

Teagasc Scoping Mission to Colombia – Terms of Reference

Background

An internal armed conflict afflicted Colombia for over 50 years, destabilising the country and causing the death of over 200,000 of people and the forced internal displacement of more than 5 million people. The conflict destroyed the country's social fabric, seriously impeded its economic development, and undermined the resilience of large parts of the population. Colombia's rural areas have been disproportionately affected by the conflict, and have suffered from illegal activities and violence. Delivery of public services has been seriously hampered by the state's weak presence in many of these rural areas.

The comprehensive peace agreements signed by the Government of Colombia and the FARC guerrilla group in 2016 present a historic opportunity to put an end to one of the oldest internal conflicts in the world. Peace in Colombia will bring major economic, political and social benefits, including for the stability of its neighbouring countries and the larger region.

The Peace Agreements focus on a number of themes:

- Comprehensive Rural Reform
- Political participation
- Illicit drugs (including Substitution of illicit crops)
- Transitional justice, reparations, truth and victims' rights
- End of the conflict and implementation arrangements.

The thematic areas of rural reform, crop substitution and prisoner reincorporation are of direct relevance to this scoping mission.

Comprehensive Rural Reform

Comprehensive Rural Reform sets the foundation for the transformation of rural Colombia with the objective of creating the conditions to ensure the well-being of the rural population. In doing so, it aims to address factors underlying the conflict, thereby helping to guarantee non-repetition of the conflict and build a stable and long-lasting peace. In this regard, the agreement on Comprehensive Rural Reform:

- Focuses on the well-being of rural people, their communities and the different ethnic groups.
- Aims to strengthen the state's presence across the country, integrate the various regions, close the gap between rural and urban areas, improve the agricultural industry, protect the environment and ensure that the right to food is progressively realised.
- Conceives of the various regions across the country as having diverse constituents, and where these different communities will play leading roles in the Comprehensive Rural Reform.

While Comprehensive Rural Reform is a nationwide programme, its implementation is being prioritised in the zones most affected by the conflict – areas with higher poverty levels, institutional weakness, the presence of crops grown for illicit use, and other illegal economies.

Teagasc Scoping Mission to Colombia – Terms of Reference

It is envisaged that national, departmental and local governments will also put in place plans for proper nourishment and nutrition, programmes for dealing with hunger and malnutrition, and measures to strengthen local and regional production and markets, as well as campaigns on the proper handling of food and for the adoption of good eating habits.

Ireland's Support to Colombia

The Government of Ireland is committed to continued support for the Peace Process in Colombia. This commitment includes providing both financial and technical support and sharing the experience of the peace process in Ireland and Northern Ireland with the Colombian government, civil society organisations and other stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

DFAT/Irish Aid have provided over €10 million in funding to Colombia since 2007, mainly channelled through Colombian and international NGOs and focusing on the areas of human rights, conflict prevention and peace building and supporting livelihoods for rural populations.

In 2016, a total of €1.2 million was channelled through NGOs, international organisations and the Colombian government to support the peace process and planning for and creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the Peace Accord. In addition, the Embassy in Mexico accredited to Colombia organised a programmes of visits by participants in the peace process in Northern Ireland to share lessons learned, focusing on the issues of human rights, gender, police reform, political participation, private sector support for peace and reconciliation. In 2017, DFAT will provide more than €2 million in funding to Colombia for the implementation of the Peace Agreement and support to human rights.

Ireland has also developed a close working relationship with the Colombian government and the key agencies involved in the implementation of the Peace Agreement. In particular, regular contact and cooperation has been established with:

- High Counsel for Peace and Security
- Territory Renewal Agency
- National Agency for the Substitution of Illicit Crops
- National Development Agency
- Presidential Cooperation Agency
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia and
- Presidential Counsellor for Human Rights
- Office of the High Commissioner for Peace.

Ireland is one of the founder members of the European Union Trust Fund for Colombia (EUTF) and will contribute €3 million over the lifetime of the Fund. Ireland has also contributed €800,000 to the UN Multi-Donor Fund in 2016 and 2017 to support the Colombian government's Rapid Response Strategy. In addition, ongoing advice and support is being provided to the Ministry of Post Conflict through the services of a Special Advisor (Pat Colgan) with specific expertise in the design and implementation of Peace Programmes in Ireland and Northern Ireland by the Special EU Programme Body (SEUPB).

Teagasc Scoping Mission to Colombia – Terms of Reference

Teagasc Mission

The Teagasc scoping mission to Colombia seeks to build upon the warm acknowledgement by President Santos of Ireland’s constructive role in the Colombian peace process during President Higgins’ official visit to Colombia in February 2017. During that visit there was an opportunity to engage with senior government figures, including President Santos, on priority areas for support and experience sharing in the immediate post-conflict period. President Santos specifically asked about the opportunities for Colombia to learn from Ireland in the area of agricultural and rural development.

The scoping mission should focus on exploring options for technical assistance to the Colombian government in respect of rural development planning, specifically the planning of the Territorial Development Programmes (*Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial (PDETS)*) envisaged in the Peace Agreement, and the strategy for Sustainable Integrated Rural Development (*Desarollo Rural Integral Sostenible (DRIS)*). Initial discussions have taken place with the High Commissioner for Peace and Security (*Alta Consejería para la Paz y la Seguridad*), the Territorial Renewal Agency (*Agencia de Renovación del Territorio*), the National Agency for the Substitution of Illicit Crops (*Agencia Nacional para la Sustitución de Cultivos Ilícitos*) and others, on the challenge of developing sustainable approaches to agricultural development as part of the strategy for Integrated Rural Reform envisaged in Point 1 of the Peace Agreement. The scoping mission should explore how Ireland’s experience and expertise may be of relevance in this process. The agreements that have been put in place with local communities on crop substitution will require considerable follow-up engagement and technical assistance to ensure that alternative forms of productive agricultural activity can be devised. This will be a central plank in the development of the 16 PDETS.

The scoping mission will also assist in sharing the experiences in Ireland of integrated rural development based on sustainable agricultural development and exploring ways in which ongoing support and technical assistance can be provided to local communities in tackling the challenges they face. The visit will also build on the considerable experience built up by TEAGASC, with the support of Irish Aid, over the past decade in providing technical assistance to a number of countries, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, who have faced similar challenges in a post-conflict environment. Some of the specific areas to be considered should include:

- the development of the ovine sector;
- rural development, particularly diversification of on and off farm income for small holders; and
- organic production and the development of supply chains and markets for organic products.

It is envisaged that the TEAGASC delegation will also meet with representatives of the FARC-EP to exchange experiences on lessons learned in Ireland in the creation of viable rural enterprises and the suitability of a range of enterprise forms for that purpose, including the cooperative model.

It is anticipated that the outcome of the visit will be a proposal for a longer-term engagement between Ireland and local actors in Colombia for the purposes of knowledge transfer and support for the development of sustainable approaches to crop substitution and development of productive

Teagasc Scoping Mission to Colombia – Terms of Reference

agricultural activities. Such proposal should identify an optimum timeframe for engagement and resources needed with outline costings, with a view to framing a proposal for support to the EU Trust Fund.

The scoping mission will include meetings with the Ministry for Agriculture; relevant agencies and experts in Colombia involved in Agricultural and Rural Development; and field visits to targeted regions and territories outside Bogotá. Pat Colgan, seconded to the Ministry for Post Conflict, will be the key point of support in Bogota for the scoping mission.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

August 2017