



UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

U.N. IN ACTION

Week of 27 June 2005
Programme No. 963
Length: 3'01"

UNICEF HELPS FORMER CHILD SOLDIERS IN COLOMBIA

VIDEO

AUDIO

NARRATION

MARIA/OTHER CHILDREN

The memories still haunt her... (1.4")

MARIA: (In Spanish)

MARIA ON-CAMERA

"There was heavy fighting. We were surrounded by the enemy. We managed to escape but were lost for two days in the hills. No food. Nothing."
(9")

NARRATION

MARIA

Her childhood... stolen. (1.4")

MARIA: (In Spanish)

MARIA ON-CAMERA

"I was thirteen when I went to the hills to stay with them. I had my own weapon." (4")

NARRATION

COLOMBIAN CHILD
SOLDIERS/ARCHIVE

Maria, now seventeen was a member of FARC, one of Colombia's fiercest guerrilla groups. She was just one of thirteen thousand child soldiers in Colombia's bloody civil war....just one of an estimated three-hundred thousand child soldiers

CHILD SOLDIERS/AFRICA

fighting in wars around the world – in Africa...Asia...and here in South America. UNICEF's Cesar Romero... (24")

ROMERO ON-CAMERA

ROMERO: (In Spanish)

"These children have participated in massacres, have witnessed assassinations, and have taken part in kidnappings." (7")

INJURED SEEK HELP

NARRATION

And once they join these groups, escape is virtually impossible. Disease, injury and even torture if captured, is also a daily threat. (8.5")

CHILDREN AT WORKSHOP

Getting these kids out of the arms of the rebels... into a safe house...and on the road toward healing is front and centre of a pilot programme run by UNICEF and the Colombian Government. (10")

ROMERO ON-CAMERA

ROMERO: (In Spanish)

"What we are doing here is rehabilitation and the first thing is to work on their mental health." (5")

CHILDREN AT SAFE HOUSE

NARRATION

Former child fighters – their releases negotiated directly by UNICEF - live together for six months in one of four safe houses where they receive one-on-one and group counselling. (10")

CHILDREN HAVING A GOOD TIME

Time is also built in for what may seem like just fun and games...but is carefully constructed

activities that allow these kids to once again laugh...form bonds...and play-by-rules. (11")

CLASSROOM

Classrooms are also set up - giving most kids like Maria, their first chance at an education in years. (6")

MARIA ON-CAMERA

MARIA: (In Spanish)

"There are opportunities here for people who want to change their lives." (3.3")

JESSEY WALKING

NARRATION

People like her new friend Jessey who, as a former machine-gunner for the paramilitary at just thirteen years-old, would have once been a bitter enemy. (9")

JESSY ON-CAMERA

JESSY: (In Spanish)

"I often think about what would be happening to me if I was still over there. I want to change, to become a different person. I don't want to be involved in this anymore." (8")

CHILDREN EAT TOGETHER

NARRATION

Hundreds of children like Maria and Jessey have sought refuge through this programme throughout Colombia. Plans are already underway to complete yet another safe house. (10")

UN LOGO

This report was prepared by United Nations Television (3")

