to their participation on illegal armed groups and having graduated within the program.

Compared to the previous quarter, the number of children who succeeded in reunification with their families decreased to 44%,. The 14 reunifications achieved during this quarter represent a 17% out of the total number who reunited with their families. This situation is caused by security problems in their home community, either for the children or the family as a whole, or due to the internal displacement of their families, as a result of the armed conflict.

The children who left the program during this period received orientation on how to proceed with their personal life project. They benefited from scholarships and support for income generation projects financed by the Program.

Family reunification is a challenge for the Program. Children are better prepared to face the social and economic situation of their families and the society in general. They have acquired some skills that favor a better personal development than when they joined the Program.

**Table # 5: Children in family reunification**

Phase	Name of the implementing NGO	# of children reunited with their families this quarter	# of children reunited with their families last quarter	Cumulative Data
Transit Homes	Luna	0	3	4
	José	0	1	2
Specialized Attention Centers	Arco Iris	0	1	5
	Benposta	0	1	5
	Buendía	2	6	22
	La Bella	2	4	13
	Puertas Abiertas	0	2	8
	Semillas de Paz	0	0	2
	Melquíades	0	3	3
	Nueva Vida	0	4	5
	Ágape	7	0	7
ICBF institutions	Protection Institutions	3	0	7
<b>Total</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>83</b>

In the cases where a family reunification was possible, it was supported by the Program. To that extent, the Program offers financial, psychological and social support to the family. Family stability diminishes the risks that the adolescent has by going back to the armed group. Additionally, the Program has foreseen to strengthen the support to the families through the hiring of a social worker in 8 local centers of the ICBF.

The departments that presented a higher number of reunifications were: Quindío, (7) followed by Cundinamarca (4). The total number of children that have been reunited with their families is 83, as can be seen in the table above, representing 11.32% of the total number of children assisted by program (733)

**Table # 6: Data on Children's Exit from the Protection Phase**

Phase	Implementing NGO	Escaped	Family Reunification	Total
<b>Transit Homes</b>	Luna	4	0	4
	José	4	0	4
<b>Specialized Attention Centers</b>	Arco Iris	4	0	4
	Benposta	3	0	3
	Buendía	8	2	10
	La Bella	5	2	7
	Puertas Abiertas	1	0	1
	Semillas de Paz	4	0	4
	Melquíades	9	0	9
	Nueva Vida	3	7	10
	Ágape	0	0	0
<b>Half Way Homes</b>	Macondo	6	0	6
	Santander	0	0	0
	Valle	0	0	0
<b>ICBF institutions</b>	Protection institutions	8	3	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>73</b>

The table above shows that 73 children left from the centers during this quarter. The majority of them left in an irregular way (escaped), which raises some concerns regarding the bottom line reasons this situation is recurrent. This number represents around 12% of the total number of children being assisted by the Program.

## Health

### a) Physical Health

During this quarter the Program on sexual and reproductive health implemented by Profamilia and also financed by USAID continued. The scope of work of this health project covers all the phases of the Program and also the projects in Chocó and Cauca.

In the department of Cundinamarca, where the project first started, health brigades were carried out, benefiting 42 children. Within the framework of this project 50 medical health actions were made, such as general consultancies and lab tests and medicines were provided.

**Table # 7: Medical Health Interventions**

SERVICE PROVIDED	NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDED
General medicine	12
Consultation and control of contraceptive remedy	9
Gynecology consultation	4
Prenatal control	1
Urology	4
Pregnancy control	3
Cytology	2
Penescopy	2
Renal and urine scan	1
Deeper urine control	1
Creatinine test	1
Glicemia test	1
Ecography	3
Specific vaginal test	1
VDRL	1
RX	1
Blood test	1
VSG	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49</b>

During this quarter the profile of the children entering the Program showed a significant difference. The new comers are more urban and had an aggressive sexual behavior, This led to a thorough internal discussion among the professional teams of the centers and the ICBF. Finally, some regulations were issued, taking into account children's rights and gender perspective.

**b) Psychological Health**

The new profiles of some of the children who have entered this year, present more use of drugs, more delinquent behavior, more inappropriate sexual conduct, in the centers, among the children and also between them and the employees. This situation led the Program to perform a close follow up on the centers which involve specifically the workshops with Profamilia and an Action Plan developed jointly with the ICBF, to carry out close activities with the youngsters and accommodate the co-existence rules of the centers according with their needs.

It is important that the program succeeds in finding answers in the short and medium run to this juvenile reality, coming up with appropriate methodologies, different from those used by ICBF in other institutions, related to protection and reeducation<sup>35</sup>. The Program aims to design a methodology to take care of minors who have a different profile without treating them as infractors, but as victims who require a different treatment of that used for children who come from rural areas.

## Education

The Ministry of Education has worked on improving the quality of the education in the country, modifying the instruments for validation of the Primary School, providing two tests, one in 5th and the other in 9th grade. The purpose of the Program is to use those for the 5th graders, to validate the children who say they have completed Primary School. Also, the test for 9th graders can be given to those children who are at the Secondary level.

This first quarter of the year 2003 has focused on making progress of the preparation of instruments to be used in the educational process, in order to carry out a good monitoring process, being able to detect areas where there is need for technical assistance.

During this quarter, 73% of the children were studying. According to the statistics from ICBF, the majority in external school systems.

During this quarter, out of the 207 children benefiting from formal studies in the program, 99 children received scholarships from IOM, being 63 on vocational training and 36 on formal education, 14% of them continued scholarships obtained last year. 24 scholarships have been given to children in the centers; CAEs and Half Way Homes. These are a complement to the government scholarships, for children who do not have their identification documents and for those who are 18 years old. There are 42 more scholarships of formal education in process.

14 of the scholarships were given to children who graduated from the program and are now on their own, together with their families or in Foster Homes, run by the Ministries of Interior and Defense. OIM is giving these children a special support in Bogotá and Cali, through our regional offices, where the adolescents receive scholarship allowance for transportation, every 15 days. This gives us the possibility of having a continuous direct contact with the beneficiaries, helping them to comply with the written commitment they have signed, on making progress in their studies. With the rest of the scholarship beneficiaries who have left the program, the monitoring process includes bimonthly reports from the educational institutions on academic progress, as well as telephone calls regularly. The appliance and monitoring process with the rest of the children in the scholarship program consists in bimonthly reports from the NGOs who carry out the service to the children in the centers – Specialized Centers and Half Way Homes.

There is now an increased interest from the centers, for the scholarship program, due to the work of the team of pedagogues, hired last year by IOM. They left installed capacity on dealing with the procedures around applications for the scholarships, for the children in the centers, as well for children who are about to leave the program for family reunification. Another result you can see from their six month period of support in the centers, is the amplified network of supporting pedagogical (formal and no formal) institutions, including signing contracts with these institutions, as well as a greater concern for the whole organization of the educational area.

The educational strategy will be oriented towards:

1. Design the instruments to make a diagnose in the Transitory Home, on each child's educational child's profile (formal and vocational)
2. Design a pedagogical methodology adapted to the needs for these children
3. Design a pedagogical plan in each center, at all levels, with a follow up on each child monthly, resulting in a close monitoring of the progress of the child in the academic – and other processes, such as the vocational one.
4. Establish a network among cultural, educational organizations/local groups/people, around the center.
5. Each center should have a pedagogue to assist the children on its educational needs

Due to reorganization within the Ministry of Education, the scholarships offered this year by Colombian Institute for Technical Studies Abroad (ICETEX) to the centers have not been

approved yet. This means that the educational institution could face financial problems soon, as they put the children to study, expecting to receive the payment from the ICETEX.

### Challenges and their Possible Solution

CHALLENGES	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM IOM
Need for better knowledge from the children of the purpose of the whole program, its phases and areas, taking into consideration the pedagogical area as a cross cutting theme, and the rights and obligations, leading to a better motivation for studies, among other results.	Production of a video with interviews on adolescents who have left the program in a successful way ( those with scholarships in Bogotá for example) to use in the information process, specially in the Transitory Homes.
Need for a better implementation and follow up on the pedagogical program at the three levels - on planning, organization and monitoring of the activities, appropriate methodology, use of validation instruments for the academic level of the child, defined procedures for the amplifying of the Network of Institutions supporting the center.	Design forms to carry out the follow up, based on the strategic basic document on education, already in use, accompanied by a plan for the presentation in the centers, as form of workshops.  Design of a plan from IOM, monitoring the implementation of the pedagogical work in the centers of ICBF
Need for an updated knowledge of the education model in each center, according to the needs of the children. Systematize the experiences, nourishing the global educational process.	Mapping of the local model each semester, using this information as a base for the annual modification of the referential document
Need for better knowledge on the program on appropriate models and methodologies for this kind of population	Design and implementation of a series of training workshops/courses with the teachers in the centers, and maybe other teachers interested in the theme; check collaboration from a University.
Need to further polish the procedures of application, approbation, monitoring and evaluation in the IOM scholarship program	Elaborate a pamphlet on the procedure of the scholarship program, polish the existing power point presentation, to be adapted to the adolescents' level

### Income Generation and Employment

During this quarter, they have been improvements on the implementation of the Income Generation Strategy. The strategy gives relevance to projects implemented by associative work, and those that strengthen families by facilitating family reunifications. Also those that favor labor training from the centers.

In the same way, emphasis has been put on the need to begin earlier the labor exploration process as well as the development of productive initiatives. The objective of beginning the process earlier is to guarantee a better preparation for the youths and, as a result, more possibilities of success with their income generation activities.

#### a) Income Generation Projects

The identification and formulation of productive projects is supported in two scenarios: The first one, the basic pattern, is based on previous agreements with different companies, that after a training process developing specific skills, could, either allow the development of

productive units related or not with the company, or hire the youngster to work at the position in which he/her was trained. The second scenario, the complementary action lines, are initiatives that are evaluated to guarantee the investment return and to demonstrate their sustainability.

As a result of this process it is worth to mention the identification and realization of the following initiatives:

### **Basic Pattern**

During the reporting quarter the Program signed two agreements that involved 39 youngsters. The first one, established with the Workshop Jewelry School Casting, guarantees the insertion of the youngsters on the production phase before concluding the first semester of year 2003. This contract was awarded for an amount of US\$ 8,700 benefiting 14 youths directly. The second agreement on the operation services and logistics sector, was awarded *Marketing de Ideas*, local operator of fairs and public events in Medellín, for an amount of US\$15,760 involving 25 youths, ex combatants or members of prevention groups. This youngsters will acquire sector related skills, and they will be able to carry out the first practices in real public events and fairs. Currently, we are trying to replicate this experience in Bogotá for a similar number of youngsters.

There were also improvements on the formulation of agreements with the footwear sector, wooden furniture and agro-industry. We began an exploration of jobs that can be accessed by the youngsters with a fast and simple training, and allow the development of productive initiatives related with sub-contracting processes to produce parts and pieces.

On the agro-industry sector, with the development of organic growing and following the production line called "city agriculture" (agricultural products consumed in the city, that can be produced in cities or in the case of the Half Way Homes in their surroundings). This will allow the children to take advantage of their skills associated to the rural origin of the great majority of the Program youngsters beneficiaries.

**Table # 8: Income Generation and Employment Goals**

CRITERIA REQUIREMENTS BASIC PATTERN	GOAL SECTORS					EXPECTED OUTCOMES
	Footwear	Wood	Jewelry	Services	Agro-industry	
						5
1. Human Talent:	LABOR SKILLS					10
2. Productive Units	COMPANIES TO BE INVOLVED					15
3. Market Articulation	PREFERENCIAL CONDITIONS					3
4. Sustainability	COMPETITIVENESS					
5. Stability	INSTITUCIONALIZATION					10
Place	Bogotá, B/manga	Bogotá Medellín	Bogotá	Bogotá - Medellín		
Strategic Partner	CORINCA	Prodiseno SENA	CASTING	MARKETING de Ideas CORFERIAS	CORPOICA	3
Status	Formulation	Study	Operation	Operation	Formulation/ Study	5
<b>BENEFICIARIES</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>100-300</b>

### **Complementary Lines**

Advances on the complementary lines are the following:

- The orientation of implementing NGOs, such as the *Corporacion Macondo* and the *Enseñame a Pescar Foundation*, toward the development of vocational spaces and sustainable productive projects that contribute to their institutional strengthening by the diversification of their supply of income generating services. In both cases the development is constructed with the youths.
- The improvements achieved in Cundinamarca with the *Corporacion Macondo* formulating projects to create productive units in Bakery and Pizza-making and also in Crafts and Ceramic. These projects are the initial point of an Initiatives Incubation and Development Center, specialized on offering labor orientation practices and developing competitive productive initiatives, that would be incubated there until reaching maturation in terms of learning, access to the market and the administration pattern. The total amount of the investment for these projects ascends to US\$12,294 and it will benefit a total of 14 youths.
- For its return of social benefits, the initiative of creating a shelter for ex combatant people, showed not only to be service oriented, but also sustainable. This is associated to the demobilization process from armed groups. The estimated amount if the investment is US\$3,276 and it will benefit 20 demobilized people, initially.
- The associative initiative formulated for youngsters in Bucaramanga to develop a productive unit of Bakery. As a result of the strategy of the Program of enlarging the number of young people benefited by these investments, the number of beneficiaries youths has been duplicated.

Summarizing, during the reporting quarter, 60 youngsters have benefited from the income generation projects in the different phases of the Program, including Family Reunification. The Program expects that by the end of the first semester of 2003 the number of beneficiaries would be 160.

Including the participants on the special projects in Chocó and Cauca the total number of beneficiaries from income generating activities is 293 youths.

#### **b) Labor Education**

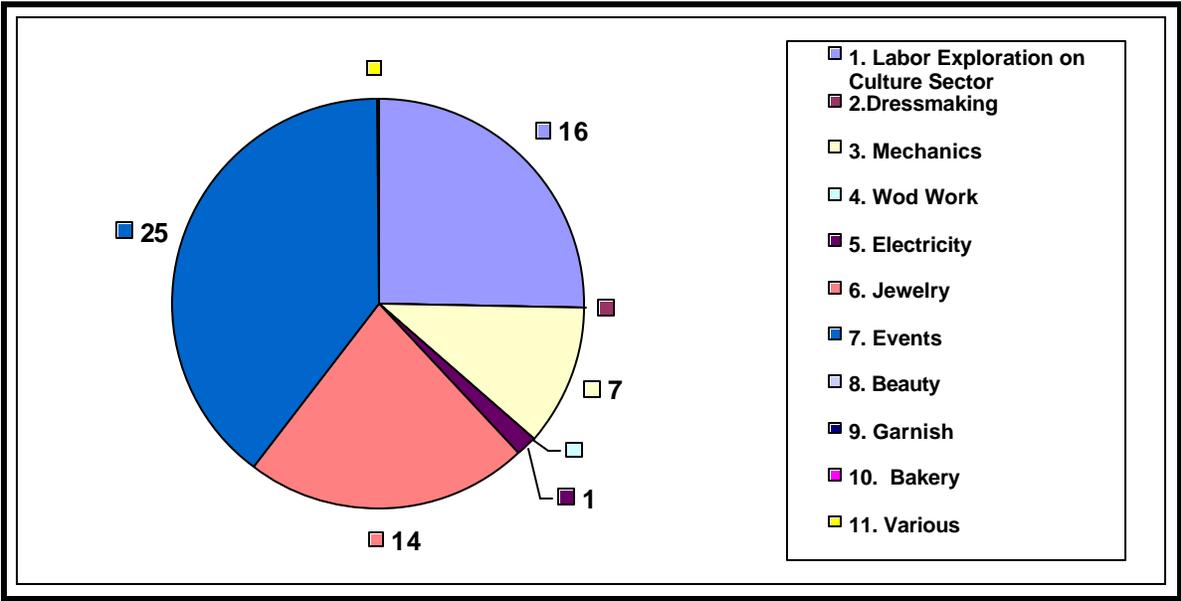
During this quarter, 63 scholarships were awarded as part of the employment strategy, that first explores the different productive sectors, as a previous step to begin a training process to acquire specific skills in this sectors. The scholarships awarded during this quarter represent 44.7% out of the total of scholarships assigned by the whole Program.

This result is explained by the emphasis given to the training processes in youngsters. and the orientation toward the specialization in a reduced number of activities, focusing on the basic pattern of goal sectors.

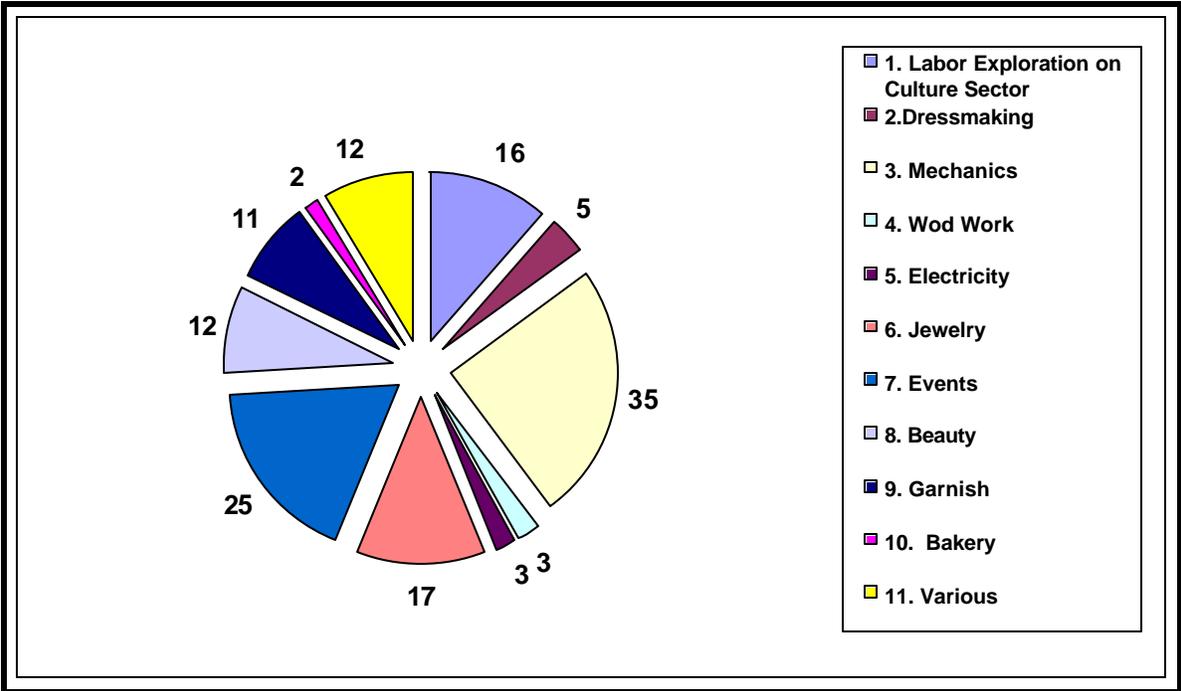
36.5% out of the total of beneficiaries are women, the 63.5% remaining are men. 25.4% of the scholarships were assigned to youths located at Specialized Centers, 30.2% at the Half Way Houses, 4.8% to youths that have returned to their families and 39.6% to youngsters on the Prevention Groups.

The scholarships were assigned focusing on the goal sectors. In that sense, 39.7% out of the total, were concentrated on the services sector, logistics of public events with emphasis in fairs; 25.4% on a special project of labor exploration in the cultural sector, that evaluates the employment options in this sector; 22.2% in Jewelry and 12.7% gave continuity to the training processes on mechanics and electricity.

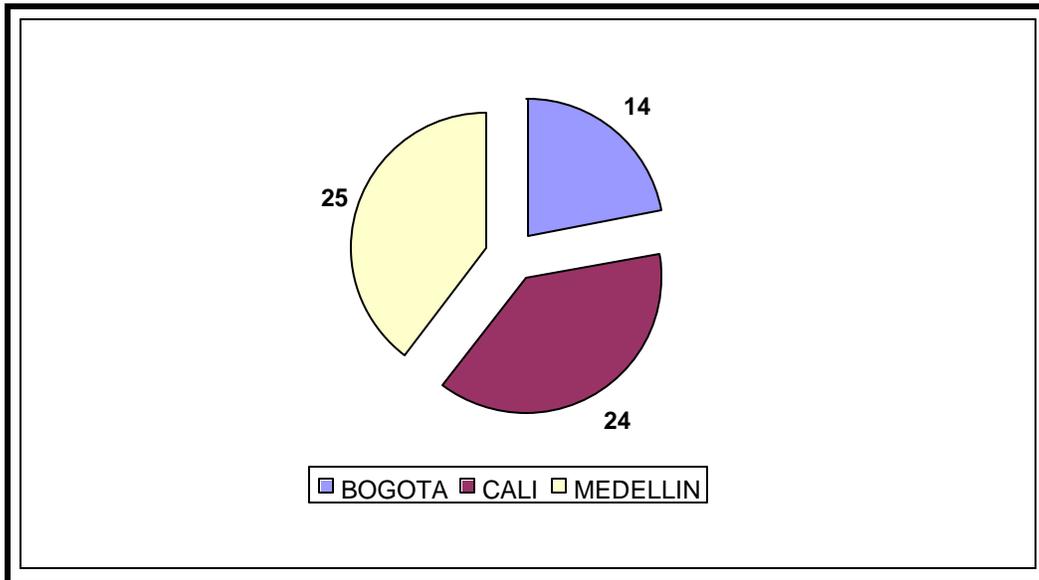
Graph # 13: Labor Training By Sectors : I Quarter 2003



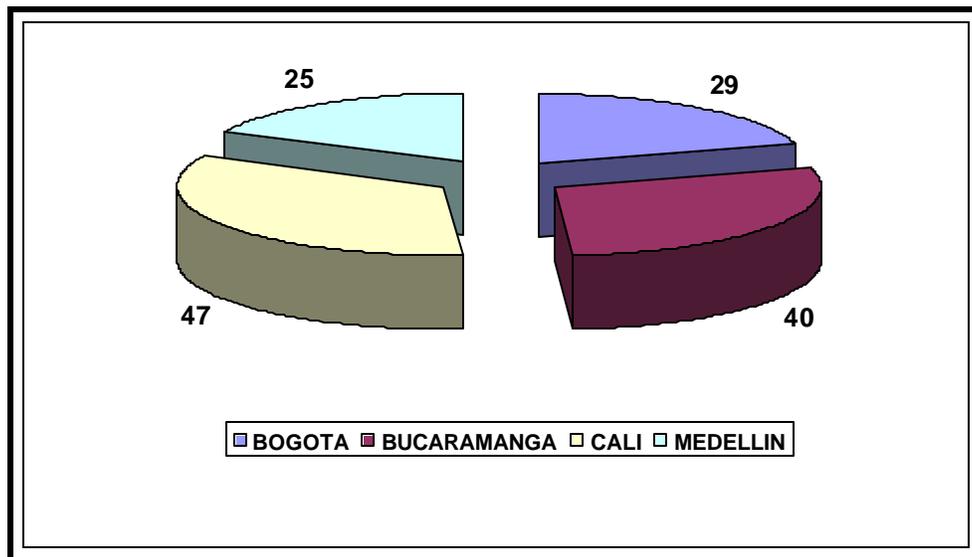
Graph # 14: Labor Training By Sectors: Acumulated Data



**Graph # 15: Labor Training By Cities: I Quarter 2003**



During this quarter, activities were focused in Medellín, (39.7%), Cali (38.1%) and Bogotá (22.2 %)..



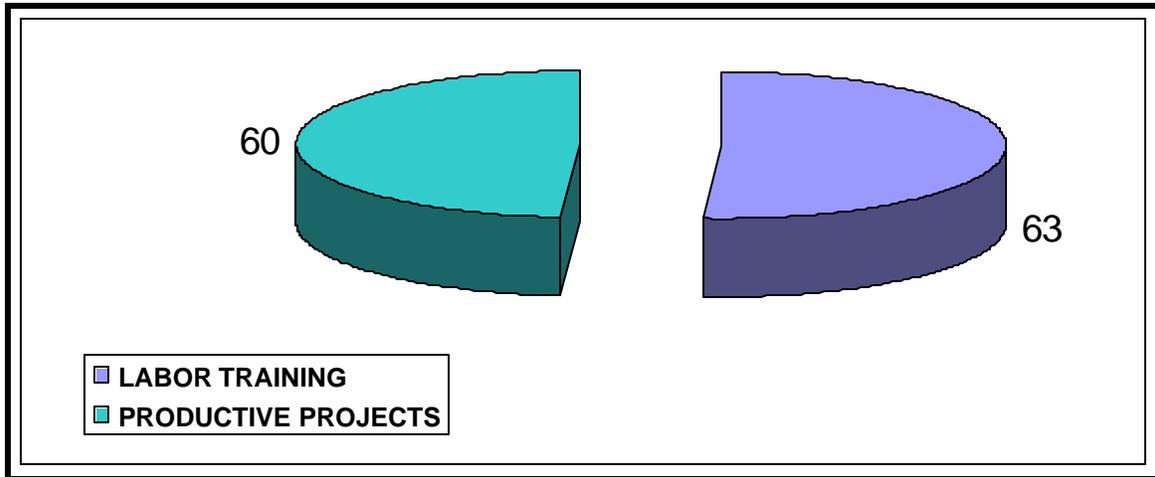
The pattern contribute to the development of a basic skills labor certification system. The 42 youths included in the on going productive projects are the initial point to establish regulations for a certification on 10 basic skills.

This pattern is assimilated to the one used in training processes in Bucaramanga and Cali, where 78 scholarships have been assigned to youngsters in training processes with labor orientation. The main difference with the previous process is that the trainers are specialized institutions that guarantee practices and the possibility of a future hiring. That is the case of the MAC Foundation in Cali, in the textile sector recognized by its wide experience in specialized training and the quality of its students.

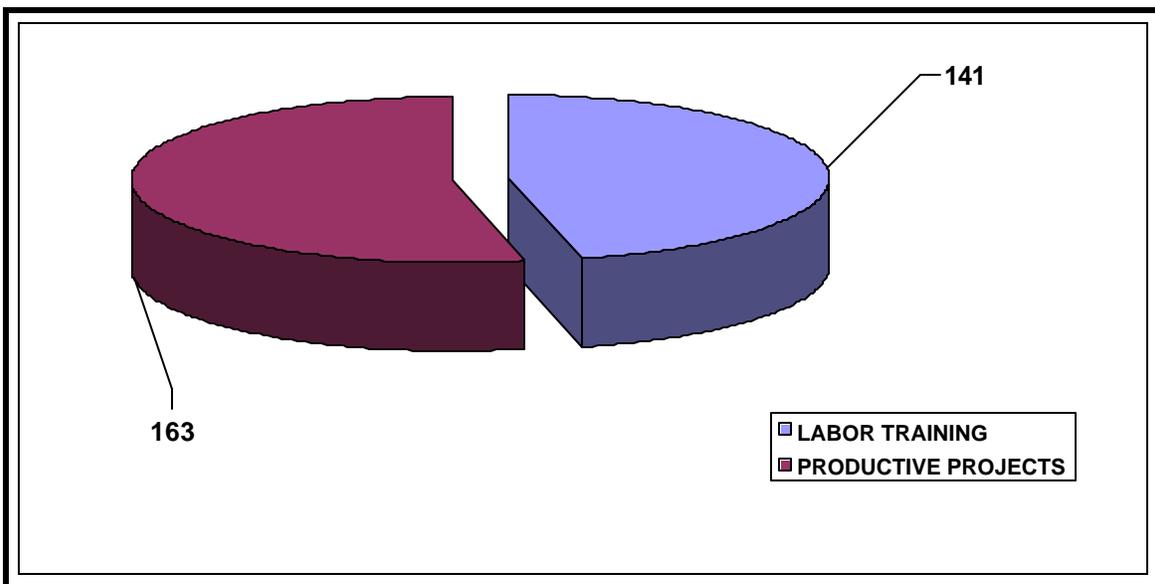
The Income generation and employment strategy present the following outcomes: 30.2% out of the total of youths (191) that were in Specialized Centers by January 2003, benefited by a scholarship of vocational training. At the same time, 79.5% out of the total of youths (44) located in Half Way Homes, by January 2003 participated either on an income generation project or a vocational training process.

There have been assigned a total of 141 vocational training scholarships, and 163 youths have been linked to the development of productive projects or labor practices.

**Graph # 17: Achievements On The Income Generation Strategy I Quarter 2003**



**Graph # 18: Achievements On The Income Generation Strategy: Accumulated Data**



## Legal Component

### a) Obtaining of identification documents

As shown in table # 9, during this quarter there was a 11% increase, compare to the previous quarter. 16 more children were granted their personal identification. This was performed by the professional team working in the centers and family defenders, who carry out the legal processes of the children.

**Tabla # 9: Number Of Children With Identification Documents**

TYPE OF INSTITUTION	NAME OF THE INSTITUTION	# OF CHILDREN WITH IDENTITY DOCUMENTS	# OF CHILDREN REGISTERED LAST QUARTER
Transit home	Luna	5	13
	José	11	10
Specialized Attention Center	Arco Iris	18	14
	Benposta	26	10
	Buendía	16	13
	La Bella	14	15
	Puertas Abiertas	20	16
	Semillas de Paz	12	11
	Melquíades	17	13
	Nueva Vida	10	17
	Ágape	10	11
	<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>143</b>

### b) Judicial Processes

Law 418/1999 was extended and further elaborated by Law 782 in late 2002. This contains an explicit statement of the rights and benefits that are to be accorded to those who voluntarily leave participation in the conflict and decide to reintegrate into civil life. In addition, Chapter 5 expressly addresses the particular needs and requirements of minors in the conflict. The law also fully recognizes and thereby legalizes the ICBF program and its specific protection mandate. It specifies the Ministry of the Interior and the ICBF as the governmental organs responsible for protecting the rights and meeting the needs of the child, as well as clarifying the education, health, and employment opportunities that will be accorded to each child.

Law 782 is critical as it clearly delineates the legal status of proceedings against “those who voluntarily disarm. They have the right to a sentence, conditional suspension of sentence, cessation of proceedings, and preclusion on investigation and inhibitory resolutions”. Until this law, anyone under 18 fell under the auspices of *Código del Menor* – the Juvenile Code.

Within this framework and around the legal standing for ex-combatant children in the process to social and economic reintegration, a set of training and orientation activities will be carried out for the next quarter. The aim is to teach the children about their rights and legal benefits they are entitled

During this quarter 113 judicial processes were opened and 38 were closed. Due the special type of process the judges can take 1 to 3 months to make a decision. However, legal

processes usually take much longer if the child remains under legal protection of the ICBF. Children who have an open legal process upon them, only can be transferred with the judge authorization.

**Table # 10: Children with legal process by department during this quarter<sup>36</sup>**

DEPARTMENT	# OF CHILDREN WITH AN OPEN LEGAL PROCESS	# OF CHILDREN WITH THE LEGAL PROCESS CLOSED
<b>Cundinamarca</b>	35	20
<b>Santander</b>	40	3
<b>Valle</b>	23	10
<b>Antioquia</b>	15	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>38</b>

**c) Monitoring Project with Human Rights Ombudsman Office**

Developing the Agreement subscribed with the Human Rights Ombudsman Office oriented to monitor “Children, and Young people under 18 years old, that in any condition had demobilized from armed groups”. The Ombudsman Office verified the human rights situation of demobilized children's, through the examination of one hundred (100) judicial procedures, one hundred (100) protection administrative procedures and 30 cases of children who graduated from the Program and entered the Reinsertion Program within the Ministry of Interior.

Examination of prosecution cases was oriented to established whether the fundamental right to the due process is guaranteed, as well as to know the normative foundations of judicial authorities actions; the kind of provisional and definitive protection measures taken by the judge; the role of the public and family defendants; children location and respect to their rights during the different judicial stages.

The information was obtained trough the revision of legal files, interviews with family judges and lawyers, assisted children, and the technical staff of operator NGOs.

123 Legal files were evaluated, 41 from girls, and 82 from boys. Their ages oscillate between 12 and 18 years old. The files were located on the Under Age Courts in Armenia, Bogota, Medellin, Popayan, Cali and Bucaramanga, and a Family Court in Calarcá. They also evaluated 92 protection administrative procedures, 31 from girls, and 66 from boys. Their ages oscillate between 11 and 18 years old; this procedures correspond to the zonal centers on Bogota, Bucaramanga, Cali, Medellin and Popayan. Additionally 88 young people were interviewed, 68% boys and 32% girls. Their ages oscillate between 12 and 21 years old.

The outcome can be summarized as follows:

- Out of the total of files evaluated since January 1999 until December 2002, we found 88 closed cases (72%) and 35 unsolved cases (28%).
- The fieldwork allow to establish that an ex combatant children prosecution case last 134 days (41/2 months) average, minimum Three days, maximum 594 days (1 year and 4 months).
- Cases still open, have lasted at least 227 days (7 ½ months)
- We found 81 pending administrative procedures, representing 84% of the cases, and 13 closed procedures, representing 13%. We couldn't establish the situation of three of the evaluated cases

<sup>36</sup> Still missing data on children at 2 centers, that are under custody of the ICBF

- 31% of the cases, showed that the protection administrative procedure began when the judge leave the child under ICBF protection. 29% of the cases showed that it began when the judge decided to locate the child on the Specialized Attention Program (PAE in Spanish). The rest of the cases, the child give in directly to the ICBF, or some other authority send him/her there.

This study demonstrated the need of establishing specific procedures to manage ex combatant children cases, in order to guarantee their right of a due process. It also shows that we must insist on sensitizing and training judges to manage this kind of cases. We also have to include on those trainings the international legal framework that rules the “Legal Route” to assist ex combatant children.

Finally we can conclude that there is still a need of extend all the actions taken to guarantee ex combatant children rights, and those actions have to involved not only the public authorities but also the communities in which children are inserted.

## Socio-Cultural Component

### a) Family Gatherings

In this quarter there was no family gatherings carried out, as a national ICBF strategy. There were some gatherings that were done locally, in some centers, and only with children who had entered the center recently. This has to do with the fact that the majority of the children who could reunify with their families did so, and it is just until recently that new children have entered the program, being a strategy set up for the next period on this theme.

When the children leave the program for family reunification, the procedure is carried out by the ICBF offices, at regional and local level, in collaboration with the Family Ombudsmen, and the social workers in the centers.

**Table # 11 : Number Of Children By Region In Family Reunification**

REGIONAL	NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY REUNIFICATION
<b>Cundinamarca</b>	12
<b>Santander</b>	3
<b>Valle</b>	1
<b>Antioquia</b>	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>

## Institutional Strengthening

### a) National Workshop

During March 6th and 7th , and with the support of the ICBF, a National Workshop was held in order to propitiate and inter institutional encounter including: ICBF national, regional and zonal centers, operator NGO’s, assisted young people, and OIM. Seventy five people assisted. The objectives of this Workshop were:

- Socialize and discuss the pertinence of the Program guidelines .
- Discuss and analyze the technical requirements for each of the phases of the Program.
- Establish the adjustments needed.

The methodology followed during the workshop was based on teamwork and discussion tables, one for each stage of the Program. The tables gathered the main ideas discussed and the topics that needed adjustments.

The workshop outcomes are the following:

- Reevaluation of the Program Technical Guidelines
- Inter institutional coordination in order to establish responsibilities, duties, and roles.
- Coordinated teamwork between Operator NGO's and ICBF zonal centers to topics such as supervision and following up.
- All the new plans and improvements reached on: Assistance, institutional strengthening and monitoring the processes, the institutions and the assisted young people.

The conclusions resulted from the discussion of the technical guidelines and the assistance procedures, are now being used to redesign and to adjust those same guidelines.

## **b) Save The Children UK Agreement**

The extension also includes the ICBF institutional straightening process, through the hiring of a professional staff (Including social workers, psychologists and gathering information systems professionals).

### *Final Outcomes of the SCUK – OIM Agreement*

At the end of this quarter the SCUK – OIM Agreement was finished. On the next paragraphs we present the outcomes of the work done by SCUK during 2002 and 2003, within the attention to ex combatant children and young people.

The purpose of the SCUK project was to straighten the Support Program for Ex combatant Children, as well as the public policies to protect and promote children victims of the armed conflict's rights

### *SCUK Contributions*

After trying to establish a tripartite technical committee (OIM-ICBF-SCUK) each institution assumed a role within the project; SCUK was in charge of: give technical and thematic advisory based on the children rights perspective; institutional strengthening of the ICBF and operator NGO's; and monitor the consultant contracts.

Some of the key issues proposed or initiated through the SCUK agreement were:

1. Institutional Strengthening: support in activities such as operative planning, evaluation of the work models and activities, construction of result indicators, evaluation by the assisted young people, among others. The outcome were institutional strengthening plans for the first Transit Home "Kairos", and each of the Specialized Centers at Cundinamarca (Buendía, La Bella, Arcoiris), Bucaramanga (Agarta), Cali (Puertas Abiertas) and Medellín (Nueva Vida). These plans were construct with the support of the technical staff of each institution, the ICBF, and the assisted young people.

### Results:

The attention models applied and the specialized centers were developed and improved, within the rights restitution framework

2. Systematization of the Pedagogic Journeys: The ICBF established a space for the discussion and the changing of experiences lived by the specialized centers referred to their attention models. This space was called Pedagogic Journeys. SCUK work closely with ICBF on the construction of the methodology used during the Journeys, as well as the systematization of them in order to create a data bank containing lessons for the future. Three Journeys were carried out, 24 people (average) assisted to each encounter. They include the participation of the centers' technical staff, the assisted young people and the ICBF.
3. Protection Policy Workshops: a series of workshops were carried out to discuss relevant topics referred to legal aspects, and basic concepts used on the construction of protection and equity policies, oriented to prevent the abuse and mistreatment at the Specialized Centers.
4. Contingency Plan: This study presents different alternatives to manage a massive children demobilization situation, as well as the cost of those alternatives.
5. Legal Matters: Its referred to a compilation of documents related to legislation on the Penal Responsibility of demobilized children.
6. Workshop guide to work on communities the "Legal Route": SCUK develop a methodological tool adapted to community work, in order to treat the Legal Route.
7. Systematization of the Legal Route workshops: They made a workshop guide to develop the ex combatant children topic with communities in a simple and understandable way. The systematization of the workshops gathered people's perceptions, imaginaries, and knowledge related to ex combatant and combatant children, as well as prevention and protection efforts. Fifteen people average, assisted to these workshops, and they were carried out on Cali, Bucaramanga, Barrancabermeja, Bogotá, Villavicencio, Medellín and Cundinamarca – Chía.
8. Hiring of Social Workers to monitor and follow up social insertion cases: the monitoring took place in four regions, oriented to improve the relationship and the communication between the Specialized centers and the ICBF Zonal centers (in charge of the technical supervision). They established the need of monitoring and support on the whole process of social and family insertion and reencounter. Additionally they implemented an impact follow up system with 63 cases.
9. Family reencounters methodology designing: The social workers support the family reencounter processes. The experience held in Cali was systematized, and a proposal to work with these families was presented to the technical staff in Bogota.
10. Network: An event was held to present the Program in the national and international context.
11. Educative Strategy Document: USCK work with Corporación Macondo to do a research on the educational experience of this institution. They analyze the educational level of the assisted children before entering the Program and the causes of their desertion. As a result of the research, an educative strategy for each phase of the Program was presented, constructed by a member of OIM, ICBF and SCUK.

## VI. SUPPORT TO INDIGENOUS AND AFRO-COLOMBIAN EX COMBATANT CHILDREN

### CHOCÓ

#### Children Recruitment Situation

Very little information exists on the recruitment of children to the irregular armed groups. The Regional Human Rights Ombudsman registered some few cases or denunciations from the indigenous population. According to the Ministry of Defense the recruitment of children to the irregular groups has diminished substantially this year, due to military operations being carried out permanently against these groups.

#### Prevention strategies

**a) Workshops on leadership training, orientation on human rights and international and indigenous legislation for indigenous children**

115 indigenous children and 35 adults of 15 communities of the village *El 18* were trained on human rights and indigenous legislation. The materials and methodologies were adapted, according to the different languages and dialects (*Embera, Chami, Katio, Tule and Wounaan*).

**b) Establishment of a network of human rights promoters**

The Human Rights Ombudsman for the regional office of the department of Chocó reached an agreement with the Technological University of Chocó, "Diego Luis Cordoba". The University is going to disseminate a human rights course for 50 students. These students will multiply what they have learned to the communities where the project is being implemented, benefiting ex-combatant children who belong to the Program.

**c) Carrying out preventive proposals on education, as a result of the diagnostics made in Istmina and Tadó:**

Due to the financial constraints experienced by the municipalities of Istmina and Tadó, the requested financial and technical support from the Program to improve the schooling system, (infrastructure, agricultural training, etc.) aiming prevent recruitment.

Following the initial contacts made in February and March with the Afro-Colombian communities (representatives from the Mayor's office, agrarian schools, peasants organizations and the public school system), workshops were planned to be started in April. The workshops will be organized around children's rights, human rights, international legislation on rights and the law 70. The target population will be the students in 11<sup>th</sup> grade (95 % Afro-Colombian and 5 % indigenous) in the agrarian school *Nuestra Señora de Fatima*, located in the village Playa de Oro, belonging to the municipality of Tadó and School *San Pio*, belonging to Istmina.

The methodology used with these children at the schools was developed by the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office,. 150 pamphlets and 4 videos are being used as teaching tools in the workshops carried out on the phenomenon of children's recruitment to and demobilization from the armed groups, violence on children, importance of the family, the right to quality education, the social reinsertion of the children, among others. There will be produced more copies of the videos, to be distributed for use in more schools and municipalities in urban and rural areas.

## **Social Reintegration Strategy (Income Generation Projects)**

### **a) Production of brown sugar (*panela*) and pigs breeding in the indigenous communities of Sabaleta and Carmen de Atrato)**

Sabaleta is situated around 60 km from Quibdó, by the road, close to the river Atrato . It is an indigenous village, belonging to the Chami tribe inhabited by 310 persons, around 50 families, of which 25 % are children. Its economy is on agricultural products, such as corn, beans, sugarcane crops, artisan type of fishing and breeding of chicken, pigs and bovine.

There has been a precarious situation for these people on public order during five months from October last year until March this year, due to activities from the two subversive groups, ELN and ERG ( Ejército Revolucionario Guevarista) , on constant blocking of the road, which is of great regional importance. This road is used for transporting the consumption goods that the population in Quibdo need. Sabaleta is a strategic village for the subversive groups , because they use it to pass between the mountains and the river. Therefore the governmental troops has carried out constant military operations in the area, making it almost impossible for the local people to carry out the programmed activities in the productive project, specially sugar cane crops and pig's breeding. Final investment amounts US\$13,066, benefiting 45 children.

The activities being carried out are the following:

- A construction for the sugar cane mill ( *trapiche*)
- Start of the production of the sugar cane
- Training on how to crop sugar cane (sowing, harvest, etc) , by the Technical Agricultural Assistance Municipal Unit (UMATA, by its Spanish initials), from the municipality of Atrato
- Training on how to marketing the product
- Training on how to use the mill
- Purchase of food for the animals
- Training on managing animals breeding (vaccination, use of local vegetal production as food for the animals)

### **b) Start up of productive projects, as a result of the diagnose made in Istmina and Tadó**

The prevention strategy for the children, include actions that will be develop during the next quarter , at a cost of US\$4,021 in Tadó and US\$4,672 in Itsmina.

### **c) Education**

During this quarter a project for the construction of two Tambo schools (typical construction) was approved. It entails the participation of the municipality of Piedepató. It aims to prevent children recruitment from the irregular armed groups. Also, the project will provide furnish the schools to improve the educational conditions of 75 children of the community. This represents a strategy of pacific resistance to the conflict, making it possible for this population to have their children in school. The project is in its initial phase.

## **CAUCA**

### **Context in The Cauca Region, Related to the Armed Conflict**

The armed conflict in the Cauca region, has been sharpened, due to military activities that have been intensified against the irregular armed groups. In addition, the recruitment of “peasants army soldiers”, has put them as war targets of the irregular armed groups. There is also presence of Self Defense Groups threatening local civil population and accusing them of being collaborators and accomplices of the guerilla groups. There are testimonies that talk about the increase of recruitment of children from the AUC.

### **Advances on Prevention and Assistance**

- Strengthen the raising awareness process with the indigenous communities regarding child recruitment
- Supported to the children to start or continue their education. Promote further initiatives from the *Cabildos* to create scholarship programs to support the children.
- Provided psychological support to some children.
- Preparation of the first CD of the musical group *La Maria*
- Participation in local cultural events *Tulpas por la Paz*
- Support to a cultural event organized by the children belonging to the *Yanacona* indigenous group
- Consolidation and merge of the cultural groups of the village *Guachené*, in the municipality of Caloto.

### **Development of the Pedagogical Proposal**

- Two workshops to strengthen their educational module have been organized with teachers from schools located in municipalities where the Program is being implemented.
- A diagnostic of the pedagogical module for teaching human rights and peace in the schools of the department was performed by the Secretary of Education and the Program’s team.
- Coordination with the Secretary of Education and with NGOs for the implementation of the pedagogical module for teaching human rights and peace. The pilot experience was carried out in the school *El Mirador* located Popayán (capital of the department).

### **Status of Income Generation Projects**

- Technical courses for the blackberry crops, hens, pig breeding and milk cow breeding were carried out
- Pig breeding for project and a local convenient store in Guachené, in the municipality of Caloto were started.
- Milk cows for the project in Rio Blanco, municipality of Sotar, were delivered.
- Agreements with institutions like Municipal Unit for Agro-Cattle Technical Assistance (UMATA), Agricultural Research and Training Institute (IICA), and National Learning Service (SENA), for further technical assistance to the children were made.
- A revolving funds for one of the productive projects was created
- Meetings with COLFRUIT, enterprise dedicated to marketing and exports of agrarian products were carried out in order to contact them with the children.
- Visits and technical assistance to each one of the projects were performed
- Exchange among the beneficiaries of the income generation projects
- Training to the *Cabildos* to strengthen their capacity in the agrarian production were carried out
- Meetings with the Department Secretary of Agriculture to design a production and marketing strategy for the program were carried out

**Table # 12 : Total Income Generating Project Beneficiaries by Ethnic Groups Cauca**

MUNICIPALITY	COMUNITY	ETHNIC GROUP	Total Beneficiaries		
			Income generation	Indirect	Total
SOTARÁ	Cabildo Indígena de Río Blanco	Yanaconas	19	95	114
CALDONO	Cabildo Indígena de San Lorenzo	Paeces	30	150	180
PENDAMÓ	Cabildo Indígena de La María	Guambianos	30	150	180
CALOTO	Cabildo Indígena de Huellas	Paeces	7	35	42
	Guachené	Afro - Colombians	2	10	12
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>88</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>528</b>

## VII. PREVENTION

### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY ACHIEVEMENTS.

#### Access to Education

During this quarter, the school restaurant at *Camilo Torres* School, was built and it is now running. The school is located in a poor neighborhood in Barracabermeja, Santander. According to our information system Barracabermeja presents one of the highest levels of child recruitment by irregular armed groups. The lot was remodeled, equipped and furnished. It is providing 500 daily lunches at a cost of US\$ 0.17 cents each. Not only the children but also their families and the school board have expressed that the School Restaurant has been a support on generating stability and preventing school desertion.

#### Awareness Raising

Four radio programs scripts were completed: 1) Recruitment and rights culture; 2) Family, domestic violence and early recruitment; 3) Social conflict, childhood and armed conflict and 4) Childhood, socialization and armed conflict.

Through these stories, narrated on a simple and quotidian way, the Program established 15 categories as the most important to understand the recruitment phenomena, in order to guide the families and communities on how to neutralize its negative impact. Family, socialization, society, democracy, government, irregular armed group, and demobilized young people, are examples of the issues discussed on these programs. We also have made some arrangements to produce and distribute the programs.

On the Annexes, two Life Stories have been included, as an example of the work done analyzing youth and armed conflict. These stories reveal the way in which these two young people conceive and relate to government institutions and to their families, the educational system and the armed groups they belong to. Through these relationships, young people build their identities as well as their sense of belonging and social rooting, their perception of other people and their development environment. Another result of this exercise is the understanding of the impact the Program has had on their life and their relationships. Also the way youngsters develop their social reinsertion process.

## Income generation

The conflict has changed towards a greater urbanization. The Program's strategy to prevent urban recruitment is to support income generating projects. A pilot project has been launched in the *Comuna* 13 of Medellín (department of Antioquia). This project benefits 25 children by training them how to organize, design and build stands, customer assistance and some other activities to coordinate fairs and events.

## VIII. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

### LEGAL STANDING (*RUTA JURÍDICA*)

The *Ruta Jurídica* has served as the roadmap to guide judges, lawyers and public officials on the step to ensure ex-combatant children rights restitution. During the previous quarter, as a result of the agreement with the Human Rights Ombudsman Office, 935 Public Ministry officials were trained.

During this quarter, workshops were carried out in Mocoa, Puerto Carreño, Medellín and Cali. These workshops trained 124 judges, community leaders and family lawyers, among others. To date, 2,000 pamphlets containing the *Ruta Jurídica* have been distributed. For the next quarter a new agreement with the Human Rights Ombudsman Office will be signed to continue the dissemination of the *Ruta Jurídica*, according to the recent changes issued in the Colombian legislation. During this new phase, training beneficiaries will be chosen from places with higher child recruitment and demobilization rate identified in the database of the Program.

At the end of this quarter the achievements obtained from the workshops can be summarized in the table below:

**Table # 13 : Dissemination of the *Ruta Jurídica***

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY	TARGET POPULATION	# OF CITIES	# OF BENEFICIARIES BETWEEN OCT AND DECEMBER 2002	# OF BENEFICIARIES BETWEEN JANUARY AND MARCH 2003
Human Rights Ombudsman Office	<sup>37</sup> Public Ministry Officials	37	935	124
SCUK	Community Leaders	11	95	57
ICBF	Military Personnel – Judges and Family Lawyers	6	200	0
<b>Sub Total</b>			<b>1.230</b>	<b>181</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>1.411</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Public Ministry Officials are referred to Under Age and Family Judges, Municipal Judges, Defendant Lawyers and Family Lawyers.

## SAVE THE CHILDREN UK – SCUK

During the present quarter the Program signed a budget extension of the Agreement established with SCUK, for an amount of \$19,280. This new funding was allocated for the institutional strengthening of the ICBF and implementing NOGs. Also, this allowed SCUK to carry out five more Legal Standing dissemination workshops for community leaders. 57 people were trained in Villavicencio, Cali, Medellín, Barrancabermeja, Bogotá, and the town of Chia in the department of Cundinamarca. During year 2002 and 2003 152 people were trained. The systematization of the workshops gathered people's perceptions, imaginaries, and knowledge related to ex combatant and combatant children, as well as prevention and protection efforts.

## PUBLICATIONS

### Los Andes University

During this quarter, took place the style correction and edition of the memories of the Seminar "Childhood and Armed Conflict: from demobilization to full protection of Children's Rights". The seminar was carried out in October 2002 with the support of the Ciro Angarita Lectureship for Childhood, at Los Andes University. Five hundred copies were published and the Memories were officially presented on April.

The following chart shows a review of the book:

Title	Proposer	Description	No copies	Language	Year
Childhood and Armed Conflict: from demobilization to full protection of children rights.	Manuel Manrique – UNICEF, Emilio García Méndez – Buenos Aires University, Beatriz Londoño ICBF, Wendy Arenas – El Tiempo, Beatriz Linares- Human Rights Ombudsman Office, Jorge Valles – UNICEF, Mario Gómez- Restrepo Barco Foundation, Giovanni Mejía - winner proposal	The Ciro Angarita Lectureship for Childhood was created as a response to the necessity of an academic space that allows the systematic discussion of the childhood protection doctrine, in order to propitiate normative, social and cultural changes.	500	Spanish	2002 2003
		<p>The " <i>Childhood and Armed Conflict: from the demobilization to full protection of Children Rights</i>" Forum was an opportunity to promote the analysis, discussion and dissemination of the ex combatant children situation, particularly the legal framework applied to protect them.</p> <p>The memoirs 2002 of the Forum " <i>Childhood and Armed Conflict: from the demobilization to full protection of Children Rights</i>" Include the presentations made and also the conclusions reached as a result of the debate.</p> <p><b>Publication Content</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Political considerations to treat offender children in Latin America. <i>Emilio García Méndez</i></li> <li>2. The Colombian Family Welfare Institute Historical analysis, Development and Critical Position. <i>Beatriz Londoño</i></li> <li>3. Ethics and Journalism: A Critical Vision on Childhood and the conflict. <i>Wendy Arenas</i></li> <li>4. Jurisprudence and Public Policies for Ex Combatant Children <i>Beatriz Linares</i></li> <li>5. Operative aspects and Experience on Demobilization. <i>Jorge Valles</i></li> <li>6. System of Juvenile Penal Responsibility. <i>Mario Gómez Jiménez</i></li> <li>7. Living the Culture: a Pedagogical proposal for diversity. <i>Giovanni Mejía Belt</i></li> </ol>			

## **Cinemateca Distrital**

The Agreement established with the Cinemateca Distrital during the previous quarter, allowed the inclusion of a cultural component, within the information dissemination strategy. The agreement involved the filming of the short film *Lúdica Macabrica*. It was edited and musicalized and delivered during this quarter.

The agreement also included the filming of a documentary, the winning proposal: *Circo para todos* was edited and completed in France during this quarter.

For the next quarter a public act will be held to present both films.

## **IX. LESSONS LEARNED**

1. The need to revise and update Program Guidelines. This became evident during the National Workshop, carried out with ICBF, implementing NGOs, assisted youths and international cooperation institutions - SCUUK and OIM.
2. The need to better coordinate between the National Headquarters of the ICBF and the Local Offices through the definition of their functions and responsibilities to improve the Program implementation.
3. The need to strengthen the local level and therefore the decentralization process by supporting the Local Offices with personnel and equipment.
4. The assistance model should be closely followed to ease the children's adapting and integration process (Transitory Homes – Specialized Attention Centers – Half Way Homes and/or Family Reunification).
5. Transfers of the children to the Specialized Attention Centers and to the Half Way Homes should be based on the youths' profiles, interests and social integration opportunities.
6. Continuous monitoring by the family defenders in coordination with the technical staff of the implementing NGO become an advantage for the reinsertion process.
7. Improve the second semester selection processes of the implementing NGOs to avoid delays in the contracting process under the Colombian contracts legislation and procedures .

## **X. EIGHTH QUARTER ACTION PLAN**

For the next quarter April-June of 2003 the following priorities have been settled down:

1. Adjust the organizational structure of OIM to implement the second phase of the Program. This will be based on 4 management areas: education, income generation, attention and prevention. To that extent managers and field monitors will be selected.
2. Consolidate the support plan for the ICBF  
Opening of three new Specialized Attention Centers in Bogotá, Bucaramanga and Medellín.  
Hire 8 Social Workers for the ICBF Zonal Centers.  
Complete the implementing NGOs costs analysis.
3. Implement a plan of institutional strengthening for the implementing ONGs that includes: Introduction to the program; planning, organization, administrative, financial strengthening; administration of projects and resources.
4. Complete the Monitoring and Tracking System, to qualify the users and to put it in operation.
5. Implement a follow up and monitoring plan with the implementing partners, according to the work plans elaborated by each area.

6. Train judges and family lawyers, specially those from departments with higher rates of children's recruitment and demobilization, on the Legal Standing for Ex-Combatant Children.
7. Consolidate the Income Generation and Employment Strategy, with the support of the economic sectors contacted.
8. Coordinate with USAID the appropriation of funds for the implementation of the second phase of the Program

## **XI ANNEXES**

## HISTORIA DE UN JOVEN EXCOMBATIENTE

La participación de niños en el conflicto armado es tan vieja como la misma violencia que azota al país. Sin embargo, la atención de esta problemática comenzó hace menos de una década. El reclutamiento forzado de menores es una de las graves modalidades de la Trata de Personas, identificada por la Convención de Naciones Unidas contra la Delincuencia Organizada Transnacional.

El Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (ICBF) ha sido pionero en este trabajo. OIM se unió a los esfuerzos del Estado colombiano en marzo del 2001, junto con Save The Children U.K, y creó el Programa de Atención a Niños, Niñas y Jóvenes Desvinculados del Conflicto Armado con la financiación de USAID.

En Colombia, entre un 15 y un 20 % de los miembros de las guerrillas y de los grupos de autodefensa son niños, según una investigación adelantada por la Defensoría del Pueblo en 1998. Hoy los estimativos indican que el número de menores reclutados por los grupos armados irregulares puede ascender a 7.000

El programa ha apoyado, desde su creación hasta marzo de 2003, a 733 niños desvinculados en las áreas de atención y reinserción social. La atención incluye nivelación educativa, orientación vocacional, actividades artísticas, culturales y atención psicosocial.

La primera parte de esta historia es el duro testimonio de uno de los jóvenes atendidos por el programa. El testimonio fue recogido por Iván Torres, director de una de las casas juveniles del Programa.

## UNA NUEVA OPORTUNIDAD DE VIVIR

*“La caminata comenzó en la Sierra de La Macarena, en el departamento del Meta. 350 combatientes guerrilleros, tenían la misión de hacer presencia en el Magdalena Medio de Colombia.*

*Al dejar atrás el departamento de Boyacá y adentrarnos en Santander, tras largas caminatas para acercarnos a nuestro objetivo hubo varios combates con un helicóptero del ejército. Fueron días duros, tuvimos que aguantar hambre, mascar hierbas, comer pepas de monte, tragar carne cruda.*

*En los combates con el Ejército, el fuego era intenso. Yo estaba asustado, escuchaba los gritos de los compañeros, oía el llanto de las compañeras y las veía que salían gritando, diciéndole a los soldados que se entregaban, que no les dispararan, que eran mujeres.*

*De un momento al otro, sentí ardor en las manos y en el pecho. Me miré sin detenerme y me di cuenta de que las esquirolas se me habían enterrado en la piel. No sabía para dónde correr.*

*Un tiro me alcanzó en el cuello y yo sentí un golpe en la nuca que me hizo girar como un trompo. Di un par de vueltas y caí contra el suelo, boca abajo. No sentí el cuerpo. Quedé pasmado. Eran como las 10 a.m. pero yo sentí como si fuera el atardecer. La luz se fue, hasta que todo quedó profundamente oscuro. En medio de esa tiniebla me*

*acordé de mi mamá. Me vi cuando era niño y yo salía gritando ¡mamá!, ¡mamá! Eso hice en medio de aquella oscuridad. Llamé a mi mamá para que me ayudara.*

*Me alzaron y me llevaron hacia el helicóptero y en vista de que no me quejaba ni daba ninguna señal de vida, me tiraron entre los otros muertos y me dejaron ahí. En ese momento me di cuenta de que estaba debajo de un montón de compañeros muertos. No podía moverme porque estaba abajo. Tenía el cuerpo empapado por la sangre de ellos. Por un lado pude ver el techo del helicóptero y no sé cómo logré mover las piernas.*

*En ese momento un coronel del ejército que iba ahí, se dio cuenta de que me había movido y comenzó a gritar: "¡hay uno vivo, hay uno vivo!" El médico le dijo que no, que todos estaban muertos. Entonces él se acercó y comenzó a quitarme muertos de encima. Cuando me destapó la cara notó que tenía los ojos abiertos y ordenó que me pusieran suero.*

*Entonces, sin saber por qué, el coronel me llevó al hospital y les dijo a los médicos que de todas formas me aplicaran el medicamento. Desperté al día siguiente. Cuando abrí los ojos, el cuarto estaba lleno de gente.*

*Cuando desperté no recordaba lo que había pasado. Necesité varios días para recordar cómo había llegado allí. Meses después, ya en el Programa de Apoyo a niños excombatientes en Bogotá, me recupero desde hace 2 años y medio de las heridas del cuerpo –y de las del corazón–."*

La vida le brindó una nueva oportunidad a Alexander. Ahora a sus 17 años su lucha ya no es por conservar su vida en medio de la guerra, sino por convertirse en un ser humano feliz y realizado.

Después de permanecer en una cárcel para menores durante un mes y de haber sanado físicamente, ingresó a un centro de atención especializada del Programa de Apoyo a Niños, Niñas y Jóvenes Desvinculados del Conflicto Armado, donde inició terapias físicas y psicológicas que le permitieron prepararse para el primer encuentro con su familia. La visita de su madre le dio nuevas fuerzas y estabilidad para superar la soledad que causan las heridas del alma.

Una nueva vida había iniciado para él y se integró a las actividades de capacitación que le brindaba el programa. Un buen comienzo fueron los talleres de panadería y la nivelación académica donde afianzó su lectura y sus conocimientos de matemáticas, español e historia.

Terminando esta etapa académica, se dio al reto de continuar estudiando. Actualmente esta terminado sus estudios secundarios. Ha sido una tarea dura, si se tiene en cuenta que hay muchas materias con las que no esta familiarizado y en ocasiones esto lo desorienta.

No es fácil encontrar un camino a su edad, en esta búsqueda ha aprendido técnicas de estampado para telas, conducción y a formado parte de actividades recreativas y lúdicas que le recuerdan que detrás de su expresión madura se encuentra un niño.

Existen personas que le han dado fuerza para continuar, la primera de ellas un pariente cercano que aunque pertenece a uno de los grupos armados le pide que ahora que tiene esta nueva alternativa no desfallezca y se mantenga fuerte. Aún recuerda las palabras al teléfono: “Alexander usted ingreso muy pequeño en el grupo armado y en unos años su futuro no puede ser el de asesinar personas.”

Estas palabras han tenido eco en su cabeza, lo acompañan a diario como las enseñanzas de Iván Castro, uno de los coordinadores de las casas juveniles donde los muchachos van después de superada la etapa inicial de adaptación y formación, quién le ha brindado confianza y apoyo.

Después de hacer parte del programa desde hace dos años, Alexander ha conocido un mundo distinto al que había percibido en el grupo armado, ahora habla de la creación de un proyecto de vida, donde estudiar sistemas es su principal meta. Es inconforme y cuestiona su futuro duramente. Cree que si sigue encontrando el apoyo y los recursos suficientes continuará estudiando y encontrándole respuestas a la vida con la que se volvió a encontrar en la mañana en la que abrió los ojos y se dio cuenta, de que todo continuaba a pesar de aquel violento combate donde lo declararon muerto.

## ORGANIZACIÓN INTERNACIONAL PARA LAS MIGRACIONES

### HISTORIA DE VIDA No. 2

#### **Yo tuve que vivir la guerra sin estarla buscando**

Mi infancia fue buena, sobre todo mientras estuve en la casa. Estudie en una veredita por allá en San Vicente del Caguan que quedaba como a una hora de mi casa. Todos los días me iba hasta allá a pata, porque aunque pasaba la lechera, para cogerla había que madrugar y llegaba uno muy temprano a la escuela. Me acuerdo los agarrones que nos pegábamos por el almuerzo. A uno le tocaba peliar para no dejarse quitar el almuerzo de los más grandes. Nosotros somos seis y con mi mamá siete. Tengo seis hermanas. Soy el único macho de la casa. Cuando terminé la primaria hice quinto, sexto y séptimo en un solo año, en un programa de validación. Además de estudiar le ayudaba a mi mamá rodeando los becerros para ordeñar y vender la leche, limpiando los potreros y a veces iba a la finca de mi abuelo a ayudarle a sembrar yuca y plátano. Vivíamos en el campo, en una vereda que queda como a veinte minutos de San Vicente. Allá ahora hay carretera y todo eso, no se si la construyó el gobierno o la guerrilla, en verdad no lo se... Cuando terminé séptimo me matriculé para octavo. En esa época estudiábamos todos en la misma escuela pero cuando empezó la secundaria pusieron el colegio en la misma finca de nosotros porque mi mamá donó un pedazo de tierra y con la gente de la comunidad, todos los que vivían en la vereda se construyó la escuela y del instituto mandaban los tutores. Me acuerdo que en octavo tuve líos con un profesor que me la montó de alegría y un día me junté con otros dos compañeros y me escondí en un filo y lo esperé. Apenas lo vi venir en la moto, con los compañeros lo agarramos a piedra y lo hicimos caer. Se fue a un barranquito y duró como un mes en el hospital. Después de eso no volví más al colegio a estudiar. Me dediqué a trabajar y cuando salía me iba a jugar billar a la tienda. En esa época la guerrilla comenzó a acercarse. Desde que tengo memoria me acuerdo verlos pasar en fila. Yo tenía doce años y cuando los veía pasar me ponía alegre. Es que uno en el campo siempre es aficionado a las armas. Me acuerdo que pasaban y con los amigos vivíamos pendientes a ver qué cargaban, que un revolver, que una pistola, que un fusil. Claro que yo nunca pensé en irme con ellos y eso que a mi papá lo mató el ejército cuando yo tenía como cinco años. Mi mamá me contaba que ese día tenían una reunión de la Junta de Acción Comunal y que mi papá se había levantado temprano con la abuela y el abuelo para ordeñar las vacas y hacer las arepas y el almuerzo pues pensaban llevar la comida. A eso de las cinco de la mañana se dieron cuenta que por la trocha subían varios carros, venían llenos de puro ejército. Ellos llegaron, entraron a la casa y mataron a mi papá, lo acusaron de ser auxiliador de la guerrilla, seguro porque ellos siempre pasaban por la casa. Mi papá era campesino, cultivaba la tierra, trabajaba el ganado, tenía empleados y mantenía la casa a lo bien, era un señor muy trabajador. Yo digo que eso no es p'a que lo maten a uno porque cómo se le va a decir a la guerrilla que no entre a la casa, o cómo va a decirle un campesino eso al ejército, o a los paras... No, uno no les puede decir nada de eso. Ellos hacen lo que quieren, si entran, entran y el campesino los atiende porque ese es el deber del campesino. Un día, cuando estaban haciendo la carretera, yo me había levantado temprano y estaba contento, ordeñando, cuando llegó un miliciano a la casa. Mi hermana estaba en la cocina haciendo las arepas p'al desayuno y mamá salía para pasarme una tasa de café. El miliciano se acercó y llamó a mi mamá, le dijo: "doña Ana, venga un momentico que la necesito". Mamá me entregó el café, cogió el balde y lo dejó al lado de la cantina de la leche, salió, habló con él y al rato fue que me di cuenta que volvía llorando. Yo dejé lo que estaba haciendo y le pregunté que había pasado. Ella me dijo, nada. Vaya coma algo rápido y alístese

mijito porque le toca irse con ellos. Yo le pregunté por qué y ella me dijo, vaya, alístese que ellos vienen ahora como a las ocho por usted. Yo entré a la casa y ella me alistó la ropa, la empacó en un bolso y me explicó que me iban a llevar a una finca para enseñarme a trabajar. Yo le pregunté que acaso que me faltaba aprender si yo ya sabía lo que tocaba hacer en la finca pero ella me dijo que de todas formas me tenía que ir, que estuviera tranquilo que en tres meses me volvían a traer para la casa... Yo la miré y le dije: "bueno mami, usted sabrá por qué dice eso". Di media vuelta y me alisté. Cuando llegaron por mí, vi a mi hermanita llorando. Ya había desayunado y había empacado en la maleta unas arepas que mi mamá me había empacado para que comiera por el camino. Me dio un beso y me dijo que si algo me faltaba o cualquier cosa llegaba a necesitar pues que la llamara o le mandara razón. Le di un beso y me fui... El recorrido lo hicimos con el miliciano que había hablado con mi mamá. Caminamos todo el día, salimos del Caquetá y nos internamos en el Huila. A eso de las siete de la noche llegamos a un campamento, el miliciano dijo que tranquilo, que esa era como la casa de un comandante al que le decían "Monazo", que era él el que me había mandado a llamar. Entonces me llevaron a una caleta en la que habían unos palos y me dijeron que durmiera ahí sobre esos palos. Esa noche aguanté frío como un tremendo. P´a colmo estaba lloviendo. Al otro día, como a las cuatro comencé a escuchar unos pitos. Venga cuñao, tómese un tinto –me gritaron-. Me acerqué al fogón, tomé café y enseguida me pasaron una ropa para que me la pusiera. Yo vi esos uniformes y le pregunté al que me había llevado: "oiga hermano y dónde es la finca". La finca? La finca es acá. Al rato me llevó al río y me enseñó a manejar la pistola. Después volvimos al campamento y, cuando volví a ver al "Monazo" le pregunté por la finca y el me dijo: "la finca es esta, mijo. Lo que pasa es que usted quedó reclutado p´a la guerrilla". Ese campamento era de puros milicianos, osea, personas que en el campamento son guerrillos y cuando salen a los pueblos son civiles que prestan servicios a la guerrilla: pueden recoger finanzas, hacer inteligencia y otros oficios que cualquier combatiente no hace. Para ser miliciano hay que ganarse la confianza de ellos, pero además le averiguan la familia y toda la hoja de vida de uno. Los que estaban allí tenían sus buenas armas. Después de eso me llevaron al río a bañarme. Era un chorro muy bonito. Habían varias muchachas bañándose. Al rato tocó pasar a recoger el almuerzo. Cada uno pasaba frente a la olla con su vajilla y yo ahí hasta que me dieron una vajilla. Entonces me explicaron lo de las formaciones y todo. Yo tenía entonces catorce años. Después de eso nos pusieron a trabajar: cortar leña, rajarla, cargar economía, almacenar remesas, conmigo habían como veinte muchachitos más. Ahí duramos como un mes. En esos días nos llevaron al río a ayudar a hacer una hamaca para poder cruzar al otro lado cuando el ejército subía. Trabajamos como quince días. Nos tocaba cargar unos cables gruesos como a dos días de camino. Cuando acabamos nos devolvimos para el campamento. Entonces me bautizaron con el nombre de Alirio y un día me dijeron Alirio! Alístese porque se va. Yo me puse contento. Pensaba en abrazar a mi mamá, en ver a mi hermana. Entonces supe que me habían escogido para hacer el curso que hacen los guerrilleros cuando entran. A caminar otra vez. Salimos rumbo a la sabana. Éramos como diez chinos los que salimos para curso. Yo conocía toda esa zona porque antes me mantenía por ahí. Al cruzar por la carretera me encontré con Orlando, mi casi hermano. Me preguntó para dónde iba. Le explique que teníamos que caminar hasta Puerto Amor y que allá nos estaba esperando "Monazo". Él lo único que me dijo fue: suerte! Nosotros seguimos y llegamos a las escuela como a las dos de la tarde allá. Cuando nos vieron nos saludaron, nos compraron una canasta de gaseosa y nos gastaron galletas. Ahí nos pusieron a voltear. Aprendí a armar y desarmar el fusil, a dispararlo, a manejar la M-60 todo. Conmigo había como unos 70 muchachos, hombres y mujeres, todos pelados. Me acuerdo que a eso como de los dos meses yo le pregunté al mando que se llamaba Oscar: "oiga y qué. Cuando se acaba el curso". Él me miró y me dijo, no..., si el curso ni siquiera ha empezado, esto no es ningún curso, el curso es adentro en la sabana, en la escuela. Yo dije. Si este no es el curso y nos están sacando el jugo, cómo será allá... Un día como a las cuatro de la mañana nos levantan y nos dicen: "alisten los

equipos porque nos vamos para la escuela". Yo pensé: ¿más adentro?. Sucede que mi mamá había ido a hablar con el comandante al pie del campamento en la sabana y allá le dijeron que yo ya no estaba por ahí, que ya me había ido p'a curso. Llegamos a la escuela un martes como a las cuatro de la tarde. Apenas llegamos nos dijeron listo, ahí está la madera, hagan caleta muchachos. Entonces hicimos la caleta, guindamos el toldillo y la carpa. Allá lo entrevistan a uno, le hacen la hoja de vida, digamos allá una hoja de vida tiene sus datos, ellos averiguan todo y comprueban que todo sea cierto sino, tiene uno problemas. En esa escuela si se ve muchísima gente, vienen muchachos de casi todas las partes del país. Peladitas, peladitos, muchachos y personas mayores. De donde veníamos, el comandante me había mandado como responsable de los setenta que iban conmigo. Eso hace que uno se sienta más que los otros, para qué. El único que llevaba arma era yo. Llevaba dos pistolas, cuatro proveedores y un radio para estarme comunicando. Me tocaba llamar todos los días a las siete de la mañana y a las cuatro de la tarde. Estar de mando es bueno pero claro, eso también implica más responsabilidad porque hay que estar pendiente de todo. Si alguien se llega a desertar, ahí tiene uno su problema; además, a uno le toca levantarse más temprano, le toca reunirse con los mandos para ver cuál es la actividad del día. El primer día como llegamos tarde, nos dejaron descansar. Al otro día a las cuatro de la mañana sonó el pitazo. En ese momento comenzaron a gritar afuera: formaaaaar! Formar con equipoooo! Cuando dicen eso hay que levantar todo. Lo único que hay que dejar son las tablas donde se acuesta uno. Dieron orden de atrincherarse. Nosotros corra de un lado para otro porque no conocíamos las trincheras y grite, donde quedan las trincheras!!! Al fin las encontramos y nos metimos, nos tuvieron ahí como hasta las siete de la mañana, esperando, esperando a ver qué era lo iba a pasar. Cuando se da la orden de atrincheramiento uno no se puede retirar hasta que vuelvan a pitar. Yo estaba preocupado porque tenía que comunicarme. En esas pitaron y nos dieron orden de formar otra vez. Yo aproveché y saqué el radio, extendí la antena y me reporté. Me preguntaron cómo estábamos y yo dije que bien. Ahí nos entregaron una parte de la dotación, porque allá le entregan a uno las cosas a su tiempo. Cuando ingresa le entregan una parte y por allá como al mes la dan el resto. Ese día nos dieron papel higiénico, crema dental, ropa interior, medias, camisetas, cosas personales y tres uniformes. Ya cuando uno es más antiguo le dan cuatro, le pueden entregar dos verdes y dos camuflados. Pero al principio son puros verdes. Ese curso fue un gallo. Tres, cuatro, cinco meses metido allá. Lo primero que lo ponen a hacer a uno es pasar el túnel. Se pone uno el impermeable, dan la orden y se tiran todos. En el túnel hay culebras pero con tanta gente pasando, arrastrándose, el rato ya están todas muertas. Ahí dura uno como dos horas metido, dando vueltas, hasta que sale justo en el caño. Después del túnel se pasan unas llantas rodeadas de chuzos. Los pies deben caer justo en las llantas sino, se le entierran esos palos en las patas. Enseguida se pasa por las chontas, por alambrados y llega por fin el polígono. Se baña uno. En el río hay unas tablas y unas balsas. Ahí se baña uno pero imagínese como a ciento cincuenta personas bañándose ahí. Mientras que uno se baña los otros lavan y así. En el polígono salí bien. Tres tiros, tres dianas. Como el 28 de mayo, se celebra el aniversario de las FARC, ese día llegaron allá Marulanda, el Mono, todo el secretariado. Nos hicieron formar y todos los mandos a entregar revista de sus tropas. Yo estaba asustado, claro. Me daba miedo equivocarme y que me pusieran a voltiar. Cuando le toca el turno a uno se hecha la bendición, pita y a formar para presentarle la tropa al mando. Esa escuela es grandísima y ese día estaba llena. Tropa por todas partes, bien formada, todo muy ordenado. Se ubican por áreas, los del Bloque Sur, los del Bloque Caribe, todos en diferente alineación. Uno le entrega al mando superior. Le entrega la tropa formada, numerada, bien alineada. Se presenta. Le entrego tantos hombres, más el que los está mandando, quedamos a su disposición. El recibe y le dice a uno forme y va uno y se forma. Se mete en la formación y ahí si queda como cualquiera. El mono nos saludó y nos puso una prueba. Había un filo alto. Se tardaba uno en subir como cuatro horas. Entonces dijo que la compañía que subiera y bajara en menos tiempo, quedaba de record del curso. Esa noche había fiesta. La compañía que ganara, no tenía que pagar guardia

y había trago y comida, lo que se comieran. Claro, todos estábamos dispuestos a ganar. El Mono sacó la tropa de él. Sesenta hombres. Los formó y les dijo: “ustedes quedaron de record hace cuatro años, entonces, no se lo vayan a dejar arrebatarse de estos ingresos”. Ellos eran hombres que llevaban seis, siete años en la guerrilla, buenos combatientes porque eran de la escolta del Mono. Listo. Alistamos el equipo, lleno, con su economía, todos bien equipados. Si otra compañía iba caminando y lo encontraba a uno podía agarrarlo como quien dice prisionero y se lo llevaban. Salió primero la tropa del mono. Cuatro horas y no regresaban y el Mono preocupado, estos hijueputas no llegan! Cada veinte minutos salía un grupo. Habíamos como unos tres mil. Cuando salían unos, los otros ya estaban llegando. Nosotros nos gastamos tres horas y media, eso sí, al trote, corriendo... Quedamos de record. Entonces el Mono se puso rabón. Cogió a su gente y les pegó su vaciada. Les dijo vea, se van a dejar ganar de estos ingresos, ni mierda. Se devuelven otra vez! Claro, la gente ya estaba cansada, cuatro horas y media caminando y les tocó devolverse. Nosotros contentos, aunque todos tenían puros fusiles de palo. En esas dieron la orden: “las armas en el armerillo porque nos vamos a enfiestar”. Ahí dejamos esa mano de palos. Bueno, yo también porque además de las pistolas me tocaba cargar mi palo. Esa noche fue un destrabe. Me acuerdo que un man se mató porque encontró lo vieja con otro. Cuando sonó el tiro hubo alarma, pero al rato se supo la cosa. En esa ocasión fueron cuatro días de farra. Todos bailando. El Mono bailando pura música norteña y trago y comida al piso. De ahí salimos bien porque a medida que uno hace cosas buenas, se va ganando más confianza. Después, cuando ya se iba a acabar el curso a todos nos dieron fusiles AK47 nuevecitos. Ese día llegaron como unas seis mil armas, nuevecitas. Tocó sacarlas, desenvolverlas, quitarles toda la grasa, limpiarlas y dejarlas brillanticas. Después a polígono con ellas. Después vinieron las camionetas y nos volvieron a llevar para el campamento donde habíamos estado la primera vez. En esos días me dieron permiso de ir a la casa a visitar a mi mamá. Había pasado como un año y medio. Yo estaba flaco, comía bien, pero estaba flaco. Llegué a la casa, en moto para que no me vieran mucho. Mamá estaba toda contenta y yo también. Hasta lloré de la alegría de volver. Duré ocho días ahí en la casa. De ahí me fui otra vez. Vinieron y me recogieron... El primer combate que tuve fue en Puerto Rico Meta. De allá salí vivo de milagro. Esa es una de las experiencias más duras que me ha tocado vivir. Ahí fue donde vi muertos, muchos muertos. Cuando nos fuimos para el área de combate, el Monazo me dio mando sobre una guerrilla. Me asignó el reemplazante los mandos de escuadra y todo. Cuatro mandos. Dos principales y dos reemplazantes por si uno llegaba a faltar. Así nos fuimos. Llegamos a San José del Guaviare, pasamos a Puerto Rico y nos metimos al Meta. Nos reunimos como dos mil guerrilleros para esa toma. Se veía guerrilla en esa sabana por todas partes. El objetivo era tomarse la base del ejército que había allá. Llegamos como a las once de la noche, rodeamos la base a pesar de que llegaban helicópteros a cada ratito. A las dos y media de la mañana dieron la orden y ahí empezó lo bueno. Alrededor de la base habíamos armado como cinco cortinas de guerrilla. Empezaron a disparar los de adelante, los demás cubríamos y avanzábamos cuando ellos avanzaban. A mí me tocó como en la tercer cortina. Ahí uno se ubica, hace su hueco para atrincherarse. Cerca de donde yo estaba había un palo. Me hice por la parte de atrás, me atrincheré y como a eso de las siete de la mañana llegó la aviación. Yo estaba lo más de contento dándole a un OB10 y no me di cuenta que un helicóptero me había alineado, era un Black Home. El piloto me alinió y dio la vuelta p´a lanzar el cohete. Yo estaba disparando. De pronto vi que el avión se abrió, voltié a mirar y vi al helicóptero listo p´a mandar el cohete, pegué un brinco y me salí. En ese momento escucho que eso estalla ahí contra el palo. El estallido arrancó el árbol como si hubiera llegado un buldózer con toda su fuerza, lo arrancó de raíz, levantó ese árbol como si fuera de papel. La tierra tembló y al ver y oír aquello me dio miedo p´a qué... Me dio miedo, pero del miedo, miedo. El ejército desembarcó la tropa en medio de las cortinas de la guerrilla. Bajó su gente toda vestida como nosotros, todos con distintivos de la guerrilla. Ahí mataron la última línea guerrillera completa. Los mataron porque se confiaron. Cuando los vieron pensaron que era gente de nosotros. Los

cogieron a todos en las trincheras y ahí los acabaron, a cuchillo. Mataron como a unos quinientos guerrillos que formaban esa cortina. La aviación también mató a muchos pero nosotros nos llevamos como a doscientos cincuenta soldados. De ahí salimos en la noche. Como a la una de la mañana. Salimos después de pelear dos días. Cuando salimos había mucha neblina. Casi no se podía ver. Llegamos a un monte y por los scanner supimos que iban a bombardear el montecito ese. Salimos rápido y en esas preciso nos bombardearon. Arrancamos a caminar. Los soldados iban amarrados con puro nudo guerrillero al cuello, esposados, cerquita el uno del otro, no había ni un paso de distancia entre ellos, casi no podían caminar. Si se caía uno se caían todos. Si alguno intentaba correr, jalaba al otro y prácticamente lo ahorcaba. De ahí los metimos a la zona de distensión, porque ya eso era zona de distensión y pasamos a Puerto Lleras. En el combate de Puerto Rico mataron por ahí unos setecientos guerrilleros, nos dieron duro, p'á qué. En Puerto Lleras los cogimos durmiendo. Les caímos en las caletas y los matamos a todos, eran como unos ciento cincuenta, estaban durmiendo. Solamente se voló uno, herido. Se montó en una ambulancia que iba pasando pero más adelantado la guerrilla paró la ambulancia, lo bajó y lo mató. A la final no se salvó ninguno. De ahí el otro tropel duro que me tocó fue la toma a Mtú. Ese es el operativo más grande que ha hecho la guerrilla, el más largo, el más complicado porque el terreno es montañoso, lluvioso, pantanoso. Allá el ejército había construido o reconstruido una base, porque esa como en tres ocasiones se la ha destruido la guerrilla. En esos días había hartísimo ejército. Cerca a la base había una laguna, pero ellos decían que por ahí no se pasaba la guerrilla. Esa laguna no la cuidaban tanto porque ellos nunca esperaban un ataque por ahí. Pero la guerrilla llegó, minó la laguna por los lados y se metió al agua. En esa ocasión se utilizaron hombres con tanques de oxígeno que llegaron prácticamente hasta la base. Mientras tanto, los que íbamos por el otro lado, empezamos a pelear y los otros se les metieron por la laguna. Me acuerdo que cuando nosotros nos replegamos, salimos hacia la laguna y el ejército se metió a la laguna dizque detrás de nosotros. A esos los mataron a puro cuchillo, entre el agua. Ese combate fue muy sangriento. Para nosotros la parte dura fue con la aviación. Como en esa base hay aviones, ahí mismo salían y entraban, fumigaban, bombardeaban, eso fue muy duro. Nos tocó salir por la laguna, nos quedamos sin comida, todos mojados, nos tocó aguantar hambre, pero hambre de verdad... Ahí nos tocó salir corriendo y la aviación nos persiguió bastante. En la toma prácticamente no tuvimos bajas, pero en la salida si nos dieron duro. Sobre todo porque la población civil le ayudó muchísimo al ejército. Claro que la guerrilla no podía quedarse con esa y después de un tiempo volvió a cobrar lo suyo: a fusilar a los sapos. De ahí nos fuimos a descansar. Nos mandaron como once meses para un sitio que bautizaron Puerto Mosco, porque había una mano de moscos ni la tremenda. Me fui de mando para esa unidad, contento por estar de mando pero con mucha responsabilidad. Claro que lo que más me aburrió fueron los moscos, tocaba trabajar duro en una finca ahí en la sabana, bolar machete, rodear las vacas. Entonces me decidí a solicitar traslado. Llamé por la tarde, pedí permiso y me dijeron listo, a las siete entréguele el mando al reemplazante y véngase para acá. Me fui solo. Cuando llegué me mandaron con una unidad a recoger finanzas y a toriar a los chulos. Nos unimos con otra unidad que había en esa zona y yo estaba de reemplazante de la columna. Tenía mando, pero me tocaba obedecerle al mando principal. Todos los días caíamos y hostigábamos a los soldados. Les dábamos un mortero o les disparábamos y nos íbamos. El helicóptero aparecía y rafagueaba, claro que no rafagueaba a donde estábamos nosotros sino en otro filito que había. Un día el mando se fue hacia Florencia y se llevó la mayoría de la tropa. Cuando él se fue se fue yo me bajé p'al pueblo. Dejé encargado al reemplazante y le dije que iba a traer unas viejas del pueblo y algo de licor para que tomáramos un rato. Me llevé al mejor hombre que tenía, bajamos a unas dos horas del pueblo y nos pusimos a tomar con un miliciano. Ahí cerquita estaba el ejército. Mandamos traer viejas, comida y trago con el miliciano. Los manes se emborracharon. Se tomaron sus tragos y se fueron con sus respectivas viejas p'al cuarto. Yo me quedé ahí y en ese momento fue que se me entró la idea de volarme. Todos estaban

dormidos ya. Lo único que cogí además de mi fusil fue una pistola y un minicrucero que llevaba, caminé hasta el río, me trepé en una lancha, aunque no la podía prender porque de pronto los despertaba. Empujé la lancha y la dejé llevar por la corriente. Como a los veinte minutos se enredó la lancha. Ehh!, yo todo piedra. Pensé prenderla pero me dio miedo hacer ruido, sin saber si por ahí andaba en ejército o qué. Dejé la bendita lancha ahí y me tiré al agua con todo lo que llevaba. Nadé hasta la orilla con una sola mano porque en la otra llevaba el fusil. Salí, escurrí las botas y empecé a correr. Corra y corra. La linterna se me había quedado en la canoa. Estaba oscuro. Eran como las dos de la mañana. Alumbraba con un reloj de ciento cincuenta memorias que tenía para cruzar los caños y corra otra vez cuando salía al potrero. Llegué a un montecito y ahí había una puerta. Pasé por debajo y ya me iba a meter cuando escuché un tropel que venía del otro lado, frente a mí. Cuando escuché el tropel cerquítica me puse a disparar cuando ehhh!, me doy cuenta que eran unas vacas. Maté como a tres vacas. Del miedo que tenía me dio fue risa. Llegué a la carretera y me fui al trote, pasé junto al ejército que estaba acampado a lado y lado de la carretera. Menos mal que los centinelas estaban dormidos sino..., hasta me matan. De la base ya me habían visto bajar pero ellos pensaban que la tropa que estaba al lado de la carretera me había cogido. Llegué al cementerio y escondí las armas, solo me llevé una pistola pequeñita. Escondí todo y me metí al pueblo, como entra un guerrillero a un pueblo, escondiéndose de todo, tratando que no lo vea la policía, que no lo vea el ejército, nadie. En esas pasó una patrulla de la policía ellos estaban alertas porque en esos días estaban matando policías en el pueblo. Dejé que pasara la patrulla y cogí un taxi. Lo encañoné y le dije que me llevara al Idema, a la base del ejército. Cuando llegamos le dije: hágame un favor, vaya dígame al teniente que está allá en la garita que viene un guerrillero a entregarse. Cuando vi que venía de regreso me bajé del carro y empecé a caminar hacia el puesto. Apenas llegué ellos se vinieron, Yo les desarmé la pistola y ellos me hicieron parar frente a la pared para requisarme. Eran como las cuatro de la mañana. Me ofrecieron comida y ropa seca. Yo tenía mucho sueño y me dejaron acostar ahí en la garita. Cuando amaneció estaba esposado y eso me dio mucha piedra. Entonces los madrié, les dije que qué era esa vaina, que si fuera a volarme o a hacerles algo ya lo hubiera hecho. Ahí me tuvieron como ocho días. Entonces yo les di información. Yo no lo hacía por divertirme. Lo hice de rabonada, de rabia por tanta charla que le dicen a uno. En ese momento pensé porqué tiene uno que matar a esos manes si ellos están igual que uno y ni culpa tienen de estar allá. Además me volvió la piedra contra la guerrilla, sobre todo por haberme reclutado sin yo haber querido, entonces le dije vean, en tal parte hay como catorce o quince minas sembradas, si quieren subimos y yo las desactivo, yo les dije eso porque ellos ya iban para allá y seguro que esas minas los hubieran matado. Iban a acampar preciso donde nosotros las habíamos puesto. Los manes aceptaron. Salimos como a las ocho de la mañana, unos doscientos soldados, todos encapuchados para que no me fueran a reconocer por ahí, quien sabe, de pronto un miliciano, un informante, cualquier persona. Salimos todos uniformados, con fusiles de los de ellos, pero no me dieron ni un solo tiro en el proveedor. Llevaba cartucheras, chaleco, morral, todo igualito que ellos pero no llevaba ni un tiro y con treinta manes al pie, custodiándome, pendientes de que no fuera a tenderles una trampa y seguro con la intención hasta de matarme si llegaba a decirles mentira. Subimos, buscamos el cable con la puñaleta y desactivamos todo. Un soldado que estaba haciendo un reconocimiento se encontró por allá abajo con el guerrillero que iba a detonar las minas. Se encontraron frente a frente y quedaron los dos apuntándose, ninguno hacía nada, parecían bobos. De pronto se dispararon y se mataron juntos. Ahí se armó la balacera pero a mí me sacaron rapidito, trajeron un helicóptero que me llevó a la base de La Arandía, de ahí me llevaron a Florencia y de ahí a la Fiscalía... De Florencia llamé a mi mamá y le dije que no se preocupara que yo estaba bien. A ella le habían dicho que a mí me habían matado en el Huila. Mi mamá se fue hasta Florencia, habló conmigo y, como el juez había decidido dejarme en libertad, me mandó para Bogotá. Después de eso ellos han ido a buscarme a la casa muchas veces. Allá llega un comandante que se llama Nicolás y le pregunta a mi mamá por mí y le dice

que él sabe que yo estoy en Bogotá. Recién llegado me hicieron un atentado. Yo estaba viviendo en Candelaria La Nueva y un día yendo de San Francisco para la casa me salió una camioneta y tres manes se bajaron y me encendieron a plomo. Yo corrí, rodé y en esas llegó la policía y los agarró. Después me llamaron de la Brigada y me preguntaron si los conocía y les dije que sí, que eran milicianos, y les dije a que Frente pertenecían y todo. Entonces me ofrecieron que trabajara para ellos, me dijeron que yo conocía bien la zona de distensión y que tenía información que para ellos era importante. Yo estaba aburrido y pensé unirme al ejército pero después lo volví a pensar y decidí que no, no se..., me dio miedo que fuera a pasarle algo a mi mamá o que fueran a matar a mi familia. Después de eso pude entrar al programa del ICBF y ahí ando, un poco aburrido por el encierro, pero contento de tener tranquilidad.

**CONFLICTO / LA HISTORIA DE CINCO GUERRILLEROS**

# ‘Yo voy a el

Por primera vez, una escuadra de guerrilleros, con su mando a la cabeza, se entrega al Ejército. No quieren ahondar del pasado, tan solo hablan de las causas de su deserción. Esta es su historia.

Los dos guerrilleros que desertaron ocho días antes de las filas del Eln, en las montañas de Antioquia, llegan forrados en chaquetas de gabardina y peluche, recién compradas.

Los sudan los manos y miran



Los sudan las manos y mirar inquietos a los escasos clientes de la cafetería, en el centro de Bogotá.

–‘Pedro’ –dice a secas uno de ellos al ofrecer su mano curtida.

–‘Alberto’ –anuncia el otro. Es alto y macizo, de manos grandes y callosas.

Los dos desertaron con sus fusiles, lo cual hace más temeraria su acción, pues la guerrilla persigue con mayor saña a quienes abandonan sus filas con armamento.

Se entregaron en una base militar junto con su comandante y con otros dos insurgentes rasos, un hecho sin precedentes en los cuatro años que lleva el proceso de desmovilización, afirma un oficial del Ejército.

En este lapso, 2.575 hombres y mujeres se han acogido a los beneficios que les otorga el Gobierno a quienes abandonen los grupos armados.

Los cinco insurgentes que desertaron, según dice ‘Pedro’, estaban decencionados por el tra-



**LA DESERCIÓN** en los 2002, 1412. Los del Eln

De los 275 guerrilleros militares que se entregaron en 2002, 157 provenían de las filas del Eln; 67 de las Epl, y de grupos dis-

Entre los combatientes capturados había 48 mujeres y 48 menores. Estos últimos pasaron a ser beneficiarios del programa de desmovilización. En este proceso, hay otros 45 menores que han sido capturados por las

Para estos menores, el programa de desmovilización ofrece beneficios que han tenido c

Son las mismas ideas que rodearon en la cabeza de sus compañeros. ‘Jesús’ el jefe del pequeño grupo al que fue asignado de

...eran aceptados por el tra-  
to que les daban sus jefes y des-  
moralizados porque no podían  
ayudar a sus familias ni a la po-  
blación civil.

## La procesión, por dentro

‘Alberto’ no sabe leer ni escri-  
bir. Tiene 24 años. En su casa  
eran demasiados hijos y solo  
unos cuantos pudieron pisar  
una escuela. Llevaba tres años y  
medio en el Eln y había ingresa-  
do a esa organización influen-  
ciado por algunos milicianos de  
su vereda.

‘Pedro’ tiene la misma edad.  
Pasó siete años como miliciano,  
antes de ser llamado al monte.

Un año después, según dice,  
comenzó a pensar que las cosas  
no eran como se las imaginaba.

–Se habla muy bonito de la  
revolución, pero se hace otra co-  
sa... esos carros bomba en los  
que muere gente inócente, la  
gente que toca desplazar porque  
hablan con el enemigo, –expli-  
ca.

–Uno brieiga para  
que está desmoraliza  
si se dan cuenta dice  
es infiltrado, un floje  
dor, –asegura ‘Pedro’.

–La orden es ajustic  
quiera que le propon  
que se vuele, así sea  
de uno, –agrega.

Por fortuna, él no  
sidad de hacerlo. ‘Jes  
prendió una mañana  
propuesta que le sonó

Ocurrió después d  
no.

–‘Jesús’ estaba ese  
nervioso. Uno lo not  
ojos, en la cara... Se m  
comenzó a hablarme  
blación, de lo dura qu  
da en el monte... y así  
metiendo–.

–¿Y usted qué com  
¿Está aburrido...?, –di  
que le preguntó de pro

–Yo estaba tan cans  
do que ahí mismo le d  
me dejan retirarme, y



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26.03.03

# NACIÓN

RECLUTAMIENTO / GUERRILLA OFRECE 'BECAS' EN MEDELLÍN

## El 'Icetex' de las

El pago de la matrícula semestral y de subsidios mensuales a alumnos que acepten trabajar con ellos es la última modalidad de infiltración detectada en varias universidades.

### REDACCIÓN NACIONAL

'Becas' para estudiar en la universidad, con 'auxilios' incluidos a lo largo de los semestres, son la última estrategia detectada por los orga-

A cambio de ello, los jóvenes se comprometen a hacer inteligencia dentro de los claustros, a hacer propaganda cuando se pueda, y en últimas a colaborar en acciones terroristas.

"Las organizaciones subversivas ejercen el viejo esquema de 'encostalamiento', sobre todo entre los primiparos", explica la fuente militar de Medellín. El 'encostalamiento' consiste en detectar en primer semestre a aquellos estudiantes que asisten a foros y asambleas y se destacan por sus intervenciones. Luego les piden el nombre, teléfono y correo electrónico con el pretexto de seguirles

LO:  
teli

nismos de inteligencia del país con la cual las guerrillas están infiltrando a varias universidades.

Esta modalidad de penetración subversiva se está desarrollando en varios centros de educación superior del país, pero ha sido detectada particularmente en la universidad de Medellín, en la de Antioquia, y en la del Cauca, en Popayán. La primera es privada y las otras dos son instituciones públicas.

De acuerdo con el coronel José Édgar Herrera Betancourth, comandante de la Policía Cauca, y una fuente de inteligencia militar en Medellín, la metodología que usan el Eln y las Farc es sencilla: lo primero es encontrar estudiantes que, por necesidad o por razones ideológicas, estén dispuestos a trabajar con ellos. Lo segundo es proveer el dinero de la matrícula cada semestre, y lo tercero es suministrar un 'auxilio' mensual.

enviando información.

Así se inician las llamadas y las invitaciones a 'tintiar'. Al poco tiempo les pasan textos de Marxismo-Leninismo y los invitan a reuniones por fuera de la universidad.

Tal vez el caso más estudiado de todos es el de la Universidad de Antioquia. Según inteligencia militar, allí la presencia de las Farc y el Eln es de más o menos 30 militantes. Los Comandos Armados Populares (Cap) son alrededor de 7, todos ellos armados.

Además de la militancia, otra tarea que cumplen estos 'becarios' de la guerrilla es suministrar información acerca de estudiantes miembros de familias con capacidad económica que pueden ser objeto de secuestro o de extorsiones. Esta modalidad se ha visto en la Universidad de Medellín.

"Entre 9.000 estudiantes de pregrado es casi imposible percibir o controlar una infiltración -asegura el rector de esa institución, Néstor Hin-

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