

EVALUATION DEPARTMENT



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A Trusted Facilitator: An Evaluation of Norwegian Engagement in the Peace Process between the Colombian Government and the FARC, 2010–2016

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This report is the product of its authors, and
responsibility for the accuracy of data included
in this report rests with the authors alone.

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Preface

Since the early 1990s, Norway has been engaged in a number of peace and reconciliation processes. Within a few years, engagement in peace processes became an important feature of Norwegian foreign policy. There is a widely shared perception, both domestically and internationally, of Norway as a nation with a particular tradition of promoting peace and solidarity with other people.

Norway was one of two ‘guarantor’ countries in the peace process between the Government of Colombia and the FARC from June 2010 to December 2016. This evaluation focuses on Norway’s support to this peace process. The evaluation does not assess or evaluate the result of the peace process, but describes and documents Norway’s engagement in, and contribution to, this process.

The purpose of the evaluation is to generate knowledge on how Norway contributed to this peace process, ultimately to strengthen future Norwegian peace efforts.

We believe this evaluation provides an important contribution to gather and systematize knowledge from peace processes in order to learn for future ones, which is emphasized in the Norwegian government’s white paper on the Sustainable Development Goals and Norwegian development policy and its 2017–2018 National Budget proposal submitted to the Norwegian Parliament.

The evaluation was carried out and authored by a team from the Evaluation Department in Norad, with contributions from external experts. I thank the team for a job well done.



Per Øyvind Bastøe,
August 2018

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This evaluation has been carried out by the Evaluation Department at Norad. The study team has consisted of Javier Fabra-Mata (team leader) and Anette Wilhelmsen, both from the Evaluation Department at Norad, and the following external experts: Christine Bell (University of Edinburgh), Marc Chernick (Georgetown University), Frans Leeuw (University of Maastricht) and Morten Skumsrud Andersen (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs). Jesper Mygind (Epinion), Torben Nyvang Jakobsen (Epinion), Mike Riess (Epinion), Asger Gehrt Olsen (Backscatter) and Anders Kristian Munk (Backscatter) contributed to the Twitter analysis carried out as part of this evaluation.

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The evaluation team would like to thank: the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and especially the Section for Peace and Reconciliation and the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá; Colombian and Norwegian CSOs; as well as a range of individuals in Colombia and Norway who took the time to talk to us in interviews, including key actors in the peace process. Without their openness and candid reflections, it would not have been possible to conduct this evaluation.

Executive summary

OVERVIEW

The evaluation focuses on Norway's support to the peace process between the Government of Colombia and the guerrilla group Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo (The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army, known as the FARC–EP, or simply the FARC) from June 2010 to December 2016. Norway was one of two 'guarantor' (facilitator) countries in this peace process. The other guarantor country was Cuba.

Initial contact between the Government of Colombia and the FARC was established soon after the presidential inauguration of Juan Manuel Santos in the summer of 2010. After two years of secret talks, in August 2012 the Colombian Government and the FARC reached an agreement on the framework and agenda for peace talks. The peace negotiations were formally launched in Norway in October 2012, and started shortly afterwards in Havana, Cuba. In August 2016, the Government of Colombia and the FARC signed a final comprehensive peace agreement, which was narrowly rejected by Colombian voters in a plebiscite, leading

to a renegotiation process. After more than four years of public negotiations, the parties signed a final peace agreement on 24 November 2016.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation is to generate knowledge on how Norway contributed to the peace process in Colombia, ultimately to strengthen future Norwegian peace efforts. This evaluation does not assess or evaluate the peace process itself, but describes and documents Norway's engagement in, and contribution to, this process.

The main objectives of this evaluation and the evaluation questions are as follows:

1. To document and analyse Norway's role in this peace process in Colombia.
2. To assess how contextual analysis, first-hand experience and knowledge from other peace processes informed Norway's approach as a facilitator in the Colombian peace process.

3. To formulate lessons learned from the Norwegian engagement in this peace process in Colombia and provide recommendations.

ANALYTICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Peace processes are complex, and the one between the Government of Colombia and the FARC is no exception. This evaluation dealt with complexity primarily by focusing on nested systems – that is, intersecting sub-systems that evolved during the peace negotiations – and crisis points during the process. Crises served as useful reference points to examine Norwegian decision-making. Furthermore, because the Norwegian team aimed to contribute to building trust between the negotiating parties, but also because trust is a key aspect of peace processes and peace facilitations, this evaluation also considered the actions and mechanisms by which trust was built.

The evaluation team developed a two-dimensional facilitation support model, considering services provided to the negotiation parties by the Norwegian facilitation team ('front-end

support'), the type of support the facilitating team needed ('back-end support') and the interaction between the two.

The evaluation combined the following data collection methods:

- › *Archival research.* Archival research was conducted from October 2017 to January 2018 in the archives of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Documents selected were limited to the period from June 2010 to December 2016.
- › *Literature review and media analysis.* The team conducted a critical review of available research, media analyses and first-hand accounts from both the Colombian Government and the FARC.
- › *Key informant and stakeholder interviews.* The Norad Evaluation Department interviewed 51 key informants and stakeholders (41.1% Colombians; 35.2% women). In accordance with ethical approaches to research, all interviews have been anonymised to avoid source identification, guaranteeing their confidentiality and protecting them from harm.
- › *Big data – social media analysis.* A social media (Twitter) analysis was carried out to obtain

information relevant to this evaluation, searching for and scraping historic public tweets relevant to Norwegian facilitation in this peace process from October 2012 to December 2016. The Twitter analysis was intended to play a complementary and contextualising role.

FINDINGS

Norway's approach, actions and contributions to the peace process

Overall, this evaluation finds that Norway made a noticeable contribution to the Colombian peace process, in alignment with the expectations that the Government of Colombia and the FARC had placed upon it as a guarantor country. Norway's contribution took the form of providing knowledge and capacity building, generating conditions to build trust between the negotiating parties, and providing international diplomatic support and operational support – especially in the form of logistics.

There are **several reasons explaining why and how Norway became engaged in the peace process**, including its reputation as a trustworthy peace facilitator, the fact that Norway is not bound to avoid interaction with any designated terrorist groups, and its financial resources and

long-term commitment to peace. An existing Norwegian 'diplomatic peace footprint' in Colombia was also an advantage, dating from its involvement in the 2005–2007 talks between the Colombian Government and the *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (National Liberation Army, ELN). The personal connections established by Norwegians on the ground, their knowledge of the different stakeholders in Colombia, and – more broadly – their ability to navigate a highly complex political landscape, were significant in this regard.

In understanding the choice of Norway as facilitator, it is important to distinguish between the secret and public phases of the peace talks. Norway's peace facilitation reputation secured its invitation to be a guarantor of the secret talks, but it was the professionalism and seriousness of Norwegian diplomats during the secret phase that convinced the parties to include Norway to be a guarantor for the public peace negotiations.

Norway adopted an approach of working through three main focus areas during the peace talks: women's participation and a gender perspective; transitional justice; and demining. This focus-based approach had not been systematically undertaken in any other peace negotiations involving Norway. The selection of focus areas was based on a number of factors – of existing

and foreseeable priorities for the negotiating parties, Norway's own commitments (i.e. to the Rome Statute and the Women, Peace and Security agenda) and its access to expertise.

This evaluation assesses working through focus areas as a positive approach for several reasons. Internally, focus areas were devised as anchors for Norway's work, and to enable different individuals, sections and departments within the MFA to rally behind the Norwegian effort. In spite of internal challenges, the focus areas did indeed play this function. Externally, tangible achievements were made in all of the focus areas.

However, these priority areas do not encapsulate the totality of the Norwegian contribution to the Colombian peace process. ***As a guarantor country that was constantly present in Havana, Norway's facilitation team provided multiple and continuous support to the negotiating parties at different levels.*** This support encompassed all five ways in which a facilitator could contribute to a peace process – operations, support facilitation, knowledge facilitation, capacity building and trust building. All these types of support from Norway are, to a greater or lesser extent, visible in each of its focus areas, but they go beyond this and run throughout the whole peace process, from its secret phase to the signature of the renegotiated peace agreement.

The Colombian peace process went through several crises, in which the guarantor countries had a role in reducing tensions and helping to move the process forward. In cases such as the military skirmishes and the killing of 11 soldiers in Cauca that led to a crisis from April to July 2015, the Norwegian and Cuban teams knew how to read the situation and acted in a coordinated manner. Another crisis was the result of the plebiscite held on 2 October 2016 that marked a turning point in the peace process. The No vote won with a narrow margin, by 0.4% and some 54,000 votes. Explanations for the high abstention rate and the rejection of the initial peace agreement range from the strategy of the No campaign to the inability of the Yes camp to mobilise the electorate, and from the influence of the Christian vote to the impact of a hurricane.

Distinguishing characteristics of Norway's organisational structure in the peace process

While small in numbers, the ***Norwegian team involved in the Colombian peace process was highly active.*** The fact that Norway operated through a small team led by a Special Envoy is assessed as positive in this evaluation, on two grounds. Firstly, this was helpful in gaining the trust of the negotiating parties, which was to a certain extent dependent on interaction between individuals. Secondly, it facilitated the acquisition

of the inside knowledge necessary to make the guarantors' support effective – a type of experiential knowledge that is difficult to obtain through either occasional participation or transferring knowledge from individual to individual.

However, this strategy was not without problems. Logically, the smaller the team, the harder it is to accompany the whole process inside and outside of the negotiations, and the more vulnerable the team becomes. To offset these challenges, a small team requires effective back-end support at different levels, ranging from operations to issue-based expertise and diplomatic support.

The Norwegian team made a conscious effort to collect experiences from other peace processes involving Norway (Sri Lanka, Guatemala, South Sudan and Nepal, as well as *El Caguán* and ELN in Colombia). Even though full transferability of knowledge is never possible, lessons from previous experiences helped members of the Norwegian team to think differently and become aware of issues that were previously not on their radar.

Norway displayed a significant contextual awareness and an analytical reading of complex situations during the Colombian peace process. Overall, the Norwegian team made good use of this knowledge in its decision-making processes.

Even though Norway contributed positively to the peace process, **this evaluation has found blind spots in the Norwegian facilitation** that affected both the depth and range of its support activities, and the effectiveness and impact of these activities. These key gaps are:

- › The Norwegian team did receive the support it needed, but it could have benefitted from more assistance. This is especially true in relation to operations (to free up team members' time so they could focus on other pressing tasks), communication (to develop tailored messages), and knowledge facilitation and technical expertise. Moreover, there was a need for further clarity in the roles and responsibilities of the different team members.
- › Norway could have assisted the negotiating parties in clarifying the gender references in the draft peace agreement and better communicating what 'the gender perspective' entailed. Given its involvement in supporting the work of the Sub-commission on Gender, Norway could have helped to raise internal awareness of contentious language. It is not possible to establish conclusively whether Norway could also have been more proactive in emphasising the need for – and eventually supporting – communication with Colombians around what the Sub-commission on Gender

had done and in explaining what the peace agreement entailed from a gender perspective.

- › Norway could have done more to help Colombians better understand the peace agreement more generally ahead of the plebiscite. A more active engagement in the pedagogy for peace (educational programme) could have been achieved through existing channels (civil society organisations, *Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz* (the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP) and the United Nations (UN) system). Similarly, Norway could have been more active in reaching out to key stakeholders in Colombia – or assisting the negotiating parties in considering who needed to be approached to support this.
- › Norway could have prepared for a scenario in which the initial peace agreement was rejected in the plebiscite. Even though Norway was quick in its response to the new, post-plebiscite reality, this evaluation found limited evidence of preparation that could have increased the effectiveness of Norwegian support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to fulfil this evaluation's overall purpose of strengthening future Norwegian peace efforts, Norad's Evaluation Department has some overall recommendations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These fall into three categories, corresponding with the different stages in operationalising a policy to promote peace.

1. Organisational readiness for future peace engagements:

1a. **Ensure there is sufficient and flexible funding for peace work.** Facilitation in peace processes requires having financial resources available and rapid decision-making related to funding throughout the process. Quick access to a sufficient and sustained financial base is necessary to ensure comprehensive support and long-term commitment in peace processes.

1b. **Increase capacity in peace facilitation and systematise experience.** The Section for Peace and Reconciliation should continue to train a cadre of diplomats on different topics related to peace processes. This should also build on the MFA's valuable first-hand experience. Furthermore, the MFA should consider how best to tap into and connect the expertise and knowledge

of former, current and future diplomats with practical experience or training on facilitation in a peace process.

2. Organisational efficiency in a concrete peace engagement:

2a. **Provide a clear and robust mandate for the facilitation team and ensure internal clarity about roles and responsibilities.**

A Special Envoy for the Peace Process with contextual knowledge, thematic expertise and the right set of analytical skills can be instrumental in the success of a facilitation effort. It is essential for the Special Envoy to have the necessary decision-making power and clarity within the larger team on roles, tasks and responsibilities.

2b. **Operate through small facilitation teams with robust back-end support.**

Small facilitation teams offer advantages in terms of building the necessary trust among the negotiating parties and increasing knowledge about the negotiation process and the parties' positions. Functional small teams operating in highly demanding processes require effective back-end support at different levels, grounded in some knowledge of what a peace process entails.

3. Facilitation effectiveness in a concrete peace engagement:

3a. **Understand how the peace facilitation links to other strategic objectives, and assess whether these can be combined through, for example, applying an approach based on focus areas.** Working through focus areas enables purposeful behaviour and individual contribution to a team effort, while supporting resource prioritisation and potentially increasing the overall coherence of the Norwegian effort.

3b. **Enhance contextual awareness and conduct scenario planning for high-stakes situations that may jeopardise a peace process.** A facilitation team's analytical toolbox should include ways to monitor the public discourse in connection to the peace process. When developing their strategies, Norwegian facilitation teams should consider scenario analysis, especially around high-stakes situations such as processes for validating peace agreements.

1. Introduction

Norway has been engaged in a number of peace and reconciliation processes since the early 1990s, making peace diplomacy a feature in Norwegian foreign and development policy.¹ There is a widely shared perception, both domestically and internationally, of Norway as a nation with a particular tradition of promoting peace and solidarity with other people.

During the two first decades after the end of the cold war, Norwegian diplomats, policymakers, aid workers and researchers played key roles as facilitators and mediators in various peace processes. Within a few years of the first engagements in the 1990s, engagement in peace processes became one of the most prominent features of Norwegian foreign policy.

The establishment in 2003 of a unit in Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) dedicated to peace processes and conflict resolution (the Section for Peace and Reconciliation) marks a milestone in the country's professionalisation

¹ MFA (2016). *Norway's peace and reconciliation policy*. Available at: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/peace-and-reconciliation-efforts/innsiktsmappe/facilitation/id708238> Last updated 23 November 2016.

TABLE 1 // NORWEGIAN ENGAGEMENT IN PEACE PROCESSES SINCE 1989

Country	Years
Guatemala	1989–1996
Mali	1992–1996
Israel/Palestine	1993–1995
The Balkans	1993–1995
Sudan	1994–2005
Sri Lanka	1999–2009
Colombia (El Caguán)	1999–2002
Cyprus	1997–2003
Haiti	1998–2008
The Philippines	2001–ongoing
Timor Leste	2006–2010
Colombia (gov-FARC)	2010–2016
Colombia (gov-ELN)	2005–2007, 2014–ongoing

Sources: MFA (2016). *Norway's engagement in peace processes since 1993*. Available at: https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/peace-and-reconciliation-efforts/innsiktsmappe/peace_efforts/id732943/ Last updated 17 November 2016; Nissen, A. (2015). *The Peace Architects. Norwegian Peace Diplomacy since 1989*. PhD dissertation, University of Oslo.

of its peace practice. This unit describes its approach as facilitation rather than ‘mediation with muscle’, which is made possible through flexible funding mechanisms and long-term commitments.² In both its white paper on the Sustainable Development Goals and Norwegian development policy³ and its 2017–2018 National Budget proposal submitted to the Norwegian Parliament, the Government of Norway “*puts emphasis on gathering and systematising experiences from peace processes*”,⁴ including from the peace processes in Colombia.⁵ This emphasis on learning was also the drive for conducting a formal evaluation of Norway’s peace efforts in Sri Lanka, published in 2011.⁶

Alongside Cuba, Norway was one of two ‘guarantor’ countries⁷ in the peace process between the Colombian Government and the guerrilla group Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo (The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army, known as the FARC–EP, or simply the FARC). After some five years of negotiations, the parties signed a final peace agreement on 24 November 2016.

The purpose of this evaluation is to generate knowledge on how Norway contributed to the peace process in Colombia, ultimately to strengthen future Norwegian peace efforts. The evaluation focuses on Norway’s support to the peace process between the Government of Colombia and the FARC from June 2010 to December 2016.

2 MFA (2016). ‘Norway’s approach to peace and reconciliation work’. Article. Available at: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/peace-and-reconciliation-efforts/innsiktsmappe/norway-peace-work/id446704/>. Last updated 9 November 2016.

3 MFA (2017). Meld. St. 24, *Felles ansvar for felles fremtid. Bærekraftsmålene og norsk utviklingspolitikk*, p48.

4 «Regjeringen legger vekt på å samle og systematisere erfaringer fra fredsprosesser [...]». MFA (2017). Prop. 1 S (2016–2017) *Proposisjon til Stortinget (forslag til stortingsvedtak) for budsjettåret 2017*, p228.

5 Ibid., p12.

6 Norad (2011). *Pawns of Peace. Evaluation of Norwegian peace efforts in Sri Lanka, 1997–2009*. Report 5/2011. Oslo.

7 ‘Guarantor’ (*garante* in Spanish) was the term employed by the Colombian Government and the FARC to designate the role given to Cuba and Norway. In this report, the terms ‘guarantor’ and ‘facilitator’ are used interchangeably as they are conceptually similar. This is also consistent with how the Norwegian MFA has used both terms – see, for example, MFA (2016). *Norway’s engagement in peace processes since 1993*. Available at: https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/peace-and-reconciliation-efforts/innsiktsmappe/peace_efforts/id732943/. Last updated 17 November 2016; and MFA (2017). *One year since the Colombian peace agreement was signed*. Available at: https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/one_year/id2580035/. Last updated 28 November 2017.

This evaluation does not assess the effects of the peace process (i.e. it is not an evaluation of the peace process), but describes and documents Norway's engagement in, and contribution to, the process.

The main objectives of this evaluation and the evaluation questions are as outlined in Table 2.

TABLE 2 // EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

Objectives	Questions
1. To document and analyse Norway's role in the 2010–2016 peace process in Colombia.	1. How and why did Norway become engaged in the peace process in Colombia?
	2. To what extent was Norway's contribution internally coherent?
	3. To what extent did Norway coordinate its efforts with other relevant international actors?
2. To assess how contextual analysis, first-hand experience and knowledge from other peace processes informed Norway's approach as a facilitator in the Colombian peace process.	1. What were the mechanisms by which the Norwegian facilitation team assessed the evolving context, conflict dynamics and risks associated with the peace process? How important were these mechanisms in shaping Norway's facilitation strategy?
	2. To what extent was Norway's facilitation team set-up adequate to support the peace process effectively? Was it conducive to learning?
	3. How was learning from Norwegian engagement in other peace processes embedded in, and used by, the Norwegian facilitation team in Colombia?
3. To formulate lessons learned from the Norwegian engagement in this peace process in Colombia and provide recommendations.	1. What are the lessons concerning Norway's role in this Colombian peace process that can be relevant for other ongoing or future peace processes?

2. Approach and methodology

The following section describes the analytical and methodological approach underlying this evaluation. It outlines the risk mitigation and ‘do no harm’ strategies taken by the evaluation team, and notes any limitations and constraints.

2.1 CONCEPTUAL AND ANALYTICAL APPROACH

This evaluation is restricted to the Colombian peace process that led to the final peace agreement at the end of 2016.⁸ Moreover, this is not an evaluation of the quality of the peace agreement, but of the Norwegian engagement in the peace process that led to the agreement. This distinction is important as it affects the elements of the process studied here, along with the particular lines of inquiry, and the underlying theories and approach.

Peace processes are complex, and the one between the Government of Colombia and the FARC is no exception. This evaluation dealt with complexity primarily by focusing on nested

systems – that is, intersecting sub-systems that evolved over time – and crisis points. It isolated and examined selected nested systems, corresponding with Norway’s priority areas.

This evaluation also considered crisis points during the peace process, which opened up space to include important aspects that would otherwise not have been part of a narrow and exclusive analysis of Norway’s self-declared focus areas. Crisis points in the peace process both affected, and were affected by, the direct negotiations between the parties but were also influenced by trust dynamics with the facilitators. It is thus of interest to examine Norway’s actions with respect to these points. The crisis points of evaluative interest (see [section 4.6](#)) were selected based on primary data, timelines developed by researchers and non-state actors, and expert assessments.

This evaluation not only pinpointed the Norwegian facilitation actions in relation to critical points in the peace process but, as far as possible, also examined how decisions relating to them were made. The measurement used

BOX 1 // DIMENSIONS OF QUALITY DECISION-MAKING IN NORWEGIAN PEACE FACILITATION IN COLOMBIA

- Self-awareness about the Norwegian role and mandate as co-facilitator of the process.
- The knowledge upon which the decision is based.
- Relationships appraisal – how a given action could affect relationships and trust levels.
- Decisions based on norms and principles of relevance to Norwegian peace facilitation.

to evaluate the quality of these decisions was based on the peace mediation and facilitation literature and Norwegian policy documents, and is outlined in Box 1.

Because the Norwegian team aimed to contribute to building trust between the negotiating parties, but also because trust is the crux of a peace process or peace facilitation, this evaluation also considered the actions and mechanisms by which trust was built during the Colombian peace process. The interest in mechanisms is core to this evaluation’s analytical approach. Mechanisms as understood in

⁸ We note, however, that in the ‘real world’ the quality of the peace agreement would be judged by the quality of the process, its implementation and the societal changes to which it leads.

this evaluation are “*underlying entities, processes, or structures which operate in particular contexts to generate outcomes of interest.*”⁹ Mechanisms are what make interventions work, they are the drivers of behaviour.

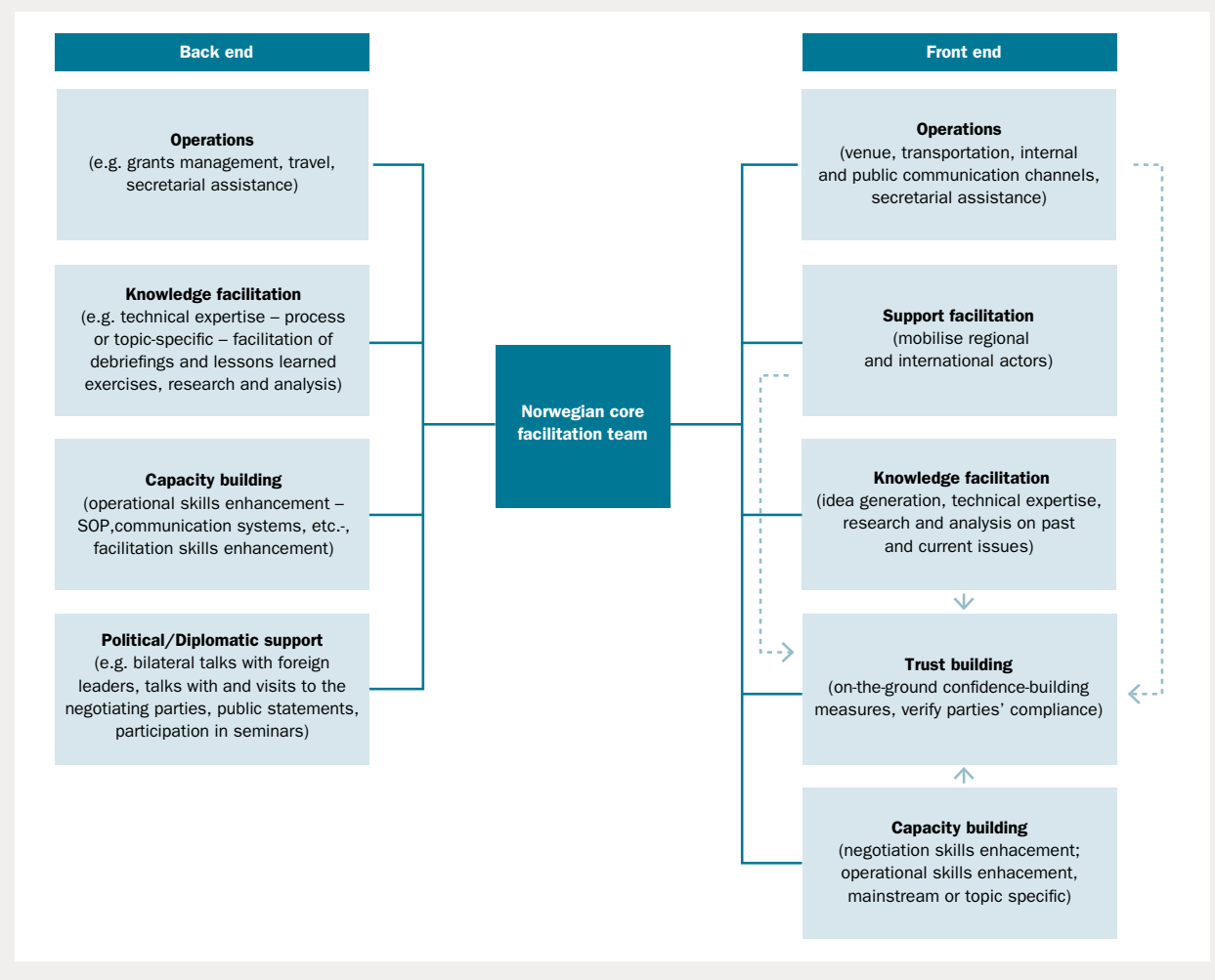
Drawing from existing research and practitioners’ accounts,¹⁰ we developed for this evaluation an ideal, two-dimensional facilitation support model (see Figure 1), which focuses on how a third party like Norway can support negotiating parties and the type of support the facilitation team requires (‘front-end support’). As the effective and timely delivery of those services to the negotiating parties is dependent on the capacity of the facilitating team, we include another dimension in the model to study what type of support the facilitating team needs (‘back-end support’) and how those are met.

The model assumes an interaction in practice between the two dimensions, i.e. feedback from

9 Astbury, B. and Leeuw, F. (2010). ‘Unpacking black boxes: mechanisms and theory building in evaluation’. *American Journal of Evaluation* 31 (3): 363–81, p368.

10 Whitfield, T. (2015) ‘Support Mechanisms: Multilateral, Multi-level, and Mushrooming’ in *Global Peace Operations Review*, 17 December 2015; Lehmann-Larsen, S. (2014). Effectively Supporting Mediation. Oslo Forum papers, Num. 3; Nathan, L. (2014). ‘What is the essence of international mediation in civil wars? The challenge of managing complexity’. Conference paper. July 2014; UN (2012). *United Nations Guidance for Effective Mediation*; UN (2011). *Mediation Start-up Guidelines*; Lehmann-Larsen, S. and Magnusson, I. (Undated). ‘What support does a mediator need for a peace process? Key takebacks on effective mediation support.’ Available at: <http://www.eip.org/en/news-events/what-support-does-mediator-need-peace-process-key-takebacks-effective-mediation-support>

FIGURE 1 // NORWAY’S FACILITATION SUPPORT MODEL



the front-end activities to the back end and vice versa. The front-end support model cuts across the analysis of evaluation objective 1,

while the back-end support was instrumental in approaching evaluation objective 2.

2.2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This evaluation combined the following data collection methods: literature review; archival peace process document review (Norwegian archives); key informant and stakeholder interviews; and social media analysis (see [Annex I](#)). Methods were chosen to match specific evaluation questions and fed into the analytical framework. NVivo software was used for sorting, classifying and analysing sections of the data.

› *Archival research.* This was conducted from October 2017 to January 2018 in the MFA archives. Documents selected were limited to the period June 2010 to December 2016.

› *Literature review and media analysis.* The team conducted a critical review of available research, media analyses and first-hand accounts from both the Colombian Government and the FARC.

› *Key informant and stakeholder interviews.* The Norad Evaluation Department interviewed 51 key informants and stakeholders (41.1% Colombians; 35.2% women). In accordance with ethical approaches to research, all interviews have been anonymised to avoid source identification, guaranteeing their confidentiality and protecting them from harm.

› *Big data – social media analysis.* A social media (Twitter) analysis was carried out to obtain information relevant to this evaluation, searching for and scraping historic public tweets relevant to Norwegian facilitation from October 2012 to December 2016. The Twitter analysis was intended to play a complementary and contextualising role, mainly linked to the three evaluation questions (see [Table 2](#), page 12).

2.2.1 Conflict sensitivity and ethical safeguards

This evaluation was conducted in a conflict- and context-sensitive manner by applying a number of interrelated measures during the planning, data collection, coding and analysis phases:

› There was a close dialogue with the MFA on the list of interviewees. From the start it was agreed that the MFA's suggestions for including or excluding informants would have to be discussed between the Evaluation Department and the MFA on a case-by-case basis.¹¹

› Interviewees were informed about the evaluation's scope and purpose, underlining what fell outside the evaluation focus.

› Careful consideration was given to the timing of the interview rounds. Similarly, the choice

of interview location was discussed with each interviewee.

› Only information feeding into this evaluation's analytical design was gathered.

› For interviews transcripts, we used password protection. Demographics and metadata that could lead to the identification of informants was kept separately.

› Source attributions and identifiers do not appear in this report, to comply with the principle of confidentiality and to protect the informants.

› Phased external validation of preliminary findings sensitive to the Colombian context.

2.2.2 Limitations

Overall, the archival material was rich and systematically structured. Procedures for archiving documents appear to have improved over time. However, regarding both the classified and unclassified sources, there are gaps in the archives. In addition, the year under which the documents were filed often did not match the actual date of some documents, making orientation difficult. There is also some duplication in the archives, where the same document is filed under more than one case number.

¹¹ No objections to proposed informants were raised by the MFA.

As pointed out in Norad's evaluation of Norway's engagement in the Sri Lankan peace process¹², it is challenging to deal with conflicting accounts and discourses. This is a classic problem in evaluative and qualitative research in social science, as is that of hindsight bias. The evaluation team was aware of this challenge and followed strategies to overcome it. For example, for interviews with MFA officials, conflicting narratives were dealt with by applying a source-competence rule that ranked the evidence based on the centrality of the source in the decision-making process or facilitation team. But, most importantly, triangulation was critical in this regard. Methodological triangulation approaches used in this evaluation included both within-method (for example, content validity for interview questions) and between-methods (such as interview responses and evidence from archival research or the literature review).

¹² Norad (2011): *Pawns of Peace. Evaluation of Norwegian peace efforts in Sri Lanka, 1997–2009*. Report 5/2011. Oslo.

2.3 THE STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

This report is divided into six chapters, including the Introduction ([Chapter 1](#)) and Approach and methodology ([Chapter 2](#)). [Chapter 3](#) provides the necessary historical context of this particular peace process in relation to previously attempted peace initiatives in Colombia, and Norway's involvement in some of those processes. It also presents a description of the 2010–2016 peace process between the Colombian Government and the FARC (in terms of structure, key issues and milestones).

The findings from this evaluation are presented in Chapters 4 and 5, each correlating with an evaluation objective. [Chapter 4](#) (Norway's approach, actions and contributions to the peace process) is organised around eight sections, on why Norway was invited to contribute as a guarantor and its mandate, focus areas, critical points, trust building and coordination with other actors. [Chapter 5](#) (Distinguishing characteristics of Norway's organisational structure in the peace process) focuses on the nexus between Norway's development aid and its facilitation of the peace talks, and also the internal workings of the Norwegian facilitation team – its organisational set-up, back-end support needs, contextual awareness and communicative approach. The report ends with conclusions and recommendations ([Chapter 6](#)).

3. Background context for Norwegian engagement in the 2012–2016 peace talks

The FARC was founded by land workers and small farmers in 1964 as a communist guerrilla force in the Andean highlands of Colombia. It was born after the country's 10-year civil war period known as *La Violencia* (The Violence, 1948–1958), at a time of a military campaign against armed peasants. Between 1958 and 2012, the Colombian conflict left at least 220,000 people dead, 81% of whom were civilian non-combatants.¹³ Kidnapping, forced displacement, sexual violence, anti-personnel mines and the destruction of property arising from this conflict have also had profound consequences in Colombia.¹⁴

3.1 PEACE PROCESSES IN COLOMBIA

Between 1982 and 2002, each presidential election in Colombia was dominated by the issue of peace. Five successive presidents attempted to pursue peace negotiations with the FARC and Colombia's other guerrilla movements that were founded in the 1960s and 1970s. The first peace negotiations took place following the

1982 presidential elections, when candidates from the two traditional parties – Liberal and Conservative – each proposed pursuing a peace deal during the campaign. Belisario Betancur, the Conservative candidate, became president and immediately engaged the FARC and three other guerrilla groups – Movimiento 19 de abril (the 19th of April Movement, M-19), Ejército Popular de Liberación (the Popular Liberation Army, EPL) and the Autodefensa Obrera (Worker's Self-Defense, ADO) – in talks.

A comprehensive amnesty was passed in 1982, and in 1984 the Colombian Government signed a bilateral ceasefire agreement with the FARC, as well as separate agreements with the other groups. In the FARC accord, the guerrillas agreed to end kidnapping and cease armed activities, and the government committed to promoting agrarian reform and rural development, alongside opening the democratic system to broader participation and increasing access to higher education. There was no mention of disarmament. The accord established that if the ceasefire held during the first year, the FARC would be able to participate in democratic politics.

During these negotiations, the FARC leadership set up its base in a historic stronghold located in the municipality of La Uribe, Meta department (state), an area just over the Sumapaz mountain range separating Meta from Bogotá. Government negotiators regularly flew from Bogotá in a helicopter to a village called Casa Verde. There, over the next three years, the two sides pursued unstructured peace negotiations. In May 1985, on the first anniversary of the ceasefire, the FARC launched the Unión Patriótica (Patriotic Union Party, UP) and soon afterwards announced its candidates for congress and the presidency in the 1986 elections. The new party managed to elect 14 members to the House and Senate, including FARC leader Iván Márquez, who would later lead the FARC negotiating team in Havana in 2012. Most UP candidates, however, were not from the FARC.

Within four months of taking office, three UP congressmen were assassinated. Over the next eight years, more than 3,000 UP leaders, candidates and elected officials were assassinated, including the UP presidential candidates in both 1986 and 1990.

¹³ Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2013). *¡Basta Ya! Colombia: memorias de guerra y dignidad*. Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional.

¹⁴ Ibid.

In August 1986, Virgilio Barco from the Liberal Party became President of Colombia.¹⁵ By then, the ceasefire with the other guerrilla groups had broken down but the FARC peace accord endured. However, under increasing strain, that too was suspended in June 1987. By then, and in the face of the increasing assassinations of UP members, the two FARC members of Congress had already slipped into hiding in the mountains.

Following the rupture of the FARC ceasefire, President Barco declared that any future negotiations would proceed based on the principle that the government was the legitimate actor and the guerrilla movements were operating outside the law. According to Barco, the government could be generous, but any subsequent negotiations would be limited to issues of unilateral ceasefire, disarmament, demobilisation and the reintegration of former combatants. The broad, open-ended negotiations begun under his predecessor Betancur would be replaced by a much more restricted agenda.

The FARC viewed Barco's proposal as a call to surrender and Colombia's remaining guerrilla groups moved to create a unified guerrilla

coalition, the Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar (Simón Bolívar Guerrilla Coordinating Body, CGSB), which brought into a common alliance the FARC, Ejército de Liberación Nacional (the National Liberation Army, ELN), M-19, EPL, indigenous guerrilla movement Quintín Lame and a few smaller groups.

Yet in 1989, as Barco's term was coming to an end, M-19 pulled out of the CGSB and accepted his conditions for negotiations. In March 1990, a final peace accord was signed and the newly founded Democratic Action/M-19 political party ran candidates in that year's congressional and presidential elections. The party's leader, Carlos Pizarro, was campaigning for the presidency when he was shot dead on a commercial airliner on the way to a rally on the Caribbean coast. M-19 declared it would not be intimidated and, during Pizarro's funeral, called on its supporters to vote for its new candidate, Antonio Navarro Wolff. When a special election for a Constituent Assembly was held in December 1990, M-19 won 28% of the vote and almost a third of the delegates. Navarro Wolff became one of three co-presidents of the Constituent Assembly, which produced a markedly more democratic constitution. President César Gaviria (1990–1994) called the new constitution a “*peace treaty*” when he presented it to the public in July 1991.

Colombia's peace processes during this period were heavily influenced by the changing global context sparked by the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the electoral defeat of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua in 1990 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. At the outset of the Gaviria administration, peace deals were reached with the EPL and Quintín Lame, who were promised non-voting seats in the Constituent Assembly. To underscore the government position on armed struggle, and with symbolism that was to last until the 2012 peace process, on the day of the special election for the Constituent Assembly in 1990, the Colombian Air Force bombed Casa Verde where the FARC leaders had continued to live. Gaviria subsequently pursued several attempts to bring the FARC, ELN and a dissident faction of the EPL (the only surviving members of the CGSB) into the Constituent Assembly but these groups refused to hand over their arms. Instead, they escalated their military activities.

In May of that year, the Colombian President again reached out to the FARC, ELN and EPL and talks began in June 1991 in Caracas, Venezuela. This was the first time that the ELN had entered into direct negotiations with the Colombian Government (for the FARC it was the second time). The two groups insisted on a return to the broader negotiation agenda but the government insisted on first resolving the issue of a ceasefire.

¹⁵ In this period, Colombian presidents served for a single four-year term and were not eligible for immediate re-election.

The government proposed a model similar to the one used by M-19, where the FARC would assemble its fighters in one location. The FARC responded that it was a much larger organisation that should be allowed to assemble in more than 200 municipalities where it had direct influence (out of more than 1,100 in the whole country). The two sides eventually agreed on a number of around 70 municipalities but could not agree on the details of whether the guerrillas would be able to carry arms, wear uniforms or have access to the whole of each municipality. The talks were suspended in December and resumed in April 1992 in Tlaxcala, Mexico; the ceasefire discussion was put off. In Tlaxcala, items from the broader peace agenda were addressed but in May 1992, when a member of the dissident EPL kidnapped a former government minister, who subsequently died of cardiac arrest in captivity, the government declared the talks over.

The next President of Colombia, Ernesto Samper (1994–1998) also attempted to negotiate with the FARC and separately with the ELN. The FARC requested one municipality to be demilitarised as a condition of holding talks. The government and its armed forces refused. Meanwhile, the Samper government was caught up in a scandal about the narco-financing of its presidential campaign, leading to congressional hearings. The FARC declared that it viewed Samper as

illegitimate and refused to negotiate further. Meanwhile, the ELN announced that it was unwilling to negotiate with the Colombian Government but would negotiate with representatives from civil society. The government facilitated such talks in Mainz, Germany and Geneva, Switzerland but little was accomplished.

The 1998 presidential election again revolved around the issue of who could negotiate peace. The Liberal candidate won against Conservative Andrés Pastrana in the first round of voting. However, between the first and second voting rounds, Pastrana's campaign manager flew to the jungle and met with FARC founder and leader Manuel Marulanda Vélez. Marulanda declared on national television that he would be able to work with Pastrana, who went on to win the election's second round. Pastrana then met personally with Marulanda before taking office. The two agreed to establish a demilitarised zone in southern Colombia, comprising five municipalities that were collectively the size of Switzerland.

Negotiations between the new government and the FARC took place in the municipality of San Vicente de Caguán in Caquetá department, beginning in January 1999. The two sides agreed a 12-point negotiating agenda, with 47 sub-issues including economic development, justice, international affairs, agrarian reform and

a reorganisation of the justice system. The two sides began by negotiating the 'economic model' with a trip to Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Italy and Spain to discuss different economic models.

Negotiations continued for the next three and a half years but no agreements were reached on the main agenda points. In 2001, the two sides arranged a prisoner swap that led to the exchange of 15 seriously ill FARC, mid-level leaders held in Colombian jails for hundreds of military and police personnel then being held by the FARC.¹⁶ This was the only substantive agreement reached during the negotiations.¹⁷

The Caguán peace negotiations represented a return to the broad negotiating agenda, albeit in a far more comprehensive and detailed way. Disarmament was not on the agenda. A new feature of the Caguán talks was that both sides created, for the first time, a Facilitating Commission consisting of representatives from 10 countries: Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, France, Italy, Canada, Cuba, Mexico and Venezuela. These representatives were invited to accompany FARC and Colombian government

¹⁶ Acuerdo entre el Gobierno Nacional y las FARC-EP. Acuerdo Humanitario. 2 June 2001.

¹⁷ The FARC also agreed to suspend random kidnappings – known as '*pescas milagrosas*' (miraculous fishing) – and to respect elected mayors. Acuerdo de San Francisco de la Sombra para Concretar y Consolidar el Proceso de Paz. 5 October 2001.

negotiators during periodic sessions in Caguán but, for the most part, were not allowed to sit in on the formal negotiations. The United Nations (UN) also named a Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (SRSG) to work with the negotiating parties, first Norwegian diplomat Jan Egeland (1999–2001), and then former US journalist and UN official James Lemoyne (2001–2005). These were the first attempts to introduce an element of international facilitation to the Colombian peace process.

Parallel to the Caguán negotiations with the FARC, the Colombian Government opened up several rounds of negotiations with the ELN in Venezuela. The ELN too hoped to establish a demilitarised zone to facilitate negotiations, in its case in the southern part of the Department of Bolívar in the north of Colombia. However, right-wing paramilitary groups aggressively mobilised and successfully prevented the zone from ever being established, and negotiations did not advance.

The Caguán negotiations came to an abrupt halt in February 2002 after the FARC hijacked a plane and kidnapped a Colombian senator. President Pastrana declared the peace process over and gave the FARC 24 hours to abandon the demilitarised zone before sending in troops. Talks with the FARC did not resume for almost

a decade, when President Juan Manuel Santos opened up secret talks with the FARC shortly after his presidential inauguration in the summer of 2010.

In 2003, Colombian President Alvaro Uribe started a demobilisation process with the country's paramilitary federation, the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-Defence Groups of Colombia, AUC). After agreements in 2003 and 2004, the AUC members demobilised in a process criticised for its impunity. After major debate about modalities for a transitional justice legal framework, the Justice and Peace Law passed in 2005.¹⁸ However, this law was challenged by the Inter-American and Colombian Constitutional Court, and was negotiated in the shadows of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Office of the Prosecutor's interest in whether Colombia was complying with the Rome Statute.¹⁹

3.2 NORWAY'S PEACE ENGAGEMENT IN COLOMBIA: BACKGROUND

When it comes to peace engagement, Norway had set foot in Colombia during the Caguán

negotiations (1998–2002) as a member of the Facilitating Commission and with Jan Egeland's subsequent appointment as SRSG. Egeland made use of his network and contacts in Oslo to assist the negotiating parties during this time, and continued to be actively engaged after the talks collapsed.²⁰ It was Egeland who facilitated the first visit of FARC commanders to Norway, in February 2000. Raúl Reyes and four other members of the FARC Secretariat, the organisation's highest decision-making organ, met with representatives of the Colombian Government in a location on the outskirts of Oslo to learn about the 'Norwegian model'.²¹

During the Caguán negotiations, Egeland's belief in the value of engaging the military in any peace dialogues led to Norwegian support for the project Skilling the Armed Actors for Peace in Colombia, simply known as *conversatorios* (dialogues).²² Its purpose was as simple as it was powerful; to facilitate conversations between officers from the Colombian army and government officials, civil society actors and politicians representing the entire political spectrum in preparation

18 Arnon, C. (ed.) (2005). *The Peace Process in Colombia with the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia-AUC*. Woodrow Wilson; Republic of Colombia (2010). *Justice and Peace Law: an experience of truth, justice and Reparation*. RC/ST/PJ/M.1.

19 Lyons, A. and Reed-Hurtado, M. (2010). *Colombia: Impact of the Rome Statute and the International Criminal Court*. ICTJ Briefing. The Rome Statute Review Conference. June 2010, Kampala.

20 Egeland, J. (2017). *Det nyttet: rapport fra frontlinjene*. Oslo. Aschehoug.

21 Ibid.

22 Interview with informant 06; León Valencia (2012). 'Militares y policías en la negociación' in *Semana*. 8 September 2012. *El Tiempo* (2015). 'El discreto trabajo de Noruega con las Fuerzas Armadas'. 3 September 2015.

for potential peace processes.²³ The first conversatorio took place in 2001 and the project continues today – still with Norwegian Government support.²⁴

Since the late 1990s, the ELN had held peace talks with the Colombian Government, with Norway's involvement as part of a six-member 'group of friends'. The talks were revamped in 2005, with the 'group of friends' countries acting as facilitators. Formal exploratory talks started in Cuba at the end of 2005 and lasted until 2007.²⁵ Norway also supported civil society initiatives connected to exploratory peace talks.

From the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá, two Norwegian diplomats closely followed the talks between the ELN and the Colombian Government in those years. One of them was Dag Nylander, Norway's Head of Mission in Bogotá between 2006 and 2008. He would later become Norwegian Special Envoy for the peace process between the Colombian Government and the FARC.

23 Schirmer, J. (2009). 'A Norwegian-support peacebuilding project: Conversations among security forces, former guerrillas, and civil society', in V. Bouvier (ed.). *Colombia: Building Peace in a Time of War*. Washington. United States Institute of Peace, pp399–410.

24 The funding in 2010–2015 amounted to more than 9.5 million NOK. Source: Norad.

25 For a detailed account, see for example Fisas (2013). *A possible peace process with the ELN in Colombia*. NOREF.

3.3 THE PEACE PROCESS BETWEEN THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE FARC

Peace negotiations between the Colombian Government and the FARC had three distinct phases: secret preparatory talks (2010–2011); secret exploratory talks (2012); and formal, public negotiations (2012–2016).²⁶

Contact between the Government of Colombia and the FARC was established soon after the inauguration of President Juan Manuel Santos in August 2010. In 2011, indirect contact gave way to preparatory meetings between emissaries from the president and the FARC. Having learned from the Caguán experience, the government was keen to limit the number of international actors participating in the process.²⁷ After the first contact, it was decided to invite teams from Cuba and Norway to be guarantors during secret peace talks.²⁸ The second such meeting took place in Venezuela, in the presence of representatives from Cuba, Norway and Venezuela. The parties agreed to Cuba as the venue for the secret exploratory

26 Nylander, D., Sandberg, R. and Tvedt, I. (2018). *Designing peace: the Colombian peace process*. Report. NOREF. Oslo; Segura, R. and Mechoulam, D. (2017) *Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War*. International Peace Institute; Wilton Park (2017). *Turbulence in peace processes: what next for Colombia?* 29–31 March 2017.

27 Interview with informant 46.

28 Interview with informant 31. For more information on this justification and mandate, see [section 4.1](#).

talks, and to ask the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to coordinate the logistics of transporting FARC members there. In the midst of these secret talks, the Colombian military killed Alfonso Cano, who had succeeded Manuel Marulanda (who died of natural causes in 2008) as FARC leader.²⁹

The secret exploratory talks started in Havana in February 2012, in a gated complex called El Laguito, where the two parties and the Norwegian representatives had residences. Ten negotiating rounds were held in Havana, each lasting between four and eight days.³⁰

After exploratory talks in August 2012, the Colombian Government and the FARC signed a General Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace, providing a framework and agenda for the talks. The parties agreed on a set of rules for their dialogues, most importantly that *“nothing is agreed until everything is agreed”*.³¹ Teams from Norway and Cuba were to continue

29 Nylander, D., Sandberg, R. and Tvedt, I. (2018). *Designing peace: the Colombian peace process*. Report. NOREF. Oslo; Segura, R. and Mechoulam, D. (2017) *Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War*. Report. International Peace Institute.

30 Nylander, D., Sandberg, R. and Tvedt, I. (2018). *Designing peace: the Colombian peace process*. Report. NOREF. Oslo.

31 General Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace, 26 August 2012. English translation taken from a June 2014 brief prepared by OACR *Learn about the peace process in Colombia*.

their role as guarantors,³² with Venezuela and Chile as accompanying countries.

The public peace negotiations followed a six-point agenda:

1. Land and comprehensive rural development (accord reached in May 2013).
2. Political participation (accord reached in November 2013).
3. End of conflict (accord reached in June 2016).
4. Illicit drugs (accord reached in May 2014).
5. Victims (accord reached in December 2015).
6. Implementation, verification and ratification (accord reached in June 2016).

The peace negotiations were formally launched in Norway in October 2012, and started shortly afterwards in Havana. The parties agreed that each side could have up to 10 delegates at the negotiating table, five of whom were appointed as ‘plenipotentiaries’ and could act as spokespeople. The guarantors would be present as observers. Negotiating rounds were organised in three series of three-day

³² The general agreement does not provide details of what the role of guarantor entails. One dimension (witness to agreements) became evident as Norwegian and Cuban diplomats (two each) signed the agreement as witnesses. See [sections 4.1](#) and [4.8](#) for further discussion on mandates and the division of tasks between Norway and Cuba, and between guarantor and accompanying countries.

negotiations, with one day off between the series and 8–10 day breaks between rounds.³³

As the process moved on, additional negotiation fora were created to speed up the negotiations (see Box 2). The formal negotiation spaces were also complemented by other spaces for negotiation, notably the ‘3×3’ breakout meetings between plenipotentiaries from each side.³⁴

There was a clear imbalance in the parties’ knowledge on the agenda topics, where the FARC – as an insurgency group – could not match the government’s expertise and analytical prowess. While the government had vast resources within and outside its administration, the FARC did not have the same access to knowledge resources on procedural and technical issues and relevant legal frameworks.³⁵ Consequently, capacity-building and third-party expertise became important to the FARC during negotiations.³⁶

³³ Nylander, D., Sandberg, R. and Tvedt, I. (2018). *Designing peace: the Colombian peace process*. Report. NOREF. Oslo.

³⁴ Ibid.; Segura, R. and Mechoulam, D. (2017) *Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War*. International Peace Institute.

³⁵ See *Semana* (2015). ‘La mano discreta que acompaña el proceso de paz’. 8 August 2015. Also, Herbolzheimer, K. (2012). ‘Claves para una negociación exitosa’, in *Razón Pública*. 3 September 2012. Available at: <https://razonpublica.com/index.php/conflicto-drogas-y-paz-temas-30/3238-claves-para-una-negociacion-exitosa.html>

³⁶ Nylander, D., Sandberg, R. and Tvedt, I. (2018). *Designing peace: the Colombian peace process*. Report. NOREF. Oslo.

BOX 2 // COMMISSIONS, SUB-COMMISSIONS AND WORKING GROUPS ESTABLISHED IN THE COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS

- Sub-commission on Gender (September 2014).
- Sub-commission on Ending the Conflict, including a bilateral, definitive ceasefire and the laying down of weapons (February 2015).
- Commission on Justice (July 2015).
- Sub-commission on Security Guarantees (August 2015).
- Working Group on Prisoners (August 2015).
- Working Group on Disappeared Persons (October 2015).

In August 2016, the Government of Colombia and the FARC signed a peace agreement bringing these agreements together into a final comprehensive peace agreement, which was subjected to a plebiscite.³⁷ Colombian voters narrowly rejected the agreement (by 50.2% to 49.8%, a difference of 54,000 votes), which led to the opening of a national dialogue to incorporate the concerns of the No campaign. In the meantime, President Santos was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in the peace negotiations. A new round of negotiations with the FARC produced a new agreement, in November of the same year. In December 2016, Colombia's Constitutional Court passed a ruling allowing Congress to fast-track legislation to enact the peace agreement's commitments.

37 The words 'referendum' and 'plebiscite' both refer to a nationwide direct democratic vote on an issue. The terms are used in different ways in different countries. In Australia, for example, a plebiscite indicates an 'advisory' referendum. In some countries a plebiscite is used to refer only to votes on self-determination or secession. In the UK, some have suggested that the terms have different political connotations. In Colombia, a plebiscite is used to describe a direct vote called for by the President to support or reject a certain decision taken by the executive (Law 134/1994). Consequently, 'plebiscite' was the term used to characterise the vote on the peace agreement reached between the Government of Colombia and the FARC.

4. Findings (a): Norway's approach, actions and contributions to the peace process

4.1 WHY NORWAY? BECOMING A GUARANTOR AND SHAPING THE MANDATE

The idea of inviting Norway to act as guarantor of the peace talks in 2010 came from the Colombian Government,³⁸ after carefully considering the potential candidates. Its reputation was one important reason for choosing Norway, which was seen as the 'go-to nation' in matters of building peace.³⁹ Individuals with first-hand experience of other peace talks facilitated by Norway vouched for its professionalism.⁴⁰

By all accounts, the prominence of Norway's commitment to peace in its foreign policy also played a significant role in the Government of Colombia's decision. Norway also offered the advantage of being a democracy not bound by the US and EU lists of designated terrorists. Not being an EU member was seen as a crucial criterion,⁴¹ as it considerably simplified

tackling legal matters regarding FARC's status as a proscribed organisation.⁴²

Furthermore, Norway had the means, and was perceived to have the will, to support a peace process. Some Colombian actors believed that building peace is a state policy for Norway, leading to their perception that if Colombian peace talks managed to progress beyond the secret phase, Norway would be able to support the process in various ways, including financially and logistically.⁴³

Applying those filters (reputational capital, enabling legal framework and financial resources), the list of potential guarantors for the Colombian peace talks shortened considerably. The additional element to tip the scales was trust, i.e. to be trusted more than other shortlisted candidates.

As described in [section 3.2](#), Norway had had a humanitarian and peace-making presence in Colombia for a decade or so before the election of President Santos in 2010. As Norway's Special Envoy for the peace process put it, *"In Colombia [...], we maintained our interest and activity when nobody believed in the usefulness of negotiating an end to the armed conflict."*⁴⁴

However, some key actors have downplayed the impact of this presence in the deliberations within the Colombian Government. Norway might have benefitted from two unintended effects, though. During the various stages of the ELN talks, the Norwegian team had not made the headlines and its low-key facilitation had not been marred by mistakes and missteps – leading to its facilitation style being seen as professional and respectful.⁴⁵

38 Interviews with informants 03, 31 and 46.

39 Interviews with informants 15, 31 and 46.

40 Interview with informant 46.

41 Ibid.; Segura, R. and Mechoulam, D. (2017). *Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War*. International Peace Institute, p11.

42 Council of the European Union, Council Common Position of 27 December 2001 on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism (2001/931/CFSP). The FARC was included in June 2002 under the list of persons, groups and entities involved in terrorist acts and subject to restrictive measures. The EU suspended the sanctions against the FARC on 27 September 2016 – see Council of the European Union (2016). Press release 533/16. 27 September 2016.

43 Interviews with informants 15, 31 and 46.

44 Dag Nylander. Interview in *El Español*, 15 October 2015. Translation from Spanish: 'En Colombia [como en otros conflictos] hemos mantenido nuestro interés y nuestra actividad cuando nadie creía en la utilidad de negociar el fin al conflicto armado'. Available at: https://www.elspanol.com/mundo/20151014/71492898_0.html

45 Interview with informant 31.

Moreover, the Norwegian team had woven a vast network of contacts during its involvement in previous peace efforts. As Chargé D’Affaires at the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá in 2006–2008, Dag Nylander represented Norway in the peace talks with the ELN. After 2008, he continued to travel to Colombia to participate in meetings related to those talks.⁴⁶ Around this time, he established contacts with different Colombian actors, some of whom later became central in talks with the FARC.⁴⁷

For the FARC, Norway was an acceptable choice as facilitator. According to a member of its Secretariat, *“We appreciated Norway’s willingness and experience. Some fellow comrades showed reluctance due to its NATO membership, but that was not an obstacle for us to give Norway the go-ahead.”*⁴⁸

The Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá kept picking up signals of a potential peace role for Norway. In autumn 2010, Norway’s invitation to participate in another attempt at negotiating peace

with the FARC was delivered to Dag Nylander, through government officials he had close contact with due to the ELN negotiations.⁴⁹

In understanding the choice of Norway as facilitator, it is important to distinguish between the secret and public phases of the peace talks. Being invited to facilitate the secret talks did not automatically lead to a place in the talks’ public phase. It was the Norwegian team’s performance during the secret peace talks that secured its role as a facilitator during the public negotiations. Norway’s peace facilitation reputation secured its invitation to be a guarantor of the secret talks, but it was the professionalism and seriousness of Norwegian diplomats during the secret phase that convinced the parties to include Norway as a guarantor in the public phase.⁵⁰

4.1.1 Norway’s mandate

The role of the guarantor countries took shape during the peace talks’ secret phase. During this phase, the negotiating parties decided that the guarantor countries had to be present at meetings, listening to the discussions without intervening. By being present, the guarantors were expected to infuse solemnity and serenity into the direct negotiations.⁵¹

Moreover, they would gain a valuable insight into the discussions, which in turn would allow them to support the process and assist the parties to stay on track.

Norway and Cuba did not have a written mandate as guarantor countries.⁵² The process was designed so that Colombians were in the driving seat and had ownership over the negotiations. Norway and Cuba both had roles in providing security to the negotiating parties (in legal, diplomatic, logistical, physical and even emotional domains), delegation members and – more broadly – to the peace process as a whole. Their role was a flexible one – ranging from capacity-building, logistical support, trust-building, witnessing functions and classic

46 Nissen, A. (2017): ‘La firma no es la paz. Norske bidrag til fred i Guatemala og Colombia’ in L. Marsteintredet (ed.): *Norge i Latin-Amerika: Forbindelser og forestillinger*. Cappelen Damm Akademisk

47 Interviews with informants 29, 34 and 46; Nissen, A. (2017): ‘La firma no es la paz. Norske bidrag til fred i Guatemala og Colombia’ in L. Marsteintredet (ed.): *Norge i Latin-Amerika: Forbindelser og forestillinger*. Cappelen Damm Akademisk, pp189–219.

48 Interview with informant 03.

49 Nissen, A. (2017): ‘La firma no es la paz. Norske bidrag til fred i Guatemala og Colombia’ in L. Marsteintredet (ed.): *Norge i Latin-Amerika: Forbindelser og forestillinger*. Cappelen Damm Akademisk, pp189–219.

50 Interview with informant 46.

51 Ibid.

52 Nylander, D., Sandberg, R. and Tvedt, I. (2018). *Designing peace: the Colombian peace process*. Report. NOREF. Oslo.

facilitation to more mediation-like initiatives – depending on the situation and according to the degree of tension and the pace of the negotiations.⁵³

Norway decided to establish its own facilitation ‘focus areas’ to help prioritise its work, achieve results and make its contribution more visible. The Colombian peace process was the first time Norway tried this approach.

The Norwegian focus areas were decided shortly after the public negotiations were formally set in motion, at some point between November 2012 and February 2013. They were: women’s participation in the peace process and the inclusion of a gender perspective; demining (removing landmines); transitional justice; and children in armed conflict. Other suggestions for focus areas that were dropped after internal discussions included the role of culture in the peace process and the rights of indigenous peoples.⁵⁴ Norway’s focus areas are addressed in more detail below but it is worth noting here that one area (children in armed conflict) would gradually fade away.

The unwritten criteria for the selection of focus areas, reconstructed for this evaluation, revolved around:

- › Norway’s comparative advantage, i.e. expertise, especially within the MFA but also within Norway and through the MFA’s international networks.
- › International norms and Norway’s commitments as a peace facilitator – especially in connection with the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and the Rome Statue of the ICC.
- › Priority areas for the negotiating parties, or the likelihood of these focus areas becoming central topics during the peace negotiations.

4.2 FOCUS AREA: GENDER APPROACH AND WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION

The Colombian peace process has been praised internationally for securing a gender-sensitive approach and women’s participation.⁵⁵ Back in 2012, few would have thought that gender would gain such a prominent status

in the peace negotiations and accord. The absence of any reference to this dimension in the framework agreement, coupled with a predominantly male press conference launching the talks in Norway, suggested grim prospects for the gender dimension of the peace talks.

The inclusion of a gender perspective and women’s participation was incremental, reaching a milestone in September 2014 with the establishment of the Sub-commission on Gender. The establishment of this sub-commission and the work that would follow can only be explained by the combined action of multiple forces at different levels. These principally included Colombian women’s groups, the push from within the negotiations by women within the FARC and government delegations, and support from international actors including UN Women and the guarantor countries.

Since the exploratory talks phase, the Norwegian team had encouraged the negotiating parties to include women in their delegations and promoted the gender perspective as an integral part of the peace process. In her statement at the public opening of the talks, the Norwegian representative explicitly mentioned the centrality of victims and that women’s voices had to be heard as part of an effort to ensure ownership

53 Ibid.; Archival document, reference 11/04267-56.

54 Archival document, reference 11/04267-28.

55 CIASE and Humanas Colombia (2017). *Vivencias, aportes y reconocimiento: Las mujeres en el proceso de paz en La Habana*; Alam, M. (2016). ‘Despite “No” Referendum, Colombia Peace Process Remains a Model for Women’s Participation’. Blog post. Council on Foreign Relations. Available at: <https://www.cfr.org/blog/despite-no-referendum-colombia-peace-process-remains-model-womens-participation>

of the peace process.⁵⁶ Norway itself continued to take up the issue of gender and women's participation at the negotiating table after the peace talks were officially launched, and strove to achieve a gender balance within the Norwegian team (see [Figure 8](#) in [Chapter 5](#)).⁵⁷ Even so, the Norway team had respect for the autonomy of the negotiating parties and was conscious of the importance of timing and prioritisation.⁵⁸

The Norwegian team was systematic in its consideration of how to provide effective support in the area of gender, first to introduce it in the negotiations and, later, in moving the agenda forward as an integral part of the negotiations. To achieve the desired goals around including women, the Norwegian team collaborated with UN Women and Colombian civil society actors. Together with the Cuban facilitation team, it also provided direct technical support after the gender theme was formally included in the peace talks.

Norway had been a champion of the WPS agenda since its origins, and its first National Action Plan on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 was adopted in 2006. Over the years, the WPS agenda became institutionalised within MFA, and technical capacity among Norway's political leadership, embassies and civil service increased.⁵⁹

Norway had supported initiatives to advance the WPS agenda in Colombia for some time before the start of the peace talks. Moreover, Colombia was a priority country in Norway's WPS action plan for 2011–2013.⁶⁰ In February 2015, Norway launched a new WPS action plan, specifying Colombia as one of five focus countries. Based on this action plan, the Norwegian team drafted its own strategy for following up UNSCR 1325 on WPS in March 2015 (see Box 3).⁶¹

BOX 3 // KEY ASPECTS OF NORWAY'S STRATEGIC APPROACH TO SUPPORT GENDER

- Encourage the negotiating parties to involve women, and to suggest women experts in key areas.
- Facilitate and cover the cost of visits from women's organisations to Havana.
- Support networks and forums for women that contribute to the peace process.
- Maintain support to both the Norwegian NGO FOKUS and UN Women.
- Continue to support international expertise to aid the gender-commission.
- Work towards including gender perspectives in the peace treaties and implementation mechanisms.
- Maintain contact with the UN SRSG on sexualised violence in conflict, and ensure that the rights of victims of sexualised violence are included when considering victims' rights.

56 Joint press conference at Hurdal, 18 October 2012. Statement read by Tone Allers, Director of the Section for Peace and and Reconciliation at the MFA.

57 Archival document, reference 11/04267-34.

58 Interviews with informants 15, 20 and 21.

59 Norad (2016). *Evaluation of Norway's support for advocacy in the development policy arena*. Report 5/2016. Oslo.

60 Government of Norway (2011). *Women, Peace and Security: Norway's Strategic Plan 2011–2013*.

61 Archive document, reference 15/4583-3.

The need for close collaboration with UN Women was emphasised early in the peace process and remained strong throughout the negotiations. Due to Norway's engagement in this area, it was seen as a strong defender of UNSCR 1325 and thus a natural partner for UN Women on this agenda.⁶² Also, the Norwegian team held a privileged position with direct access to the negotiating parties and the talks. The collaboration between Norway and UN Women occurred at political and programmatic levels during the Colombian peace talks.

At the political level, UN Women and Norway devised strategic approaches to raise awareness of the importance of the WPS agenda. There was an exchange of information between UN Women and both Norway's embassy in Bogotá and its Special Envoy for the Peace Process, and between the Norwegian team and the UN Women headquarters in New York. The information exchange was most intense in the first years of the public phase of the negotiations but existed throughout the process. It focused on what Colombian women were asking for – concrete proposals beyond ensuring their participation.

The two National Summits of Women and Peace organised in Colombia, in 2013 and

2016, epitomise the programmatic collaboration between the Norwegian team and UN Women. Norway provided funding and political support to UN Women for the summit in October 2013, where some 450 women from all over Colombia gathered.⁶³ UN Women later presented these proposals to the negotiating teams in Havana, with Norwegian support. Shortly after this summit, President Santos appointed two women as plenipotentiary negotiators – months earlier, a female commander had joined FARC's negotiation team.

Since 2009, UN Women in Colombia had been receiving Norwegian financial support for its country programme to strengthen women's participation in peacebuilding (see [Figure 2](#)).⁶⁴ With Norwegian funds and support, UN Women, among other things: provided training sessions for newly appointed government women plenipotentiary negotiators; briefed the Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz (Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, OACP); organised regional workshops with women on the end of the conflict; assisted in facilitating the visit of women victims of the conflict to Havana (four delegations in 2014); arranged meetings

⁶³ For more information, see the summit report. Sistematización Cumbre Nacional Mujeres y Paz, Bogotá, 2014. Available at: <http://colombia.unwomen.org/es/biblioteca/publicaciones/2014/01/sistematizacion-cumbre>.

⁶⁴ Archival document, reference COL 12/0020.

between those women victims and women negotiators (two in 2014).⁶⁵

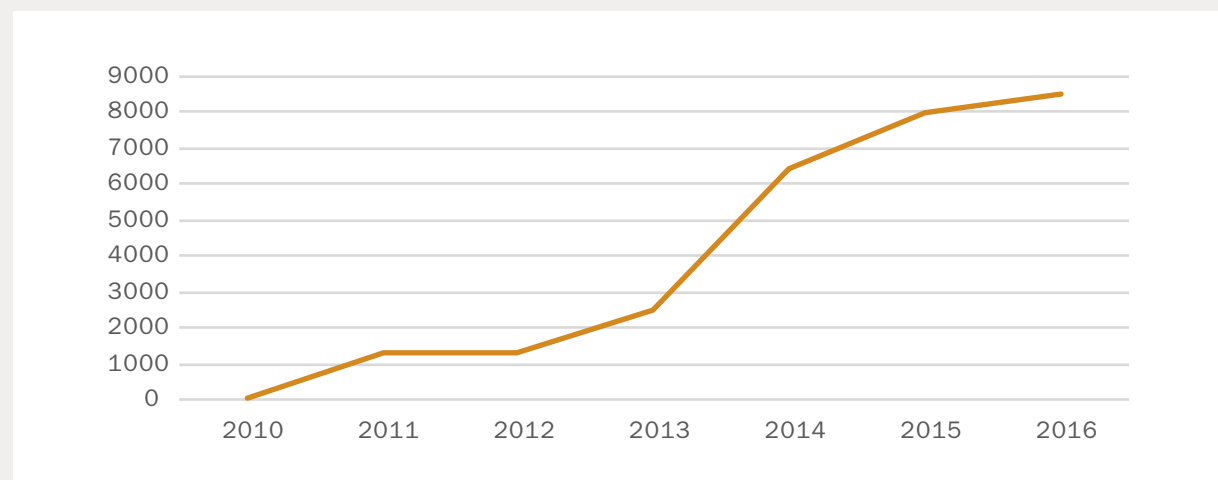
The establishment of the Sub-commission on Gender was an achievement in itself, leading to including a gender perspective in the peace negotiations and the final peace agreement. Mounting pressure from the women's movement in Colombia was important in this regard. The Sri Lankan peace process of the early 2000s was the only other process that has included this mechanism, albeit with a significantly different design. A Norwegian politician facilitated the establishment of the Subcommittee for Gender Issues in Sri Lanka. The Norwegian team working on the Colombian peace process presented the negotiating parties with models on how to include gender in the negotiations, including that of the Sri Lankan experience, based on contact the Norwegian team had with Astrid Nøklebye Heiberg, a Norwegian with first-hand experience of facilitating the establishment of the Subcommittee for Gender Issues in Sri Lanka.⁶⁶

The Colombian Sub-commission on Gender was tasked to review *“with the support of national and international experts, that the agreements reached and an eventual final agreement will*

⁶⁵ Archival document, reference COL-13-0016.

⁶⁶ Interviews with informants 26, 28 and 34.

FIGURE 2 // NORWEGIAN FUNDING TO UN WOMEN IN COLOMBIA, 2010–2016 (1,000 NOK)



Source: Norad, Norwegian Aid Statistics

*have an appropriate gender approach”.*⁶⁷ It counted on the technical support of Cuba and Norway, each of which had a gender expert involved in the process.⁶⁸ In addition, Norway supplied an international gender expert to provide advice,⁶⁹ in the form of drafting notes on experiences from other peace processes, with suggestions on gender-sensitive text or supporting the reviews of the partial agreements. These three gender experts worked

under a set of ad hoc principles: technical input was to be provided on demand by the negotiating parties; including gender would not mean having to renegotiate what had already been agreed; lessons from other contexts could be used, respecting the contextual specificity; communication would flow through the guarantor teams; and ensuring that both delegations would have the right to the same information.⁷⁰

Three delegations of women’s groups and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) representatives were invited to the peace negotiations during the autumn of 2014 and spring of 2015.⁷¹ They met with the Sub-commission on Gender and other delegation members, including their leaders.⁷² Women have been consulted like this in other peace processes but this has often been more challenging, with talks being held out-of-country. In the Colombian process, these visits were facilitated by UN Women with funding from Norway. This way of including the participation of Colombian civil society found a precedent in the victims’ visits to Havana (see [section 4.3](#). Focus area: Transitional justice).

Experts on conflict-related sexual violence and gender equality also visited the negotiating parties during the Colombian peace talks, and coordinated with the guarantor countries. Both the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Bangura, and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka were in Havana and met with the delegations of the Colombian Government and the FARC. Women in both negotiating teams have described these visits as key in pushing

67 Joint communiqué, 7 June 2014.

68 Hilde Salvesen (Norway) and Magalys Arocha Domínguez (Cuba).

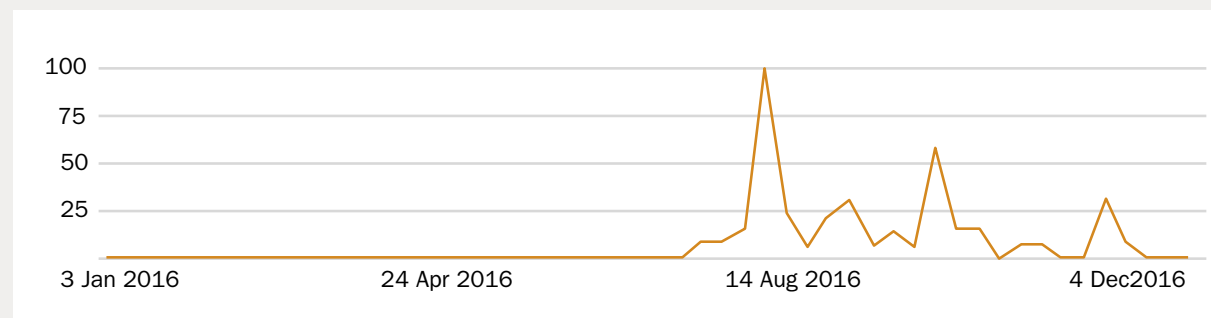
69 Mireia Cano.

70 International expert end-of-mission report. (Undated).

71 Nylander, D. and Salvelsen, H. (2017). *Towards an inclusive peace: women and the gender approach in the Colombian peace process*. NOREF. Oslo.

72 Ibid.

FIGURE 3 // GOOGLE TRENDS 2016, 'IDEOLOGÍA DE GÉNERO' – COLOMBIA



Source: Google Trends

the gender approach forward.⁷³ Furthermore, at the negotiating parties' request, the Norwegian and Cuban technical experts assisted the sub-commission in identifying, and inviting to Havana, female ex-combatants from other guerrilla organisations⁷⁴ to share their experiences in laying down arms and transitioning to civilian life – this visit took place in May 2016.⁷⁵

Through its embassy in Bogotá, Norway maintained good contacts and a regular dialogue with various women's organisations and networks.⁷⁶

73 CIASE and Humanas Colombia (2017). *Vivencias, aportes y reconocimiento: Las mujeres en el proceso de paz en La Habana*, p32.

74 Interview with informant 26.

75 EFE (2016). 'Mujeres excombatientes de varios países dialogan con negociadoras colombianas.' 18 May 2016.

76 Interviews with informants 12, 16, 26, 37, 41 and 43.

Norway found another strategic partner in a Norwegian civil society organisation, the Forum for Women and Development (FOKUS). The FOKUS programme relating to UNSCR 1325 in Colombia (funded by 29 million Norwegian krone (NOK) from Norway from 2010–2016) contributed to strengthening the women's movement for peace. Also, the work undertaken by Humanas, one of FOKUS' Colombian partner organisations, in collaboration with other organisations, was successful in lobbying for the incorporation of conflict-related sexual violence and exempting amnesties for sexual perpetrators into the peace accords.⁷⁷

77 Scanteam (Undated). *Getting Women to the Table (2011–2016)*. External Evaluation of FOKUS Programme 1325: Colombia and Sri Lanka.

The peace agreement between the Colombian Government and the FARC signed in September 2016 included gender-sensitive language and provisions in all of its six points. It considered not only the rights of women but also those of people with diverse sexual orientations and identities. Only two other sets of peace agreements – in the Philippines and Northern Ireland – have any positive reference to sexual orientation. In both of those agreements, the references were fairly incidental parts of broad equality commitments, while in the Colombian process they were more explicit and reflective of demands by LGBTI communities.

The gender perspective became a bone of contention in Colombia during the plebiscite campaign, where supporters of the No campaign denounced the promotion of a 'gender ideology' in the peace accord (see [section 4.6](#)). They believed that the peace agreement legitimised a particular understanding of gender at the expense of traditional family values.⁷⁸ Proponents of this view took to the streets to demonstrate in favour of the traditional family, and this critique grew exponentially during the public debates in the weeks

78 See, for example, Hoyos, I.M. (2016). 'El "enfoque de género" en el Acuerdo final para la terminación del conflicto a la construcción de una paz estable y duradera'. 7 September 2016.

before the vote,⁷⁹ as shown in the evolution of subject searches on Google (see [Figure 3](#)). On social media, *género* (gender) also became one of the most influential key words in Twitter in relation to the Colombian peace process.⁸⁰

Following the victory of the No vote in the plebiscite, the government and the FARC renegotiated parts of the agreement to accommodate demands emerging from a national dialogue in Colombia. One of the things the parties changed – with support from a Colombian expert funded by Norway – was the gender language. The Norwegian team identified as a lesson learned the need for clarity in formulating a gender approach:

*“A too repetitive and imprecise form of language on gender may have contributed to fostering the fear of a ‘gender ideology’ and eventually contributed to the rejection of the agreement. Clarifying what is meant by a ‘gender approach’ and specifying what this implies for each agenda item was a wise approach.”*⁸¹

79 See, for example, *Semana* (2016) ‘Ideología de género: una estrategia para ganar adeptos por el “No” al plebiscito’, 17 August 2016; *BBC Mundo* (2016) ‘El rol de las iglesias cristianas evangélicas en la victoria del “No” en el plebiscito de Colombia’, 5 October 2016.

80 Twitter analysis conducted as part of this evaluation. See Annex I.

81 Nylander, D. and Salvessen, H. (2017). *Towards an inclusive peace: women and the gender approach in the Colombian peace process*. NOREF. Oslo.

The renegotiated accord replaced references to *enfoque de género* (gender approach) and *identidad sexual diversa* (diverse sexual identity) with formulations such as *enfoque de no discriminación* (non-discrimination approach) and *enfoque diferencial* (differential approach). It includes affirmative measures against “vulnerable groups” and more generic references to “equity between men and women” or fight “against stigmatisation”.⁸² The gender approach in the final peace accord is shown in eight thematic areas: access to land and land property rights; economic, social and cultural rights of women and people with diverse sexual identity in rural areas; women’s participation in decision-making and conflict resolution; prevention and protection measures sensitive to women-specific vulnerabilities; truth, justice and guarantees of non-recurrence; public acknowledgement and no-stigmatisation of women’s work as political actors; strengthening of women’s organisations; and disaggregated information systems.⁸³

82 See OACP (2016). Cambios, ajustes y precisiones al Acuerdo (documento). 12 November 2016. Available at: <http://www.altocomisionadopalapaz.gov.co/herramientas/Paginas/Todo-lo-que-necesita-saber-sobre-el-proceso-de-paz.aspx>. *El Tiempo*. ‘Una reflexión para quienes votaron “No” en el plebiscito’. 17 November 2016. Available at: <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/cuales-fueron-los-cambios-del-nuevo-acuerdo-de-paz-31308>

83 5 Claves (2017). *Equidad de género y derechos de las mujeres en el acuerdo final de paz*. Humanas Colombia, Red Nacional de Mujeres and Sisma Mujer. Bogotá.

The Norwegian team was tenacious in its support for the inclusion of women and a gender perspective in the peace negotiations, and it found a strategic and natural partner in UN Women. Moreover, it supported Colombian women’s organisations, a major driving force in this agenda. Norway provided first-hand expertise from both external experts and in-house experts from the MFA, and made possible the transfer of knowledge, on for example modalities for gender participation. It assisted the Sub-commission on Gender in its revisions of the peace agreements, and facilitated visits of gender experts to Havana.

In spite of Norway’s distinctive role as a guarantor country in the peace process, it is open to debate whether it could have been more proactive in emphasising the need for – and eventually support of – communicating to Colombians what the Sub-commission on Gender had done and what was included in the peace accord. As acknowledged by the Norwegian team, the gender language in the pre-plebiscite peace agreement was not optimal and lent itself to misrepresentation.⁸⁴ The renegotiated peace agreement reduced this ambiguity.

84 Nylander, D. and Salvessen, H. (2017). *Towards an inclusive peace: women and the gender approach in the Colombian peace process*. NOREF. Oslo.

4.3 FOCUS AREA: TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

Norway's overall goal in the Colombian peace process was to assist the parties in reaching an accord that would combine peace with justice, in accordance with international law and Colombia's legal obligations. To do so, it was important to increase awareness among the FARC about the role of international law and the limits it places on negotiation outcomes, and to ensure the necessary balance in knowledge and capacity between the Government of Colombia and the FARC.

The asymmetry in knowledge between the FARC and the Government of Colombia was particularly noticeable around Colombia's legal framework, international legal norms relating to accountability for gross human rights violations and serious crimes under international law, and the relationship between the two. Rulings by both the Constitutional Court and Inter-American Court⁸⁵ in relation to the implementation of previous transitional justice agreements had indicated the capacity for courts to intervene and challenge failures to comply with human rights standards. Against this background, a focus for Norway was to support the FARC

85 Colombian Constitutional Court, Ruling C-370/2006, Bogotá, Gustavo Gallón Giraldo y Otros v. Colombia, 18 May 2006; Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Mapiripán Massacre v. Colombia, 15 September 2005; See, for example, Uprimny, R. and Saffon, M.P. (2007). *Uses and Abuses of Transitional Justice Discourse in Colombia*. PRIO Policy Brief 6. Oslo.

to gain access to expertise on transitional justice, by inviting experts to Havana. More significantly, Norway also funded advisors to assist the FARC delegation on this issue on a more ongoing basis – the value of which has been recognised by the FARC.⁸⁶

One of the first concrete Norwegian initiatives within this focus area was to bring to Havana two experts (Priscilla Hayner and Morten Bergsmo) to talk to the FARC about transitional justice and international criminal law. In 2012, these experts were some of the first outsiders to talk with the FARC delegation about human rights and international criminal law.

Later on, in February 2013, a seminar on transitional justice was organised in New York at Norway's behest. This seminar was to explore challenges and map expertise on the topic. The meeting – attended by experts like Bergsmo and Hayner – became a precursor of what would come to be known as the 'New York Group', named after the city where it first held its meetings.

Norway's involvement in the transitional justice agenda is most visible in this expert group. The New York Group was a Norwegian idea

86 Interview with informant 03.

and was supported financially and technically by Norway throughout its lifetime. Group members operated under obligations of confidentiality and secrecy, in 1.5–2-day meetings between early 2014 and January 2016. The group met 13 times in total, in New York but also in Bogotá, Havana, Madrid and Panama.⁸⁷

The New York Group served as a platform for discussion around transitional justice, testing ideas and models in a confidential setting. The group's seven members included both Colombian and non-Colombian experts, predominantly with a legal background, who were knowledgeable about the Colombian legal framework, international criminal law and the workings of the ICC, but also social scientists with international experience on non-judicial transitional justice mechanisms.⁸⁸ Two of its members were legal advisors to the FARC delegation in Havana. From the Norwegian facilitation team, Dag Nylander and Idun Tvedt (see [Figure 8](#)) participated regularly, together with Martin Sørby from the Legal Affairs Department in the MFA. Members of the Cuban team were also invited to attend the meetings.

87 Logistics were soon outsourced to NOREF, which, according to group members, handled it well.

88 Members included Carlos Martín Beristain (Spain), Morten Bergsmo (Norway), Priscilla Hayner (US), Luis Guillermo Pérez Casas (Colombia), Carlos Alberto Ruiz (Colombia), Enrique Santiago (Spain) and Rodrigo Uprimny (Colombia).

The New York Group was to fulfil several overlapping purposes, in order to meet a set of differentiated needs (see Table 3). As a ‘laboratory’ for the generation of ideas, the group aimed to provide innovative solutions to the most difficult challenges faced in a peace negotiation. This task was done without a formal mandate from the negotiating parties. While the group was known to, and informally endorsed by, the delegations in Havana, it did not emanate from the negotiation table nor was it formally linked with the ongoing negotiations in Havana. Despite this, the New York Group had several paths for its ideas to find their way to Havana:

- › Some group members had communication lines with the Colombian Government and FARC delegations. In addition, one of the New York Group members was also part of the Commission on Justice,⁸⁹ entrusted by those at the negotiation table.
- › Via the guarantor countries, which had their own communication channels to the negotiating parties.

⁸⁹ The Commission on Justice was created in July 2015 at the request of President Santos, with the hope to increase the pace of the negotiations. See Segura, R. and Mechoulam, D. (2017). *Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War*. International Peace Institute, p17.

TABLE 3 // CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE NEW YORK GROUP

Outcome	Necessary condition (for the New York Group to contribute to the outcome)	Rival explanation	Supporting explanation	Strength of evidence of New York Group contribution to the outcome
The peace agreement combined peace with justice, in accordance with international law and Colombia's legal obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Production/Yes › Connectivity/Yes › Endorsement/Yes (informal) › Timeliness/Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Other, non-New York Group advisors to the parties on transitional justice › Commission on Justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Civil society proposals 	› Weak
The FARC changed its perception and discourse on transitional justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Connectivity/Yes › Receptivity/Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Other, non-New York Group advisors to the parties on transitional justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Victims' visits to Havana 	› Strong
Norwegian team kept abreast of transitional justice debates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Connectivity/Yes › Production/Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Presence in Havana following the negotiations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Other, non-New York Group advisors 	› Strong

- › Through short papers written by group members, at their own initiative or in agreement with the group at large (yet not expressing a consensual, monolithic view). An example of such a paper was a note on general parameters and good practices in relation to truth commissions.
- › A group meeting in Havana on one occasion, meeting both the government and FARC delegations.

The group's deliberations were also useful to the Norwegian facilitation team. By being present and a ‘passively active’ actor during the discussions of the New York Group, Norway kept abreast of debates around transitional justice and different reactions to concrete ideas. Closely linked to this, the Norwegian team could see how well those ideas aligned with international norms and principles. As a party to the Rome Statute of the ICC, Norway could never be a witness to a peace agreement

that included blanket amnesties for crimes against humanity and war crimes. In a similar vein, there is an expectation on state parties who have ratified the Rome Statute to support its aims and activities.⁹⁰

The New York Group did not try to reach consensus but instead aimed to put ideas on the table and discuss them from different angles. One of the team members had the overall responsibility for facilitating the discussions in each meeting.

Those who participated in the group have a shared positive assessment of its value. For them, the meetings served to push individual thinking and generate new ways of approaching the issues at hand, squaring the circle of combining legal norm compliance, delivering justice and meeting the negotiating parties' expectations. Moreover, informants who participated in the New York Group as members, observers or invitees stress the group's value for FARC advisors – as well as for Norway's facilitation team. Direct testimonies are substantiated by an observable fact regarding group continuity over the years; the meetings would probably have stopped had group participants not found

90 Government of Norway (2014). *Opportunities for All: Human Rights in Norway's Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation* – Meld. St. 10 (2014–2015) Report to the Storting (white paper).

them useful. Induced participation rewards ('carrots') would have had to be very substantial to offset the risks (political, reputational and physical) and inconvenience (time away from other responsibilities, travel and fatigue due to intense discussions) of participating in the meetings. The hypothetical reputational gains for the group's participants (professional recognition as a result of having been part of a group) are not applicable to key stakeholders who were already involved in the peace process in a different capacity, such as the FARC advisors or members of the Norwegian facilitation team.

The New York Group's impacts on shaping debates on transitional justice in the Colombian peace negotiations, and references to it in the final peace agreement, are harder to assess in a conclusive manner. It is not always possible to trace the origins of an idea with methodological rigour as such origins are often elusive – ideas conflate, build on serendipity, occur simultaneously, and so on. However, proposals that emerged within the group (such as transitional justice perspectives, which later became part of the special jurisdiction for peace or the truth commission) did find their way into the negotiations in Havana and eventually into the peace agreement, though it is not possible to establish a precise causality.

According to a member of the FARC Secretariat, and others close to the FARC delegation in Havana who are knowledgeable about the discussions about justice, the New York Group played a crucial role in putting forward different proposals.⁹¹ On the side of the Colombian Government delegation, however, the centrality of the group in shaping the final dispositions on transitional justice in the peace agreement is far less clear.⁹²

The group has also been credited with contributing to a change in the FARC's perception on the transitional justice framework, and more concretely on what was realistically possible and what was unacceptable in terms of international standards.⁹³

A series of factors may help explaining the New York Group's ability to function as an idea incubator. Firstly, the group's size, which was large enough to feed the debate with diverse viewpoints but small enough to allow the discussion to be inclusive.

91 Interviews with informants 21 and 38.

92 Interviews with informants 15 and 46.

93 Segura, R. and Mechoulam, D. (2017) *Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War*. Report. International Peace Institute; Interviews with informants 05, 15 and 46.

Secondly, group participants had different backgrounds and political sensitivities – even though hardline proponents of punitive measures were not represented. Still, a moderate degree of pluralism did not lead the group to fall into disarray. This was arguably possible because participants spoke the same ‘language’ (expertise on transitional justice) and had a common goal (supporting the negotiating parties to achieve peace). In spite of their differences, these commonalities eventually enabled the group to generate ideas through constructive conflict.

The third factor was timing. Working as a group well before the peace negotiators reached the agenda point on transitional justice freed the group from having to follow the pace of the negotiations and provided some breathing space for nurturing ideas.

The fourth aspect was the combination of the group’s distance from, but linkages with, the formal negotiations in Havana. As stated above, the group was not formally connected to the peace negotiations between the Colombian Government and the FARC, a fact that supported the group’s ability to function. But this disconnect could have led to irrelevance in the formal negotiations, and a reduced capacity to exercise positive influence at the idea generation

level. This permeability turned out to be critical in order for the group to operate. However, the informality of its communication channels and information flows was not without its problems. At times, some group members felt uncertain about the impact their work was having on the negotiations, or how one or both negotiating delegations felt about the group’s discussions on certain issues.

The group concluded in January 2016 that it no longer needed to meet, given that the Colombian Government and the FARC delegations had signed an accord on conflict victims a month earlier⁹⁴ and that the focus of the peace negotiations was gradually shifting to the implementation phase.

One of the peace process’s innovations is linked to the multiple ways it found to ensure broad public participation, including that of conflict victims. The negotiating parties acknowledged that the victims’ voices would be a fundamental input into the peace process and invited victims’ representatives to Havana.⁹⁵ In a process facilitated by the UN, the Colombian National University and the Episcopal Conference, five groups of 12 victims (more than 60% of whom

were women) of different conflict perpetrators met with the peace negotiators in the second half of 2014, something described as having a great impact on the delegation members.⁹⁶ The guarantor countries had been asked by the negotiating parties to play a formal role in this process, but Norway and Cuba decided not to take part in selecting individual members of these victims’ delegations. Instead, the guarantors served as an informal channel between the organisers of the visits and the negotiating parties.⁹⁷ Furthermore, members of the Norwegian team accompanied these victims on visits to Havana and facilitated encounters – for example, between some women victims and women from both negotiating delegations.⁹⁸ The women victims experienced these as positive.⁹⁹

The importance of these victims’ participation in the peace negotiations has been noted, and several lessons have been distilled after systematising experiences from members of

94 Joint communiqué 64. Havana. 15 December 2015

95 Joint communiqué 39. Havana. 17 July 2014.

96 Brett, R. (2017). *La voz de las víctimas en la negociación. Sistematización del proceso de participación de las víctimas en la Mesa de Conversaciones en La Habana*. UNDP Wilton Park (2017). *Turbulence in peace processes: what next for Colombia?* Report. 29–31 March 2017; Bouvier, V. (2016). *Gender and the role of women in Colombia’s peace process*. Background paper. USIP and UN Women; Segura, R. and Mechoulam, D. (2017). *Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War*. International Peace Institute.

97 Interview with informant 34.

98 Interview with informant 45.

99 Brett, R. (2017). *La voz de las víctimas en la negociación. Sistematización del proceso de participación de las víctimas en la Mesa de Conversaciones en La Habana*. UNDP, p41.

the victims' delegation. One of the less positive aspects was the absence of a clear follow-up strategy to support those victims after their return to Colombia as change actors.¹⁰⁰ The Norwegian facilitation team considered providing some sort of tailored support to these victims,¹⁰¹ but such support did not materialise because of a lack of capacity within the Norwegian team.¹⁰²

Norway's support to civil society organisations in the focus area of transitional justice was limited, with the notable exception of The International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ). The Norwegian team maintained contact with the ICTJ office in Bogotá throughout the public phase of the peace process.¹⁰³ The ICTJ received funding from Norway every year from 2010–2016. The organisation provided to Norway in-depth analysis, expert advice and briefings on topics of mutual interest, such as a special focus on Colombia and a particular focus on children's issues.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p90.

¹⁰¹ Interview with informant 34.

¹⁰² Interview with informant 36.

¹⁰³ Archival document, reference 16/1002-40; Interviews with informants 05 and 36.

¹⁰⁴ Archival document, reference QZA-13/0532. The topic of children in armed conflict ended up being integrated into the transitional justice focus area – see [section 4.5](#). Children in Armed Conflict.

To sum up, from early in the peace process Norway was conscious of the imbalance in knowledge and capacity between the Government of Colombia and the FARC and worked actively to balance it. But this was a contentious area that had the potential to be a 'deal-breaker' if no solution was found, and where the parties were also negotiating in the shadow of international law, with outside bodies such as the Inter-American Court on Human Rights and the ICC having the potential to re-shape any agreement that did not comply with international human rights and criminal law standards.

Norway funded legal advisors to the FARC, who were instrumental in helping to achieve a peace accord that ensured the rights of conflict victims, underlined the accord's basis in the applicable legal framework, and supported both public and closed seminars. The New York Group stands out as a noteworthy initiative, because of its innovative nature and its impact at different levels. Norway was instrumental in establishing the group and in keeping it alive and relevant. Finally, Norway's involvement in making the victims' delegations' involvement in the peace process a reality was not formalised yet was noticeable, even though it did not provide any follow-up support to the victims who visited Havana to contribute to the process.

4.4 FOCUS AREA: DEMINING

Colombia is one of the most landmine-contaminated countries in the world. Anti-personnel mines have taken a heavy toll on the population. Between 1982 and 2012, 10,189 people in Colombia became victims of landmines – 3,885 (38%) of whom were civilians, including 995 children and youths. The presence of landmines alters everyday life for community members and restricts their movements and activities.¹⁰⁵

The two main elements within this focus area of the Colombian peace negotiations were the Norwegian facilitation team's cooperation with Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) to establish a demining pilot project, and Norway's collaboration with the US on a demining initiative in Colombia.

The Norwegian facilitation team believed that public trust and support for the Colombian peace process required a visible peace dividend, particularly during the crises that emerged during the process. In a peace process lasting several years and guided by the principle that 'nothing is agreed until everything is agreed', it was important to show Colombians tangible gains on the ground. This was a key reason for the demining pilot project

¹⁰⁵ Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2013). *¡Basta Ya! Colombia: memorias de guerra y dignidad*. Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, pp92–96.

announced by the negotiating parties in March 2015. Demining created an opportunity to build confidence between the parties, and among Colombians in general during the peace talks, in addition to becoming an important part of the peace agreement.

According to key informants, the origins of the pilot project idea are hard to pinpoint but can be traced back to discussions between the Norwegians and the main negotiating parties. Norway had been ready to provide support in the area of demining as early as April 2013.¹⁰⁶ The concrete proposal was put on the table for discussion by the Colombian Government.¹⁰⁷

The demining pilot project took place between May 2015 and December 2016 in the villages of El Orejón (Antioquia state) and Santa Helena (Meta state), and it was led and coordinated by NPA. The negotiating parties agreed¹⁰⁸ to ask NPA to lead and coordinate the pilot due to the limited number of civilian international actors with documented technical expertise and experience in demining (see Box 4), and partly due to lobbying by Norway.¹⁰⁹ The fact that NPA has

Norwegian roots and links with the Norwegian Government were mentioned by key members of the Colombian Government's negotiation team.¹¹⁰ Norway considered NPA's strong social profile in Colombia an asset¹¹¹ – the organisation already had some years of experience working with indigenous rights, land distribution and marginalised groups in the country. In addition, NPA was present in Ecuador and had carried out activities in the areas bordering Colombia.

In early 2013, NPA started to explore opportunities to engage in demining in Colombia, meeting with representatives of the national authorities, the Programa Presidencial para la Acción Integral contra Minas Antipersonal (Presidential Programme for Comprehensive Mine Action, PAICMA) and the Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas (Colombian Campaign Against Landmines, CCCM), among others.¹¹² In mid-2014, NPA started the registration process in Colombia and was accredited as a demining operator to conduct this project in early May 2015.¹¹³

BOX 4 // SUMMARY OF THE DEMINING PROPOSAL, LAUNCHED THROUGH JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ 52 IN HAVANA, MARCH 2015

- The negotiating parties would jointly select the sites to be decontaminated.
- NPA would conduct a non-technical survey within the selected areas, with the participation of members representing both sides in the peace process.
- NPA would form teams for the clean-up and decontamination of sites. Mine removal was the responsibility of the Government of Colombia through the BIDES, with a representative from NPA, accompanied by two members each from the government, the FARC and the local communities.
- NPA would maintain a close dialogue with communities during the demining implementation.
- NPA would verify that the decontamination was conducted in accordance with best international practices and standards, accompanied by two members each from the government, the FARC and the communities.
- The NPA verification team, along with the delegates of the government and the FARC, was responsible for formally delivering the decontaminated lands to local community representatives and authorities.

¹⁰⁶ Archival document, reference 11/04267-42.

¹⁰⁷ Interviews with informants 34 and 47.

¹⁰⁸ Joint communiqué 52. Havana, March 2015.

¹⁰⁹ Sergio Jaramillo, interviewed in *Agenda Colombia*, 9 March 2015; Archival documents, reference 14/10811-15 and 16/1002-84; Interview with informant 47.

¹¹⁰ Sergio Jaramillo, interviewed in *Agenda Colombia*, 9 March 2015.

¹¹¹ Archival document, reference 16/1002-34.

¹¹² Archival document, reference 11/04267-11.

¹¹³ In 2013, the HALO Trust became the first NGO to receive permission to conduct demining in Colombia. MAG, NPA and HALO Trust (2017). *Clearing the Mines 2017*, Report for the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, p69.

The demining pilot project took shape in the first months of 2015, when NPA representatives travelled to Havana to work with the Colombian Government and FARC representatives to make it a reality. Demining was a complex topic in this context, particularly in relation to who would benefit, in which areas, when it would take place and the potential risks in the field for all involved. NPA had separate meetings with the FARC and the government, facilitated by Norway. The final project proposal was presented after intense meetings and included a number of points relating to roles and responsibilities.¹¹⁴

NPA functioned as a supplier of technical expertise and as the coordinator in the field. More importantly vis-à-vis the peace talks, NPA's presence as a third party was necessary to overcome mistrust and provide reassurance to both parties.¹¹⁵ On the FARC side, there was an initial strong scepticism of the Batallón de Desminado Humanitario (Demining Engineers' Battalion, BIDES) role, which was responsible for mine removal on behalf of the Colombian Government. On the government side, there was an acknowledgement that the FARC could take advantage of the project in its public

communication, as a way to reach to Colombians not available to them at the time.

The demining technical discussions were challenging, sometimes taking 'one step forward, two steps back'.¹¹⁶ The process involved a balancing act between actors and called for deep contextual knowledge (especially of the peace negotiation dynamics, but more broadly of Colombian conflict, history and society) and diplomatic sensitivity. The Norwegian team understood this and actively worked to get NPA up to speed in terms of understanding the political environment, the dynamics between the negotiating parties and the complexity of the operational situation.¹¹⁷ There was also a need for all demining discussions to be calibrated according to the agreements and discussions between the government and the FARC and future negotiations about implementation of the final accord.¹¹⁸ This made the Norwegian team's inside knowledge even more necessary to fine-tune any proposals. This accompaniment of NPA by the Norwegian facilitation team became less intense over time, especially after the demining pilot started.¹¹⁹ The Norwegian team continued

to be involved throughout the project, though, including by participating in field visits. The pilot project resulted in the clearance of 40,723 square metres of land. Altogether, 66 landmines and one item of unexploded ordnance were found and destroyed.¹²⁰

In its internal discussions, while the government and the FARC delegations were still discussing the shape and form that a demining pilot project could have, one member of the Norwegian facilitation team pointed out that the pilot project was a form of 'mini-disarmament', and that the model agreed at that point might develop a precedent and relevant experience for disarmament in general.¹²¹ This turned out to be the case from both the FARC's and the government's perspectives.¹²² The pilot set the foundations for later demining and disarmament work, both in terms of the model for cooperation and some of the practical issues that had to be addressed, such as the need to identify FARC members involved in the pilot to comply with life insurance legislation.¹²³ Doing this on a small-scale as part of the

120 IcSP and Peace Direct (2017). *Making Colombia Safe Again. Demining Mountain Communities*; Finson, V. and Diffidenti, G. (2017). 'Clearing Landmines and Building Peace in Colombia'. *The Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction*. Vol. 21. Issue 3.

121 Archival document, reference 16/1002-89.

122 Interview with informants 20 and 38.

123 Interview with informant 20.

114 Archival documents, reference 16/1002-90 and 16/1002-92.

115 Archival document, reference 16/1002-89; Interview with informant 20.

116 Interview with informant 04.

117 Interviews with informants 34 and 47.

118 Archival document, reference 16/1002-93.

119 Archival document, reference 16/1217-5; Interviews with informants 04 and 34.

demining pilot provided some valuable lessons for the wider peace process.¹²⁴

Trust linked to the demining project needed to operate between three different sets of relationships: between the two main parties negotiating in Havana; between FARC members and army officials on the ground and beyond, to allay some of the mutual fears between the military and the guerrilla force; and among Colombians in relation to the wider peace process, not least by giving the media a cue to cover the process in positive terms.

Key informants from both the FARC and the government side consider the demining pilot project to have worked well as a confidence-building initiative. Trust between the parties in Havana was built gradually.¹²⁵ The demining pilot was seen as important both in generating trust, but also in generating confidence in the peace process as a whole.¹²⁶ On the ground, trust between the FARC and the Colombian military personnel involved in the project was built through facilitating contact and

interaction, both symbolically (i.e. by creating a shared logo and uniform for those involved in demining) as well as in their day-to-day work, living side by side and creating informal spaces for interaction (for example, weekly football matches with mixed teams).¹²⁷

The demining focus area also proved to be strategic in opening up a venue for collaboration between Norway and the US. The US and Norway spearheaded a global anti-landmine initiative in Colombia, formally launched in Washington on 4 February 2016, which aims to make Colombia mine-free by 2021. Norway pledged funding of 180 million NOK over three years.¹²⁸ As a follow up, an expert meeting on demining was organised in Bogotá on 10–13 May 2016, attended by representatives from more than 20 countries. Participants visited the demining pilot project site in Santa Helena.¹²⁹ This was followed up at the UN General Assembly in New York in September that year, where the US and Norway – along with 19 other nations and the EU – pledged

105 million US dollars to support landmine surveys and clearance, mine risk education and assistance for survivors of landmine incidents in Colombia.¹³⁰

The US proposal to establish the global anti-landmine initiative helped to project Norway as a country that was in the Colombian peace process for the long haul, underscoring its commitment to the post-conflict phase.¹³¹ The timing of the initiative was not coincidental; it aimed to highlight the international support for, and contribution to, the Colombian peace negotiations in the important final phase. It also aimed to express support for Colombia's implementation of a peace deal, and thereby also direct attention to the country's needs in the post-conflict period.¹³²

According to informants from both parties in the peace negotiations, Norway had a key role in both the Colombian demining pilot and the international anti-landmine initiative. Norway stimulated discussion around a potential demining pilot and actively lobbied to get NPA on board in the project. The pilot

124 At the technical level, project managers credited it with helping to establish new standards, including the use of mechanical demining, the development of environmental rules and procedures for medical evacuations. IcSP and Peace Direct (2017). *Making Colombia Safe Again. Demining Mountain Communities*.

125 Interview with informant 20.

126 Interview with informant 04.

127 Interview with Vanessa Finson, NPA representative in Colombia in *Las 20rillas*. '¿Qué hace una noruega ayudando a desminar a Colombia?'. 18 December 2016; IcSP and Peace Direct (2017). *Making Colombia Safe Again. Demining Mountain Communities*; Interview with informant 04.

128 Government of Norway (2016). *Global anti-landmine initiative for Colombia*. Press release, 5 February 2016.

129 See <http://www.accioncontraminas.gov.co/prensa/2016/Paginas/160511-Arranco-Iniciativa-Global-de-Desminado-para-Colombia.aspx>

130 US Department of State (2016). *Joint Statement from the United States and Norway on the Global Demining Initiative for Colombia*. Washington, DC, 18 September 2016.

131 Archival document, reference 16/154-26.

132 Archival document, reference 16/154-1.

created an opportunity to build trust between the negotiating parties, and helped Colombians in general to have faith in the peace process as it showed tangible results while the negotiations were ongoing. In addition, demining became an important part of the eventual peace agreement. The anti-landmine initiative with the US tied in nicely with the demining pilot – by engaging in this initiative, Norway also signalled that it would support the peace process during its implementation phase.

4.5 CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICT

In the archival material, the choice of ‘children’ as a focus area for Norway is never explicitly given a rationale. Key informants were equally unable to pinpoint its origins,¹³³ but referred to international law and the moral justification as arguments for working on this area.¹³⁴ Neither is it entirely clear when the team decided not to focus on the area. The mention of ‘children’ as a focus area keeps appearing in meetings and documents up to early 2016, but its importance had been dwindling as early as 2014.

What does seem clear is that relatively little work was done by the Norwegian team on the issue when compared with its engagement in the other focus areas. It became difficult to fill this focus area with content as the peace negotiations progressed. Externally, the issue of children conscripted by the FARC was sensitive. Internally, the Norwegian team seemed uncertain what to do about it, and who was the driving force or focal point for this topic within the team. Unlike demining, transitional justice or gender, there was no natural contact point in the MFA who could provide assistance to the team on this issue.¹³⁵ The other focus areas demanded considerable work and resources, and an area that was so ill-defined struggled to gain attention. Further, in the first two years or so of the peace talks, other issues were more central in the negotiations.

Norway's actions within this focus area concentrated on exploratory talks with Unicef and contact with the SRSG for children in armed conflict, and facilitating contact between the SRSG and the negotiating parties.¹³⁶ In late November 2013, Norway entered into a framework arrangement with the ICTJ, with a particular focus on children and transitional justice in Colombia.¹³⁷ The few initiatives relating to children in armed conflict that existed as part of the peace process gradually fell under Norway's transitional justice umbrella or into discussions on reintegration as part of the implementation of the peace agreements.¹³⁸ In May 2016, the negotiating parties reached an agreement on terms for withdrawing children under 15 years of age from the FARC, and the final peace agreement included provisions protecting children's rights.¹³⁹ However, there are no significant traces of direct Norwegian contributions to either of those developments.

133 Interview with informants 01, 34, 36 and 42.

134 Interview with informant 34.

135 Interviews with informants 01, 08 and 42.

136 Archival documents, reference 11/04267-28 and 11/04267-36; Interviews with informants 42 and 43.

137 Archival document, reference 16/1002-42.

138 Archival document, reference 16/1002-56.

139 Report of the Secretary-General to the UN General Assembly on Children and Armed Conflict, 24 August 2017. A/72/361-S/2017/821; Report of the Secretary-General to the UN Security Council on children and armed conflict in Colombia (September 2011 to June 2016), 4 October 2016. S/2016/837.

4.6 CRISIS POINTS

The Colombian peace process went through several crises, during both the secret exploratory talks and the public phase. Some directly related to the talks (with origins in disagreements and stances taken by one or both negotiating parties), while others occurred in Colombia and made waves around the negotiating table. Evidence¹⁴⁰ makes it possible to establish four such critical points, based on their severity level and potentially disruptive effect (see Table 4).

The guarantor countries had a role to play in all four crises – one internal to the process, and three external to the talks. After the kidnapping of General Alzate, the government and the FARC delegations agreed to ask the guarantor countries to facilitate the resolution of future crises, if any arose.¹⁴¹ Norway’s actions in two crises that occurred after that point are further assessed below.

140 Interviews, archival research, analysis of Twitter activity and media analysis.
141 Joint communiqué. Havana. 3 December 2014.

TABLE 4 // MAIN CRISES DURING THE COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS

Secret exploratory talks (2012):
1. One critical point (internal to the process) on disarmament.
Public talks (2012–2016): Three critical points (external to the talks)
2. Kidnapping of soldiers Paulo César Rivera, Jonathan Andrés Díaz and General Ruben Darío Alzate (November to December 2014).
3. Military skirmishes and the killing of 11 soldiers in Cauca (April to July 2015).
4. Plebiscite and national dialogue (autumn and winter 2016).

4.6.1 Military skirmishes and the killing of 11 soldiers in Cauca (April to July 2015)

The year 2015 proved to be a demanding one for the Colombian peace process, with the Norwegian team constantly working to make the negotiations more effective. One of the worst crises of the entire peace process occurred in the spring of that year.

On the night of 14 April 2015, 11 Colombian Army soldiers were killed in a FARC attack in the village of Buenos Aires (Cauca state). President Santos responded by lifting the army’s air strikes truce against the FARC.¹⁴² On 21 May, the Colombian Army killed 26 FARC guerrillas in an air strike, including a member who had

142 *El Tiempo* (2015). ‘Once militares muertos en el Cauca tras ataque de las Farc’, 15 April 2015.

participated in the peace talks in Havana.¹⁴³ In response, the FARC suspended its unilateral ceasefire announced in December the previous year. At the time, the Norwegian facilitation team described this as the “deepest crisis” since the onset of negotiations,¹⁴⁴ and there were fears that the whole process would break down. Tensions ran high in the delegations – it was sink or swim for the process.¹⁴⁵ Norwegian Special Envoy Dag Nylander describes it as follows:

“That particular moment was difficult for all. There were a high numbers of victims [sic] on both sides in a short time-span, including people who had been part of the process. There was a level of

143 *El Tiempo* (2015). ‘Farc dice que uno de sus exdelegados en La Habana cayó en bombardeo’, 27 May 2015.
144 Archival document, reference 14/10811-30; Interview with informant 33.
145 Archival document, reference 14/10811-26; Interviews with informants 28, 29 and 32.

*personal grief, disappointment and a fear that the process was over and that a return to a full-fledged conflict was unavoidable. Fortunately, reason prevailed and the parties were able to agree on a number of measures for de-escalation in the field, allowing for dialogue at the table to continue.”*¹⁴⁶

During this crisis, the Norwegian and Cuban strategy was to try to maintain the government and the FARC parties' focus on the negotiations in Havana, preferably on issues that could be easily resolved, in order to bring them back on track, make progress and inspire confidence in the peace process. This was achieved on 28 May 2015 by providing a list of points¹⁴⁷ that would be relatively easy to deal with. According to a plenipotentiary negotiator, Norway and Cuba spared no effort in facilitating informal meetings during this critical period.¹⁴⁸ All of this happened at the same time as the Norwegian-supported demining pilot project (see [section 4.4](#)) was about to be launched in El Orejón, which helped to shift attention away from the crisis. One of the actions suggested to the negotiating parties by the guarantor countries was for the government

and the FARC delegations to issue a joint communiqué on demining. Such a statement was made on 29 May 2015.¹⁴⁹

On 27 May 2015, Norway and Cuba issued a joint statement on the crisis, aimed at de-escalating the conflict and providing both the Colombian Government and the FARC with more room for manoeuvre, both internally and publicly. In the statement, the guarantors call on the parties to reach an agreement on a definitive bilateral ceasefire and cessation of hostilities. This statement received broad coverage in the media. It made the proportions of the crisis visible to the Colombian public and allowed the parties to save face and return to the peace talks as responsible parties.

The Norwegian and Cuban interventions were considered a success in Havana. By the end of May, the Norwegian team observed a positive shift in public opinion.¹⁵⁰ A small shift is supported by a sentiment analysis of Twitter activity at the time, from a 34% negative (15% positive) cumulative in May 2015 – its highest peak in 2015 – to a 16% negative (21% positive) in June.

Alongside Cuba, Norway's actions had the desired effect of reducing tensions and refocusing the main parties' attention squarely on the issues at hand in the Havana negotiations. The decisions made by Norway are assessed as adequate. The guarantors acted together in a conscious manner and in the best interest of the peace process. This was one of the times when Norway probably stretched its profile as a facilitator to its limits, by introducing de-escalation proposals and performing mediation-like activities. Still, this was in accordance with the principles for crisis resolution agreed by the Colombian Government and the FARC. These actions – shuttle diplomacy between the negotiating parties, proposed trust-building action points and a press statement – were taken in agreement with relevant parties.

4.6.2 Plebiscite and national dialogue (autumn and winter 2016)

The Colombian Government and the FARC agreed to have the peace agreement ratified through a popular participation mechanism,¹⁵¹ and on 24 August 2016 the President of Colombia announced that a plebiscite would be held on 2 October the same year.¹⁵² In the plebiscite,

¹⁴⁶ Interview with SBS News (2016). 'The tense inside story of Colombia's peace deal', 9 September 2016.

¹⁴⁷ *Semana* (2015). 'La mano discreta que acompaña el proceso de paz'. 8 August 2015.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with informant 38.

¹⁴⁹ Joint communiqué 51. Havana. 29 May 2015.

¹⁵⁰ Archival document, reference 14/10811-35.

¹⁵¹ Joint communiqué 76. Havana. Undated.

¹⁵² See *El Tiempo* (2016). 'Todo está acordado, el texto definitivo es inmodificable': Santos. 25 August 2016.

with a turnout of less than 40%,¹⁵³ Colombians rejected the agreement. The No vote won with a narrow margin, by 0.4% and some 54,000 votes. The post-event explanations for this high abstention rate and the rejection of the peace agreement are multiple, ranging from the strategy of the No campaign and the inability of the Yes camp to mobilise the electorate to the power of the Christian vote and the impact of Hurricane Matthew.¹⁵⁴

Arguably, the physical distance between the peace negotiations in Havana and the Colombian public was a factor in generating scepticism and confusion around the process. To bridge this gap, efforts were made to bring the talks closer to the citizenry, to carry out a *pedagogía para la paz* (pedagogy for peace), a term that gained currency in 2015 and 2016, in the run-up to the plebiscite. Pedagogy for peace signified an effort to ensure that Colombians knew about and understood the agreements reached in Havana and felt ownership of them. The OACP rolled out a pedagogy for peace strategy intended to explain the almost 300-page peace agreement.

153 The abstention rate in presidential and parliamentary elections in Colombia is in both cases around 55%, with more variance in the case of parliamentary elections. See Barrero, F. et al. (2013). *Abstencionismo electoral en Colombia. Una aproximación a sus causas*. Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, Centro de Estudios en Democracia y Asuntos Electorales and Universidad Sergio Arboleda.

154 Álvarez-Vanegas, E., Garzón-Vergara, J.C. and Bernal, J.L. (2016). *Voting for Peace: Understanding the Victory of "No"*. Wilson Center and FIP; See <http://cifrasconceptos.com/nuestras-encuestas-y-el-plebiscito/>

Norway supported the OACP's and civil society organisations' efforts to increase national and regional awareness and ownership of both the peace process and the peace accord. For example, since 2014 the embassies of Norway, Sweden and Switzerland had supported four Colombian non-governmental organisations (NGOs)¹⁵⁵ and the OACP to conduct groundwork for future implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia's regions. Norwegian support also reached the UN in Colombia and its awareness-raising campaigns, first *La Paz es Mía* (The Peace is Mine), from December 2013, and later *Respira Paz* (Breathe Peace).¹⁵⁶ The Swedish-Norwegian Fund for Support to the Colombian Civil Society (FOS)¹⁵⁷ also supported other peace pedagogy initiatives, such as those carried out by INDEPAZ and Corporación Conciudadanía.¹⁵⁸ According to the FOS *Annual Report 2016*, "*a majority of organizations have worked to spread knowledge of the contents of the Havana peace accords (some of them with special emphasis on ethnic groups, women, access to land, environmental issues) and*

155 Redprodepaz, Red de Iniciativas de Paz desde la Base, Pensamiento y Acción Social and Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres.

156 Interviews with informants 40 and 43; Jessup, F. and Hayek, E. (2016). *Evaluación del proyecto "Comunicación para la Paz" en Colombia financiado por el Fondo para la Construcción de la Paz (PBF) y el Gobierno de Noruega*.

157 FOS was established in 2009. Norway joined the initiative in 2011, through its embassy in Bogotá.

158 FOS (undated). *Annual Report 2016*.

of the importance of citizens' participation and mobilization for peace" (p29).

Even before the plebiscite, the Norwegian facilitation team had discussed whether to 'heighten its profile' by actively supporting the Yes campaign.¹⁵⁹ For Norway, it was important to strike a balance between its role as guarantor country and its respect for Colombian democracy and sovereignty. Norway's few public statements on this matter came from its Special Envoy to the Peace Process, who carefully underlined the country's respect for Colombia's decision while giving his personal view of the peace accord as a good agreement arising from long and intense negotiations.¹⁶⁰ Norway's public position on the plebiscite can be characterised as low-key and balanced. It refrained from showing public support to the Yes campaign but publicly emphasised that the parties could hardly renegotiate what they had already agreed.

To a certain extent, Norway's public standpoint was similar to that of the Colombian Government: a framing that emphasised the negative consequences of voting against the peace agreement, rather than pointing to its positive

159 Archival document, reference 16/3887-20.

160 Interview in W Radio. 16 September 2016.

dimensions, and a reminder of the absence of any alternative to the peace agreement for achieving peace. It was a strategy gauged to support the Yes vote while avoiding risking the alternative – a return to violence. The insistence on the adoption of peace agreement by the electorate as the only way to put an end to war in Colombia was understood to be the best way to sway the public towards voting yes. It hung on voters making the rational decision of embracing the peace agreement as a ‘package deal’ in the absence of a better alternative. However, this strategy probably underestimated the population’s weariness of peace agreements, and its antipathy to the FARC and the negotiations.

Early on, Norway had signalled that both negotiating parties could count on its continued support after the plebiscite. After the vote, it reaffirmed its willingness to support them in the renegotiation process, something that both parties appreciated.¹⁶¹ The Norwegian team was quick in reacting and adapting to a potentially new role for the facilitating countries. It issued a press release and two team members accompanied the Colombian Government representatives on their trip back to Havana, where they renegotiated the agreement with the FARC. Following the national

dialogue in Bogotá between the government, members of the No campaign and others with an extensive meeting schedule and networking became a priority for the Norwegian facilitation team. However, since Norway had no formal role in this national dialogue, the facilitation team took care not to engage too closely with interest groups who had campaigned for a No vote.¹⁶²

Unlike during the negotiation phase, the guarantors had a less significant role in facilitating the post-plebiscite negotiations, as the Colombian Government and the FARC were working together with the common objective of finding acceptable solutions. The long working sessions were less formal and followed a different dynamic in order to produce concrete outcomes quickly. Norwegian team members did not attend all of the post-plebiscite sessions due to the fast pace and parallel nature of the renegotiations. They were, however, available for informal and bilateral discussions at the parties’ request.¹⁶³

There is no evidence of Norway providing any specific, direct technical input as it had done before the plebiscite, for example regarding the gender perspective. On the contrary, negotiations to revise the gender language in the

peace agreement occurred without Norwegian involvement.¹⁶⁴ However, the Norwegian team’s presence during the renegotiations in Havana gave assurances to the main parties and signalled the international community’s ongoing support for the process, a factor that helped to prevent the peace deal from collapsing.¹⁶⁵

The Norwegian facilitation team had not prepared for a scenario other than a Yes victory. It had not done any thorough scenario planning ahead of the plebiscite, in spite of the inevitable risk of the referendum. Referenda held among whole electorates are ‘high risk, high stakes’ – if they are won then they legitimise the result, but if they are lost they produce an obstacle for the peace negotiations. The Norwegian team overlooked lessons from recent history – for example, the narrow Unionist support of the peace agreement in the Northern Irish referendum, the failure of the Cyprus referendum on a peace plan, and the 1999 Guatemalan referendum to ratify constitutional reforms linked to a peace agreement.¹⁶⁶ It also ignored the peripheral voices inside Colombia who had warned of

¹⁶¹ Archival document, reference 16/1217-05; Interviews with informants 03, 20, 38 and 47.

¹⁶² Archival document, reference 16/1217.

¹⁶³ Interviews with informants 13, 30 and 36.

¹⁶⁴ Interviews with informants 13, 25 and 40.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with informant 19.

¹⁶⁶ *El Espectador* (2016). ‘De Guatemala a Guatepeor, otro ejemplo del No a un plebiscito.’ 3 October 2016.

a possible No win.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, the team overlooked the inevitable risk of presenting the Colombian public with a binary choice for a complex package of measures. It ignored a hard probabilistic truth; a referendum can produce two equally likely outcomes.¹⁶⁸

In the run-up to the plebiscite, opinion polls were overwhelmingly unanimous in suggesting a win for the Yes campaign. This seems to have created a hypnotic and overoptimistic effect on key actors, including Norway. In talks held weeks before the plebiscite, some Norwegian team members had heard about the unreliability and high error margins surrounding polls on referenda on highly political issues, and how difficult a Yes victory would be.¹⁶⁹ In spite of this, Norway joined the bandwagon believing that the Yes campaign would win.

How could Norway have behaved differently if it knew the result would be so close or that the No campaign might win? Some of the measures the Norwegian team took after the plebiscite could have been taken beforehand, as part

of a contingency plan. After the plebiscite, the team discussed how best to support the renegotiation process with targeted inputs into negotiations in Havana. It identified three areas in which changes to the agreement could be expected and where it could come up with concrete proposals, should the parties request such input: the gender dimension; the transitional justice agreement; and the agreement on political participation by the FARC.¹⁷⁰ Concrete actions were discussed within the Norwegian team, and brief analytical notes were prepared.

In terms of gender, the Norwegian team acknowledged public opposition to the peace agreement in the No camp – the ‘gender ideology’ argument. It decided to prepare a paper focusing on how gender was presented in the peace agreement, the reactions to this in Colombia and counter-arguments. This proposal was discussed within the team and one person was assigned to follow up on 12 October. This paper could have been drafted before the plebiscite. The same can be said about the team’s paper on transitional justice, which considered issues that had been criticised in the run-up to the plebiscite. Even more telling is the case of the FARC’s political participation. Unlike the proposed papers on the gender perspective

and transitional justice, neither the specific political participation issue to be covered nor the person with responsibility to follow it up could be immediately identified.¹⁷¹ In internal Norwegian team discussions after the plebiscite, it was also stressed how the mine-clearance efforts would count as a positive contribution after the No vote, showing tangible results and helping to create trust in the peace process.¹⁷²

The question of whether Norway could have done more in the months prior to the plebiscite to strengthen the chances of the peace agreement being ratified merits separate reflection. The Norwegian team acted out of a conscientious respect for how it understood its mandate vis-à-vis a democratic political debate and, more broadly, the limits of diplomacy and respect for national sovereignty. Norway’s cautious and risk-based assessment made it possible to navigate a difficult, politically charged environment.

However, some members of the Colombian Government delegation and the Norwegian team, as well as UN staff,¹⁷³ believe that Norway could have done more to reach out to key Colombian stakeholders and the Colombian public at

167 See, for example, Gutiérrez Sanín, F. (2016). ‘Plebiscito exequible... y perdible.’ *El Espectador*, 21 July 2016.

168 That providing that there is no turnout threshold. If there is one, two more outcomes are possible: a victory of the Yes side under the threshold; and, conversely, a No victory without reaching the threshold.

169 Interviews with informants 07 and 26.

170 Archival documents, references 16/1217-5 and 16/3887-25.

171 Archival document, reference 16/1217-5.

172 Ibid.

173 Interviews with informants I12, I26, I34, I40, I43 and I46.

large – or to assist the main parties in thinking about who to approach to help with this. On the former, there were some windows of opportunity for targeted engagement with representatives of Colombian sectors sceptical about the process while the negotiations in Havana were ongoing. Acting with the negotiating parties' approval, such a first-hand account from a trusted third party would have been in accordance with diplomatic norms and could have helped to ease some of the growing concerns among Colombian sectors. There was also room for Norway as a donor country to boost its support to pedagogy for peace efforts.

In spite of its lack of planning for a No victory, the evidence shows that the Norwegian team reacted quickly and provided support tailored to the new circumstances – which has been praised by both the Colombian Government and the FARC. The absence of scenario planning did not compromise Norway's engagement in the negotiations after the plebiscite. However, it cannot be ruled out that contingency planning would have strengthened the efficiency of Norway's internal actions. For example, some discussions within the team could have taken place before the plebiscite, simply by paying attention to public opinion, the arguments of the No campaign and the pronouncements of key stakeholders. Similarly, with the necessary

precautions, time-saving measures could have been taken within the core team to prepare for a No campaign victory.

4.7 BUILDING TRUST

In order for the Colombian peace process to succeed, trust needed to be built within two different sets of relationships; between Norwegian facilitation team and the negotiating parties, and between the negotiating parties themselves. It was also necessary to build trust in the peace process among Colombia's population.

4.7.1 Trusting Norway

Enjoying the trust of negotiating parties is a necessary condition in order for a facilitator to do its job. As shown in [section 4.1](#), Norway enjoyed considerable credibility and reputational capital as a trustworthy actor in peace processes among the negotiating parties in Colombia. This was useful but did not provide a blank cheque for Norway's handling of the process, where trust had to be maintained and even built further. It was Norway's behaviour over time that determined the level of trust it enjoyed during the Colombian peace process, and eventually its chances of being successful in aiding the main parties to find a peace agreement. By the end of 2016, Norway was in an even better place than when it was first invited to become a co-facilitator; the level of

trust placed in it by both the Colombian Government and the FARC was remarkable. What did Norway do over the several years of negotiation to deserve such high levels of trust and respect from these parties?

A series of mechanisms can be derived from the literature on trust, negotiations and conflict resolution.¹⁷⁴ The study of how Norway conducted itself, from the secret phase of talks in 2010 until the signature of the revised final peace agreement in 2016, reaffirms the significance of these intertwined mechanisms, as outlined below.

› *Communicative integrity.* This evaluation explores two attributes: the Norwegian team's ability to communicate accurately, openly and transparently; and its observance of confidentiality. In both instances, the evidence shows that communicative integrity was achieved. There are no significant complaints in this regard from any key stakeholders in either of the negotiation teams interviewed as part of this evaluation. On the contrary,

174 Lewicki, R.J. and Tomlinson, E. (2014). 'Trust, Trust Development and Trust Repair'. In M. Deutsch, P. Coleman and E. Marcus (eds.) *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution*. Third Edition. San Francisco: Jossey Bass; Lewicki, R.J. (2006). 'Trust and Distrust', in A. Kupfer Schneider and C. Honeyman (eds.) *The Negotiator's Fieldbook*, American Bar Association; Mayer, R.C, Davis, J.H. and Schoorman, F.D. (1995). 'An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust' in *The Academy of Management Review* Vol. 20, No. 3 (Jul. 1995), pp709–734.

the Norwegian team was praised for how it conducted itself and there are examples that illustrate the trust placed in the team to ensure confidentiality and protect the integrity of the draft peace accords.

- › *Delivery on commitments.* The Norwegian team delivered on the commitments it made to the negotiating parties, initially and at the macro level as a co-guarantor, and also in relation to the day-to-day substantive requests by the negotiation teams. In terms of its mandate, the team showed an awareness of the limitations of its role concerning process inputs and the substance of the negotiations, as well as the need to keep the trust of both negotiating parties.¹⁷⁵ In the day-to-day negotiations, when a request for capacity-building or technical support was put forward by the FARC, its members found that the Norwegian team's assessment was quick and well grounded and, if approved, it took action accordingly. The team's processing of such requests aligns with the principle of communicative integrity described above.
- › *Repeated interaction.* The direct exchanges and face-to-face interaction between the Norwegian team and representatives from

both delegations during the negotiations in Havana formed the basis of trust. By being there throughout the negotiations in limited numbers, members of the Norwegian team became familiar faces to Colombians on both sides. Interaction during breaks and in informal settings also played a role in building trust. Constant presence was key in cementing Norwegian trustworthiness. For Norway, the downside of such a permanent presence in Havana and operating with a reduced team was the toll it took on each team member, as discussed in [section 5.2](#).

During the prolonged peace negotiations, this repeated interaction, the targeted use of informal spaces, being there in the most difficult times to accomplish a common goal, the fulfilment of promises and its consistent behaviour over time and in a variety of situations all helped to create positive attachments of varying degrees. The initial respect that the government and FARC negotiating parties had for the Norwegian team due to its good credentials and reputation transformed into trusted relationships built on a direct appreciation of the team's ability and integrity as a guarantor.

Key informants from both delegations unanimously expressed their appreciation for the professionalism and manner in which the

Norwegian team conducted itself during the different phases of the peace process. There are concrete indications of trust between the parties and Norway's team, such as the fact that the parties would use the Norwegian team house in El Laguito for smaller meetings and request to use the residence of the Norwegian Ambassador for encounters between delegation members and visitors, or that the negotiating parties invited NPA to become involved in the demining pilot project after lobbying by the Norwegians. A sentiment analysis of Twitter activity by the Colombian Government and FARC members provides additional corroborating evidence; both manifest an overall positive perception of the Norwegian – and Cuban – teams as guarantors.

4.7.2 Trusting each other

Norway facilitated the creation of informal spaces where members of the negotiation teams could interact. Such opportunities were facilitated as early as the secret exploratory phase of talks – after both delegations had arrived in Havana, before their first formal meeting, Norway hosted a reception.¹⁷⁶

The number and relevance of these informal interaction spaces increased in the course

¹⁷⁵ Archival document, reference 11/04267-28; Interview with informant 29.

¹⁷⁶ Santos Calderón, E. (2014). *Así empezó todo: el primer cara a cara secreto entre el gobierno y las Farc en La Habana*. Intermedio.

of the public negotiation phase. The conference centre where the talks were held provided a venue that the parties could use to mingle informally during meeting breaks.¹⁷⁷ Other opportunities for informal interaction were provided by Norway, including receptions at the Norwegian ambassador's residence in Havana.

With the experience of El Caguán still fresh in the minds of Colombians, the government delegation was cautious of any form of informal interaction with FARC members.¹⁷⁸ These receptions provided those sitting around the negotiation table the opportunity to interact without the limitations characteristic of formal encounters at structured negotiating tables. Moreover, invitees included delegation members who were not necessarily sitting at the negotiating table.¹⁷⁹

The value of those spaces is acknowledged by both FARC and government delegation members. The informality allowed for the sharing of personal stories, but also for discussions of peace issues in a different manner.¹⁸⁰ These

spaces were also used strategically by women in the negotiating delegations, to introduce themes, solve issues and reduce tensions.¹⁸¹ For men and women alike, these informal interactions also enabled the formal content of the negotiations to be viewed from different perspectives, through personal experiences, expectations and plans. Knowing more about key individuals involved in the negotiations would help enrich the understanding of his or her actions at the negotiation table, and hearing about their future plans would give interpretative clues through which to assess their other statements. These less formal interactions, including those hosted at the Norwegian residence, would become instrumental in speeding up the peace process.¹⁸²

The value of those informal spaces is indisputable. That said, what emerges from the interviews with key informants present in Havana¹⁸³ is that trust among parties who are at war is not forged at a social reception. Objective and tangible elements connected to promise fulfilment between the parties are the building blocks of trust.

One central task for Norwegian diplomats was to accompany missions to transport FARC members from the Colombian jungle to the negotiations in Havana, and also accompany the delegations on their visits to projects like the mine clearance in the countryside, or inspections of the Zonas Veredales Transitorias de Normalización.¹⁸⁴ Norway considered it crucial to build trust and make the main negotiating parties feel secure, and expended human and financial resources on helping to create a safe atmosphere around the peace talks. Simply being present was an important witness function in events where the FARC and the government (including the military) were side by side outside Havana.

4.7.3 Public trust in the peace process

In addition to working on the level of trust between the Colombian Government and the FARC, Norway also undertook actions to build public trust in the peace process. The demining pilot project was one such initiative (see [section 4.4](#)), as was the launch of the talks in Norway.

177 Nylander, D., Sandberg, R. and Tvedt, I. (2018). *Designing peace: the Colombian peace process*. Report. NOREF. Oslo.

178 Interviews with informants 08, 12, 15, 20, 31 and 46.

179 Nylander, D., Sandberg, R. and Tvedt, I. (2018). *Designing peace: the Colombian peace process*. Report. NOREF. Oslo.

180 Interview with informant 15.

181 CIASE and Humanas Colombia (2017). *Vivencias, aportes y reconocimiento: Las mujeres en el proceso de paz en La Habana*, p31.

182 Interviews with informants 20 and 46.

183 Ibid.

184 Designated zones where FARC ex-combatants were to gather as part of the demobilisation and reintegration process.

Another element in building public trust in the peace process involved efforts to locate and identify the remains of people who were missing as a result of the conflict. In October 2015, the government and the FARC agreed on some measures for the search, location, identification and return of the remains of missing people due to the internal armed conflict, including the creation of a special unit to search for missing people.¹⁸⁵ Norway supported ICRC initiatives to search for and identify human remains in Colombia and participated in ceremonies where these remains were handed over.¹⁸⁶ Moreover, Norway and Sweden – through FOS – provided support to EQUITAS, a Colombian civil society organisation with forensic expertise in searching for ‘disappeared’ and missing people. EQUITAS was invited by the OACP and the FARC to share its experiences in this area, and was active in supporting the work of the special unit that searched for missing people.¹⁸⁷

185 Joint communiqué 62. Havana. 15 October 2015.

186 Archival document, reference 14/10156.

187 FOS (undated). *Annual Report 2016*.

4.8 COORDINATING WITH OTHER ACTORS

4.8.1 Guarantor countries

To succeed in meeting the expectations placed on them by the Colombian government and the FARC, it was imperative for Cuba and Norway to understand each other and cooperate efficiently during the peace process. The reasons that brought each of them into the process as guarantor countries were different, and both added value. Where Norway had a reputation as a peace facilitator, Cuba had credibility among left-wing guerrilla groups like the FARC and a diplomatic service perceived by Colombian government officials as highly professional.¹⁸⁸ Where Oslo was a geographically distant capital, Havana was ‘just’ some 3.5 hours by plane from Bogotá. On paper, both countries could complement each other and fulfil the role of guarantors efficiently so that the cooperation could run smoothly.

According to Cuban and Norwegian diplomats who were involved in the peace process, the cooperation between the two countries turned out to be excellent.¹⁸⁹ In the words of one of those diplomats, *“the guarantors came together as a single team working under tight timeframes. There was very close coordination, with regular*

188 Interview with informant 46.

189 Archival document, reference 11/04267-37; Interviews with informants 01, 08, 10 and 43.

*meetings, and showing always equidistance with the parties. Trust was built over time.”*¹⁹⁰ This was confirmed by members of both the FARC and the government negotiation teams, as well as well-informed external observers.¹⁹¹

Even though there was neither a written mandate for the guarantor countries nor an explicit division of labour between them, the Norwegian and Cuban teams found a natural working relationship, most likely determined by Norway’s past experience as a peace facilitator, its international network and its capacity to mobilise financial resources.

In times of crisis, the assessment was that the Norwegian and Cuban facilitation teams worked well together in order to bring the peace process back on track (see [section 4.6](#). Crisis points as an example).

At the request of the negotiating parties, Norwegian and Cuban diplomats and their embassies in Bogotá worked hand-in-hand with the ICRC on arranging and carrying out the transportation of FARC representatives to and from Havana. Transport planning meetings were hosted by the countries’ embassies in Bogotá on an

190 Interview with informant 10.

191 Interviews with informants 04, 15, 19, 27, 28, 29 and 30.

alternating basis, and the protocol established that representatives from both countries would participate in the actual transport.¹⁹²

While preserving its autonomy in the peace process, Norway shared information with Cuba on the selection, and work, of its advisors and experts. Norway kept Cuba in mind when it arranged seminars, events or initiatives connected to the peace process. If Norway arranged an event by virtue of its role as guarantor, then its standpoint was that the Cuban facilitation team should be invited to attend.¹⁹³

The collegiality established between Norway and Cuba had unintended positive effects outside the peace talks. Bilateral relations between the countries were strengthened, leading to closer dialogue on other issues.¹⁹⁴ Reflecting this, in 2015 a Norwegian Foreign Minister visited Cuba for the first time.¹⁹⁵

192 Interviews with informants 10 and 43.

193 Archival document, reference 16/1002-105

194 Interviews with informants 26, 44 and 47.

195 NRK (2015). 'Brende: Politiske reformer ikke lett med USAs sanksjonspolitik'. 2 February 2015.

4.8.2 Accompanying countries

During the public peace negotiations, Venezuela and Chile played less direct roles than Norway and Cuba. Unlike the guarantor countries, these accompanying countries were not continuously present at the negotiations, a fact that limited their possibilities for coordination on day-to-day or unexpected events. Their representatives travelled to Havana at the end of each negotiation round and met with the Colombian government and FARC delegations¹⁹⁶ as well as Cuban and Norwegian diplomats. The role of the accompanying countries was different, yet complementary, to that of the guarantors. As in the case of the guarantors, the accompanying countries were given no terms of reference in advance – the actors involved had to fill the role with content and develop a strategy to work together.

Venezuela's strategic role in starting the Colombian peace talks and during their secret phase has been acknowledged.¹⁹⁷ During the public phase, Venezuela maintained open communication lines with the FARC.¹⁹⁸ Its capacity as a non-permanent member of

196 Segura, R. and Mechoulan, D. (2017). *Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War*. International Peace Institute; Nylander, D., Sandberg, R. and Tvedt, I. (2018). *Designing peace: the Colombian peace process*. Report. NOREF. Oslo.

197 Ibid.; Interviews with informants 03, 10, 14, 20, 31, 38, 40 and 46.

198 Segura, R. and Mechoulan, D. (2017). *Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War*. International Peace Institute.

the Security Council in 2015–2016 was also seen as important for the peace process,¹⁹⁹ causing the Norwegian team to prioritise contacts with Venezuela.²⁰⁰

Chile had no involvement in the peace talks prior to August 2012,²⁰¹ when it accepted the invitation to accompany the process. From that point on, it is reported by particular experts that Chile and Venezuela coordinated their efforts.²⁰²

4.8.3 The UN, the US and other international actors

The UN's involvement in the Colombian peace process was gradual. Its limited presence at the early stages of the public negotiations are linked to both negotiating parties' reservations about, and resistance to, international involvement in the talks, mixed with a certain resentment towards the UN because of its role in El Caguán and other decisions by the international community.²⁰³ In first years of the peace process, the UN in Colombia contributed to the process

199 See, for example, WLRN (2014). 'Bring Peace To Colombia Or Block Venezuela From A U.N. Seat? Pick One'. 25 September 2014.

200 Archival document, reference 16/1002-63.

201 Guerrero, N., Matamoros, R. and Guerrero, A. (2017). *Hombres de estado. La contribución de Chile a la paz en Colombia*. Revista de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos, 5 (2): 38–5.

202 Ibid.

203 Segura, R. and Mechoulan, D. (2017). *Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War*. International Peace Institute.

from the outside, especially as co-organiser together with the National University of consultation exercises that enabled Colombians to contribute proposals for the peace process.

Against that background, the Norwegian team aimed to keep central actors in the UN system updated on developments in the Colombian peace process,²⁰⁴ in collaboration with Norway's mission to the UN. The peace process was highly sensitive and, lacking the contextual knowledge of the Norwegian team, some external actors had problems pitching their inputs in an appropriate way. This risked jeopardising further the negotiating parties' trust in these actors. Norway functioned as an important, albeit definitively informal, contextual 'translator' between UN actors and the negotiating delegations.²⁰⁵ That said, because of its role as a guarantor country, Norway took great pains not to be – or be perceived as – an alternative consultation mechanism. Also, informal contacts with external actors like the UN were an important way for Norway to keep abreast of developments in Colombia, tapping into their in-country political, diplomatic and security analytical bases.²⁰⁶ From the UN

standpoint, Norway provided important communication lines with the inside of the peace talks in Havana, and also provided support in nudging the two parties into gradual acceptance of a UN role around certain aspects of the peace agreements' implementation.²⁰⁷

The UN gained greater presence in the peace talks near the end of the process. In August 2015, a UN envoy was appointed UN Secretary-General's Delegate to the Sub-Commission on End of Conflict issues,²⁰⁸ and in January 2016 the UN Security Council adopted a resolution establishing a political mission in Colombia tasked with monitoring and verifying the definitive bilateral ceasefire and cessation of hostilities between the Government of Colombia and the FARC.²⁰⁹ Norway kept in close touch with the UN SRSJ Jean Arnault concerning developments in the UN Security Council.

Regional and international actors also became increasingly involved in the peace process as it neared its end. Norway's response to this was to expand its diplomatic contacts. The resulting emergence of various, parallel discussions increased the complexity of the negotiations, and made the situation more demanding for Norway. The Norwegian team seems to have handled this well with its routines (to-do lists, coordinating with embassies, assigning responsibility on individual and section levels, etc. – as discussed in [Chapter 5](#)).

Both the US and Norway judged their mutual collaboration during the Colombian peace process to have been excellent. Their most visible area of collaboration was the joint demining global initiative (see [section 4.4](#)). The US and Norwegian envoys maintained a fluid dialogue and attempted to coordinate actions in the interest of the peace process. The fact that the US Envoy used the Norwegian Ambassador's residence in Havana for his own meetings²¹⁰ testifies to the trust between these two parties.

204 Archival document, reference 11/04267-29.

205 Archival document, reference 16/1002-12; Interview with informant 40.

206 Interviews with informants 23 and 40.

207 Interview with informant 40.

208 The sub-commission was to work on the terms of the bilateral, definitive ceasefire and the laying down of weapons. The UN and UNASUR were asked to accompany the sub-commission (Joint communiqué 55. Havana. 12 July 2015).

209 UN SCR 2261 (2016).

210 Interviews with informants 35, 44 and 47.

5. Findings (b): Distinguishing characteristics of Norway's organisational structure in the peace process

5.1 OVERLAPS BETWEEN NORWAY'S DEVELOPMENT AID PORTFOLIO AND ITS ROLE IN THE PEACE PROCESS

In 2010–2016, overall Norwegian development aid to Colombia amounted to 914.1 million NOK²¹¹, almost double the amount of aid provided to the country in the previous six-year period (see Figure 4).²¹²

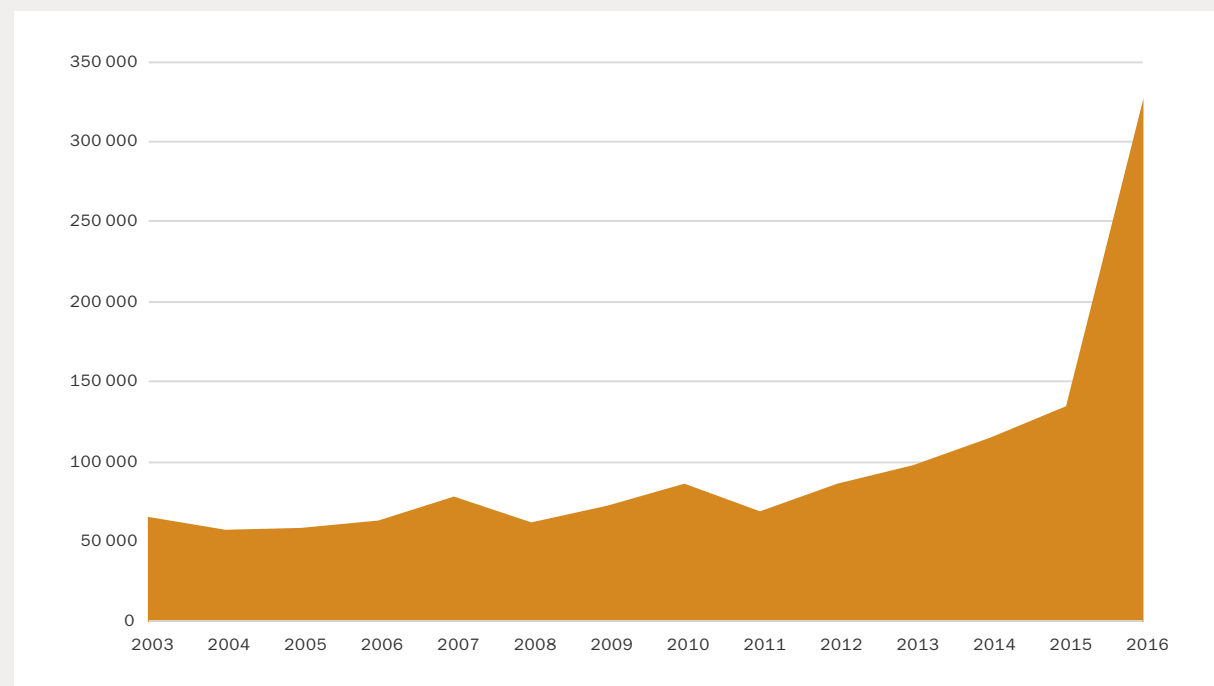
It is part of Norway's peace and reconciliation approach to make strategic use of development aid to support negotiating processes.²¹³ The Norwegian facilitation effort in Colombia requested a funding basket for both expected and unexpected needs, in order to protect and reinvigorate the peace process. The Norwegian team used flexible funds to quickly assess and respond to emerging funding needs relating to the negotiating parties and those arising during

211 Norad. This includes 131.5 million NOK to environment and energy initiatives, 118.1 million of which was allocated in 2016.

212 Norad.

213 Government of Norway. (2016) *Norway's peace and reconciliation policy*. Available at: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/peace-and-reconciliation-efforts/innsiktsmappe/facilitation/id708238/>
Last updated 23 November 2016.

FIGURE 4 // NORWEGIAN DEVELOPMENT AID TO COLOMBIA, 2003–2016 (1,000 NOK)



Source: Norad, Norwegian Aid Statistics

the negotiations (expert advisory, events, etc). The Norwegian team also had its own funding needs, to strengthen it (for example via capacity building and external advisory support, as

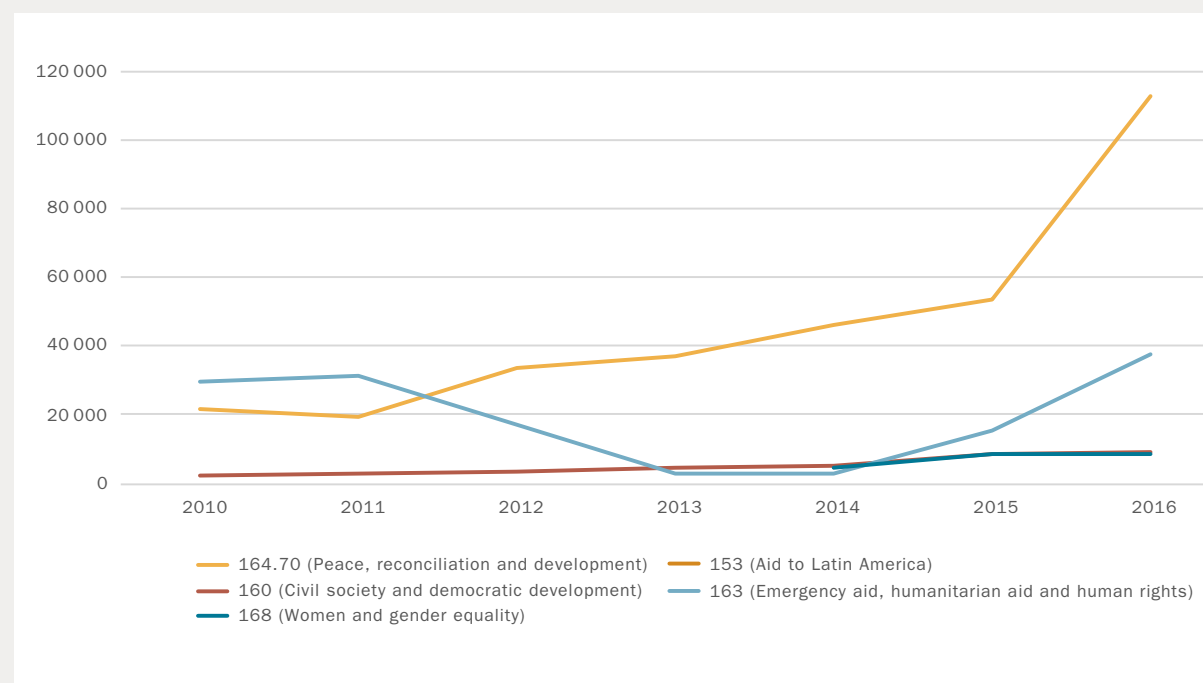
outlined in [section 5.3](#)). In addition, Norway also supported key initiatives outside the negotiations that were judged as supportive of the peace process.

The Norwegian Special Envoy for the Colombian peace process was part of the Section for Peace and Reconciliation, which had the main responsibility for following up the peace process while negotiations were ongoing.²¹⁴ The management of some funds from the budget for peace, reconciliation and development (budget code 164.70) remained in Oslo, mainly within the same section but also in Norad or the Section for Humanitarian Affairs. Some of those funds were, however, delegated to the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá, to follow up in line with Norway's focus areas.

There was a gradual increase in both the volume of funds and number of agreements managed by the embassy in Bogotá (see Figure 5 and Figure 7, next page). In assessing applications for financial support, the embassy paid attention to how its development portfolio could complement the peace process. Strategic partners, both from civil society and the UN system, were also identified by Norway. Regarding the latter, the significant increase in funds from budget code 164.70 disbursed by the embassy in 2016 is due to Norway's contribution to the UN Post-conflict Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Colombia that year (50 million NOK).

²¹⁴ Archival document, reference 16/1217-5.

FIGURE 5 // DISTRIBUTION OF NORWEGIAN BILATERAL AID FUNDS, BY BUDGET CODE (1,000 NOK)



Source: Norad, Norwegian Aid Statistics

5.2 ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP

Norway operated with a small core team led by its Special Envoy to the Colombian peace process, organisationally anchored in the Section for Peace and Reconciliation in the MFA in Oslo. Very few individuals within the MFA were aware of Norway's subtle efforts during the secret and exploratory phases of the peace talks – and even fewer were involved. When it became clear

there were going to be public talks and a role for Norway in those talks, the core team expanded to include diplomats outside the Section for Peace and Reconciliation, with representatives from various other sections in the MFA and representations covering Colombia and Cuba to ensure adequate coordination and support. The core team consisted of three (early during the public phase) to six people

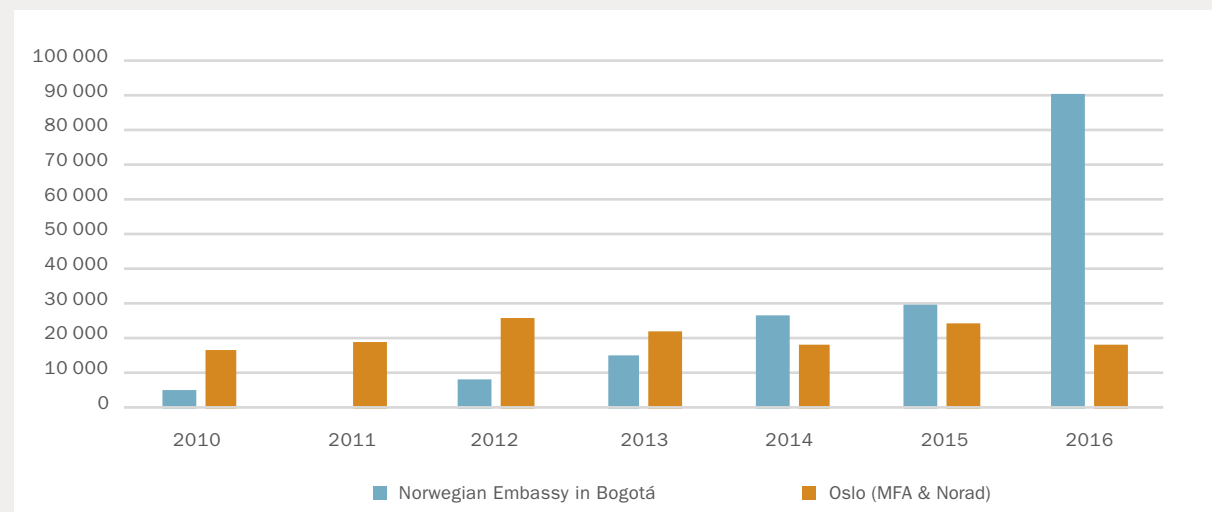
who followed the negotiations in Havana on a rotating basis (see [Figure 8](#), next page). The expanded team included representatives from different parts of the MFA in Oslo (the Latin America Section/Department for Regional Affairs, the Section for Human Rights, Democracy and Gender Equality/Department for UN and Humanitarian Affairs, the Section for UN Policy/Department for UN and Humanitarian Affairs, the Section for Humanitarian Affairs/Department and Humanitarian Affairs, the Communication Unit, and the Section for Humanitarian and Criminal Law/Legal Affairs Department.)

The core team members were in regular contact, whereas the expanded team met less frequently, on a fortnightly basis or at least once a month.²¹⁵ In meetings, the responsibility for each focus area and follow-up actions were assigned to specific team members. Much of the coordination in the Colombia core team was arranged through phone or Skype conferences and, later, through instant messaging applications because many team members were travelling, and because the embassies in Havana and Bogotá were an integral part of the team's daily work.²¹⁶

215 Interviews with informants 01 and 34.

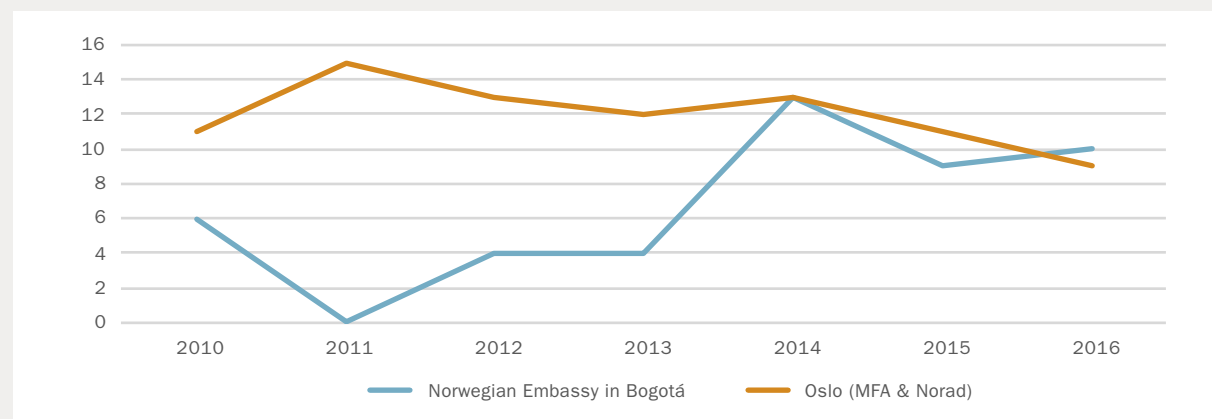
216 Archival document, reference 14/02075.

FIGURE 6 // DISTRIBUTION OF NORWEGIAN FUNDS FOR THE COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS (BUDGET CODE 164.70) (1,000 NOK)



Source: Norad, Norwegian Aid Statistics

FIGURE 7 // MANAGEMENT OF COLOMBIA GRANTS (BUDGET CODE 164.70)



Source: Norad, Norwegian Aid Statistics

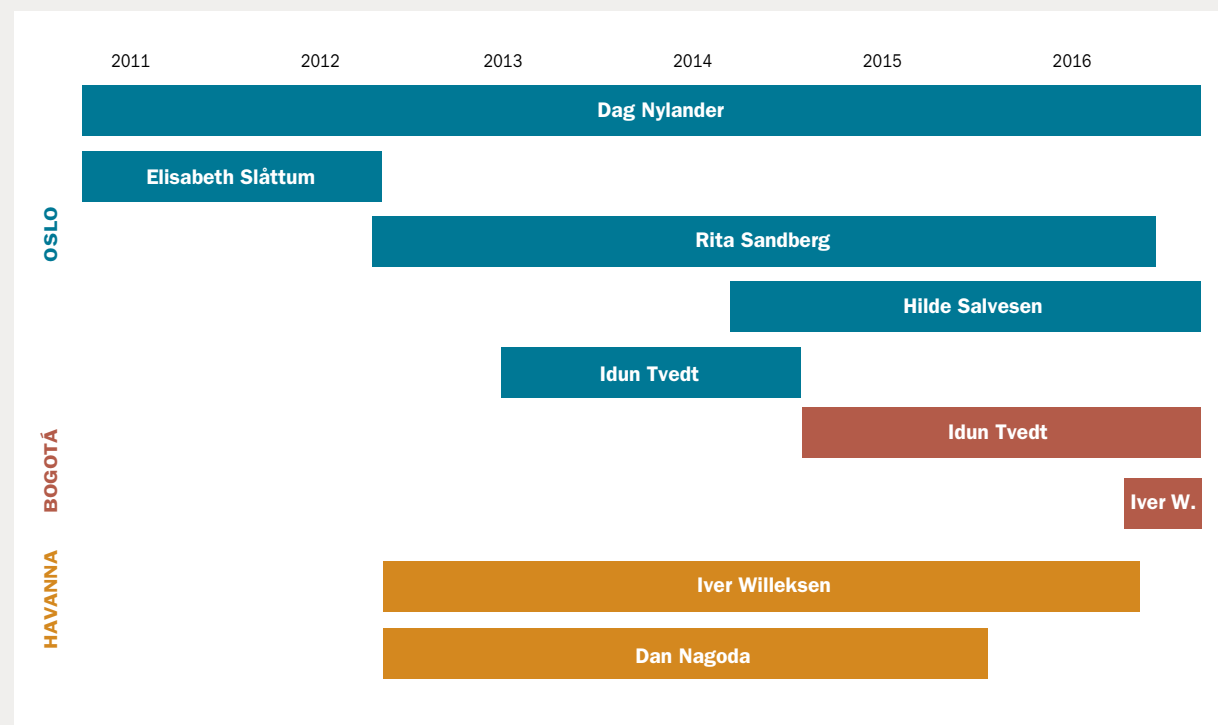
The factors characterising Norway's facilitation set-up (a small team based in Oslo), in combination with certain facilitation requirements, (a constant presence in Havana, the format of the negotiations and the expansion of the negotiation agenda) presented a series of advantages and disadvantages.

A key concern for Norway was to ensure that its Foreign Minister and the Section for Peace and Reconciliation maintained frequent contact with the team, and the Special Envoy in particular. This was one reason why team members were based in Oslo rather than abroad. However, that entailed extensive travelling and came to take a toll on many of the diplomats involved.

The Section for Peace and Reconciliation considered placing the Special Envoy in New York to reduce the travel burden across time zones – and because a permanent residence in either Bogotá or Havana could be perceived as being biased in relation to the other party.²¹⁷ This request was, however, turned down by the MFA. From a family- and work-life balance perspective, the travel was also demanding for other Norwegian diplomats based in Oslo.

²¹⁷ Archival document, reference 14/02075-1.

FIGURE 8 // THE CORE NORWEGIAN TEAM DURING THE COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS



Source: Norwegian MFA records and interviews

The peace negotiations kept expanding to new areas, and new sub-commissions kept being added. Also, as the negotiations accelerated and expanded, the need for constant updates increased. This presented a challenge to the initially understaffed core team, who suffered under a heavy workload. This also affected team members based in Havana and Bogotá,

who – like other members of the Norwegian core team – had other diplomatic tasks besides engagement in the peace process.

At the same time, it was important to ensure continuity at the negotiating table. This meant having at least two Norwegian diplomats present in Havana at any time, of which at least one

was an Oslo-based team member, and they should ideally also be familiar to the negotiating parties – to ensure continuity for the sake of trust-building.²¹⁸ As discussed in [section 4.7](#), this had a positive, trust-building effect. Moreover, continuity of presence and daily interactions gave the Norwegians an edge on increasing their awareness and understanding of the negotiations – something that can hardly be gained by occasional appearances or second-hand knowledge. Norwegian schedules had to be aligned with the negotiations, resulting at times in unpredictable travel and work schedules. Particularly at the beginning of the process, and later when a parallel process with the ELN was underway, the capacities of the Norwegian team were stretched.²¹⁹

The team was later expanded, and more routines were gradually introduced. In the early phase of Norwegian involvement in the Colombian peace process, the division of roles and responsibilities between functions was not always clearly delimited and understood. There are indications that this improved over time.²²⁰ There were noticeable improvements in the team's planning and internal communications;

218 Interviews with informants 01 and 08.

219 Archival documents, reference 16/1217-5 and 16/3887-2; Interviews with informants 01, 29 and 30.

220 Interviews with informants 12, 22, 36, 37, 42 and 43.

to-do lists and internal briefings before and after each round of negotiations, and calendars and other periodical briefings and reports, were better aligned over time.²²¹

For the Norwegian embassies in Bogotá and Havana, Norway's role as guarantor in the peace process had major implications. It was very clear to staff that their diplomatic missions were geared towards the peace process, and their plans and resources were used accordingly.

The decision to close the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá in the summer of 2011, as part of a broader prioritisation process affecting several Norwegian diplomatic missions,²²² disappointed central Colombian political actors. By then, the Norwegian team was already engaged in secret negotiations between the government and the FARC, and the decision was hard to understand among those who knew about Norway's involvement in this process.²²³ In subsequent months, the Colombian authorities regularly and informally asked Norway if there was any possibility

221 See, for example, archival documents reference 16/1002-23 and 16/3887-2; Interview with informant 26.

222 Stortinget (2011). Dokument nr. 15:402 (2010–2011). Skriftlig spørsmål fra Morten Høglund (FrP) til utenriksministeren. Besvart: 03.12.2010 av utenriksminister Jonas Gahr Støre; Aftenposten, «Norge stenger dørene i fem land». Last updated 10 December 2011.

223 Archival document, reference 11/04267-2; Interview with informant 31.

of re-establishing its embassy in Colombia.²²⁴ At the end of 2012, Norway reversed its decision and in 2013 its embassy in Bogotá was reopened.

The reopened Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá became a 'listening post', enabling Norway to understand the type of debates in Colombia and engage in dialogue with key interlocutors. It was also used to: manage a development portfolio heavily influenced by the choice of focus areas for Norwegian support in the peace process; play a representation function; and, more broadly, to fulfil the peace negotiations' logistical and technical needs. One member of the core team was placed at the embassy in Bogotá from the summer of 2014, with responsibility to follow up the peace process between the Colombian Government and the FARC. A second Norwegian diplomat was responsible for covering the exploratory talks with the ELN. Considering the amount of travel involved (to the regions, to Havana and to other capitals), the embassy was understaffed to fulfil the multiple and demanding tasks related to the negotiations in Havana. On multiple occasions, the Norwegian Ambassador had to step in, participating in events that would otherwise have required a lower level

224 Archival document, reference 12/03901-2.

of diplomatic representation.²²⁵ This situation was improved towards the end of the peace negotiations by increasing the number of Embassy-based staff.

In Havana, Norwegian diplomatic mission staff attended the negotiations, had bilateral conversations with delegation members and with many of the people who were invited to the talks, reporting back to Norway's core facilitation team members.

The core team made decisions on a day-to-day basis. The Special Envoy had decision-making capacity within the team, a faculty that enabled a rapid response to both direct requests from the negotiating parties and needs emerging from the negotiations. He also had the last word regarding strategies on how to, or how not to, talk to the negotiating parties, who to consult, what to do when, etc. This was a self-driven team in many respects, although it functioned in close coordination with the Section for Peace and Reconciliation, other MFA sections and Norway's Foreign Minister. The Section for Peace and Reconciliation also exercised flexibility and swiftness regarding funding mechanisms and approval procedures in relation to the peace process.

225 Interviews with informants 42, 43 and 44.

5.3 BACK-END SUPPORT NEEDS

The Norwegian core team relied on back-end support from others to aid the peace process in a timely and effective manner. This need for 'support to be able to support' was clear to Norway from the beginning, as shown in references to internal expertise within the MFA when selecting Norway's focus areas and in early discussions on capacity-building.

This evaluation identifies the team's back-end needs in four realms: operations; knowledge facilitation and technical support; capacity building; and political.

› *Operations.* Travel arrangements, procurement and event logistics were, more often than not, handled by core team members themselves. Team members described this as an unnecessary burden. The Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution (NOREF) came to play a support role in this regard, in connection with meetings of the New York Group. Moreover, the responsibility for managing some small initiatives to support the peace process was transferred to the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in 2015.²²⁶

226 Archival document, reference COL-15/0035.

› *Knowledge facilitation and technical support.*

There was limited technical input from other parts of the MFA, with one notable exception – the Department of Legal Affairs, with one of its members becoming a key contributor to internal discussions on issues related to transitional justice. The Communication Department provided occasional support.²²⁷ As mentioned in [section 4.5](#), there was no natural contact point in the MFA on the issue of children and armed conflict to help the team working on the Colombian peace process.

Early on, Norway's Colombian peace process team sought to build on experiences from Norwegian teams that had assisted in other peace processes. Given the scarcity of codified knowledge (i.e. briefing notes, exit memos and other types of lessons learned documents) from other peace processes, meetings were organised with former ambassadors and practitioners involved in peace processes in Sudan, Sri Lanka, Guatemala and Nepal, hoping to gather their recollections. Team members perceived these meetings as extremely important.²²⁸ Evidence shows that experiences from Sri Lanka and Nepal proved to be the most significant points of reference, providing

227 Interviews with informants 01 and 34.

228 Interview with informant 01.

knowledge and contacts – traces of which can be observed in the Norwegian facilitation in Colombia (see Table 5).

The Norwegian team also relied upon external experts on peace processes who were already known to the Section for Peace and Reconciliation.

- › *Capacity building.* The Norwegian team set priorities to build its own capacity on topics of particular relevance to the Colombian peace process (for example, on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants into civilian life).²²⁹ This was done in collaboration with the other sections at the MFA, for instance, in strengthening the knowledge and expertise of the team on the issue of gender. Many of the seminars, conferences and other capacity-building events aimed chiefly at the negotiating parties were also presented as opportunities for enhancing the knowledge of the Norwegian facilitation team. Some team members felt more capacity building could have been provided on certain themes, for example on ceasefires.²³⁰ The Section for Peace and Reconciliation also worked to fill very specific knowledge gaps

²²⁹ Archival document, reference 11/04267-49.

²³⁰ Interview with informant 36.

TABLE 5 // NORWEGIAN USE OF KNOWLEDGE FROM OTHER PEACE PROCESSES IN THE COLOMBIAN PROCESS

Peace process	Knowledge	Proof of presence in the Norwegian facilitation in Colombia
Sri Lanka	Keep a low public (media) profile	Yes, strong evidence (e.g. low media and social media exposure)
	Avoid dual formal roles	Yes, moderate evidence (e.g. refusal to be part of the selection process related to victims' visits)
	Gender (Sub-committee for Gender issues)	Yes, strong evidence (e.g. establishment of Sub-commission on Gender)
Nepal	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration	Yes, moderate evidence (e.g. engagement of expert)

within the facilitation team to better understand the negotiating parties.

- › *Political.* The political leadership at the MFA provided on-demand support in a timely fashion, in the form of speaking on the phone or visiting the negotiating parties and channelling or emphasising certain points, or through bilateral conversations with other leaders to gauge support and coordinate actions on specific issues. The core Norwegian team's experience was that Norwegian political leadership, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs at its top, was committed and made time to provide the requested support.²³¹

²³¹ Interviews with informants 26, 34 and 48.

5.4 CONTEXT AWARENESS

Contextual awareness permeated Norway's work in the Colombian peace process. The analytical abilities of the team, especially its Special Envoy, to read the situation and devise courses of action accordingly were a constant in the Norwegian peace facilitation. The evaluation team was able to reconstruct several examples of how contextual awareness constructively influenced Norwegian decision-making processes – and one (the plebiscite) where awareness fell short.

The Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá provided the Norwegian facilitation team with periodic, as well as ad hoc, situational reports and commissioned analysis from external experts on different topics. Norway's vast network of contacts in Colombia and abroad also played a role in this regard. Moreover, the Norwegian team tapped into the in-country UN analytical capacities in Colombia, mainly through the office of the UN Resident Coordinator.²³²

The Norwegian team also made attempts to promote self-reflection and strategise based on first-hand experience – most notably through all-team reflective sessions²³³ and an external review of its facilitation role. Two external

²³² Interviews with informants 01, 23 and 40.

²³³ Interview with informant 01.

reviews, based on interviews with team members, took place while the Colombian peace process was still ongoing (in 2013 and 2015).

The flow of contextual analyses on developments in Colombia was not always deemed sufficiently fluid by some members of the Norwegian team. The day-to-day, intense pace of the negotiations left little for room for individuals to follow developments in Colombia or to go deeper into trying to decode socio-cultural references. At the same time, such contextual knowledge would have helped team members keep sight of the big picture and better understand some references made during the talks. This, however, was not perceived as a major difficulty but rather a gap that could have been filled.²³⁴

5.5 COMMUNICATION

Norway did not have a communication strategy for its involvement in the Colombian peace process, neither for the core team as a whole nor for its embassy in Bogotá – the staff who were more exposed to media attention.²³⁵ However, the Norwegian team was aware of the importance of public communication, and discussions regarding media strategies often took place during team meetings.

²³⁴ Interviews with informants 08 and 48.

²³⁵ Interviews with informants 01, 08, 12 and 34.

Communication was complicated as there was no single audience, but many. First, it was important for the MFA to communicate to a domestic constituency, for accountability reasons. Second, the MFA needed to communicate to a Colombian audience, which was subdivided in different communities. Third was the need to communicate to the international community, to build support for the peace process. All Norwegian team members noted that all of these audiences pulled in different directions. For Norway, the main goal was to communicate in a way that was beneficial to the peace process and to its own objectives as a facilitator. It wanted to have a profile that was as high as possible at home and as low as possible in Colombia, at least at the beginning of the peace process.

For the Norwegian Special Envoy to the Colombian peace process, a lesson learned from the Sri Lankan process was to keep a low profile in-country.²³⁶ Only at critical times did Norway resort to public communication, through statements issued with Cuba, to push forward the peace process. Because of the guarantors' low-key communicative profile,

²³⁶ *Aftenposten* (2016). 'Norges spesialutsending måtte selv hente gissel inne i Colombias jungel'. 19 March 2016. Last updated 27 September 2016. On Norwegian facilitation in the Sri Lankan process, see Norad (2011). *Pawns of Peace. Evaluation of Norwegian peace efforts in Sri Lanka, 1997–2009*. Report 5/2011. Oslo.

those joint statements during crises arguably had a relatively dramatic effect and were taken seriously – i.e. avoiding receptivity fatigue.

Norway's communicative role only started to become visible towards the end of the peace process, with some (but only a few) interviews given by the Special Envoy, mainly in the Norwegian and international press but also in the Colombian media. On social media, Norway was silent at the beginning of the peace process. Mid-way through the process (June 2014), team members were encouraged to keep social media platforms in mind and to send tweets when appropriate.²³⁷ The Twitter analysis conducted as part of this evaluation shows that the Norwegians began their Twitter activity around the Colombian peace process in 2014, but they tripled the number of tweets in the three years they were active, going from 15 tweets in 2014 to 59 in 2016. This is still a relative low number considering the activity levels of many Twitter users.

When asked about Norway's communication strategy during the peace process, key informants interviewed for this evaluation tended to reduce it to a media strategy. However, media is only one aspect of communication.

²³⁷ Archival document, reference 16/1002-36.

Internal communication was key in relation to the negotiating parties as well as to the efficiency of the constituent parts of the MFA. In terms of the media strategy, the negotiating parties perceived Norway as speaking with one voice. There was coherence in its messaging among team members, and it was clear that Norway's Special Envoy was the person with the Norwegian script and who set the tone. Overall, communication among the core team members seems to have been fluid and rich. However, in hindsight, some members²³⁸ would have valued more sharing of information and analysis on developments in Colombia, to better understand the worries, positions and expectations of those negotiating in Havana.

Far more challenging was the communication between the core team and other parts of the MFA. From Bogotá to Oslo, those who were not involved in the day-to-day process would have liked to know more. The distinction between 'good to know' and 'need to know' also applies in this case. The core team and the Special Envoy at its head were – understandably – protective of the peace process and aware of the risks of losing control over information, so they wanted to keep a tight rein on the information flow. Moreover, they had experienced

²³⁸ Interview with informant 08.

a breakdown in reciprocal communication – the sharing of information with MFA colleagues did not necessarily translate into concrete actions to support the team.

Operating in a demanding environment, with many competing priorities, the Norwegian core team prioritised the 'need to know' communicative approach. The 'good to know' was thought to be addressed through the extended group meetings. It is unclear whether, once the public talks commenced, a more generous 'good to know' approach (for example, conducting more frequent expanded team meetings or more briefing meetings for embassy staff) would have enabled the sharing of some (less sensitive) information, which in turn could have strengthened the sense of being part of the same team, or whether the benefit of that strategy would have been outweighed by the time and effort involved.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 WHAT WAS NORWAY'S ROLE IN THE COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS?

Overall, this evaluation finds that Norway made a noticeable contribution to the Colombian peace process, in alignment with the expectations that the Government of Colombia and the FARC had placed on it as a guarantor country. Norway's support began long before the public launch of the peace process in Hurdal in October 2012, and – like the process itself – followed an incremental path. Norway's facilitation approaches (to build trust and solve problems) in the early stages of the peace process were replicated and increased little by little. Generally, Norway's contribution materialised in the form of providing knowledge and capacity building, building trust, international diplomatic support and operational support – especially in the form of logistics.

There are several reasons explaining why and how Norway became engaged in the peace process. The first of these factors is Norway's 'peace tradition' – its reputational capital as a trustworthy peace facilitator. The second is the fact that Norway was not bound by any list of designated terrorist groups. Thirdly, the

existing Norwegian presence in Colombia was an advantage, specifically its involvement in the 2005–2007 talks between the Colombian Government and the ELN. A fourth explanatory factor is closely linked to the existing Norwegian 'diplomatic peace footprint' in Colombia – the personal connections established by Norwegians on the ground and their understanding of who the different stakeholders in the peace process were, and more broadly, their ability to navigate a highly complex political landscape.

Taken together, these four factors explain why Norway was invited by the negotiating parties to accompany the secret preparatory talks and become a guarantor country in the secret exploratory talks that started in Havana in February 2012. However, that invitation did not guarantee continuing to be engaged in the public phase of the peace talks. It was the performance of the Norwegians during the secret phase that made the negotiating parties extend the invitation to the public phase.

Norway adopted an approach of working through three main focus areas during the peace talks: women's participation and a gender perspective; transitional justice; and demining. This focus-based approach had not been systematically undertaken in any other peace negotiations involving Norway. The selection of focus areas was based on a number of factors – of existing and foreseeable priorities for the negotiating parties, Norway's own commitments (to the Rome Statute and the WPS agenda) and its access to expertise. A fourth proposed focus area, children in armed conflict, never found its own niche and was phased into other Norwegian areas of support for the peace process.

This evaluation assesses working through focus areas in this way as positive for several reasons. Internally, focus areas were devised as anchors for Norway's work, and for different individuals, sections and departments within the MFA to rally behind the Norwegian effort. In spite of the internal challenges, the focus areas did indeed play this function. Externally, there were tangible achievements within all of the focus areas.

Different approaches were used in each focus area. Norway's work in the area of women's participation in the peace process was intimately linked with lobbying the negotiating parties directly, combined with an alliance with UN Women and Colombian civil society. When pressure from inside and outside the negotiations led to the establishment of the Sub-commission on Gender, Norway turned to direct provision of technical expertise to the sub-commission.

The role of civil society, however, was less prominent in the area of transitional justice, where experts played a more significant role. Norwegian support to capacity building and knowledge generation was most significant in this area. This was particularly important given the different levels of – and access to – expertise on transitional justice between the negotiating parties (the FARC was less well equipped in this area). Norway supported advisory services to the FARC, and also supported the establishment and work of an expert group (the New York Group). This was an innovation in itself, in both form and purpose. In the area of demining, a Norwegian NGO and the US became Norway's most prominent external partners.

These focus areas were unevenly linked to developments in Havana. Women's participation and the inclusion of a gender perspective in the

peace process were not on the 2012 agenda for the talks, but transitional justice was. Demining emerged as a core initiative to build confidence part way through the talks, with the purpose of helping the process to move forward.

While the focus areas were an effective channel for targeted support from Norway, their existence also raises questions about Norway's approach to peace facilitation which emphasises supporting the parties to find their own solutions, rather than seeking to influence particular outcomes. How, then, did Norway reconcile its approach based on focus areas, which are by definition directive, with peace facilitation? This conceptual tension became most visible in the gender focus area, when the Norwegian team was directly involved in the dual role of supporting the negotiating parties to find solutions themselves while at the same time pursuing a normative agenda. This conceptual tension, however, did not cause any concrete problem or difficulty.

Furthermore, these priority areas do not encapsulate the totality of the Norwegian contribution to the Colombian peace process. As a guarantor country that had a constant presence in Havana, Norway provided multiple and continuous support to the negotiating parties at different levels, in all five ways in

which a facilitator can arguably contribute to a peace process – operations, support facilitation, knowledge facilitation, capacity building and trust building. All these types of support are to a greater or lesser extent visible in each of Norway's focus areas, but also exceeded them and ran through the whole peace process, from its secret phases to the signature of the renegotiated peace agreement.

With its co-guarantor country Cuba, Norway played a part in de-escalating tensions and helping to move the peace process forward during several crises. In cases such as the April to July 2015 crisis (military skirmishes in Cauca), the Norwegian and Cuban teams knew how to read the situation and acted in a coordinated manner.

Even though Norway contributed positively to the Colombian peace process in all three focus areas, as well as in building trust and at critical junctures during the peace talks, this evaluation has found blind spots in the Norwegian facilitation that affected both the depth and range of its support activities, and the effectiveness and impact of these activities.

Firstly, Norway could have assisted the Government of Colombia and the FARC in clarifying the gender references in the draft peace agreement

and to better communicate what ‘the gender perspective’ entailed. The fact that the issue of gender in the agreement was going to be pivotal to the No campaign was clear weeks ahead of the plebiscite. Given its involvement in supporting the work of the Sub-commission on Gender, Norway could have played a role in raising internal awareness of contentious language. It is not possible to establish conclusively whether Norway could also have been more proactive in emphasising the need for – and eventually supporting – communication with Colombians around what the Sub-commission on Gender had done and in explaining what the peace agreement entailed from a gender perspective.

Secondly, Norway could have done more to help Colombians better understand the peace agreement more generally ahead of the plebiscite. An instinct to protect its own mandate and the process as a whole led Norway to shy away from supporting the pedagogy for peace educational programme more vigorously. A more active engagement would not necessarily have meant more public exposure, as it could have been done through existing channels (civil society organisations, the OACP and the UN system). Similarly, Norway could have been more active in reaching out to key stakeholders in Colombia – or assisting the negotiating parties in considering who needed to be approached to support this.

Also in relation to the plebiscite, Norway could have prepared for a scenario in which the peace agreement was rejected to increase the effectiveness of its support. Even though Norway was quick in its response to the new, post-plebiscite reality, this evaluation found limited evidence of preparation of this type.

Thirdly, Norway did not provide any substantial form of support to the conflict victims who spoke to the negotiating delegations after their return to Colombia. Why that was not done had little to do with external constraints or lack of awareness and more to do with team capacity and competing needs.

6.2 TO WHAT EXTENT WAS NORWAY’S FACILITATION TEAM SET-UP ADEQUATE TO SUPPORT THE PEACE PROCESS EFFECTIVELY?

While small in numbers, the Norwegian team involved in the Colombian peace process was highly active. The fact that Norway operated through a small team headed by a Special Envoy is assessed as positive in this evaluation. Its instrumental value was two-fold: (1) to gain the trust of the negotiating parties, which was to a certain extent dependent on interaction between individuals, and (2) to acquire the necessary inside knowledge to make the guarantors’ support effective –

a type of experiential knowledge that is difficult to either obtain through occasional participation or transfer from individual to individual.

However, this strategy was not without problems. Logically, the smaller the team, the harder it is to accompany the whole process inside and outside of the negotiations, and the more vulnerable the team becomes. To offset these challenges, a small team requires effective back-end support at different levels (from operations to issue-based expertise and diplomatic support). Overall, the Norwegian team did receive the support it needed, but it could have benefitted from more assistance. This is especially true in relation to operations (to free up team members’ time so they could focus on other pressing tasks), communication (to develop tailored messages), and knowledge facilitation and technical expertise (in the case of the short-lived children in armed conflict focus area). Moreover, there was need for clarity in the division of labour, internal mandates and responsibilities of the different team members.

The shutting down of the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá in 2011 is an example of a lack of forward planning within the MFA. Once the decision was taken as part of a broader embassy reform process, without considering the quiet peace diplomacy taking place in

Colombia, it took just over a year to revert it and reopen the embassy. In the process, Colombian actors who knew about the secret exploratory talks struggled to understand the mixed signals coming from Norway.

Internal communication between the core Norwegian team involved in the peace process and other parts of the MFA also posed a challenge. Operating in a demanding environment, with many competing priorities, the core team adopted a ‘need to know’ communicative approach. There are solid arguments backing this decision but it is plausible to assume that a more generous (‘good to know’) communicative approach would have secured more internal ownership of the peace process across the MFA.

6.3 HOW DID CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS, FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE INFORM NORWAY’S APPROACH IN COLOMBIA?

The Norwegian facilitation team made a conscious effort to collect experiences from other peace processes involving Norway (Sri Lanka, Guatemala, South Sudan and Nepal, as well as El Caguán and ELN in Colombia). To compensate for the scarcity of written archival records, the Norwegians involved in the peace process in Colombia contacted

former ambassadors, practitioners and colleagues who had been part of these various peace teams. Some experiences were more relevant than others, but the team found some useful contacts and learning points (for example, on keeping a low media profile and ways to include a gender perspective). Even though full knowledge transfer is never possible, lessons from previous experiences helped team members to think differently and become aware of issues that were previously not on their radar.

Norway displayed a remarkable contextual awareness and analytical reading of complex situations during the Colombian peace process. It capitalised on a vast network of contacts among different groups, both in Colombia and abroad. In the case of Colombia, these contacts were mostly cultivated by the Norwegian Special Envoy for the peace process but also by others within the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá. In the case of knowledge communities outside Colombia, the Norwegian team benefited from a wide network built up by the Section for Peace and Reconciliation. Furthermore, Norway also relied on information and analysis produced within the UN system. Overall, the Norwegian team made good use of that knowledge in its decision-making processes – with the notable exception of the plebiscite, as described in the previous sub-section.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to fulfil this evaluation’s overall purpose of strengthening Norwegian peace efforts, Norad’s Evaluation Department has three categories of overall recommendations, corresponding with different stages in the operationalisation of a policy to promote peace. The target group for the recommendations is primarily the MFA.

1. Organisational readiness for future peace engagements:

1a. *Ensure there is sufficient and flexible funding for peace work.*

Facilitation in peace processes requires having financial resources available and rapid, funding-related decision-making throughout the process. Even though the nature of facilitation needs will vary from stage to stage in a given peace process, and from process to process, quick access to a sufficient and sustained financial base is necessary to ensure comprehensive support and long-term commitment.

1b. *Increase capacity in peace facilitation and systematise experience.*

The Section for Peace and Reconciliation should continue to train a cadre of diplomats on different topics related to peace processes (including communication issues and approaches). This should also build on valuable first-hand experience by the ministry. Furthermore, the MFA should consider how to best tap into and connect the expertise and knowledge embedded in former, current and future diplomats with practical experience or training on facilitation in a peace process.

2. Organisational efficiency in a concrete peace engagement:

2a. *Provide a clear and robust mandate for the facilitation team and ensure internal clarity about roles and responsibilities.* A Special Envoy for the Peace Process with contextual knowledge, thematic expertise and the right set of analytical skills can be instrumental in the success of a peace facilitation effort. For organisational efficiency, it is crucial to ensure that the Special Envoy has the necessary decision-making power and that there is clarity within

the larger team on roles, tasks and responsibilities.

2b. *Operate through small facilitation teams with robust back-end support.*

Small facilitation teams offer advantages in terms of building the necessary trust among negotiating parties and increasing knowledge about the negotiation process and the parties' positions. Functional small teams operating in highly demanding processes require effective back-end support at different levels and with some knowledge of what a peace process entails (see recommendation 1b). Similarly, when a formal peace process gets started, the facilitation team should be stationed as geographically closed to the negotiation table as possible.

3. Facilitation effectiveness in a concrete peace engagement:

3a. *Understand how the peace facilitation links to other strategic objectives, and assess whether these can be combined* through, for example, applying an approach based on focus areas. Working through focus areas enables purposeful behaviour and

individual contribution to a team effort, while supporting resource prioritisation and potentially increasing the overall coherence of the Norwegian effort. Women's participation and a gender approach, and transitional justice, are likely to be areas of relevance in all cases. It is important, however, to let the context determine the number and type of focus areas, clearly define the criteria for selecting them and delegate responsibilities within each area.

3b. *Enhance contextual awareness and conduct scenario planning for high-stakes situations that may jeopardise a peace process.* A facilitation team should have the means to monitor and analyse public discourse in connection to a peace process. The information sources of expert analyses, polls and well-informed individuals should be supplemented with systematic and in-depth analysis of social media and other forms of open data to gain insights on trends and forecasts. Norwegian peace facilitation teams should develop their strategies considering scenario analysis, especially around high-stakes situations such as processes for the validation of peace agreements.

Annex I: Methodological approach

This evaluation combined the following data collection methods: literature review; key informant and stakeholder interviews; and social media analysis.

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

Archival research was conducted from October 2017 to January 2018 in the archives of the MFA. The archives contain documents in electronic as well as physical formats. The digital archival material consists of non-classified sources. However, most are exempt from public disclosure according to Norway's Offentlighetsloven (Freedom of Information Act). The physical archives consist of documents that are classified with reference to Norway's Sikkerhetsloven (Security Act). Documents selected were limited to the period June 2010 to December 2016.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND MEDIA ANALYSIS

The evaluation team conducted a critical review of available research, media analyses and first-hand accounts from both the Colombian Government and the FARC. Findings from this review were used to establish the known facts

about the peace process, its timeline and milestones. Moreover, it provided additional contextual reference points to inform the development of other data collection methods. Some sources (for example, interviews with negotiation team members available on YouTube) fed information directly into the analysis.

KEY INFORMANT AND STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The Norad Evaluation Department carried out 48 semi-structured interviews and 3 unstructured interviews with key informants and stakeholders (41.1% Colombians; 35.2% women), in Spanish (32), English (15) and Norwegian (4). Face-to-face interviews in Norway and Colombia (33 in total) were complemented with 18 carried out remotely, over the phone or via Skype. The list of informants was distilled from scanning primary and secondary documents in Spanish, Norwegian and English, combined with input from the MFA, Norad and Norwegian civil society organisations. Two FARC-related interviewees and another two academics were recruited through chain referral (see the semi-structured interview guide in Annex II and

Figure 9, next page). All interviews have been anonymised to avoid source identification, guaranteeing their confidentiality and protecting them from harm.

BIG DATA – SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS

Colombia is among the countries with the highest social media engagement in its region, and among the top 20 countries worldwide in terms of the number of Twitter users.²³⁹ A social media (Twitter) analysis was carried out to obtain information relevant to this evaluation, searching for and scraping historic public tweets relevant to this evaluation spanning more than four years (October 2012 to December 2016). The Twitter analysis was intended to play a complementary and contextualising role, mainly linked to the three evaluation questions (see Table 1).

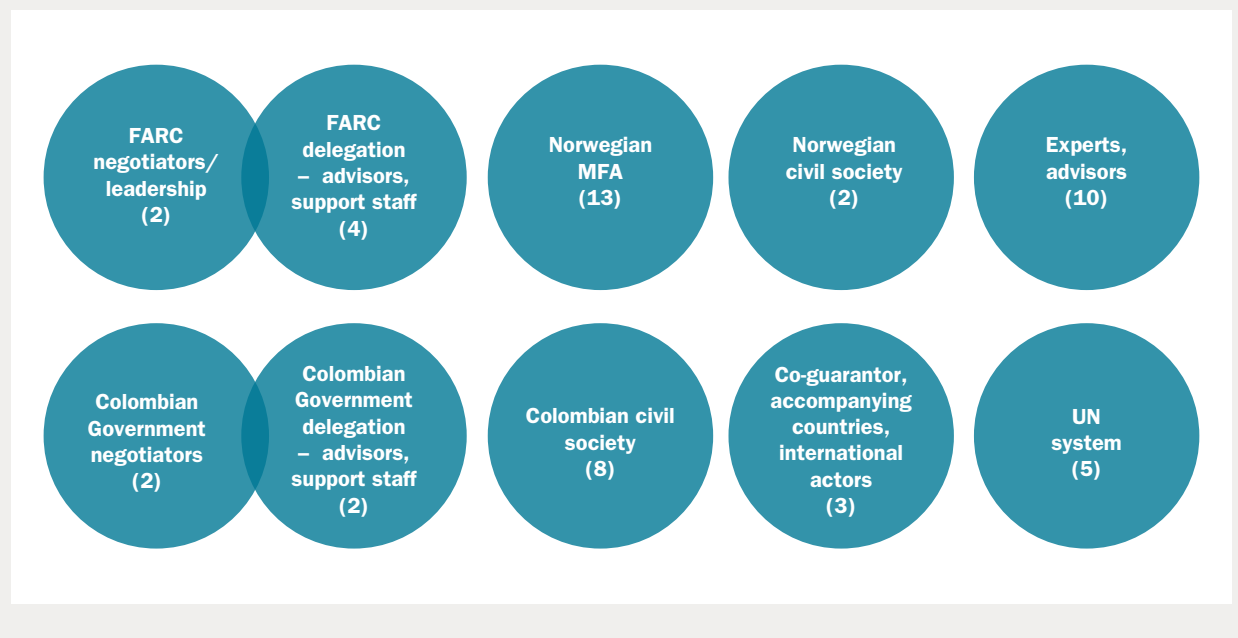
That analysis allowed this evaluation to expand and deepen its data collection reach, by including

239 Ministry of Information and Communications Technology of Colombia (undated); Available at: <http://www.mintic.gov.co/portal/604/w3-article-2713.html>; *El Tiempo* (2016). 'Twitter aumenta en 15% el número de usuarios en Latinoamérica en 2016', 2 December 2016. Available at: <http://www.eltiempo.com/tecnosfera/novedades-tecnologia/numero-de-usuarios-de-twitter-en-latinoamerica-39709>

perspectives from Colombian society at large and other actors. It provided information on how the FARC and the Colombian Government ‘felt’ about Norway’s involvement in the peace process (sentiment analysis). Positive attachment is one element this evaluation considered as part of its analytical framework in connection to trust building, with sentiment analysis scores as a proxy indicator. Moreover, the analysis provided contextual (indirect) information on the Norwegian facilitation team’s communicative approach.

The study design revolved around a public discourse regarding Norwegian engagement in the Colombian peace process (general discourse) as well as a study of related utterances by six actor groups (the FARC, Government of Colombia, Government of Norway, media, politicians and international actors). These actors’ profiles were mainly built based on lists by Torres Samboni (2015),²⁴⁰ and were then filtered and complemented to suit this evaluation’s objectives and design. The 77 different Twitter users initially identified as of interest prior to the analysis were further reduced to 59 active users.

FIGURE 9 // INTERVIEWEES FOR THIS EVALUATION, BY GROUP AFFILIATION



²⁴⁰ Torres Samboni, L.P. (2015). *Análisis de sentimientos sobre el postconflicto colombiano utilizando herramientas de minería de texto*. Maestría en Gestión de Información. Bogotá, Escuela Colombiana de Ingeniería Julio Garavito.

The Twitter data was extracted using an Application programming interface (API) through Twitter's own supplier, Gnip. The data extraction was based on a predetermined list of key words. The inclusion criteria were that all the tweets need to contain the word "*Noruega*" (Spanish for Norway) and one of the following key words: "*paz*" (peace), "*FARC*", "*víctimas*" (victims), "*justicia*" (justice), "*género*" (gender) or "*mujeres*" (women) in order to be extracted. Additionally, there was a special case where an English version of the key words was used (see below).

› **Spanish:**

"*Noruega*" + ["*paz*" / "*FARC*" / "*víctimas*" / "*justicia*" / "*género*" / "*mujeres*"]

› **English** (only eight users):

"Norway" + ["peace" / "FARC" / "victims" / "justice" / "gender" / "women"]

Applying these criteria (key words and time period), data was extracted from Twitter in 28,682 different gzipped packages. This data was subsequently unpacked and transformed into an N (total amount of tweets) × K (variables available from Twitter) data set. After this process, a set of consistency checks were run to ensure that all relevant tweets were in the data set. The resulting data set consisted of 120,757 tweets before data cleaning.

After data cleaning, the data set comprised 91,892 tweets. Google Cloud Platform and Microsoft Cognitive services were used to conduct the sentiment analysis as well as key phrase extraction. The sentiment score of a tweet was analysed through Google's natural language API, using Google's own thresholds.

In addition to the multifaceted Twitter analysis, this evaluation also draws on the frequency of search terms extracted from Google Trends. Its use has been limited to creating timelines of the popularity of key topics, as an additional reference point for the parts of the evaluation's analysis relating to public opinion in Colombia.

Annex II: Semi-structured interview guide

Different sets of interview questions were developed and adapted to each interviewee category (see [figure 9](#)). While the order of the questions and core topics remained the same across interviews, the specific questions asked were tailored to the interviewee's profiles – i.e. their knowledge of, and role in, the Colombian peace process.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MFA PUBLIC SERVANTS

- › In what capacity did you contribute to Norwegian peace facilitation efforts in Colombia? What was your role?
- › How much did you know about the peace talks before you got formally involved?
- › Why do you think Norway became engaged in the peace process?
- › Norway chose to focus on a number of thematic areas [in the Colombian peace process]. Do you know how those focus areas were chosen? Who was involved in the decision-making process? As far as you know, what type of support did Norway facilitate within those focus areas?
- › Children in armed conflict was selected as a focus area for Norway. Do you know what Norway's support was in this regard?
- › How would you describe Norway's collaboration with the other co-facilitator, Cuba, during the secret and the public phases? Was it a formal or informal division of labour? How did Norway and Cuba coordinate the day-to-day work among themselves?
- › What about coordination with other actors (Venezuela, Chile, US, EU, UN agencies, etc.)? How smooth would you say it was?
- › Did the Norwegian team take steps to bring in voices beyond those of the main parties? If yes, do you have any examples?
- › Did the Norwegian facilitation team review its own practice along the way and take on board lessons learned? If yes, how? Do you have any concrete example of actions taken as a result?
- › What were the mechanisms by which the Norwegian facilitation team assessed the evolving context and risks associated with the peace process? Would you say that they were sufficient to meet the team's analytical needs?
- › Would you say that the Norwegian facilitation team utilised research from research institutions in Norway, in Colombia or abroad? Do you have any examples? Was it useful to have that input?
- › In general, how important would you say it is for Norwegian peace efforts to gather knowledge from Norwegian engagement in other peace processes and build on lessons learned elsewhere?
- › In the Colombian case, how much effort was put into gathering and assessing lessons from Norwegian involvement in other contexts (including previous efforts in Colombia)? Where was that knowledge found (e.g. people, documents)? Was it useful? If yes, in what way? Please share examples.
- › How would you describe the internal coordination within the MFA, between the different sections, embassies and the core [facilitation] team?

- › How would you say that Norway's development aid portfolio related to Norway's role in the peace process? And how important was the Norwegian support provided through channels such as UN organisations and civil society to advance the peace process? Was there 'joined-up' thinking in terms of Norway's interventions in Colombia during the facilitation period?
- › In general, what would you say that Norway [the Norwegian facilitation team] did to build trust between the negotiating parties? And between each party and Norway?
- › Can you recall a situation when assuring confidentiality created a problem for the Norwegian facilitation team?
- › Imagine the Norwegian facilitation team in Havana received a request from the FARC delegation to provide capacity building on political communication. How would Norway have handled that request?
- › In all peace processes there are events away from the negotiation table that have a negative impact on the negotiations, generating tensions and maybe stalling the negotiations – or causing them to collapse. Can you recall any of those situations in this case?
- › The 2016 referendum was a turning point in the peace process. How did Norway prepare itself for the referendum, and eventually react to it? Ahead of the referendum, did the Norwegian team consider whether to publicly support the Yes side? What factors influenced Norway's decision?
- › How would you characterise decision-making processes within Norway's facilitation team? Were all relevant stakeholders within the MFA consulted?
- › What type of support did core [Norwegian facilitation] team members need? Was it provided in a timely fashion? By whom?
- › Would you say that the Norwegian facilitation team was appropriately resourced and staffed? Why/not?
- › Did the [Norwegian] facilitation team have a communication strategy? If so, how was it used?
- › Do you think that funding mechanisms and approval procedures within the facilitation team were flexible and swift enough?
- › What worked well, and what worked not so well in terms of the Norwegian facilitation team? In your opinion, how could have the Norwegian facilitation set-up have been improved?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FARC NEGOTIATORS

- › ¿Por qué Noruega? ¿cuáles son los motivos por los que Noruega les pareció a las FARC un país adecuado para ejercer ese papel?
- › ¿Qué tipo de participación tuvo Noruega durante las conversaciones secretas y la fase exploratoria?
- › Durante la fase de negociación pública, en La Habana, ¿qué apoyo proporcionó Noruega, a la mesa en general y a las FARC en particular?
- › Las negociaciones se desarrollaron en La Habana, ¿cómo de complicada fue la logística en lo relativo a, por ejemplo, desplazamientos de miembros de las FARC a Cuba? ¿Cómo ayudó Noruega con la logística?
- › Una de las áreas en las que los estudios dicen que un facilitador externo puede contribuir a un proceso de paz es proporcionando a una o ambas partes acceso a expertos, a personas con conocimientos técnicos o experiencias relevantes. ¿Contribuyó Noruega en este aspecto? De ser así, ¿fue a siempre a solicitud de las FARC? ¿cómo de importante fue para las FARC el tener acceso a estas voces y conocimiento externo? ¿cree que hubiera sido posible acceder al mismo sin Noruega?
- › Otro aspecto es el de la capacitación de los negociadores, el generar oportunidades para que los miembros de las delegaciones puedan adquirir conocimientos y mejorar sus competencias en áreas específicas. ¿Prestó ayuda Noruega a las FARC en este sentido? ¿en qué áreas?
- › ¿Cree usted que Noruega contribuyó a generar apoyos al proceso entre la comunidad internacional, a movilizar apoyo a nivel regional e internacional?
- › ¿Cree usted que Noruega se coordinó suficientemente con el otro país garante, y con los países acompañantes?
- › En todo proceso de paz existe una falta de confianza entre las partes. ¿Qué hizo Noruega, como país garante, para generar confianza entre los representantes del Gobierno y los de las FARC?
- › Las partes también necesitan confiar en el facilitador, en el garante. ¿Cómo fue en el caso de las FARC con Noruega? ¿Cómo evolucionó ese aspecto de la relación con Noruega?
- › El desminado humanitario conjunto entre el Ejército colombiano y las FARC, junto con su valor objetivo para acabar con el legado de la guerra, se esperaba contribuyera también a generar confianza. ¿Cómo surge y se concretiza esta iniciativa, y qué papel juega Noruega en la misma?
- › Noruega también hizo especial hincapié en apoyar la inclusión de una perspectiva de género y en proporcionar insumos en el tema de la justicia transicional. ¿Qué valoración hace del apoyo noruego en estas dos áreas? ¿Fue significativo?
- › La mesa, el grueso de las negociaciones en La Habana discurrieron sin un cese bilateral del fuego, y el conflicto armado produjo situaciones de alta tensión que generaron crisis en las negociaciones. ¿Cómo valora usted al papel que los países garantes y acompañantes, y en especial el papel de Noruega, durante esas crisis? ¿Cómo contribuyó Noruega, junto con Cuba, Venezuela y Chile o en solitario, a calmar los ánimos y crear las condiciones para que el diálogo continuara?
- › ¿Cuál fue la postura de Noruega respecto al plebiscito, ante las partes? ¿Cómo recuerda las horas y días posteriores y, más concretamente, el papel de los garantes en ese periodo?
- › ¿Cómo juzga usted la estrategia de comunicación pública de Noruega durante el proceso de paz? ¿Cree que fue adecuada?, ¿le hubiera gustado que Noruega se hubiera pronunciado más – o menos- públicamente?
- › Para concluir, ¿hay algo más que le gustaría añadir?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATORS

- › ¿Por qué Noruega? ¿cuáles son los motivos por los que Noruega les pareció a las FARC un país adecuado para ejercer ese papel?
- › ¿Qué tipo de participación tuvo Noruega durante las conversaciones secretas y la fase exploratoria?
- › Durante la fase de negociación pública, en La Habana, ¿qué apoyo proporcionó Noruega, a la mesa en general y a la delegación del gobierno en particular?
- › Las negociaciones se desarrollaron en La Habana, ¿cómo de complicada fue la logística en lo relativo a por ejemplo desplazamientos de miembros de las FARC a Cuba? ¿Cómo ayudó Noruega con la logística?
- › Una de las áreas en las que los estudios dicen que un facilitador externo puede contribuir a un proceso de paz es proporcionando a una o ambas partes acceso a expertos, a personas con conocimientos técnicos o experiencias relevantes. ¿Contribuyó Noruega en este aspecto? De ser así, ¿fue a siempre a solicitud de las partes? ¿cómo de importante cree que fue para las FARC el tener acceso a estas voces y conocimiento externo? ¿cree que hubiera sido posible acceder al mismo sin Noruega?
- › Otro aspecto es el de la capacitación de los negociadores, el generar oportunidades para que los miembros de las delegaciones puedan adquirir conocimientos y mejorar sus competencias en áreas específicas. ¿Prestó ayuda Noruega a las delegaciones en este sentido? ¿en qué áreas?
- › ¿Cree usted que Noruega contribuyó a generar apoyos al proceso entre la comunidad internacional, a movilizar apoyo a nivel regional e internacional?
- › ¿Cree usted que Noruega se coordinó suficientemente con el otro país garante, y con los países acompañantes?
- › En todo proceso de paz existe una profunda falta de confianza entre las partes. ¿Qué hizo Noruega como país garante para generar confianza entre los representantes del Gobierno y los de las FARC?
- › Las partes también necesitan confiar en el facilitador, en el garante. ¿Cómo fue en el caso de la delegación del gobierno con Noruega? ¿Cómo evolucionó ese aspecto de la relación con Noruega?
- › El desminado humanitario conjunto entre el Ejército colombiano y las FARC, junto con su valor objetivo para acabar con el legado de la guerra, se esperaba contribuyera también a generar confianza. ¿Cómo surge y se concretiza esta iniciativa, y qué papel juega Noruega en la misma?
- › Noruega también hizo especial hincapié en apoyar la inclusión de una perspectiva de género y en proporcionar insumos en el tema de la justicia transicional. ¿Qué valoración hace del apoyo noruego en estas dos áreas? ¿Fue significativo?
- › La mesa, el grueso de las negociaciones en La Habana discurrieron sin un cese bilateral del fuego, y el conflicto armado produjo situaciones de alta tensión que generaron crisis en las negociaciones. ¿Cómo valora usted al papel que los países garantes y acompañantes, y en especial el papel de Noruega, durante esas crisis? ¿Cómo contribuyó Noruega, junto con Cuba, Venezuela y Chile o en solitario, a calmar los ánimos y crear las condiciones para que el diálogo continuara?
- › ¿Cuál fue la postura de Noruega respecto al plebiscito, ante las partes? ¿Cómo recuerda las horas y días posteriores y, más concretamente, el papel de los garantes en ese periodo?
- › ¿Cómo juzga usted la estrategia de comunicación pública de Noruega durante el proceso de paz? ¿Cree que fue adecuada?, ¿le hubiera gustado que Noruega se hubiera pronunciado más – o menos – públicamente?
- › Para concluir, ¿hay algo más que le gustaría añadir?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EXPERTS AND ADVISORS

- › How were you engaged in the Colombian peace process? At which level or with which groups or themes did you work? In what capacity?
- › Did you contribute in any way to Norwegian peace facilitation efforts in Colombia?
- › If so, how? What was your role? How did you get engaged with Norwegian peace facilitation?
- › What types of services were you asked to provide? If [you were] an advisor to the MFA, were the tasks and expectations on the MFA side clear to you?
- › How would you describe your communication with the MFA?
- › As part of your assignment, did you work with other experts/advisors? How did you work together?
- › Why do you think Norway became engaged in the peace process?
- › In addition to, or as part of, its role as a facilitator through the whole process, Norway chose to focus its support on some thematic areas. In your opinion, how significant was that thematic support, or particular actions taken by Norway within one or more of those specific thematic areas?
- › As far as you know, did Norway facilitate knowledge exchanges within those focus areas (internal/external expertise, actors from other conflicts etc.)? How were those knowledge exchanges organised and received by the negotiating parties?
- › In all peace processes there are events away from the negotiation table that have a negative impact on the negotiations, generating tensions and maybe stalling the negotiations – or causing them to collapse. Can you recall any of those situations in this case?
- › The 2016 referendum was a turning point in the peace process [leading to] the post-referendum process of ‘putting back together’ the agreement, and other broader consequences. Do you have any opinion about how Norway positioned itself in relation to the referendum and its outcome?
- › What was your interaction with the negotiating teams (i.e. the FARC and Colombian Government)?
- › In this peace process, as far as you can tell, how important would you say it was for Norwegian peace efforts to gather and reflect on knowledge from [Norwegian] engagement in other peace processes and build on lessons learned elsewhere?
- › How significant would you say Norwegian support provided through channels such as UN organisations and civil society was to in advancing the peace process? Why?
- › In general, what would you say that Norway [the Norwegian facilitation team] did to build trust between the negotiating parties? And between each party and Norway?
- › How did you relate to the Norwegian facilitation team?
- › How would you characterise decision-making processes within Norway’s facilitation team?
- › Would you say that the Norwegian facilitation team was appropriately resourced and staffed? Why/not?
- › Do you know if the [Norwegian] facilitation team had a communication strategy? If so, how was it used?
- › What worked well, and what worked not so well in terms of Norway’s facilitation? In your opinion, how could have the Norwegian facilitation set-up have been improved?
- › If there anything else you would like to add?

Annex III: Terms of reference for this evaluation

AN EVALUATION OF NORWEGIAN ENGAGEMENT IN THE COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS BETWEEN THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND FARC–EP TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. BACKGROUND

Norway as a peace broker

Norway has been engaged in a number of peace and reconciliation processes since the early 1990s, making peace diplomacy a feature in Norwegian foreign and development policy.²⁴¹

Norway's approach to peace and reconciliation work as described by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs includes the following features:²⁴²

- › A long-term willingness to provide assistance, backed by national consensus on foreign policy, including on development assistance and peace work;

- › The provision of both human and financial resources for peace and reconciliation efforts. Flexible funding mechanisms and a significant amount of development assistance make it possible for Norway not only to support negotiation processes, but also to help secure sustainable peace settlements by contributing to monitoring mechanisms and peacebuilding. Norway can assist with advice and expertise, or support a political process through projects that build capacity and ownership among local populations.²⁴³
- › Close cooperation with Norwegian NGOs, which in many cases have acted as a door opener for Norway in peace and reconciliation processes.
- › Experience gained through its role as facilitator in a number of peace processes.
- › Good relations with key international actors and credibility in the international community.

- › No colonial past. Norway's peace and reconciliation efforts are seen as sincere, in that they are not motivated by political or economic self-interest.
- › The promotion of women's participation and an integrated gender perspective in peace processes and negotiations.²⁴⁴
- › Focus on peace facilitation rather than 'mediation with muscle'. Norway will assist the parties to a conflict in their efforts to find a peaceful solution, but the responsibility for this lies with the parties themselves.

Mediation and facilitation are distinguished from each other by their assertiveness. While both refer to consented assistance to conflict parties by an external actor, facilitation is the preferred term when the third party exercises minimal or no influence over the content of the negotiations, refraining from making proposals. The facilitator focuses instead on the process,

241 MFA. (2016) 'Norway's peace and reconciliation policy'. Article. Available at: [Government.no](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/MA/press/2016/06/20160622-norways-peace-and-reconciliation-policy). Last updated 23 November 2016.

242 MFA. (2016) 'Norway's approach to peace and reconciliation work'. Article. Available at: [Government.no](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/MA/press/2016/06/20160622-norways-approach-to-peace-and-reconciliation-work). Last updated 9 November 2016.

243 MFA. Prop. 1 S (2016–2017) Proposisjon til Stortinget (forslag til stortingsvedtak) for budsjettåret 2017, p228.

244 Norway's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security for the period 2015–2018; MFA. Meld. St. 24, Felles ansvar for felles fremtid. Bærekraftsmålene og norsk utviklingspolitikk, p48.

assisting the parties in staying on track with the procedural goals they have set.²⁴⁵

Studies of Norwegian peace mediation show that at times Norway has displayed limited understanding of the complex contextual dynamics.²⁴⁶ Also, Nissen (2015) points out that there have been changes over time in the cooperation with Norwegian NGOs, shifting away from the symbiotic relationship it had in some of the early peace engagements.²⁴⁷

Over the years Norway has made strides in strengthening its mediation capacity, with the establishment in 2003 of a unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the Section for Peace and Reconciliation), flexible funding for peace efforts, and strategic support to communities of research and practice.²⁴⁸ Both in its white paper on the Sustainable Development Goals and Norwegian development policy²⁴⁹ and its

2016–2017 National Budget proposal submitted to the Norwegian Parliament, the Government of Norway “*puts emphasis on gathering and systematizing experiences from peace processes*”,²⁵⁰ including from the peace process in Colombia.²⁵¹ This emphasis on learning was the drive for conducting an evaluation of Norway’s peace efforts in Sri Lanka, published in 2011.²⁵²

Norway and the peace process in Colombia

Together with Cuba, Norway has acted as a facilitator and played a key role²⁵³ in the Colombian peace process between the Government of Colombia and FARC–EP. After exploratory talks, the peace negotiations formally started in Oslo in autumn 2012. In November 2016, the Government of Colombia and FARC signed a revised peace agreement, after an earlier version of the accord was rejected in a plebiscite. In December 2016, Colombia’s Constitutional Court passed a ruling by which it allowed the Congress to fast-track legislation to enact the peace agreement’s commitments.

Norway’s peace involvement in Colombia predates the current peace process, dating back at least to the ‘El Caguán’ peace process with FARC (1998–2002) as part of the Group of Friends for the negotiations, as well as peace talks with the ELN.²⁵⁴ Norway has also supported initiatives such as dialogues involving the security forces, which since 2001 have aimed to make members more familiar with peace issues and able to engage in a meaningful dialogue on how to build peace.²⁵⁵

According to some, the peace process has benefited from a number of innovations, from procedural novelty to positioning the rights of the victims at the centre of the talks.²⁵⁶ Norway has aimed to contribute to trust building and has provided different types of assistance, especially in the areas of women’s participation in the peace process, clearing anti-personnel mines and transitional justice.²⁵⁷ Children in

245 Mason, S. (2007). *Mediation and Facilitation in Peace Processes*. International Relations and Security Network (ISN), ETH Zurich; Fabra-Mata, J. (2012) *La ética de la pacificación. Estudio de la Mediación Noruega en Conflictos Armados*. PhD Dissertation, University Jaume I, Castellón.

246 Nissen (2015); Norad (2011): *Pawns of Peace. Evaluation of Norwegian peace efforts in Sri Lanka, 1997–2009*. Report 5/2011. Oslo.

247 Nissen (2015).

248 Ibid.; Fabra-Mata, J. (2012) *La ética de la pacificación. Estudio de la Mediación Noruega en Conflictos Armados*. PhD Dissertation, University Jaume I, Castellón.

249 MFA. Meld. St. 24, *Felles ansvar for felles fremtid. Bærekraftsmålene og norsk utviklingspolitikk*, p48.

250 «Regjeringen legger vekt på å samle og systematisere erfaringer fra fredsprosesser [...]». MFA. Prop. 1 S (2016–2017) Proposisjon til Stortinget (forslag til stortingsvedtak) for budsjettåret 2017, p228.

251 Ibid., p12.

252 Norad (2011). *Pawns of Peace. Evaluation of Norwegian peace efforts in Sri Lanka, 1997–2009*. Report 5/2011. Oslo.

253 « (...) væpnede konflikten i Colombia, der Norge har en nøkkelrolle i fredsprosessen sammen med Cuba (...)» MFA. Prop. 1 S (2016–2017) Proposisjon til Stortinget (forslag til stortingsvedtak) for budsjettåret 2017, p23.

254 Fisas, V. (2017): *Anuario de Procesos de Paz 2016*. Icaria Editorial, Barcelona; Fabra-Mata, J. (2012) *La ética de la pacificación. Estudio de la Mediación Noruega en Conflictos Armados*. PhD Dissertation, University Jaume I, Castellón.; Egeland, J. (2007): *Det nytter. Rapport fra frontlinjene*. Aschehoug, Oslo.

255 Schirmer, J. (2009): ‘A Norwegian-Supported Peacebuilding Project: Conversations among Security Forces, Former Guerrillas and Civil Society’, in V.M. Bouvier (ed.), *Colombia: Building Peace in a Time of War*. Washington, DC, United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009, pp399–410.

256 Wilton Park and NOREF (2017): *Turbulence in peace processes: what next for Colombia?* Seminar report; Herbolzheimer, K. (2016): *Innovations in the Colombian peace process*. Oslo, NOREF.

257 MFA. Prop. 1 S (2015–2016) Proposisjon til Stortinget (forslag til stortingsvedtak) for budsjettåret 2016, p219.

armed conflict was also highlighted as an area of Norwegian support at an early stage in the peace negotiations.²⁵⁸

Norway committed to accompany the process during the implementation of the peace agreement.²⁵⁹ This role is formalised in the peace accord.²⁶⁰

Norwegian development aid to Colombia

In the period 2010–2016, Norwegian development aid to Colombia amounted to 914.1 million NOK. See table 6 for annual distribution of funds.

The main Norwegian NGO recipients of funds in this period were the Norwegian Refugee Council (165 million NOK), Norwegian Red Cross (97 million NOK), Norwegian People’s Aid (57.3 million NOK) and Digni (10.5 million NOK). Other Norwegian NGOs received a combined total of 75.4 million NOK.²⁶¹

258 Ibid., p183.

259 Ibid.,p190.

260 Mesa de Conversaciones (2017): *Acuerdo final para la terminación del conflicto y la construcción de una paz estable y duradera*, April 2017, p201.

261 Norad.

TABLE 6 // NORWEGIAN DEVELOPMENT FUNDS TO COLOMBIA PER YEAR, 2010–2016

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total (in million NOK)	85.8	68.5	86	97.3	115.5	134.1	326.9

Source: Norad, Norwegian Aid Statistics

2. OVERALL PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation is to generate knowledge on how Norway contributed to the peace process in Colombia, to ultimately strengthen future Norwegian peace effort. The main objectives of this evaluation are as follows:

1. To document and analyse Norway’s role in the peace process in Colombia.
2. To assess how contextual analysis, first-hand experience and knowledge from other peace processes informed Norway’s approach as a facilitator in the Colombian peace process.
3. To formulate lessons learned from the Norwegian engagement in this peace process in Colombia and provide recommendations.

3. INTENDED USERS

The main users of this evaluation are likely to be public officials and policy makers in the MFA, including the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá, as well as Norad and the Norwegian Parliament, NGOs and the general public. The evaluation might also be of interest to researchers in Norway and abroad, in contributing to the academic debate on peace processes and international efforts to end armed conflicts.

4. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation will focus on Norway’s support to the peace process between the Government of Colombia and the FARC in the time period from June 2010²⁶² to December 2016.

The evaluation will not assess the effects of the peace process, but describe and document

262 Second round of the Presidential elections in Colombia, won by Juan Manuel Santos.

Norway's engagement in, and contribution to, the process. The evaluation shall focus on the conditions that made Norway's engagement possible, and the rationale behind the decisions made by Norway in deciding how to exercise the formal role it was given by the negotiating parties. Similarly, it will consider how Norway's role played out throughout the peace process up to December 2016, and will assess the strengths and weaknesses of Norway's facilitation team set-up. Furthermore, it will examine the challenges that Norway faced and how these were managed. The evaluation will also investigate how Norway's development aid portfolio related to Norway's role in the peace process.

The evaluation team can draw historical lines as deemed necessary, to situate and eventually expound how Norway became involved in the process.

5. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Objective 1 – To document and analyse Norway's role in the peace process in Colombia.

1. What was Norway's role in the peace process in Colombia?
 - a) How and why did Norway become engaged in the peace process in Colombia?
 - b) Which factors determined Norway's choice of key areas of support in the peace process?
 - c) How did Norway relate or contribute to the peace process? Issues to be considered include innovations in the peace process from a thematic or procedural perspective, key topics during the talks and in the peace agreement, and milestones and 'turning points' in the overall process.
 - d) To what degree did Norway enable knowledge exchange opportunities among stakeholders inside or outside the formal peace negotiations?
2. To what extent was Norway's contribution internally coherent?
 - a) What was the rationale behind Norway's development cooperation activities in Colombia?
 - b) How did Norway's development aid portfolio relate to Norway's role in the peace process?

c) How much, and in what way, were the different efforts coordinated?

3. To what extent did Norway coordinate its efforts with other relevant international actors involved in the Colombian peace process? Specifically, its:
 - a) coordination with Cuba as well as Venezuela and Chile as accompanying countries to the process.
 - b) coordination with other countries and regional and international bodies, including the US, the EU and the UN.

Objective 2 – To assess how contextual analysis, first-hand experience and knowledge from other peace processes informed Norway's approach as a facilitator in the Colombian peace process.

1. What were the mechanisms by which the Norwegian facilitation team assessed the evolving context, conflict dynamics and risks associated to the peace process? How important were these mechanisms in shaping Norway's facilitation strategy?
2. To what extent was Norway's facilitation team set-up adequate to effectively support the peace process? Was it conducive to learning?

3. How was learning from Norwegian engagement in other peace processes embedded in, and used by, the Norwegian facilitation team in Colombia?

Objective 3 – To formulate lessons learned from the Norwegian engagement in this peace process in Colombia and provide recommendations on how to strengthen Norwegian peace practice.

1. What are the lessons concerning Norway's role in this Colombian peace process that might be relevant for other ongoing or future peace processes?

6. METHODOLOGY

In the inception report, the evaluation team will present the methodological approach to address the above-mentioned evaluation questions. The approach will include:

- › A review of documents in the archives of the MFA (for example, decision memos, political reports, project documents, reviews, appraisals and correspondence) and key informant and stakeholder interviews in Norway, Colombia and Cuba. These methods are of relevance to map the location of actors as well as to situate and analyse actions, objectives and dilemmas in their context.

- › A contribution analysis that focuses on the most salient aspects of the peace process.
- › Media analysis and data mining from social media.

The evaluation team may propose in its inception report additional evaluation methods. The methodological approach must allow for tracing processes in relation to decisions made at different points in time. Patterns should be detected in order to learn and generate lessons that can be useful for similar work in the future.

Triangulation will be an integral part of the methodological approach, to assess the quality of the data collected and to increase the accuracy and robustness of findings. The evaluation team is to be explicit about how it intends to apply triangulation, and to describe in the evaluation report the type of triangulation and methods employed.

All parts of the evaluation shall adhere to recognised evaluation principles, the OECD DAC's quality standards for development evaluation and for evaluating peacebuilding activities in settings of conflict and fragility. Similarly, the evaluation is to adhere to relevant guidelines from Norad's Evaluation Department. The evaluation should be utilisation-focused.

Ethics and conflict sensitivity

The evaluation shall be undertaken with integrity and honesty and shall ensure inclusiveness of views. The rights, dignity and welfare of participants in the evaluation should be protected, maintaining anonymity and confidentiality.

An overriding consideration in the conduct of the evaluation is the principle of 'do no harm'. The evaluation team must consider the potential direct and indirect negative effects tied to the evaluation process and outcomes, and formulate strategies to mitigate those. The evaluation should not be conducted in a way that jeopardises the implementation of the peace process, harm individuals who have been involved in the peace efforts or endanger Norway's standing as a trustworthy facilitator by publicising information that key parties and various actors expect to be kept confidential. Other considerations will always have to be secondary. An introductory statement to the evaluation report may explain what measures were taken to ensure conflict sensitivity of the evaluation itself.

7. ORGANISATION OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation will be led by a senior advisor from the Evaluation Department in Norad. The senior advisor will team with external resource people with documented expertise and experience relevant to the evaluation. The team leader shall be in charge of all deliveries and will report to the Director of the Evaluation Department on the team's progress, including any problems that may jeopardise the assignment. The Evaluation Department and the team shall emphasise transparent and open communication with the stakeholders. Regular contact between the Evaluation Department and stakeholders will assist in discussing any arising issues and ensuring a participatory process. All decisions concerning the interpretation of these terms of reference, and all deliverables, are subject to approval by the Evaluation Department's senior management.

Stakeholders will be asked to comment on the draft inception report and the draft final report. In addition, experts or other relevant parties may be invited to comment on reports or specific issues during the process. The evaluation team shall take note of all comments received from stakeholders. Where there are significant divergences of views between the evaluation team and stakeholders, this shall be reflected in the final report.

Quality assurance shall be provided by the Evaluation Department in Norad as well as personnel external to the Evaluation Department with documented knowledge of relevant evaluation and/or social science methods, and/or academic research on topics of relevance for this evaluation. Access to archives will be facilitated by Norad and stakeholders. Aid statistics are available at <https://www.norad.no/en/front/toolspublications/norwegian-aid-statistics>

8. DELIVERABLES

The deliverables consist of the following:

- › Inception report not exceeding 20 pages excluding annexes, to be approved by the Director of the Norad Evaluation Department.
- › Draft report. After circulation to the stakeholders and meeting to discuss draft findings and conclusions, the evaluation team will consider all feedback received.
- › Final report not exceeding 30,000 words (approx. 50 pages) excluding summary and annexes, to be approved by the Director of the Evaluation Department.

- › Presentation at a public seminar in Oslo.
- › Presentation at a seminar with MFA officials in Oslo and for the Norwegian Embassy in Bogotá (via video link).
- › Policy brief on a topic identified during the evaluation process, not exceeding four pages, to be approved by the Evaluation Department.

All reports shall be prepared in accordance with the Evaluation Department's guidelines and shall be submitted in electronic form in accordance with the progress plan specified in these Terms of Reference or later revisions. The Norad Evaluation Department retains the sole rights with respect to the distribution, dissemination and publication of the deliverables.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AUC	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-Defence Groups of Colombia)	NOK	Norwegian krone
BIDES	Batallón de Desminado Humanitario (Demining Engineers Battalion)	NOREF	Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution
CGSB	Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar (Simón Bolívar Guerrilla Coordinating Body)	NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
ELN	Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army)	OACP	Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz (The Office of the High Commissioner for Peace)
EPL	Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army)	SRSG	Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army, also known as FARC–EP)	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
FOKUS	Forum for Women and Development	UNSCR	UN Security Council Resolution
FOS	Swedish-Norwegian Fund for Support to the Colombian Civil Society	UP	Unión Patriótica (Patriotic Union Party)
ICC	International Criminal Court	WPS	Women, Peace and Security
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross		
ICTJ	International Centre for Transitional Justice		
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and Intersex		
M-19	Movimiento 19 de abril (the 19th of April Movement)		
MFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs		
NGO	Non-governmental organisation		

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