OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME TO PROVIDE POST-EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO DISPLACED GROUPS AND RECEPTOR COMMUNITIES IN COLOMBIA

December 2002

IOM International Organization for Migration

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Programme to Provide Post-emergency Assistance to Displaced Groups and Receptor Communities in Colombia* is part of a larger, global strategy implemented by IOM to assist the Government of Colombia and the international community in their efforts to restore peace and to address the difficult problem of Internally Displaced Populations - IDPs. Three other programmes are running simultaneously:

1) *Strengthening Peace through Civil Society Initiatives at the Community Level* with a total budget of US$ 8,133,804 financed by the US Government;

2) *Support Programme for Ex-Combatant Children* funded by the US Government for a total budget of US$ 2,500,000;

3) *Community Strengthening Initiatives in Northern Ecuador* with a total budget of US$ 17,642,195 funded by the US Government too. Implemented in another country, this programme addresses however the problems caused by the movements of populations and refugees in Northern Ecuador due to the conflict in Colombia.

Activities are closely co-ordinated by IOM's main office in Bogota, to benefit from complementary interventions and to avoid duplication, political or security problems. This is especially important in view of the complexity of the conflict in Colombia and the difficulties in achieving peace between the fighting parties. During the evaluation it has been possible to observe the important work done by IOM Bogota in achieving an efficient institutional framework with the Government, the local authorities, the UN System and NGOs.

The programme's title contains the words 'post-emergency', as the programme was signed at the time of active peace negotiations. However, in the meantime, conflicts between the different factions and the Government of Colombia resumed, bringing with it the problems of displaced populations. As it was still possible to work in the regions initially covered, IOM decided not to stop its activities. A significant element in the programme's implementation has been the close relationship with the UN System and UNSECORD in particular concerning security management. In September 2002, a two-year extension was approved by USAID, bringing the total budget of the project to US$ 27,110,125.

The overall objective of the programme was:

> '*To contribute to the peace process in selected regions through actions which address the threat posed by the increased incidence of internal displacement by providing post-emergency and transitional assistance to internally displaced persons, increasing the absorptive capacity of receptor communities and promoting stability in at-risk populations through community-led development initiatives*'.

./…

Six broad components were selected for intervention, each with specific project purposes to be achieved:

- Income-generating activities
- Medical attention and preventive health
- Educational services and special programmes
- Community-led development
- Social communication and peace promotion
- Transitional housing solutions

Apart from some minor problems for implementation of transitional housing solutions, e.g. difficulties concerning land ownership in Colombia, the evaluation confirms the programme's effectiveness in achieving the six components' specific objectives. The programme is also considered cost-effective. All interviews conducted also underline the important role played by IOM for the support to the Government and local authorities in managing the difficult problem of IDPs.

The relevance of the programme's strategy was also examined: IOM's intervention was found to accord with Colombian Government policy and the situation in the field. Intervention strategy was also properly coordinated with the UN System, UNHCR in particular. The work of NGOs in that field was analysed in depth by IOM for effective collaboration. As underlined during interviews, the donor was also impressed by IOM's intervention strategy regarding IDPs and assistance to receptor communities.

The relevance to IOM's mandate is analysed in the context of the Organization's assistance to IDPs. It is concluded that the programme accords with IOM's Constitution and policy for IDP assistance. The intervention does not conflict with the policy of the UN System, nor of other international organizations and NGOs. It has, in fact, received the full support of the UN in Colombia and of the Colombian Government.

A section of this report covers an analysis of the monitoring, auditing and evaluation conducted by IOM Bogota. The office deserves special praise for its work. Adequate and efficient financial management, with local auditing procedures, the development of an integrated monitoring system, with regular and very good reporting, and a system of impact analysis through detailed indicators contributed to this positive note. Efficiency analysis was positive.

Analysis of the programme's impact and sustainability has not yet been conducted. Sustainability will be examined by IOM Bogota during the second year of the approved extension, in 2004, taking into account the frequently changing situation of the conflict in Colombia. IOM Bogota has been recommended to organize an impact analysis at a later stage, using as a main tool the recently-finalized system of analysis through detailed indicators.

As regards strategy replication in other countries, it has already been emphasized that IOM Colombia's achievements should be used as a reference for IOM in the management of IDPs. The programme's methods and IOM's overall intervention approach could also be used as models.

Ayudanos buen Señor, a terminar la violencia
y a componer la consciencia, de tanto especulador
de tanto acaparador más de un mi11ón de usureros
nos tienen en puros cueros, y es el siglo del terror

y alerta pues colombianos, de unos y de otros partidos
que en este país tan bello nos encontramos jodidos
Colombia tiene una herida por causa de la inconsciencia
y solo por la injusticia quel país esta perdido.

venganza no más existe, hambre miseria y dolor
y es esta maldita guerra, la causa del descontrol

es un destierro mi patria, no aprecian al hombre honrado,
son muchos los campesinos que se encuentran desplazados
el campo se encuentra solo, en posesión de malvados
quien cultivará producto para traer al mercado?

estemos todos unidos sin políticas ni odios,
que haya trabajo y comida, sin dejar el campo solo
no causen más descontento, vivamos como Dios manda
seamos todos hermanos y terminemos la rabia.

Luis Daniel Hurtado Gaviria*

* Poem written for the field visit of the evaluator and recited during the focus group discussion.

1.   BACKGROUND

1.1 Conflicts and Peace Processes in Colombia

An understanding of the complex situation prevailing in Colombia, in terms of conflicts and peace processes, is key to the elaboration of an effective intervention strategy. Colombia, with a population of more than 39 million, has been plagued by political violence during the last century and is now considered to be one of the most violent countries in the world, despite being a democracy. It is the only country in the world where, in a period of one year (1989-1990), three presidential candidates have been assassinated. As a result of the increasing self-defence forces and guerrilla offensives, large numbers of people, many of whom are women and children, are forced to flee and are congregating in shanty towns on the margins of the cities.

Many attempts to bring peace to the country have been made during the last fifty years, but with little success: the situation became even worse during the 1990s, but at the end of the decade fresh negotiations were initiated to open up a new peace process with the support of the international community. In 2000 the Government of Colombia put in place the 'Plan Colombia', comprising four main strategic components: social and economic recovery, a negotiated political solution of the internal armed conflict, the fight against drug trafficking, and institutional reinforcement and social development.

Unfortunately, at the time of writing this report the peace negotiations have broken down and major military offensives have resumed.

Apart from the regular government forces, different factions are also involved in the conflicts:

-       guerrilla groups that have been operating since 1940/1950; two major groups were part of the recent peace negotiations, the FARC and the ELN[1]; other, smaller groups are also operating in the country;

-       self-defence forces or AUC[2] operate in many municipalities of the country but their territorial presence is not as extensive as that of the guerrillas; however, reports underline that their power of confrontation is increasing;

-       the drug cartels are not directly involved as political factions in the conflict, but take advantage of the instability to increase their power base in some regions; also, the huge amounts of money generated by cocaine trafficking attract the interest of fighting factions; such a situation only renders the Colombian conflict more complex and increases delinquency in the major towns, the level of violence reflecting the overall situation in the country.

---

[1] FARC: Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia; ELN: Ejercito de Liberación Nacional
[2] AUC: Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia.

The security situation is not only affected by the confrontation between armed forces, but also by violent acts against the civilian population, often poor peasant farmers from rural areas. Assassinations, massacres, kidnappings, indiscriminate bombings, rape, arbitrary detention, and robbery are all used by armed forces involved in the conflict, whether guerrilla, self-defence forces or drug cartels. As an example, around 2,000 kidnapping cases are reported every year, 60 per cent being the responsibility of various guerrilla groups and 40 per cent of self-defence forces and unknown groups. From January to October 2000, 2,965 persons were kidnapped and 432 disappeared. Forced recruitment is also becoming an increasing problem in rural and shantytowns, especially among children and teenagers. Many civilians are therefore compelled to flee, to escape the rising tide of violence, making the displacement of populations one of the greatest problems confronting the Government.

In the last few years there has been strong hope that peace negotiations will be possible and will lead to an end to the conflict, political and social violence and population displacements. It should however be noted that assassinations, kidnappings, massacres, disappearances and bombings were still taking place during the peace talks.

One characteristic of the conflict in Colombia is worth underlining: even if the situation has been ongoing for 50 years now, it has never been an all-out war with well-defined zones under the control of a given group with clearly defined goals. It is more a guerrilla-type conflict, but use of terrorist methods and intimidation is rising. Groups and militias are present in most regions and major towns and are active depending on different factors, for instance the control of drug trafficking routes. In addition, it is not a conflict involving just two factions. As mentioned above, all the groups are fighting independently, often based on economic and political interests, without a definite alliance or clear political agenda.

The intervention of the Government of Colombia (GoC) is further complicated by the complexity of the conflict, its nature and the political implications. This is why it is possible to have periods of peace in one region whilst in another the intensity of conflict is increasing with its violence and population displacements.

1.2 The Problem of Displaced Populations

"…The rest of the Colombian population is hardly aware of the forced displacement of people that has occurred and is occurring in the country. That is why such displacement has been called a silent and clandestine process. However, society has to acknowledge the humanitarian tragedy facing the country before the hundreds of thousands of displaced Colombians can be cared for. That is the only way of involving all Colombians in efforts to deal with the devastating effects of forced displacement on people..." (Constitutional Court, Judgement 30 August 2000)[3]

---

[3] Theme Group on Displacement, 'Situation of displaced persons and challenges for 2001', January 2001.

This judgement clearly illustrates the situation of Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs) in Colombia. Two major issues can be identified:

1) *A humanitarian tragedy*: more than 2 million Colombians have been displaced due to the conflict between 1985 and 2000. In 1998, 1999 and 2000, the numbers of displaced persons per year reached an all time high with respectively 308,000, 288,000 and 228,000 victims. *"In summary, 5% of the Colombian population [...] has lived the dramatic situation of displacement because of violence in Colombia[4]"*. For the same period the capital Bogota registered approximately 400,000 displaced persons, which represents 6.7 per cent of its total population[5].

2) *A silent and clandestine process[6]:* three reasons are behind such a statement. According to the legislation, every displaced person can benefit from Government assistance insofar as they register themselves as such. However, displaced populations fear reprisals from the armed groups who forced them to flee their region of origin and are reluctant to register officially. In addition, the displacement can occur in several phases, from the countryside to the nearest small town and then to major towns in the country where it is easier to remain anonymous. Secondly, these populations often face problems with the receptor communities, who are often just as poor as the displaced persons and do not appreciate the preferential treatment given to them, especially in view of the unstable economic environment. Finally, many of them are poor peasants who are not even aware that they can receive assistance if they register upon arrival.

One of the most notable efforts made by the GoC to address the problems of IDPs has been the adoption in July 1997 of Law 387 *Measures for the Prevention of Forced Displacement[7]*. This is a comprehensive law that defines the internally displaced persons, their rights and the obligations of the Government towards them. It also gives the regulations for the prevention of forced displacements, return, relocation and family reunification, and for the socio-economic consolidation and stabilization of the displaced populations. The GoC recently adopted another Decree to protect the property of displaced populations, as it had become common practice for the armed groups to 'confiscate' property and then sell it without the owner's agreement.

In order to enforce the Law, a Presidential Decree of March 1999 assigned the Red de Solidaridad Social (RSS) with the responsibility for coordinating the

---

[4] CODHES/ACNUR, 'Desplazamiento Forzado Interno en Colombia: Conflicto, Paz y Desarrollo', November 2001.

[5] CODHES, 'Senderos; Rostros Invisibles del Desplazamiento en Bogotá', September 2001.

[6]"La memoria esta ahí, intacta, lo que pasa es que uno la esconde para no recordar, como tratando de echar al olvido tanta tragedia, como si el silencio hiciera las cosas mas fáciles, como haciéndonos pasito, porque nos dieron muy duro, hablando bajío para que los niños no se asusten otra vez, porque no han dejado la cara del miedo"'. CODHES, "Senderos; Rostros Invisibles del Desplazamiento en Bogotá", September 2001.

[7] Ley 387 – Medidas para la prevención del desplazamiento forzado; la atención, protección, consolidación y estabilización socioeconómica de los desplazados internos por la violencia en la República de Colombia – 18 de Julio de 1997- **Annex 7.**

development and functioning of the National System of Assistance and Information to the Internally Displaced Population[8]. RSS is mainly tasked with the registration of displaced populations and for delivering the economic and social assistance provided by the GoC. It also coordinates the assistance to displaced populations funded by the international community and works closely with other GoC bodies.

---

[8] Translated from the Spanish: Sistema Nacional de Información y Atención Integral a la Población Desplazada.

2. EVALUATION SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The main objective of the evaluation, as described in the Terms of Reference (**Annex 1**) is: " *to evaluate IOM overall performance and achievements during the first year of implementation of the programme, including recommendations for a viable exit strategy, and to assess IOM strategy for delivering post-emergency and transitional assistance to internally displaced populations"*. Although there was a delay in getting the exercise under way, there were no negative consequences for the evaluation, due to the unexpected political events in the country as mentioned in Section 1.

The methodology consisted of a documentation review of the material produced by IOM in the framework of its interventions. It also covered documents on the conflict in Colombia, the IDP phenomenon and the action taken by the Government and the international community to establish a peace process and manage the problem of displaced populations. A series of interviews with key elements and beneficiaries, and field visits were also organized. As mentioned in the Terms of Reference, an impact analysis will not be a priority, as implementation continues, however suggestions for a future impact analysis will be made. This will also depend on a possible stabilization of the population following new and violent incidents.

The report is divided into three main sections based on the specific objectives set out in the Terms of Reference of the evaluation. **Section 3** includes:

- a presentation of IOM's programme implementation strategy and the strategy for implementation of other complementary activities, including in neighbouring countries;

- an analysis of the institutional arrangements for programme implementation, including issues of personnel security;

- an analysis of the mechanisms put in place for programme monitoring, auditing and evaluation. Efficiency analysis will be included under this section.

Section 4 analyses the following aspects of the programme:

- relevance of the strategy to the prevailing situation and GoC policy, including the relevance of the regions and target groups selected;

- relevance of the programme to IOM's mandate;

- effectiveness in reaching the objective and project purposes of the programme, in particular with regard to:
    - income-generating activities
    - medical attention and preventive health
    - educational services and special programmes
    - social communication, stabilization and peace promotion, including also community-led development
    - transitional housing solutions

- cost-effectiveness.

As mentioned above, **Section 4** also discusses the impact and sustainability of the programme. Recommendations on an exit strategy (as proposed in the Terms of Reference of the evaluation) will not be made. A two years extension of the programme has been approved in September 2002 and the situation in Colombia can still change before completion.

Section 5 gives a brief analysis of the programme's potential for replication in other countries facing the same kind of problems.

3.   PROGRAMME STRATEGY AND COMPONENTS

This Section presents the strategy adopted by IOM in Colombia in view of the complexity of the situation, as described under **Section 1**. There is also a brief presentation of the institutional arrangements for programme implementation and the mechanisms put in place for its monitoring and evaluation.

3.1 Peace Strengthening and Assistance to Displaced Populations

The IOM intervention in Colombia started in September 2000 with the implementation of the programme *Strengthening Peace through Civil Society Initiatives at the Community Level* funded by the Office for Transition Initiatives of the United States Agency for International Development (OTI/USAID[9]). At the time of implementation negotiations between the GoC and the warring parties were under way, with the support of the international community. Indeed there was every hope that the peace process would lead to a stabilization and resolution of the conflict and IOM and OTI/USAID therefore agreed to support the Colombian civilian population at this crucial moment of the peace process.

The initial strategy was based on the following programme objectives to:

- Increase the participation of Colombia's civil society in peace-promoting activities at local level;

- Promote increased discussions between local actors on themes related to the conflict and peace by strengthening channels of dialogue and improving local access to reliable information;

- Enhance citizen participation in peace-promoting processes at the local level as a means of promoting greater unity within the community.

During implementation, three more areas of activity were agreed upon:

- Support to Regional Peace Commissioner's offices;

- Assistance to victims and related issues;

- Support to war-affected groups excluded from Development and Peace Processes.

The target groups defined in the programme document are war-affected groups; new and emerging NGOs and civil society; and governmental offices engaged in peace promotion.   The total budget including extensions up to December 2004 amounts to US$ 8,133,804.

At the same time IOM was studying the possibility of implementing a programme to provide assistance to internally displaced populations who were recognized as being one of the most negative consequences of the conflict, as emphasized in **Section 1**.   In October 2000, the programme for *'Post-*

---

[9] For a summary table of the different programmes implemented, see **Annex 3.**

Emergency Assistance to Displaced Groups and Receptor Communities' — the subject of this evaluation — was approved by the GoC and USAID provided US$ 12 million to fund it. In September 2002, an extension up to September 2004 was confirmed by USAID for a total budget of US$ 27,110,125.

The main objective of the programme was stated as follows:

> *'To contribute to the peace process in selected regions through actions which address the threat posed by the increased incidence of internal displacement by providing post-emergency and transitional assistance to internally displaced persons, increasing the absorptive capacity of receptor communities and promoting stability in at-risk populations through community-led development initiatives.'*

The document also identified six broad components, the project purposes of which are more narrowly defined as follows:

1. Income-Generating Activities to:

- *provide immediate opportunities for employment for the target group;*
- *provide training opportunities to enhance skills and capabilities of displaced and vulnerable persons, thereby increasing their opportunities for gainful employment;*
- *increase family incomes among target group by facilitating employment and self-employment opportunities (through appropriate NGOs).*

2. Medical Attention and Preventive Health to:

- *lessen the strain placed on health services in receptor communities as a result of the influx of displaced groups by strengthening these to respond better to an increased caseload;*
- *lessen the strain on water and sanitation infrastructure in receptor communities and improve the management of these services at the community level, which in turn results in an improvement in overall health conditions of the target group;*
- *support affected individuals among the internally displaced population to overcome psychological trauma or related problems.*

3. Educational Services and Special Programmes to:

- *attend to special education needs presented by the beneficiary group, product of their displacement or vulnerability;*
- *strengthen the response capacity of the Secretariat of Education to the increased demand on already-strained educational services in receptor communities, thereby facilitating the integration of displaced populations.*

4. Community Led Development to:

- *facilitate community organization in communities with a high incidence of displacement to strengthen their capacity to resolve common problems;*
- *promote stability in vulnerable communities that face a high-risk of future displacement through community-led development initiatives.*

5. Social Communication and Peace Promotion to:

- *strengthen channels of communication between local actors and groups to facilitate dialogue and raise awareness;*
- *facilitate increased dialogue between key actors to better respond to the needs of the target group, resolve conflicts and generate local policy dialogue on long-term solutions to the challenges of displacement;*
- *promote creative, grassroots solutions to overcome obstacles to the peace process confronted at the community level.*

6. Transitional Housing Solutions to:

- *contribute to the implementation of transitional settlement solutions by supporting displaced and vulnerable populations to attain basic housing.*

The main target group was defined as the internally displaced populations officially registered by the Government and vulnerable persons in the receptor communities. Six Departments particularly affected by displacements were selected for the intervention[10].

In December 2000, a third programme covering peace reinforcement and assistance to displaced populations was implemented on the border of Ecuador with Colombia. The main objective was to provide assistance to selected villages and towns, especially those affected by the arrival of migrants fleeing the conflict in Colombia. The Government of Ecuador and Colombia invited IOM as an Observer at the ministerial meetings organized between Ecuador, Colombia and UNHCR on management of displaced populations in the border zones. The initial budget of the programme amounts to US$ 7,900,000. A one-year extension was approved in September 2002 amounting to US$ 9,742,195.

Finally, a fourth programme, focusing on assistance to ex-combatant children, was started in March 2001. Although this programme is more specifically targeted than the other three initiatives, it was developed in the same vein of contributing to the peace process and providing assistance to the victims of conflict. USAID has also agreed to fund this intervention, the budget for which is US$ 2,500,000. Programme completion is planned for March 2003.

---

[10] See map in **Annex 4.**

3.2 The Institutional Framework

Four main levels of institutional relationships have been identified:

1. *With the Government,* a cooperation agreement has been signed with the Red de Solidaridad Social, the main organ in charge of displaced populations as explained under Section 1.2 and working at Presidential level. However, as the RSS was coordinator and implementer of the Ley 387, IOM also had to develop close relations with different ministries, e.g. Health, Education, and Public Affairs. In addition, Agreements were signed with different offices of the Ministries present in the field such as the ICBF or the Defensoria del Pueblo and universities were contacted for some aspects of the education component. Finally, close relationships with the Municipalities were noted during the field visits.

2. *With the UN System,* a main issue was security, not only that of our staff themselves but also of the exchange of information between departments in view of unpredictability of the conflict. As in any operations with high security levels and instability such as the Colombian situation, clearance had to be requested from UNSECORD before travelling. However, as in some departments information was provided by IOM, this issue was absolutely not a problem. It is also important to note that IOM was authorized to use UN logos and IOM- modified 'UN logos' in order to be better recognized by the different rebel groups. As an anecdotal experience: one IOM Chief of Mission met a High Representative of the FARC who made it very clear that if IOM was not UN, he would face serious problems in implementing activities. Most of trips to the Departments, including to the Capital Bogota, were made by plane to avoid the many incidents on the roads and the inherent dangers. Close ties were also noted during the field visit with UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, and UNDCP. UNHCR being in charge of coordination for the problems of IDPs officially recognized IOM's important role in the implementation of its programmes[11]. It has also been noted during the interviews and through the documentation review that the 'Diagnostic of the Displaced Population in six Departments of Colombia' finalized by IOM in November 2001 has been and remains an important source of information.

3. *With NGOs and civil society:* close to 200 counterparts signed an agreement with IOM to implement activities generated by the different IOM on-going programmes (see **Annex 5** for the detailed list). During the interviews, it was confirmed that IOM made detailed enquiries before signing an agreement in order to maintain its neutrality and to avoid signing agreements with NGOs closely linked to fighting groups. In addition, all agreements, contracts, and Memoranda of Understanding signed by IOM were carefully analysed by a legal adviser recruited by IOM.

---

[11] UNHCR, 'Grupo Temático sobre Desplazamiento', Bogota, August 2001

4. *With the target groups:* as reflected in the title of the programme to be evaluated, the main target group was the displaced population. However, as mentioned under **Section 1,** a focus on that group only was creating tensions. Therefore, it was decided at the outset of implementation to have a ratio of 80 per cent displaced persons and 20 per cent poor communities living in the same neighbourhood. When necessary, assistance was provided through the other IOM programmes. It is also important to mention that adoption of this approach facilitated integration of IDPs, as was seen during field visits and confirmed by one mayor interviewed.

Conclusion: IOM's groundwork in achieving an efficient institutional framework is praiseworthy, especially in a country facing such a complex and violent situation, creating major problems for its population. Such work necessitated a constant effort on the part of the Chief of Mission and programme managers. The positive and strong relationships developed at all levels were clearly evident during the field interviews and visits.

3.3 Programme Monitoring, Auditing and Evaluation

Different systems have been established to monitor, audit and evaluate the four inter-linked programmes as underlined under **Section 3.1.** Two levels are examined here: 1) at the global administrative and financial level and 2) at the specific programme level.

1. *At the global administrative and financial level,* the monitoring was fully centralized and every contract, procurement request, and recruitment action went through IOM Bogota. Every month the field accounts were sent to Bogota to prepare the financial report to the donor; an important exercise as money was released only upon presentation of a coherent financial report. The same was done for the programme implemented in Ecuador[12]. It is worth noting that an effective archive system was put in place to track all transactions, bearing in mind that IOM was working with close to 200 NGOs[13], Government entities and the municipalities[14]. Another issue important to note here is the monitoring of the security situation and the relationship with UNSECORD. No incidents occurred during the visit. Finally, and as already mentioned, a Legal Officer was recruited for the management of any contracts. In some instances, this was really necessary due to the complexity or absence of laws in Colombia. An internal audit was conducted in January 2002 and did not find any evidence of major mismanagement at either administrative or financial level. Regular contacts were also kept with the USAID Office in Colombia to discuss any problems that could have prevented the donor from disbursing funds.

---

[12] See **Section 3.1**
[13] For further reference, see **Annex 5.**
[14] See **Annex 6.**

2.   *At the specific programme level:* The programme that is the subject of this evaluation was not in fact treated separately from the other interventions mentioned in **Section 3.1**. Every three months the field offices had to report to the IOM central office. All the information and data collected were then presented in a quarterly activity report to the donors. During the documentation review, it was possible to go through all these reports and to observe their high quality. Additional work was also ongoing to facilitate the collection and management of the data from the different projects implemented in the field[15]. However, this was not the only way of monitoring implementation in the field; the programme officers based in the central office were making regular field visits. This was crucial, especially because of the centralized management of the different programmes. Another important aspect of monitoring was the presentation of the projects to be implemented. A committee was supervising them, especially to avoid duplication or to look for possible synergies with other UN or governmental projects. This supervision was recognized as an important aspect during the interviews, especially by UNHCR who was in charge of the coordination of IDP activities. Concerning an evaluation system, a considerable effort has been made by a consultant to measure impact through indicators for each of the programme components[16]. During the interviews, the donor showed great interest in this assessment of impact through indicators. However, such an assessment requires careful management and data dissemination and at the time of the visit the system was still under experiment. The recent events and their impact on the data collected will have to be re-evaluated. Finally, this internal evaluation was also planned during programme design.

Conclusion: *IOM Bogota deserves a special note of praise for the monitoring, auditing and evaluation systems it has established. The audit conducted has also provided evidence to conclude positively on the efficiency of the programme. As for the institutional relationship, the key element in good — and in this particular case excellent — programme monitoring is the recruitment of appropriately qualified and dedicated staff.*

Recommendation: IOM Bogota should keep Headquarters - especially PTU and MMS - informed on the work done for the monitoring and evaluation of its activities. Special attention should be given to the integrated system for monitoring of the community projects and management of the programme, and to the system for impact analysis through detailed indicators.

---

[15] This system has been presented to the newly created Project Tracking Unit at Headquarters in order to explore the possibility of its standardization.

[16] Income generating activities; medical attention; educational services; community led development; social communication and peace promotion and transitional housing solutions.

4.   PERFORMANCE AND ACHIEVEMENTS

This Section evaluates the relevance of the strategy used, including the relevance of the regions selected and the target groups. It also covers the relevance of the programme to IOM's mandate and then examines the effectiveness in achieving programme objectives[17]. Cost-effectiveness[18] will be analysed under the same section. **Section 3** already highlighted the good performance of IOM Bogota in establishing an adequate institutional framework and a very effective management system. Efficiency analysis was also covered under **Section 3**.

An extensive analysis of the impact and sustainability of the programme was not performed during the evaluation, as the programme was still active and a new extension for two years already approved. It is also important to note for the sustainability that the breakdown of the peace negotiations in March 2002, followed by new presidential elections, could have an impact on the work already done.

There are, however, indications through interviews and field visits that the programme has had a positive impact on the management of the IDP problem in Colombia, especially through technical assistance to the Government and local authorities, and assistance to the NGO network, active even in times of crisis. The recent approval for a programme extension is also an indication from the donor of its expected positive impact.

Recommendation: IOM Bogota is strongly encouraged to plan an impact and sustainability analysis during the new two-year phase, especially as a very detailed system of indicators measurement is already in place. Results could also be very interesting for IOM in terms of learning from this type of programme.

4.1   Relevance of the Programme's Strategy

As mentioned under **Section 3.1**, this programme is part of a more global approach adopted by IOM. As a first step, there was a focus on peace promotion and on the assistance to communities affected. At the end of the first intervention, IOM Bogota made the valid observation that the IDP problem was not properly covered and that the Government and other national entities were considering it as a serious element for stabilizing population and for an aid to peace promotion (see **Section 1** above).

---

[17] Details of the objectives of the programme can be found under **Sections 2 and 3.1.**
[18] For the Efficiency, see **Section 3.3** above.

In order to respond to the situation, IOM proposed an intervention through this programme, which was then discussed in depth with the Government, as mentioned during the interviews. The diagnostic of November 2001[19] also allowed IOM to refine its strategy. As underlined in **Section 1,** the Government has a wide knowledge of the situation of IDPs and offices to assist them. IOM therefore focused its efforts in assisting the IDPs through the existing structures.

IOM also coordinated its strategy with the UN System, as the Organization was considered as being part of it. This was evident for security reasons, but also for participation in regular UN meetings[20] where the issue of displaced populations was discussed. The regions to be covered were selected according to the IDPs' situation and the level of assistance needed[21]. This issue was also thoroughly discussed with the donor, to avoid duplication with its programmes.

During the interview with the donor's representatives in Bogota, it was mentioned that a high-level US Official was impressed by the work done by IOM in the southern region and that US Government should adopt some of IOM's approaches for their intervention. When IOM's Director General visited the US Government in Washington in February 2002, the work done by IOM in Colombia and in Ecuador was considered excellent.

Concerning the target population, IOM decided to work according to a percentage of population in order to avoid tensions. Eighty per cent of the assistance had to be allocated to IDPs and 20 per cent to the local population, also affected by the conflict. This decision was considered as very adequate by the mayors and government officials interviewed.

Conclusion: *The strategy adopted for the programme can be considered as fully relevant to the existing situation and to GoC policy. It took in consideration the situation of IDPs as described by NGOs and government entities working in the field, and was based on an important work of coordination with the central Government, the donor and the UN System. It also took into consideration the other programmes implemented by IOM in Colombia and in the northern border of Ecuador.*

4.2   Relevance to IOM's Mandate

The discussions on the issue of IDPs in the international community started late in the eighties with humanitarian interventions, for instance in Mozambique, but no UN Agency was actually mandated to work with IDPs. In past conflicts, the ICRC took care of this population, sometimes with the assistance of NGOs such as Médecins sans Frontières, or in collaboration with the UN Secretariat when possible.

---

[19] IOM, 'Diagnostico sobre la población desplazada en seis departamentos de Colombia – 2001', Bogota, November 2001

[20] For reference, see the report to the Secretary General by the UN Coordinator for 2001 or documentation issued by UNHCR as the coordinator for IDPs.

[21] See **Annex 4 and 6** for the regions covered

Inside the UN System the debate on who among the UN Secretariat and the UN Specialized Agencies should be in charge of IDPs became more active late in the nineties. UNHCR was proposed, but there was the problem that IDPs are not refugees. In 2002, the Internal Displacement Unit, working under the responsibility of the UN Secretariat, issued a Mission Statement and a 2002 Work Plan, trying to coordinate activities linked to the phenomenon of displaced populations. No lead agency was however specifically named.

IOM has a broad mandate capable of including IDPs as 'internal' migrants. In its Constitution, reference is made to the fact '*that international migration also includes that of refugees, displaced persons and other individuals compelled to leave their homeland...*'.[22] There is a link in the text between displaced persons and international migration, but when the IOM Constitution was amended in 1989, the problem of IDPs was still marginal, as mentioned above.

The notion of displaced persons does not exclude, however, internally displaced persons. IOM prepared a policy paper on IDPs in 1997 to clarify its approach.[23] In 1998, another IOM document, '*The humanitarian mandate and activities of the International Organization for Migration*', underlines the role of IOM versus IDPs and the important number of agreements signed with IOM Member States and UN Specialised Agencies specifically mentioning the assistance to that population. There is also an agreement with UNHCR clarifying their respective roles. IOM's policy has been updated in November 2002 based on the latest discussions at the General Assembly, inside the UN System and on discussions with Member States[24].

Another issue to consider under this Section is not only the assistance to displaced groups, but also to receptor communities. IOM has for many years implemented programmes that could assist the receptor communities to absorb the flow of refugees or/and IDPs: Mozambique, Haiti, Guatemala, BiH, Kosovo are major examples[25]. The basic idea behind the strategy is to avoid tensions between the receptor communities and the new arrivals, in order to promote and reinforce the stabilization of population, considered as a key factor for peace promotion, reconciliation and reduction of risky and illegal migration. This assistance is in accordance with the articles of IOM's Constitution and other IOM policy papers insisting on the importance of humane and orderly migration.

In the case of Colombia, IOM has been specifically requested to intervene in the field of IDPs by the Government and also by the UN System. Additionally, the strategy adopted did not differ from earlier experiences or approaches presented briefly in the previous paragraphs.

---

[22] IOM Constitution - Preamble

[23] The first official reference in IOM to 'Internally' Displaced Persons was made in fact in Resolution 87 (LXXXVI) of 1994 asking for cooperation and technical assistance to deal with the problem of IDPs in Latin America (MC/EX/INF/54 and MC/EX/INF/57).

[24] IOM - MC/INF/258 'Internally Displaced Persons: IOM Policy and Activities', November 2002. See also MC/INF/260 of November 2002 "Role of IOM in Emergency and Post-conflict Situations".

[25] For reference, see MC/INF/249 of May 2002 "Emergency and Post-conflict Response".

Conclusion: The IOM programmes and its interventions in neighbouring countries affected by the Colombian conflict are fully in line with IOM's Mandate. Internal population displacements are a problematic phenomenon for the country and these populations are displaced sometimes two or three times in their life, often without returning to their place of origin. Assistance to receptor communities therefore also becomes important. It should be noted that IOM is very well integrated in the UN System and nobody sees IOM as interfering with the mandate of another Agency. IOM is seen as providing assistance to the Government for the management of IDPs, in addition to granting assistance to the affected population.

4.3   Effectiveness and Cost-effectiveness

It is important to underline that other IOM programmes have also contributed to community improvement or to the assistance to the victims of the conflicts. **Annex 5** shows the IOM projects implemented with partners - close to 200 projects.

It has not been possible during the field visit to cover them all. However, as mentioned under **Section 3.3,** the monitoring system put in place is very efficient and the activity reports produced already provide sound elements with which to judge the effective implementation of the programme.

During the interviews conducted, the donor praised the quality of the reports including appropriate pictures, maps, etc. In only one area was it felt there could be an improvement, this being the need for more details regarding the number of people assisted: in the fifth quarterly report, for instance, are listed 'Direct beneficiaries: 133,380' and 'Indirect Beneficiaries: 230,895', divided by regions only. These numbers are impressive and the interest to know more about them is certainly valid and justifiable.

Recommendation: IOM Bogota should give more precise information on the numbers of the targeted population. This could eventually be done through the detailed monitoring system by indicators or through the integrated system for community projects monitoring. Municipalities could facilitate a better dispatching of data, based on their assistance to displaced populations.

Before concluding on the effectiveness, it is however interesting to look more precisely at the different components of the programme as described under **Section 3.1**.

Income generating activities: At the time of the field visit, 53 projects aimed at economic assistance to the targeted groups were implemented. During the field visit, it has been possible to note a variety of projects covered under this approach, e.g. a small shop in a market place, a small shoe factory and a more sophisticated ice-cream shop. Beneficiaries had to bring a personal contribution to each of these projects. NGOs were also associated in project implementation and technical assistance. The list attached in **Annex 5** demonstrates the variety of interventions. The other IOM programmes were also contributing to income generating activities, as and when it was possible to implement joint action or to supply what was missing. The family component was considered in priority, as has been noted in some field visits.

Medical Attention and Preventive Health: The quarterly report covering the period September 2001-December 2001 notes that 32 projects have been implemented. It has not been possible to visit projects located in some hospitals and medical centres. During the meeting with the Ministry of Health, it was however possible to note how professional the coordinating team was in preparing and following the implementation of IOM projects and how IOM was praised for its work. Some interesting visits have been made to water and sanitation projects in the receptor communities, being part of the 20 per cent target group. Some work on IDP psychological trauma was performed at schools or with some NGOs. The issue of psychological trauma was not very well defined at Government level. This has been noticed in many interviews and did not facilitate IOM's activities.

Educational Services and Special Programmes: During the field visits it has been possible to note the work done towards IDP integration, including the family. As an instance, mothers and fathers were participating in the management of the schools assisted by IOM projects. Thirty-six projects were registered at the time of the field visit. IOM sometimes faced problems in implementing activities in the field of education due to the lack of resources of the Secretariat of Education. A proposal was also made to IOM Bogota during the visit, to use the Costa Rican experience for the integration of Nicaraguan migrants[26]. The approach could be modified for IDPs, talking for instance of acceptation of internally displaced populations by receptor communities, and to include in the teaching material notion of peace in the history of Colombia.

---

[26] See for instance IOM, 'Evaluation of the Programme to Upgrade the Capacity of the Costa Rican Education System in Selected Communities Affected by Mitch-Related Nicaraguan Migration', November 2001.

Social Communication, Stabilization and Peace Promotion: Tension between IDPs and the community was noted during the field visits. IOM is trying to reinforce the channels of communication, especially working with the Mayors of the towns facing major problems. In discussing this issue with IOM staff, a Mayor and representatives of the RSS and ICBF, it was recognized that dialogue's success also depended on the attitude of the local authorities, which could sometimes have political overtones. Forty-six projects were registered in February 2002. Another important decision taken by IOM in order to diminish the tension and to increase the absorption capacity of the receptor community was the share of budgetary resources – 20 per cent for the community and 80 per cent for the IDPs. During interviews with governmental officials and NGOs, IOM's approach for population stabilization and reduction of tension among communities was considered as appropriate and effective. Peace promotion was also part of the communication strategy, complementary to the work towards reducing tension. However, this was not part of the main objectives of the programme and the specific IOM programme focusing on peace promotion is still running.

Transitional Housing Solutions: This is certainly the most difficult component of the programme, especially as the funding allocated by the GoC is low. Another problem is the great confusion regarding land ownership, which will not be clarified in the short term. Only 20 projects had been implemented up to February 2002.

Cost-effectiveness was also evident through the analysis of appropriate monitoring systems put in place, through the documentation review and the interviews conducted in the field. For instance, complementary interventions and administrative management with other IOM programmes, UN Specialized Agencies or NGOs were common in the field for implementation of projects. Used of shared resources was also the case, e.g. for premises. Measures, such as requiring the Mayors, the Government or the target populations to contribute funds or other resources in order to benefit from IOM projects were also cost-effective. All the staff in the regional offices were recruited locally. Only part of the costs of international staff in the main IOM office was charged to the programme. The rule of projectization of costs has been properly applied within all IOM programmes in Colombia.

__Conclusion: In reading the very detailed activity reports produced by IOM Bogota, going to the field and analysing the working conditions, we can conclude that IOM has been effective in achieving the programme's objectives. All the interviews conducted confirm the important support role played by IOM in managing the IDP problem. The programme implementation was cost-effective.__

5. REPLICATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES

The strategy adopted in Colombia is not new to IOM. For many years now, IOM has been implementing programmes addressing the problem of population stabilization through community-led development. Its approach is based on increasing the absorption capacity of communities receiving a large number of people, whether returning refugees and displaced populations or new arrivals due to redistribution of population following conflicts. 'Stabilization' also tends to decrease the risks of illegal and inhumane migration. UNDP and World Bank are also increasingly recognizing the appropriateness of this approach[27].

Where this programme is comparatively innovative is the main focus on the management of the IDP problem and the lead role given to IOM. It has been possible to note in the evaluation that the programme implemented in Colombia is relevant to IOM mandate and therefore can be replicated in other countries facing similar problems, especially when there is a global agreement with the Government concerned and the UN System.

What certainly deserves to be replicated is the high quality of management and the very good strategic approach developed by the IOM team in Colombia. This deserves special attention.

Recommendation: EPC and MMS – for the development component - should keep all the work done in Colombia as a reference for implementation in other countries. The good relationship and cooperation with the UN System should also be used as an example when discussing IOM's role in post-conflict management and assistance to IDPs.

---

[27] UNDP, 'Sharing New Ground in Post-Conflict Situations', Evaluation Office, January 2000.

6. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

1. *IOM's groundwork in achieving an efficient institutional framework is praiseworthy, especially in a country facing such a complex and violent situation, creating major problems for its population. Such work necessitated a constant effort on the part of the Chief of Mission and programme managers. The positive and strong relationships developed at all levels were clearly evident during the field interviews and visits.*

2. *IOM Bogota deserves a special note of praise for the monitoring, auditing and evaluation systems it has established. The audit conducted has also provided evidence to conclude positively on the efficiency of the programme. As for the institutional relationship, the key element in good — and in this particular case excellent — programme monitoring is the recruitment of appropriately qualified and dedicated staff.*

3. *The strategy adopted for the programme can be considered as fully relevant to the existing situation and to GoC policy. It took in consideration the situation of IDPs as described by NGOs and government entities working in the field, and was based on an important work of coordination with the central Government, the donor and the UN System. It also took into consideration the other programmes implemented by IOM in Colombia and in the northern border of Ecuador.*

4. *The IOM programmes and its interventions in neighbouring countries affected by the Colombian conflict are fully in line with IOM's Mandate. Internal population displacements are a problematic phenomenon for the country and these populations are displaced sometimes two or three times in their life, often without returning to their place of origin. Assistance to receptor communities therefore also becomes important. It should be noted that IOM is very well integrated in the UN System and nobody sees IOM as interfering with the mandate of another Agency. IOM is seen as providing assistance to the Government for the management of IDPs, in addition to granting assistance to the affected population.*

5. *In reading the very detailed activity reports produced by IOM Bogota, going to the field and analysing the working conditions, we can conclude that IOM has been effective in achieving the programme's objectives. All the interviews conducted confirm the important support role played by IOM in managing the IDP problem. The programme implementation was cost-effective.*

<u>Recommendations</u>

1. IOM Bogota should keep Headquarters - especially PTU and MMS - informed on the work done for the monitoring and evaluation of its activities. Special attention should be given to the integrated system for monitoring of the community projects and management of the programme, and to the system for impact analysis through detailed indicators.

2. IOM Bogota is strongly encouraged to plan an impact and sustainability analysis during the new two-year phase, especially as a very detailed system of indicators measurement is already in place. Results could also be very interesting for IOM in terms of learning from this type of programme.

3. IOM Bogota should give more precise information on the numbers of the targeted population. This could eventually be done through the detailed monitoring system by indicators or through the integrated system for community projects monitoring. Municipalities could facilitate a better dispatching of data, based on their assistance to displaced populations.

4. EPC and MMS – for the development component - should keep all the work done in Colombia as a reference for implementation in other countries. The good relationship and cooperation with the UN System should also be used as an example when discussing IOM's role in post-conflict management and assistance to IDPs.