

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

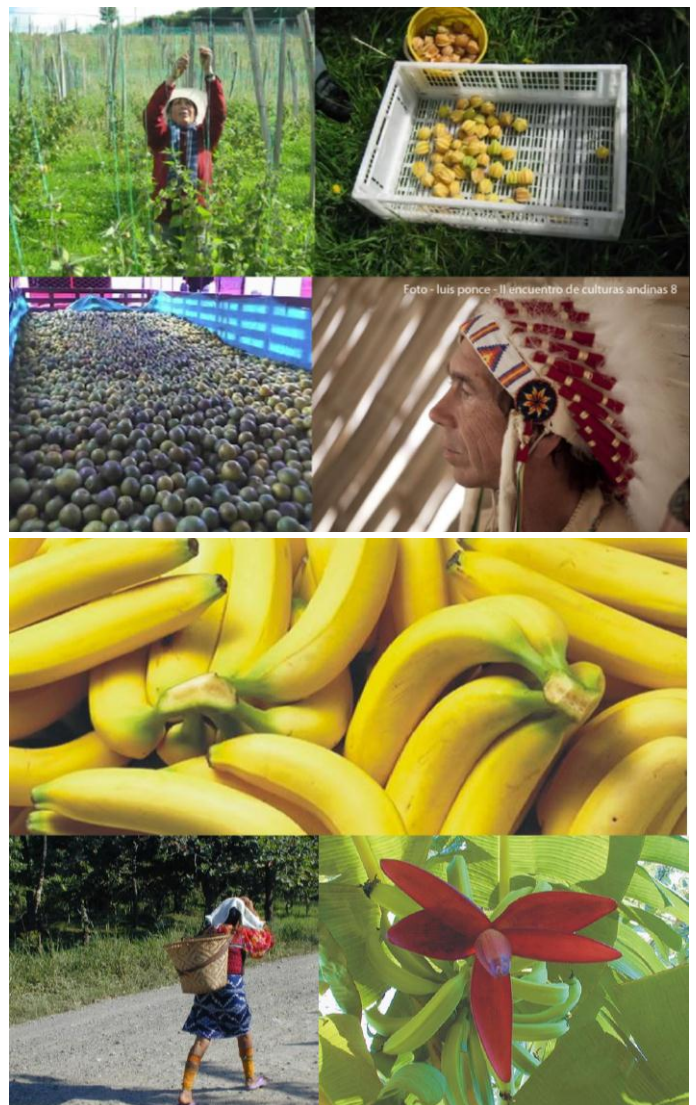
A STRATEGY FOR BUILDING PEACEFUL TERRITORIES IN COLOMBIA

Following the participation of the [Colombian Local Economic Development Agencies network REDADELCO](#) as expositor to the KIP Pavilion at EXPO Milan 2015, ILS-LEDA, as part of the KIP International School, was invited as speaker to the international conference *Economic Development: A Strategy for Building Peaceful Territories* carried on in Bogotá on the 7th of October 2015.

The Conference was organized by the National Network of Local Development Agencies of Colombia [REDADELCO](#), European Union (EU) and the Department for Social Prosperity (DPS) of the Colombian Government, with the aim of promoting cross-sectoral dialogue on challenges, opportunities and contributions to economic development in areas affected by the armed conflict in Colombia, through territorial economic approach.

The meeting took place in the framework of the European Union *New Territories of Peace* program and it is part of a series of major interventions aimed at creating peace conditions in areas affected by the armed conflict in Colombia. The conference was opened by Rachel Brazier of the European Union, Tatyana Orozco, Director of the Administrative Department for Social Prosperity, Manuel Fernando Castro, territorial deputy director general of Public Investment of the National Planning Department (DNP), Diego Bautista, Adviser for Territorial Peace and Institutional Architecture for Post-conflict of the High Commissioner for Peace.

Interventions of Alejandro Benitez, director of LEDA Morazan (El Salvador), Giancarlo Canzanelli president of [ILS LEDA](#), Philippe Van Huynegem, of ILO Office for Andean countries, Anuvís Pinto, director of Ocotopeque ADEVAS (Honduras), Carlos Alberto Callejas, director of REDADELCO, the network of Colombian LEDAs, followed.



All these interventions highlighted the importance of local economic development and local economic development agencies as crucial elements for creating conditions for socio-economic equality, revitalizing territories, closing gaps between rural areas and urban settings, generating decent jobs and ensuring the inclusion of social groups affected by armed conflict.

ILS LEDA, in particular referred the learned lesson from its experience, as resumed in the picture on the side. All these lectures were considered major inputs to the debate.

Therefore, two panels took place. In the first one *Opportunities and challenges of economic recovery and regional development: strategies for post-conflict*, representatives of UNDP Colombia, the Delegation of the European Union in Bogota, the CIDER and the Directorate of Productivity and Competitiveness of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism participated.

In the second panel *Territorial productive challenges: making peace economy*, the Deputy Minister of Agricultural Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Director of the Green Business Bureau of Ministry of Environment, Housing and Territorial Development and representatives of USAID.

The main result of the conference was a common understanding among all the participants about:

- Local economic development approach allows more effective and efficient actions also in post-conflict situations due to the proximity conditions, it provides more adequate responses to the specificity of each place, and avoids creating discrimination between groups.
- In order to concretize these actions, it is necessary that the local actors own the instruments of their implementation, such as the Local Economic Development Agencies, which allow sharing priorities, commitments and responsibilities, and channelling different types of interventions within a coordinated and comprehensive framework.

The conclusions of the conference will be considered as important inputs for the national policy about the post-conflict strategy and plans. The conference was closed by the intervention of Alejandra Guáqueta Girvin, Director of Post-Conflict of the Ministry of Post-Conflict, Human Rights, and Security and Monica Varona, Director of Institutional Coordination of Colombian Cooperation Agency

