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**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/
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Executive Board**

**United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the
Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)
Executive Board**

**United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Executive Board**

**World Food Programme (WFP)
Executive Board**

Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS
Second regular session 2019
3-6 September 2019, New York
Executive Board of UN-Women
Second regular session 2019
9-10 September 2019, New York

Executive Board of UNICEF
Second regular session 2019
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Executive Board of WFP
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Report of the joint field visit to Colombia by members of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP, 11–18 May 2019

I. Background

A. Visit overview

1. A joint field visit to Colombia by members of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the World Food Programme (WFP) took place from 11 to 18 May 2019. The delegation of 22 Board members was led by H.E. Mr. Hisham Mohamed Badr, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations Agencies in Rome, Italy, and President of the Executive Board of WFP. The field visit was also for the first time including the President of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, the President of the Executive Board of UNICEF and the

President of the Executive Board of UN-Women. The complete list of the members of the delegation is set out in the annex.

2. The purpose of the field visit was to help the members of the Executive Boards to understand the extent to and ways in which the United Nations organizations work together in partnership and collaboration through “delivering as one” and working with others, including national and subnational governments, beneficiaries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society, the private sector and other development actors, to support the delivery of national development priorities, including alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. The programme during the first two days of the visit included exchanges with the United Nations country team (UNCT), the Acting Minister and senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Congress Legal Commission for Women’s Equity and other Government representatives, as well as representatives of donors and embassies.

4. For the next three days, the delegation was divided into two groups. The first group, led by H.E. Ambassador Cho Tae-yul, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations and President of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board, visited the Meta department while the second group, led by Ambassador Badr, visited the Nariño department.

5. Upon arrival in Villavicencio in Meta on Tuesday, 14 May 2019, the delegation was warmly greeted by the Mayor of Villavicencio, H.E. Mr. Wilmar Barbosa Roza. The team had a briefing session with the local coordination team and United Nations representatives on the ground. This was followed by a formal meeting with Mayor Barbosa Roza and a lunch meeting with regional government authorities of Meta. The team then visited the Park of Memory in honour of the victims of the country’s armed conflict, and later met with a group of victims’ representatives and members of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition. The next day, the team travelled to Mesetas district via helicopter, where it visited reincorporation of ex-combatants productive projects on ecotourism and a community school, witnessed a dialogue on sexual and reproductive health with the community, visited a mother and child health brigade and a women-led bakery and was treated to a lunch with the Stabilization Presidential Advisor before returning to Villavicencio. On Thursday, the team held a breakfast meeting with representatives from the National Reincorporation Agency, the National Territory Renewal Agency and the National Victims’ Unit. They visited the 13 de Mayo neighbourhood where they saw the impact of the Transitional Solutions Initiative for the reintegration of women victims of displacement. Then, the delegation visited Malocas Park, where it met civil society organizations, local government representatives and beneficiaries of United Nations support for various peace and sustainable development platforms. The team then met with the Governor of Meta. The team flew back to Bogotá in the evening.

6. Upon arrival in Ipiales in Nariño, on Tuesday, 14 May 2019, the delegation had a breakfast meeting with local authorities before being transported to the Rumichaca border bridge between Colombia and Ecuador, where it viewed the integrated response to the arrival of Venezuelan migrants, which included mobile health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene initiatives and a child-friendly-space project. The team then travelled to a migrant shelter managed by the Catholic organization Pastoral Social. At lunch time, the delegation met representatives of the Peacebuilding Fund binational project aimed at strengthening institutional capacities for the protection of girls, boys, adolescents and young people from border areas. The team then met with the Governor of Nariño, Mr Camilo Romero Galeano. The next day it met with the local coordination team and the Migration Inter-agency Group before being transported to La Cocha Natural Reserve, where it visited the Sustainable and Adapted Territories Project. In the afternoon the team met with civil society organizations that are implementing projects promoting the rights of women, children and young people

and on peacebuilding and later had dinner with secretaries from the Governor's Office. On Thursday, 16 May 2019, the team met with sectoral representatives (health, education, academia, justice, private sector, food security and nutrition and climate change) and held a debriefing session with the Governor's international cooperation office team before flying back to Bogotá.

7. On the final day of the visit the delegation met with representatives of civil society and held a final debriefing session with government representatives.

8. Following the visit, the delegation made recommendations for strengthening: (a) the impact of the United Nations in Colombia; (b) the work of the Executive Boards; and (c) future Board field visits.

9. This is especially relevant to improving understanding of how the United Nations is carrying out its mandate vis-à-vis United Nations development system reform, implementation of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes' strategic plans and the common chapter, review of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Colombia and maximizing the impact of the United Nations delivering as one.

10. The delegation also met a number of beneficiaries, NGOs and civil society and Member State representatives.

11. The members of the Executive Boards expressed their gratitude to the Government of Colombia for its hospitality and availability for exchanges with the delegation. Warm appreciation was also extended to the UNCT for the well-prepared joint field visit, to the Executive Board secretariats for their ongoing support and to all the partners with whom the delegation met during the visit.

12. The delegation recognized and commended the Government of Colombia for its solidarity and for the support provided to the migrants from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Colombia has taken a leading role in adopting an open borders policy and implementing good practices in the provision of services to migrants and support to host communities, from education to health to employment services and humanitarian aid. During the field visit to Nariño, the delegation was able to witness the engagement of the United Nations agencies in the mixed migration response, working together with local governments, line ministries, civil society organizations and faith-based organizations in supporting both migrant and host communities to gain access to basic services and protection. This was a good example of the added value and catalytic role of the United Nations agencies in a coordinated humanitarian response that brings different partners together.

B. Colombia overview

13. Colombia, a middle-income country the size of France, Spain and Kuwait combined has a population of around 48 million people spread across 32 departments (provinces). The current administration is headed by President Iván Duque Márquez.

14. Colombia today has the best opportunity for its sustainable development in recent history. Since 1948, violence has marked the country's development and its political, economic and social history. Women have been especially affected by the more than five decades of violence.

15. In November 2016, the final Peace Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace was signed between the Government of Colombia under President Juan Manuel Santos and the FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia). The United Nations Security Council established the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia in its resolution 2366 of 10 July 2017. The mandate of the mission is to verify the reintegration of former FARC-EP members into political, economic and social life and the guarantees of security for former FARC-EP members, their families and communities.

16. The country is going through a critical transitional period, moving from humanitarian crisis to sustainable peace and development. Progress, however, is mired by multi-factor dynamics such as the migration crisis; challenges of implementing the final peace agreement; the resurgence of illegal groups and new dynamics of violence in some areas; ongoing humanitarian needs pertaining to landmines and internally displaced persons; and other structural development challenges, such as deforestation.

17. While the peace process has created the bedrock for economic and social progress in Colombia in the last three years, it remains fragile. More needs to be done to protect the lives of social and other local community leaders and more attention needs to be focused on the reintegration of ex-combatants to curb rearming, the resurgence of violence and the return to illegal economies. During the field visit, members of the delegation noted a strong desire among the Colombian people for a peaceful coexistence. In many ways the UNCT, in partnership with the Government, helps to identify the required capacity and skills among the reincorporated people to open new pathways to peace through development projects. In El Meta, members of the delegation gained awareness of the work of some of the former FARC-EP members who were actively involved in different development projects.

18. United Nations cooperation with Colombia is focusing efforts and resources on the most vulnerable populations, such as those victimized by the armed conflict, migrants from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, children, adolescents, youth and women, with a strong ethnic and gender focus, based on protecting and advancing human rights to ensure the sustainability of the peace agreement and fulfilling its premise of leaving no one behind.

C. The United Nations in Colombia

19. The United Nations presence in Colombia comprises 27 United Nations agencies, made up of 22 resident and 5 non-resident agencies. The UNCT has an important presence in the field, with more than 170 offices spread across 67 locations throughout Colombia and a total of 2,330 staff members, 93 percent of whom are locally hired. In 2018, United Nations agencies completed 61 joint initiatives, which allowed the UNCT to initiate actions that helped to break down the silos between the humanitarian, development, peace and human rights pillars.

20. The United Nations' activities in Colombia, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator and with the support of the Resident Coordinator's office, cover a wide range of areas including humanitarian action, development, peacebuilding and human rights. A strong Resident Coordinator is critical for dealing with the complex challenges the country faces.

21. The UNDAF for 2015–2019 is the strategic framework outlining the contribution of the United Nations in Colombia towards the national development goals and priorities outlined in the Colombia national development plan for 2014–2018. The UNDAF focuses on (a) inclusive and sustainable growth; and (b) peacebuilding and peaceful conflict transformation.

22. The United Nations agencies, funds and programmes have their own country strategic plans that guide their work in Colombia, in alignment with the UNDAF and national development priorities. The UNCT has commenced preparations for a common country analysis as an essential element of the next UNDAF, covering the period 2020–2024, in line with United Nations reform and a greater emphasis on joint programming and coordination among UNCT partners.

II. Effectiveness of the United Nations in Colombia

A. Supporting delivery of national development priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals, including the implementation of the peace process

23. The work of the United Nations in Colombia is broad and covers a myriad of issues. However, during the joint field visit the delegation focused on the strategic pillars of the UNDAF for 2015–2019: (a) overall alignment; (b) inclusive and sustainable growth; and (c) peacebuilding and peaceful conflict transformation. In addition to the above, it is important to note that at the time of the visit, the Colombian authorities had just launched the national development plan for 2018–2022, “Pact for Colombia, Pact for Equity”, while the United Nations system was in the process of elaboration of the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF, 2020–2024).

(a) Overall alignment

24. The delegation found evidence of strong links between the work of the United Nations in Colombia and the national development priorities outlined in the Colombian National Development Plan 2014–2018: All for a New Country. Based on discussions with both the Government and the UNCT, the current work of the United Nations funds and programmes provides a good basis for strengthening its collaboration in Colombia in line with the national development plan. The delegation bore witness to a close working relationship between the Resident Coordinator, the UNCT, the United Nations Verification Mission and the Government of Colombia in all key pillars: development, humanitarian, peace and human rights. During the visit, the team observed with satisfaction the effort of the UNCT, working in close coordination with national and local authorities – at the departmental and municipal levels, with extended outreach to the local level via local coordination teams (ELCs) – to reach the most excluded and vulnerable populations, with particular attention to children, women, indigenous people, migrants and displaced populations, while working with relevant authorities at national and local levels in the socioeconomic reintegration of FARC-EP ex-combatants.

25. The delegation recognizes the efforts of the UNCT to use its comparative advantages to support the Government of Colombia in the implementation of cross-sectoral initiatives and strategies under the principle of leaving no one behind, in particular in rural areas of the country and other hard-to-reach places. The United Nations, through an extended presence across the country as well as multisectoral coordination, is supporting the efforts of the Colombian Government to consolidate its presence in the most isolated, vulnerable and conflict-affected areas. The UNCT, led by the incoming Resident Coordinator, must exhaust all efforts to continue strengthening the inter-agency joint programming aligned with national and local government priorities, focusing on comparative advantages and joint leveraging of the significant United Nations field presence to help Colombia (i) achieve the Sustainable Development Goals; (ii) ensure greater state protection of basic human rights presence in those areas; (iii) support the implementation of the final peace agreement; (iv) contribute to the social and economic integration of internally displaced populations, FARC-EP ex-combatants, victims of natural disasters and Venezuelan migrant populations, particularly in the border areas, as well as providing effective assistance to the Colombian returnees.

26. The Colombian Government was very vocal about the need for sustainability and support for national capacity development in all United Nations-led or -assisted projects. The Government expressed the view that the United Nations could do more to programme according to country demands and priorities in order to strengthen national ownership and leadership through capacity building and boost prospects of Colombia meeting its Sustainable Development Goals and the recently approved national development plan for 2018–2022.

The Government emphasized the importance of United Nations agencies continuing to operate in a joined-up, coherent manner. The delegation emphasized that the United Nations should step up its efforts to effectively communicate with the Colombian Government in order to align its programs with national and local government priorities. The UNSDCF, 2020–2024, which is currently under development, constitutes an opportunity to frame inter-agency efforts to support Colombia using the logic of complementarity of mandates and optimization of resources.

27. At the departmental level, the Governments of Nariño and Meta were positive about the role of the United Nations. Collaboration with international partners was fundamental and the United Nations was described as well-coordinated. The United Nations presence at the local level manifests the strong emphasis of the UNCT on local ownership, while building local capacity through interrelated interventions (in health, nutrition, education, water, sanitation and hygiene, child protection, food security and gender mainstreaming, and on strengthening the capacities of social and indigenous organizations in the design and implementation of public policies geared towards consolidating peace and achieving the SDGs). The work at the local level meant it was able to better understand the local context and was well positioned to help address the unique challenges faced by the department. The UNCT was playing a key role in strengthening the role of the departmental and municipal governments as the primary service providers.

28. Given the complexity, speed of events and long-term nature of the migration from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to Colombia, the transition from a humanitarian to a development context constitutes a major challenge. The United Nations, as part of the Regional Platform for the Migration Response created by the Secretary-General, is working with the Colombian Government, as well as with other international and local organizations, to address this issue, including through health, education, protection, food assistance, water and sanitation and information interventions.

(b) Inclusive and sustainable growth

29. Despite the rapid reduction in poverty over the last 10 years, the poverty rate in Colombia is still higher than the Latin American average. Large historical disparities between urban and rural areas persist.

30. Inclusive sustainable growth has been a top priority for the Colombian Government and an area in which United Nations support has been focused. The United Nations, in collaboration with other development actors, including international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society, has been supporting Colombia to create enabling conditions for inclusive growth, helping to bridge economic, social and environmental gaps that impede achievement of sustainable development.

31. The United Nations is working with the Colombian Government by investing in productive projects aimed at strengthening economic and social initiatives with a territorial, gender and ethnic focus and supporting the reintegration of former combatants, including through income-generating activities.

(c) Women, youth and children

32. Creating an enabling environment for women and girls through economic empowerment, education, sexual and reproductive health, protection of human rights and gender equality, curbing gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, containing femicide and reducing violence against children is crucial for advancing the peace process and achieving inclusive sustainable growth in Colombia. The Legal Commission for Women's Equity identified a need to educate and train women in entrepreneurship as a key tool for helping to reduce violence against women. The United Nations and its development partners, including the Colombian Government, are committed to this endeavour.

33. The delegation was heartened to learn that the Colombian Government is leading by example in promoting gender equality. The current administration is the first in Colombia to have a gender-parity cabinet, representing a cultural change in Colombia. Women make up 19.7 percent of the members of Congress. There was a call for the United Nations to follow suit by having gender balance among the heads of the various agencies operating in Colombia.

34. During 50 years of armed conflict in Colombia, sexual violence was prevalent and was perpetrated with impunity. Many women became widows and were left to take care of their nuclear families, in many instances including extended families. The delegation was heartened to see women taking on leadership roles in taking care of their families and working to advance the peace process.

35. The United Nations continues to support efforts to ensure the representation and participation of women at all levels of Government as it contributes to strengthening democracy in Colombia and empowering women, thus improving human development and ending gender stereotypes while at the same time increasing the sustainability of the peace process.

36. Colombia has the largest UN-Women country office in Latin America. UN-Women is seen as a key partner and ally in promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment in Colombia. While continuing to provide technical advice, UN-Women is strengthening its participation in and leadership of joint programming. The delegation observed women playing an active role as agents of change within Colombia, as employees of the United Nations, as beneficiaries of projects or in Government. In Nariño, UN-Women partners with local NGOs on projects to combat gender-based violence and increase women's political participation, including in local government elections, while in Meta one of the main focuses is the promotion of gender-responsive budgeting. Training young women to understand and assert their human rights is also a focus.

37. In Meta, the United Nations, through UN-Women, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Verification Mission, UNFPA, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other partners, is contributing to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting in public policies and projects focused on reducing the prevalence of gender-based violence, building local integrated models that facilitate access to the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Recurrence and improving the fulfilment of women's rights in terms of citizen participation in peacebuilding.

38. Youth and children represent both the present and the future of Colombia. Ensuring the fulfilment of child rights, addressing multi-dimensional poverty, protecting children from all forms of violence and abuse and working together with communities to ensure that all children and adolescents live in protective environments are essential to sustaining the peace process. The hope of the future in Colombia lies in healthy and educated youth and children. Access to good-quality health, nutrition and education – including life skills, inclusive education and comprehensive education on sexuality – and protection will provide Colombian youth and children with pathways to social and economic self-reliance.

39. In Meta, the joint UNDP, FAO, UN-Women, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP projects, coordinated by the Territorial Renewal Agency (ART) and the National Archdiocesan Social Pastoral System, aimed at accelerating the implementation of development plans with a local approach, provide a clear example of comprehensive assistance based on the experience of each United Nations organization. The delegation observed how the participatory approach in the design and implementation of this project, which supports former FARC-EP members in their social and economic recovery using different models for building trust and promoting social cohesion while ensuring that the community – in particular children – has access to

basic services and food security, are positive strategies for supporting communities, strengthening their organizational skills and promoting reconciliation and peaceful coexistence where the Spaces for Reincorporation and Training are located. These agencies are encouraged to continue strengthening their collaborative work at the local level, and to revisit some of their strategies and the ways that they can help the Colombian Government to enforce laws to protect women and to assist women in overcoming violence and participating in all spheres of economic life. This includes training more women in entrepreneurship, supporting access to good-quality health and education for youth and children and scaling up school meals programmes to support better health and nutrition for children. Participants also visited the Joint Trust and Territorial Peace Programme, led by UNICEF, UNDP, UN-Women, and FAO, with the Health for Peace Project, led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/World Health Organization (WHO) and UNFPA in Mesetas, El Meta department. The programme was a clear example of the development of a community, family and school-centred proposal that helps children to avoid school repetition and dropout and strengthens educational capacities.

40. In Nariño, the delegation recognized the positive interaction among UNICEF, UN-Women, UNHCR and the United Nations Volunteers programme with local and national governments, as well as with civil society, indigenous and Afrodescendent communities through the implementation of the joint binational project with Ecuador to strengthen institutional capacities for the protection of children and adolescents affected by violence and armed conflict in cross-border areas. The project interventions related to creating a protective environment against all types of violence, including gender-based violence, recruitment and use of children by organized armed groups, reflect the synergy and collaboration between United Nations organizations to strengthen protection for children, adolescent and youth peacebuilding capacities in their own territories. The delegates were particularly impressed by the use of participatory strategies to empower adolescents and youth to address key barriers that prevent the fulfilment of their rights.

(d) Agriculture

41. Boosting agriculture is key to lasting peace and food security in Colombia. Almost half of the 2.7 million farmers in Colombia live in poverty. The United Nations is assisting small growers in particular to achieve economic resilience.

42. The delegation met with a number of farmers in Meta, most of whom were women. Their concerns included conflicts over land use and tenure; privatization of water sources limiting access to water; and access to markets for their products due to dire road conditions.

43. In Nariño, the delegation visited the UNDP-WFP Sustainable and Adapted Territories Project, which is helping local farmers to adapt to the impacts of climate change and restore local ecosystems. The project has a strong focus on capacity building for local communities, including by helping farmers turn produce into products that can be sold at local markets. Through the project 44 farmers have received climate change certificates.

44. The United Nations and its partners are facilitating the work and consolidation of farmer organizations, improving their technical capacities, the quality of their products and marketing abilities and empowering individual and associative farming. During the field visit, members of the delegation expressed their concern about the current trend of deforestation, which affects the ecosystem in Colombia, particularly in the countryside.

45. The crop substitution program enshrined in the peace agreement, under which the Colombian Government provides incentives for coca planters to cultivate other crops, has had setbacks and could eventually prompt families to return to consider returning to planting coca and thus increase coca production. Creating socioeconomic opportunities, particularly

in the agriculture sector, presents a real chance of making the crop substitution programme work. This is an area in which the UNCT could leverage its expertise to scale up support.

(e) Migrant crisis

46. The arrival of approximately 1.2 million Venezuelan migrants and 400,000 Colombian returnees from elsewhere in the region is placing significant pressure on national systems and municipalities, particularly near the border with Ecuador. Since 2017, the population of Colombia has increased by 4 percent due to migration. Colombia is also host to “pendulum migrants,” who cross the border to obtain services. A lack of documentation is a key challenge for migrants, impeding their ability to work. The team observed a large number of migrants in Ipiales and was informed that increasingly migrants were families with children, unaccompanied and separated children and elderly and people with disabilities.

47. The United Nations, through UN-Women, WFP, UNICEF, PAHO/WHO, UNFPA, UNHCR and IOM, is complementing the Colombian Government’s efforts to meet the needs of migrants by providing access to food, education and basic healthcare services.

48. Through the Child-friendly Space project, UNICEF and WFP are providing health services, including vaccinations, nutrition and psycho-social support, as well as food assistance with the provision of food kits, to migrant children and their parents. Between August 2018 and May 2019 the Space provided services to over 55,600 children and mothers. The Child-friendly Space project also provides a safe environment for breastfeeding, emotional recovery, promotion of early childhood development and identification of unaccompanied or separated children. Due to the increasing number of migrants, the agencies have reported that they face challenges with regard to meeting requirements for adequate infrastructure, access to medicines and implementing a system of epidemiological reporting. They are developing systems for sharing data on migrant health with Ecuador. The United Nations is also working with the local health department to design sustainable, low-cost interventions for addressing migrants’ health and education needs.

49. WFP is working in partnership with the Catholic organization *Pastoral Social* to operate a migrant shelter. The shelter provides meals to approximately 250 migrants per day as well as legal, psycho-social care and healthcare for approximately 2,000 persons in transit per month. Venezuelan community leaders play leadership roles in the shelter.

50. The UNCTs from Colombia and Ecuador are working together on a peace-building fund project implemented by UN-Women, UNHCR and UNICEF. Begun in 2019, this innovative project is focused on coordinated responses to joint transboundary challenges that are aimed at strengthening institutional capacities for the protection of girls, boys, adolescents and young people from border areas.

51. Donors are urged to increase funding so that United Nations agencies operating to assist Venezuelan migrants and returnees can scale up their response to support the Colombian Government in its efforts to deal with the crisis. UNICEF reported that its appeal was only 21 percent funded.

(f) Peacebuilding and peaceful conflict transformation

52. Support for the construction and consolidation of peace in Colombia cuts across all areas of United Nations engagement and is having demonstrable impacts on those affected and displaced by conflict. The United Nations has been present in Colombia for several decades, supporting projects addressing the causes and consequences of the armed conflict: There is no peace without development and no development without peace. Efforts target the most vulnerable to ensure that no one is left behind.

53. The United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia is monitoring and verifying the implementation of the peace agreement, playing a pivotal role in overseeing the reintegration of ex-combatants into political, economic and social life while ensuring their personal and collective security, and partnering with the United Nations agencies, in order to enable livelihoods opportunities for thousands of ex-combatants. As part of the tripartite mechanism, the United Nations has helped to generate trust between both parties to the peace process by defusing tensions during fragile phases of the post-conflict situation.

54. The United Nations is engaged in various peacebuilding projects through the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund, which represents an important strategic alliance between the Colombian Government, the United Nations and the international community working together to advance the post-conflict peace and stabilization agenda in Colombia. The fund supports projects related to post-conflict stabilization and confidence building measures and is used in the implementation of the peace agreements. It has helped to reduce the risk of new cycles of conflict and violence and to build confidence in affected areas.

55. The United Nations' efforts to contribute to peacebuilding centre on reducing violence and promoting peaceful resolution of conflict, strengthening civil society participation, local governance, preparedness and implementation of the peace agreement, setting up a Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Recurrence and restoring victims' rights.

56. The delegation met beneficiaries of the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund, the majority of whom are women and children. The delegation bore witness to how the fund contributed to improving living conditions and enabling the victims of the armed conflict to gain access to justice. The delegation also witnessed how the fund was able to support small infrastructure projects prioritized by communities and how those projects positively affected their lives by generating employment and income, as well as building confidence in the peace process.

57. The delegation was delighted to learn of the remarkable value of Colombian women's contribution to the peace process. Women were involved in negotiating the peace agreement and are instrumental in building public support for the peace process.

B. Partnerships and collaboration

58. The United Nations works with a wide range of partners, including national and local governments, beneficiaries, NGOs and civil society organizations, Member States, the private sector and other development actors.

One United Nations

59. The delivering as one approach has brought the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes together as "One" in their interactions with the Colombian Government. The UNDAF for 2015–2019 contributed to strong national ownership and government leadership. With an empowered Resident Coordinator in place coupled with a large coherent and coordinated UNCT, One United Nations in Colombia is in the process of formulating a "new generation" UNDAF for 2020–2024, aligned with the national sustainable development plan, reflecting the humanitarian-peace-development nexus and identifying new opportunities for joint programming. Inter-agency cooperation is strong. United Nations agencies conduct joint context analysis and field missions.

National and local governments

60. The United Nations is an important and valued strategic and implementing partner for the Colombian Government at all levels. National authorities lead and manage the UNDAF process. It is important that the United Nations continue to deliver as one in jointly planning and coordinating with national authorities to ensure that the UNDAF for 2020–2024 is

demand-driven and that the UNCT has a high-quality presence in Colombia able to provide better, more efficient and higher quality support for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals at all levels of government. Continued open dialogue with the Colombian Government to maintain robust relationships and to jointly keep track of the implementation of the UNDAF will be crucial moving forward.

Beneficiaries

61. The delegation was able to meet and discuss issues with a number of beneficiaries. This was helpful for getting a first-hand account of the work and impact of the United Nations, including what is going well and what could be improved, and for putting into perspective discussions and decisions taken at the highest level of the United Nations. Beneficiary feedback on engaging the United Nations was positive overall, citing examples of how the United Nations is empowering local people, including on entrepreneurship.

62. The delegation saw first-hand projects that have helped displaced people reintegrate into society and become economically and financially independent. It witnessed a number of thriving businesses that had been capitalized through seed funding from UNDP and UNHCR.

63. The delegation bore witness to a large number of women taking the lead in entrepreneurship. For many of these women it was not a matter of choice but rather a path they needed to take in order to care for their families. The impact that the United Nations is creating for these families is life changing. The delegation also witnessed the importance of adolescent and youth participation in peacebuilding initiatives at the local level, with the involvement of indigenous communities.

Non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations

64. NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) play important roles in supporting delivery of the development priorities of Colombia. A number of local NGOs and CSOs active in a range of areas briefed the delegation through an informal exchange. They encouraged the United Nations to do more to strengthen gender, institutions that empower women and monitoring mechanisms to guarantee the rights of children and youth and to continue to encourage dialogue among different levels of government and the Colombian people to maintain trust in the peace process. They encouraged the United Nations to scale up its coordination with NGOs and CSOs to strengthen the nexus between humanitarian interventions and sustainable development, including the achievement of food security.

Member States

65. Member States play an important role in supporting delivery of national development priorities and as partners of the United Nations. The delegation met a number of high-level diplomats through an informal exchange to share views on, among other things, how the United Nations can better deliver on the ground.

66. The delegation received positive feedback on how the United Nations was delivering in Colombia. There were descriptions of robust partnerships between member states and the United Nations. The United Nations was encouraged to approach its delivery in a holistic manner, improving coordination and coherence among its agencies.

67. The UNCT noted that it had observed “donor fatigue.” Following the armed conflict the United Nations has found it difficult to generate sufficient resources to respond to the current migration crisis.

Private sector and other development actors

68. In Nariño, the delegation met with local private sector representatives working in partnership with UN-Women to increase women’s participation in the workforce and to help them to understand and assert their rights. The University of Nariño briefed the delegation

on its research network established to help develop gender-based indicators for research to influence policy development.

III. Recommendations

69. Based on these reflections on the effectiveness of the United Nations in Colombia, and recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all approach, the delegation has made a number of recommendations for strengthening: (a) the impact of the United Nations in Colombia; (b) the work of the Executive Boards; and (c) future Board field visits.

(a) Strengthening the impact of the United Nations in Colombia

Recommendation 1

70. Continue to improve the ability of the UNCT in Colombia to deliver as one, drawing on comparative advantages and reducing overlaps of activities. Effective inter-agency collaboration in Colombia is key. The UNCT must consider greater inter-agency joint programming in the next UNDAF. The UNCT should step up its efforts to effectively communicate with the Colombian Government in order to align its programmes with national and local government priorities. The UNCT could start by linking to its website the next UNDAF, all United Nations agency-specific country programme documents, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Government national development plan.

Responsibility: UNCT

Recommendation 2

71. Ensure a strong focus on long-term sustainability and developing national capacity, including through using lessons learned from existing programmes and projects, for instance mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals, local capacity development and regional dimensions; strengthening links between humanitarian, peacebuilding, gender mainstreaming and development programming.

Responsibility: UNCT

Recommendation 3

72. Continue to take innovative approaches to programming to address transboundary issues. In particular, the UNCT is encouraged to continue working with the United Nations country team in Ecuador, building on the lessons learned from the binational Peacebuilding Fund. The UNCT should ensure that the new UNSDCF outlines opportunities for joint programming, recognizing that additional funding is required for binational joint programmes.

Responsibility: UNCT

Recommendation 4

73. Develop a communications strategy for sharing results broadly. The United Nations is achieving impressive results in countries, but the delegation observed limited visibility of those results outside the UNCT. The communications strategy will set the lines for continuous communication and awareness raising on the mission and role of United Nations agencies in order to foster better understanding of the mission of the UNCT by the host country.

Responsibility: UNCT

(b) Strengthening the work of the Executive Boards**Recommendation 5**

74. Strengthen Executive Board understanding of country-level issues, particularly key cross-cutting issues such as humanitarian/development action and gender, including through more dynamic and interactive briefings at Board sessions and informal meetings; use this as an opportunity to strengthen cross-United Nations agency work; engage the Resident Coordinator, the UNCT, agency country heads, local partners and political leaders, as appropriate; and further contextualize agency-specific country programme documents within the broader UNSDCF when they come to the Executive Boards for approval.

Responsibility: Board secretariats

(c) Strengthening future Board visits**Recommendation 6**

75. Ensure the effectiveness and impact of field visits, including by being clearer on strategic objectives and ensuring a deeper dialogue with the UNCT, the Resident Coordinator and all relevant partners. During field visits, the delegation should be provided with and could benefit from opportunities to see how the UNCT implements United Nations development system reform at the country level.

Responsibility: Board secretariats in partnership with UNCTs

IV. Conclusion

76. The delegation would like to express its deepest appreciation to the Government of Colombia, the Acting Resident Coordinator, the UNCT and WFP as coordinating agency for all the efforts made to give a wide overview of the work of the United Nations agencies in Colombia, for being wonderful hosts for the joint field visit and for making it a successful and impactful visit.

77. The visit delivered on the key objectives to assess the effectiveness of the United Nations in Colombia with regard to supporting delivery of national development priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals and on partnerships and collaboration. The delegation looks forward to the consideration and implementation of the follow-up recommendations.

Annex: List of participants

| Region/ Agency | UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS | UNICEF | UN-Women | WFP |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | Dr. Edgar SISA Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Botswana to the United Nations, New York | H.E. Mr. Omar HILALE President of the Executive Board of UNICEF, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations, New York | H.E. Ms. Koki Muli GRIGNON Vice-President of the Executive Board of UN-Women Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Kenya to the United Nations, New York | H.E. Hisham Mohamed BADR* President of the Executive Board of WFP Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations Agencies, Rome *Head of Delegation |
| | | Dr. Nawal Ahmed Mukhtar AHMED Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Sudan to the United Nations, New York | | |
| Asia-Pacific | H.E. Mr. Cho Tae-yul President of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, New York | H.E. Mr. Masud BIN MOMEN Vice-President of the Executive Board of UNICEF Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the United Nations, New York | Mr. Marwan Ali Noman AL-DOBHANY Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations, New York | H.E. Mohammed HOSSEIN EMADI Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to FAO, WFP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development Rome |
| | Mr. Sylvain KALSAKAU Minister Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Vanuatu to the United Nations, New York | | | |

| Region/ Agency | UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS | UNICEF | UN-Women | WFP |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Eastern Europe | H.E. Ms. Besiana KADARE Vice-President of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations, New York | H.E. Mr. Miroslav KLÍMA Minister Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the United Nations, New York | H.E. Ms. Katalin Annamária BOGYAY Vice-President of the Executive Board of UN-Women, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations, New York | Mr. Evgeny VAKULENKO First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to FAO and other United Nations Agencies, Rome |
| Latin America and the Caribbean | Ms. Flor DE LIS VASQUEZ MUÑOZ Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations, New York | Mr. Omar CASTAÑEDA SOLARES Minister Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the United Nations, New York | H.E. Ms. Pennelope Althea BECKLES President of the Executive Board of UN-Women, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations, New York | H.E. Ms. Karla Gabriella SAMAYOA RECARI Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the United Nations Agencies, Rome |
| Western Europe and other States | Ms. Melina LITO Senior Policy Advisor, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, New York | Mr. Daniel GIMENEZ Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations, New York | Ms. Rosemary O'HEHIR Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations, New York | Mr. Marcus A. JOHNSON Counsellor for Development Affairs, United States Mission to the United Nations Agencies, Rome |
| Executive Board Secretariats | Mr. Jordi LLOPART Secretary | Ms. Hai Kyung JUN Secretary | Mr. Jean-Luc BORIES Secretary | Ms. Harriet SPANOS Secretary |
| | Ms. Elena KASKO Board and Governance Specialist, UNFPA | | | Ms. Sarah COLBOURNE Executive Board Junior Professional Officer |
| | Mr. Dragan MICIC Team Leader, UNOPS New York Liaison Office | | | Ms. Elisa GRIFONI Business Support Assistant |