



Golombiao

United Nations Children's Fund and
Young Colombia



Golombiao¹

Region	Global
Country	Colombia
Organization	United Nations Children's Fund and Young Colombia ²
Name	Golombiao
Category	Resilience development
Start date	2003
End date	Ongoing
Partners	Civil society organizations (CSOs), national institutions, municipalities and governorates, youth organizations.
UN involvement	UNICEF
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1. Background and description

Adolescents and youth in Colombia have been seriously affected by the protracted armed conflict involving the Government, paramilitary groups and guerrillas since the mid-1960s. After more than five decades of conflict, resulting in over 220,000 deaths and more than 5 million internally displaced persons,³ the country has initiated a major peace process which could result in a historic agreement.⁴ Beyond the signature of such agreement, an inclusive and sustainable process of peacebuilding will necessitate disarmament and reconciliation among parties, reintegration of guerrillas, including children, adolescents and youth, and an overall strategy for building peaceful coexistence. Recruitment of children, adolescents and youth has been a direct and harmful effect of the conflict, particularly for those residing in the most marginalized areas – rural communities and shanty townships.

The presidential programme Young Colombia (Colombia Joven) launched 'Golombiao' in 2003. Based on the 'Football for Peace' strategy initiated in the city of Medellín, Golombiao aims to build the skills of young people to prevent violence, promote peace and gender equity, and strengthen young people's social capital and active community participation. The initiative has received the support of UNICEF from the outset.

1 The write-up was prepared in collaboration with the inputs from UNICEF Colombia (Olga Lucia Zuluaga, Frederick Spielberg and Jorge Garzón). Final validation (October 2015).

2 Young Colombia is the national Government's youth programme. In partnership with civil society, the programme implements protection measures to guarantee youth's right to exercise citizenship and participation in the social, economic, political and cultural aspects of the country.

3 Colombia's National Centre for Historical Memory.

4 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-19875363>

Golombiao is a modified version of football based on the values of non-violence, peaceful coexistence, gender equity and ethnic diversity. Young people playing Golombiao engage in 'on the field' and 'off the field' activities where they learn how to identify problems and achieve conflict resolution in a peaceful manner. Through this process, young people become actors of their own development.

Golombiao is implemented through a network of partnerships with local government departments and municipalities, civil society organizations (CSOs), youth networks and community leaders, and is supported by international agencies – UNICEF, the International Organization for Migration, German Agency for International Cooperation – as well as contributions from the private sector.

During the first two years (2003-2005), which are considered a pilot phase, Golombiao was introduced in eight departments and 39 municipalities.⁵ The outcome of this phase was the production of a manual and the systematization of the methodology. Golombiao has become a national strategy and is now played in over 50 municipalities across the country. Recently, Golombiao was successfully introduced in the Awa and Nasa indigenous communities.

Organization profile

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) "is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential". UNICEF works with decision makers and partners at the global and grass-roots levels to prevent child mortality and improve children's lives

by providing health care and immunizations, clean water and sanitation, nutrition, education and emergency relief.

Colombia Joven is part of the Presidential Programme for the National System of Youth, which designs policies, plans and programmes that promote the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of youth. It offers integrated services for youth and an entrepreneur forum as well as psychosocial strategies, especially Golombiao, the 'game of peace', aimed at peaceful resolution of conflict. It helps young people and adolescents, as rights holders, to acquire and apply experiential knowledge and skills, both individually and collectively.



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⁵ Colombia is comprised of 32 departments, headed by a Governor and a Department Assembly. Each department is formed by a grouping of municipalities. Each municipality is headed by a Mayor and administered by a Municipal Council.

2. Goal and objectives

2.1. Goal

The overall goal of Golombiao is to strengthen the capacity of adolescents and youth, boys and girls, to build lives and projects away from violence and in full exercise of their civic rights through games, sports and recreational activities.

2.2. Objectives

- Build and strengthen the social capital of adolescents and youth;
- Constitute integrated territorial partnerships with public and private organizations, CSOs, community-based organizations (CBOs) and youth groups to facilitate the implementation of Golombiao;
- Establish encounters between adolescents and youth, girls and boys, the community, institutions and organizations for the construction of a culture of peace, coexistence and reconciliation;
- Promote gender equity and equality among participants;
- Foster the participation of adolescents and youth, girls and boys, in formal and non-formal settings, to influence the decisions affecting their lives.

3. Target group

3.1. Age group

Golombiao is a methodology that can be played by all, but the focus is on children, adolescents and youth ages 8 to 18 years. Youth, generally up to age 24 years, participate in Golombiao as game advisers. Many of them have previously played the game, so their role is to guide the game and mentor the younger participants.

3.2. Gender considerations

One of the seven core values of Golombiao is the promotion of gender equity and equal participation of boys and girls. This is directly reflected in the rules of the game, as half of the participants must be women, and the first goal of the game must be made by a woman. Subsequent goals must be scored in equal proportion by men and women.

A series of gender-related principles is addressed during the formative sessions, workshops and activities before and after the game: gender equity and equality; non-discrimination; cultural rules; gender-based violence; masculinity; and sexual and reproductive health. These principles of coexistence are taught for application on and off the field, as participants are given exercises to reflect on them before and after the game, and apply the lessons learned during the game.

To date, an estimated 54 per cent of participants in Golombiao are female. Moreover, the methodology gives females the opportunity to act as game advisers, which leads to their taking on leadership roles in the community, gaining recognition and visibility.



3.3. Ethnic / disability considerations

The Golombiao methodology pays attention to the inclusion of the various ethnic and indigenous groups in Colombia, including members of the Afro-Colombian community. In 2014, Golombiao organized 'indigenous Golombiao',⁶ which brought together over 100 adolescents and youth from more than 10 indigenous communities. Each of these communities has adapted the Golombiao strategy to align with its particular culture and customs. During the encounter, the most prominent topic was the use of Golombiao in the promotion of non-violence, as indigenous adolescent boys and girls have been among the most vulnerable to recruitment for armed conflict. A key moment of the encounter was the sharing of experiences and proposals for the role and participation of indigenous communities in the peacebuilding process.

3.4. Targeting the most marginalized / most at risk

Golombiao targets vulnerable children, adolescents and their families, especially those affected by armed conflict, criminal gangs and displacement. An estimated 88 per cent of the participants belong to the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds. The majority of participants reside in rural areas and in shanty townships affected by urban violence.

UNICEF has prioritized five departments and 50 municipalities for the roll-out of Golombiao. The selection of municipalities is based on several factors, including low levels of development and high levels of poverty and violence. In addition, some municipalities that have implemented Golombiao have moved forward independently with its continuation, adapting it to their local needs.

3.5. Human rights programming

Golombiao adopts a human rights based-approach and the promotion of young people's basic human rights is a fundamental pillar. In practice, this takes place during the formative sessions, workshops and activities, and includes the use of manuals and resources related to the promotion of human rights.

Golombiao is aligned with the Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (ILO Convention No. 182), which states that recruitment of children and adolescents by armed groups is one of the worst forms of child labour.⁷

3.6. Youth involvement

Adolescents and youth are involved as implementers and drivers of the practice. A fundamental role is that of the 'game advisers', who receive training on the methodology and consequently are able to disseminate the practice in their communities.

Adolescents and youth involved in Golombiao are sometimes part of youth groups and organizations, and the methodology is transferred to them as part of their capacity-building and in view of disseminating the practice, particularly in hard-to-reach communities.

4. Strategy and Implementation

4.1. Strategies / theoretical approaches / methodologies

Golombiao is grounded on the theory of change and a logical framework approach was employed for the development of the

⁶ <http://www.unicef.com.co/noticia/comunidades-indigenas-juntas-en-golombiao-2014/>

⁷ <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/ILOconventionsonchildlabour/lang--en/index.htm>





manuals. Golombiao employs sports, games and recreational activities to promote peaceful coexistence, participation, conflict resolution and gender equity, contributing to the positive development of adolescents and youth and strengthening their social capital. Golombiao is played on and off the field. It requires two mixed teams – both comprising girls and boys – who meet in a large space, which could be a park, a classroom, the street, a sports field or any open space.

The Golombiao game consists of three major steps and is guided by seven principles, which are put into practice in each match, game or activity.

The seven guiding principles of Golombiao are:

1. Non-violence;
2. Taking care of oneself and others;
3. Care for the environment;
4. Freedom of expression;
5. Non-discrimination;
6. Active participation;
7. Equality.

Participants may choose to focus on one or more the seven principles throughout the activity. The focus is based on the context and priorities expressed by the participants. For example, municipalities in Antioquia, deeply affected by violence, focus the game on the two principles of non-violence and care for the environment. In Narino, which is home to the indigenous Awa group, the focus of Golombiao is on equality, non-discrimination and taking care of oneself and others.

Golombiao was conceived as a flexible tool which can adapt to the needs of participants. Together, participants and facilitators define the specific objectives of each Golombiao game beforehand. After the game, they do a self-evaluation and reflect upon issues that arise, the lessons learned and the challenges.

4.2. Activities

The three phases for playing Golombiao are:

1. Before the game. Game advisers and players get together in the centre of the field to establish the coexistence agreements of the Golombiao game. All the players on both teams must get a chance to play. Two teams of 10 players are formed. Two facilitators are assigned to coordinate the game. Two game advisers guide the players on how to play Golombiao, lead the discussions and reflections, and keep track of the process. Golombiao also requires 'bars', a group of local friends and/or family members who encourage the adolescents and youth to play.
2. During the game. Players engage in Golombiao and are guided to comply with the agreements set at the outset of the game. The first goal for each team and in each playing period must be made by a woman, complying with the principle of equality. After that first goal, the next goals must be alternated between the male and female members of the teams. This encourages the active participation of all players, and stresses the principles of equality and non-discrimination. Game advisers act as mediators in case an issue arises. In such a case, the second game adviser



monitors the situation and documents the process. These game advisers are young people who have been playing the game, know the rules and participate in the organization/motivation of peers to join the game.

3. After the game. The players and the game adviser get together in the centre of the field to reflect on and evaluate the game. Together they select the team that stood out throughout the game in terms of respecting the coexistence agreements. There are no losers or winners. At this stage, there may be complementary and follow-up activities such as workshops, cinema-forums,⁸ meetings and exchanges of experiences before and after the game to develop the artistic, cultural and communicative skills of children, adolescents and youth.

The evaluation of each game is done by the game advisers according to a set of criteria, which attribute points to one team or the other. There are no winners or losers, but this helps the players to understand which team best followed which processes. Evaluation criteria include: number of registered players; number of registered players who play; number of aggressions; number of merits; and number of players present during the evaluation, self-evaluation and evaluation of the other team. To play Golombiao, it is necessary for all players to be involved in learning and reflection processes about peaceful coexistence, participation and gender equity.

Throughout the years, Golombiao has organized annual national tournaments with the aim of bringing together Golombiao participants from different municipalities

and departments. The tournaments typically last five days, and bring together in one city delegations of adolescents and youth from all over the country. During the tournament, the different delegations engage in Golombiao football matches as well as in cultural and recreational activities. In 2013, the Golombiao national tournament brought together over 200 adolescents from 15 departments. Last year, Golombiao organized for the first time an indigenous tournament, bringing over 10 different indigenous communities together to play.

Transfer of the methodology

Launched by the Government, Golombiao is a tool that has been progressively introduced in the different departments and municipalities across the country. Agreements have been signed with governors of departments and mayors to implement Golombiao at the community level. Facilitators who will transfer the Golombiao methodology are selected and trained. They are also responsible for recruiting and motivating adolescents and young people in the community to participate.

After their own training, they build the capacity of future Golombiao players and of the game advisers. Game advisers are adolescents and youth living in the selected community who will organize and lead the games. Ideally, they are young, are already aware of games promoting peacebuilding and conflict resolution and are leaders in their community. The game advisers are also responsible for organizing the follow-up workshops and activities which reflect on the values and lessons learned during the game.

8 See Cinema-Forum resources.





During the training, future facilitators learn about the elements, fundamentals, concepts and tools of Golombiao. Depending on the area, time and resources, the methodology is transferred during a workshop lasting between two and three consecutive days (eight hours per day), or throughout a month with one or two weekly sessions of no more than three or four hours.

Materials: a Golombiao kit contains a printed manual with instructions on what Golombiao is, how to play it and implement the accompanying learning activities.

4.3. Innovativeness

When Golombiao was first implemented, sport for development was a relatively new approach, and it was the first time that the Government adopted this type of initiative. Golombiao is also contextually innovative in the sense that it mobilizes the community, local institutions and adolescents themselves for its implementation.

In Colombia, the introduction of the topics of gender, participation, coexistence and human rights through sports for development has been innovative.

From a strategic perspective, Golombiao encourages a holistic approach by fostering partnerships between the Government, CSOs, NGOs, the community and adolescents.

4.4. Cost and funding

The annual budget of UNICEF for the implementation of Golombiao in the targeted territories in 2014 is displayed in the following table.

Category	Cost (United States dollars, approximate)
Technical assistance	88,000
Transfer of the Golombiao methodology	19,500
Mobilization strategy	3,700
Tournament with the indigenous communities	43,500
Various	38,120
Administration	11,700
Tax	5,700
TOTAL	210,200

The Golombiao methodology has been implemented by public and private institutions in additional territories to those prioritized by UNICEF and Colombia Joven. These costs are not available to UNICEF.



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4.5. Sustainability

The sustainability strategy for Golombiao is two-fold:

- Formation of integral alliances and partnerships with local organizations, public institutions, government, CBOs, NGOs and youth organizations;
- Transfer of the methodology to the adolescents, community leaders and interested parties so that it can be disseminated widely. Those that have acquired the Golombiao methodology continue to apply it and can consequently transfer it to other adolescents and communities.

The financial resources for the implementation of Golombiao come from UNICEF as part of the cooperation programme established with the Government. The Golombiao team comprises a national coordinator, four territorial advisors and one adviser supporting the systematization of the Golombiao methodology.

The national coordination and follow-up of the strategy is a shared responsibility of UNICEF and Colombia Joven, with periodic meetings organized to revise targets to be achieved and implementation of planned activities.

At the local level, several municipalities have achieved ownership of Golombiao. Where partnerships have been established with the municipal government, the latter is responsible for leading the process and implementing the planned activities. The adoption of the methodology in some municipalities and departments has gone even farther as they are now in charge of financing the strategy, from the recruitment

of game advisers and organizers to the logistics and materials for the games.

In 2009, 695 alliances had been established, of which 63 per cent were with the public sector, 18 per cent with NGOs, 14 per cent with youth organizations, 3 per cent with the private sector and 2 per cent with international agencies. This inter-institutional alliance has been fundamental to the long-term sustainability of the methodology.

4.6. Replicability

Golombiao was designed to be replicated and implemented by a variety of organizations and institutions and in different contexts. Golombiao therefore designed a mechanism for the formal transfer of the methodology,⁹ accompanied by a package with materials and tools that enable replication. As part of the replication package, guidance is provided on the methodological and thematic adaptation of Golombiao, including local context and the particular needs of adolescents in the zone where Golombiao is to be replicated.

The transfer includes capacity-building of facilitators – young people, organizations, institutions, CBOs and community leaders – who will thereafter implement and transfer Golombiao in an independent way. They receive support and follow-up from Young Colombia and UNICEF, but the ultimate goal is for Golombiao to be adopted by the community and adolescents and be played independently. The follow-up process by UNICEF/Young Colombia lasts a maximum of six months, considered to be the formative phase. It is recommended that this formative phase last no less than six months in order for the methodology to be sustainable and supported by the community beyond the period of transfer.

⁹ See section 10 – Resources.





To date, Golombiao is played in Colombia only, but there have been some advancements towards the adaptation and implementation of the strategy in other countries and contexts in the framework of South-South cooperation.

5. Evaluation of effectiveness

The number of Golombiao users has increased over the years; in 2014, 30,347 adolescent girls and boys from 10 different departments participated in the activities, encounters and tournaments organized as part of Golombiao. In total, an estimated 200,000 young people, of whom an estimated 15,000 are from indigenous communities, have participated in Golombiao since its outset.

Golombiao was evaluated as part of a larger evaluation of projects preventing the recruitment of children and adolescents by armed groups in Colombia covering the period 2006 - 2010.¹¹ The study was commissioned by UNICEF, the Swedish International Development Authority and the then-Canadian International Development Agency (now Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development). The methodology employed was to evaluate three departments – Bolivar, Sucre and Narino – and 11 municipalities; 286 interviews were conducted with Golombiao staff, beneficiaries, families of the beneficiaries and donors. The project was evaluated based on the OECD/DAC¹² criteria of relevance, efficiency, sustainability, human-rights based approach and gender. Results were classified as excellent, sufficient, deficient and precarious.

Focus group discussions were used to measure the impact on the adolescents and youth, but this remains qualitative. The young people who participated in the evaluation noted positive changes in their

lives after Golombiao, specifically:

- Resolution of daily problems with more tranquility;
- Development of leadership skills;
- Enhanced and better relations with young people of the other gender;
- Enhanced interest in what is happening in the community;
- Enhanced coexistence with the family; spend more time with the family.

Changes towards perception of the other gender is one of the highlighted positive changes: “Before, we did not respect women.” “I hated girls, but after playing with them, we’ve become friends.” “We used to be very violent towards girls during the games, but we have now learned new techniques and have started to integrate women in the games with no problem.”

Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation frameworks are currently under revision and development, as the objective is to strengthen the quantitative and qualitative measurements of the impact of Golombiao.

To date, routine monitoring has consisted of (1) the identification of participants; (2) information about the partners and implementers; and (3) monthly bulletins.

1. Identification of participants

Participants are prompted about their situation at three different stages throughout the implementation of Golombiao, enabling a comparison between ‘before’ and ‘after’. Before enrolling in Golombiao, participants provide information about their socioeconomic and family backgrounds. During the first month, participants complete an ‘in-depth

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.





form', which allows organizers to identify and understand the adolescents in terms of their relationship to violence (potential problems and previous involvement in conflict), participation and coexistence. At the end of the implementation, participants are asked about changes in their daily lives as well as in the community as a result of their participation in Golombiao.

2. Partners' perception of Golombiao

These forms are used to understand the perceptions of local partners of the impact of Golombiao at the community level. In the final phase of the transfer of the methodology, a workplan is established with the partner to set milestones that facilitate monitoring of progress. A daily activity form is employed to track the daily activities conducted by partners. This tool allows sharing of information about the strategies and approaches employed by each of the partners. Finally, partners submit progress and annual narratives on the successes and challenges faced during the process, as well as suggestions for improvement.

3. Monthly bulletin: 'Golombiao in Action'

'Golombiao in Action' is a monthly tool employed to track the progress of partners and motivates the work of those involved with Golombiao. The bulletin summarizes the progress of partners and highlights Golombiao components. Particularly positive personal stories and experiences are also included.

6. Strengths and opportunities

- Strengthened national capacity through the Golombiao methodology;
- Inclusion of Golombiao in the national plans for youth;
- Use of Golombiao to mobilize and promote adolescent and youth participation, and to prevent the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, although this remains to be formally tested;
- A holistic and inclusive approach involving all key stakeholders – public and private institutions, CBOs, NGOs, adolescents, youth, community leaders;
- A methodology that is flexible and easy to transfer and which adapts to the local context of the community.

7. Challenges

- Limited resources, which have been mitigated by reaching out to the private sector;
- Weak monitoring and evaluation, insufficient development of these frameworks.
- Changes at the government level, which had an impact on the development and implementation of the project; heavy bureaucratic processes; competing agendas from the central and local governments;
- Infrastructure: lack of spaces where Golombiao can be played; lack of transport for boys and girls who want to participate but live too far away;
- Vanishing commitment of some partners and lack of clarity on the roles and responsibilities of each partner;



- Fear of armed groups, given the highly sensitive and complex environment in which Golombiao operates;
- Cultural barriers, notably for the participation of adolescent girls;
- 'Invisible' barriers between the young people, which limit the amount of interaction they can have with other young people (e.g., competing gangs/armed groups limiting the communities that participate). Golombiao tournaments have been found to be successful in closing these gaps to some extent;
- Reaching those hardest to reach; to mitigate this effect, the methodology is directly transferred to adolescents and community leaders so that they in turn can disseminate it in their communities and surroundings.

8. Next steps and the way forward

Golombiao continues to be played across Colombia, and plans are underway to build more robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The goal is to generate quantitative and qualitative measurements of the impact of Golombiao, in order to expand its outreach.

9. Lessons learned and recommendations

Lessons learned:

- Participation of adolescents and youth is instrumental in all phases of the process. It facilitates and gives credibility to the project;
- Seek the support of and buy-in from the community and local organizations from the outset as this strengthens the sustainability of the practice.

Recommendations:

- Partnerships should have clearly outlined workplans to track and measure progress from each partner.
- Stronger monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

10. Components to consider for scale-up in MENA

Golombiao's flexible and easy-to-transfer methodology, which adapts to the local context of the community and can be applied in conflict-affected areas with marginalized adolescents and youth.

11. Resources

The following resources are available in Spanish:

1. Implementation manual for Golombiao
2. Technical Kit Golombiao
3. Manual: cinema forums for Golombiao
4. Manual: Golombiao transfer
5. Videos: Implementation of Golombiao

12. References

ILO Convention No. 182:

<http://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/ILOconventionsonchildlabour/lang--en/index.htm>

OIT and MinTrabajo (2012). El Trabajo Infantil y la Política Pública en Colombia: Prácticas y Lecciones Aprendidas 2012. [Child Labour and Public Policies in Colombia: Practices and Lessons Learned 2012]. Document produced by ILO and the Ministry of Labour in



Colombia.

UNICEF (April 2013). Evaluation of UNICEF programmes to protect children in emergencies: Colombia country case study.

UNICEF Colombia Country Offices: documentation on Golombiao

Interview with Frederick Spielberg, Protection Specialist and Jorge Garzon, Consultant, UNICEF Colombia (December 2014).



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