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Advances and challenges in the implementation of the “Primera Infancia” policy in Colombia.

An analysis from the situation of the children victims of the armed conflict

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Colombia
Colombia is an Unitarian republic:
- 32 Departments
- 1101 Municipalities
- 1 Capital District
- 710 Indigenous reservations
- 123 Afro-collective territories

Colombia has a GINI coefficient of 0.539: The highest in Latin America, similar to the one of Lesotho.

There are 7‘265‘159 victims of the armed conflict in Colombia, of which 1‘348‘778 have died.
## Victims of the armed conflict

### Range of age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTUAL AGE</th>
<th>PEOPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between 0 and 5 years</td>
<td>487,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 12 and 17 years</td>
<td>994,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 18 and 28 years</td>
<td>1,574,749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 29 and 60 years</td>
<td>2,508,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 6 and 11 years</td>
<td>843,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 61 and 100 years</td>
<td>585,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information</td>
<td>645,923</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Datos Febrero 2016
Colombia’s Constitution. Article 44
The child’s superior interest; prevalent and fundamental character of his/her rights; subjective right to receive protection; mandate that commands the special protection of the children

Law 387 of 1997 regarding Force Displacement
Establishes early childhood as a fundamental area

Law 1098 of 2006
Article 20 – A child’s right to protection
Article 29 – Early childhood’s right to integral development

Law 1448 of 2011 – Title VII
Characteristics of Colombia’s Armed Conflict

• Prolonged duration (over 60 years). Trans-generational and normalising character of the war.

• Occurrence in a vast extension of the national territory, specially in rural areas located far away from the focal points of development and in marginal urban areas.

• Brutality of the violent actions and serious violations to Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

• Crimes against humanity committed against the civilian population by both legal and illegal armed actors.
• Recruitment of boys, girls, and teenagers

• Forced displacement of entire populations throughout the whole of the national territory with collective and individual impacts, causing disarray, fractures in the social fabric, and the denaturalization of the culture, in addition to disorganized movements of populations in the marginal zones of large and medium cities, or even towns

• Consequence of conditions of profound inequality, insecurity, and social exclusion

• According to ACNUR, Colombia is the second highest country regarding the amount of forcefully displaced people in the world just behind Siria
This normative frame guides the actions of the policy, directed towards boys and girls victims of the conflict, must be based on two standings

- **Boys and girls as subjects with rights.** All children victims of the conflict in *Primera Infancia* must have quality attention that allows for their integral development.

- **Boys and girls as subjects of reparations.** All children victims of the conflict, BESIDES integral attention, must receive specialized attention directed to the integral reparation of the damages and affectations that the war has provoked.
• The youngest of the children have been made invisible within the conflict. For a long time now the repercussions of the war on the children’s development have been ignored. Just now have those repercussions and consequences on the children’s life been acknowledged.

• Studies and investigations done on the subject take into account children ages 6 and up. There is still much data and evidence to be gathered in order to guide the policies dealing with this issue.

• Several programs have been implemented in the areas that have been the most affected by the armed conflict, but a clear line of policies has yet to be implemented.
Work processes with teachers directed to:

• Sensitize the teachers in regards to the effects and affectations that the conflict leaves on the children

• Provide the teachers with tools that allow them to recognize behavioural manifestations of those children affected by the war

• Guidance in the elaboration and use of teaching material based on art and several expressive languages, that simplifies the teacher’s job regarding emotional recuperation and reparation
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Work processes with the children and families that are developed through the different programs:

1. Emotional expression, knowledge of oneself, and the proper management of conflicts in the boys, girls, and their families. This is done through the reading of stories, psychodramas, games, and anecdotes.

2. Emotional maturity, and the resolution of individual and family processes in appropriate and high risk situations through the use of educational techniques.
Approach of the Actions in Primera Infancia

Work processes with policy makers

1. Defining a national line of policies that aims to guide all actions within the national territory

“technical guidelines of the Cero a Siempre strategy related to the violence associated with the armed conflict to which the children are exposed during their early childhood and the approach within the frame of integral attention” (2016)

2. Inclusion of the Primera Infancia and the armed conflict themes to the new developmental plans made by mayors and governors

3. Incorporate the specialized attentions to the Atencion Integral a la Primera Infancia scheme, improving the educational, familiar, and community environments as fixers and builders of the social fabric.
Governmental qualification and mobilization regarding the attention processes to families and children affected by the armed conflict and the situation of the Primera Infancia en Posconflicto in Valle del Cauca (Santiago de Cali and Jamundí) and Cauca (Puerto Tejada and Buenos Aires)

• Review and recognition of experiences

• Qualification of teachers for the strengthening of the educational environment as fixer and rebuilder

• Qualification of community leaders

• Public servants that address the victims

• Articulation of municipal spaces (visibilization of the Primera Infancia en Espacios de Vítimas)

• Event of Mobilization