



COUNTRY PROFILE



Photo PADF by Kari Grodi

Beneficiaries from an Alternative Development project located in the municipality of Trinidad in the north-central department of Cordoba prepare palm seedlings for planting.

USAID's alternative development activities have supported roughly 298,000 families with licit economic opportunities.

OVERVIEW

Rich in natural resources and with a long history of democracy, Colombia's development challenges have been exacerbated by decades of violence fueled by widespread illicit crop production and narco-trafficking. Numerous rural municipalities, isolated by poor infrastructure and fragile institutions, remain prone to aggression from illegal armed groups, illicit crop cultivation, forced displacement, and human rights abuses.



Approximately half of Colombia's citizens live below the poverty line, suffering from income disparities, poverty, and inadequate social services. The Government of Colombia (GOC) is exerting pressure on illegal armed groups, but their presence and propensity for violence continue to pose a threat. The GOC is working to consolidate a legitimate state presence and establish irreversible development throughout the country by revitalizing the economy and combating corruption. As a partner in Colombia, the U.S. Government, through USAID, supports GOC, private sector, and citizen efforts to achieve peace, promote economic prosperity, improve the living conditions of Colombia's most vulnerable groups, develop economic and social alternatives to illicit crop production, and strengthen the presence and effectiveness of the state and its democratic institutions.

PROGRAMS

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

USAID supports GOC efforts to strengthen the licit economy through productive projects, enterprise development, natural resource protection, institutional strengthening, and promoting access to markets. USAID works with the private sector to expand economic opportunities and provide long-term alternatives to illicit crop production. At the local level, the goal is to improve effectiveness of municipal governments, expand access to markets, and promote growth in targeted regions. In addition, USAID facilitates the creation and effective implementation of laws and policies to promote trade and strengthen economic competitiveness.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

USAID assists the GOC as it combines broader and fairer justice with more representative and responsive governance, particularly to address the needs of traditionally underserved regions and populations such as Afro-Colombians and the indigenous. The program is implemented through five comprehensive and interrelated activities: human rights, justice, regional governance consolidation, labor, and political processes strengthening. USAID/Colombia implements the largest USAID human rights program in the world. The program provides support for prevention

COLOMBIA SNAPSHOT

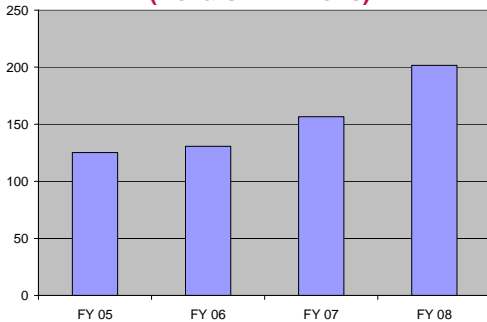
Date of independence: 1810
Population: 45.644 million
GDP (PPP): \$399.4 billion
GDP per capita (PPP): \$8,900

Source: CIA, *The World Factbook*



COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

**USAID Assistance to Colombia
(Dollars in Millions)**



of and protection against human rights abuses, as well as for strengthening institutional and civil society responses. USAID also works with justice sector counterparts, the GOC, and civil society to promote access to justice for underserved groups and to expand the presence of the justice sector in post-conflict areas of Colombia. Likewise, USAID assists the judicial branch and the public defender's office to implement Colombia's new oral advocacy-based criminal accusatory system. In addition, USAID collaborates with the GOC and civil society to expand state presence, improve local service delivery, and enhance citizen participation and governmental accountability in areas that have been hard hit by violence. USAID also works with political parties and civil society groups to implement reforms that increase competition and transparency among political parties while promoting greater inclusion in the political process for vulnerable groups such as Afro-Colombians, indigenous, women, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Moreover, USAID supports Colombia's labor market reforms for better enforcement of workplace standards and worker rights, broader understanding of and compliance with union rights, prevention of child labor abuses, and the improvement and protection of trade unionists' security and human rights.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

Working with the GOC, USAID helps to provide social and economic development opportunities to approximately three million Colombians who have been displaced by the conflict. The GOC also receives support for IDPs from the Department of State's Office of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and USAID. PRM provides funding for emergency assistance to families and individuals during their first 90 days of displacement. Once this emergency phase has concluded, USAID provides medium- and longer-term assistance to displaced families until they can return to their homes or be resettled. Activities focus on meeting the basic needs of the displaced and other vulnerable groups by expanding access to health care, shelter, education, water and sanitation, psychosocial programs, and income generation.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION

USAID is addressing both the causes and consequences of conflict. Through the Office of Transition Initiatives, USAID is supporting the GOC to institutionalize state presence in parts of the country that have experienced significant conflict but have been secured recently by the military. The program helps improve social service delivery by working with local governments on civilian consolidation plans and coordinating with the GOC on small-scale, quick-impact, community-prioritized infrastructure and income-generating projects. In addition, USAID supports a collective demobilization process for paramilitary fighters through four interrelated activities: effective legal processing and monitoring of ex-combatants, verification of the demobilization and reintegration process, support for reconciliation and reparations of victims, and peaceful reintegration of ex-combatants. USAID also assists victims of armed conflict through enhanced delivery of mental health and other social services by local and national institutions.

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