

Tag: Aff – Plan Colombia finances harmful aerial fumigation.

Sizemore, Katie. "Will New U.S. Aid Address Damage Caused to Colombia's rural Communities?" Huffington Post, 16 Mar. 2016.

In support of Colombia's battle against drug production, drug trafficking, organized crime, guerilla and paramilitary groups, Plan Colombia contributed to the tripling of Colombia's military spending and doubling the size of its security forces. The associated human, social, and economic impacts have been widely documented. For example, the aerial spraying tactic using toxic chemicals - the main pillar of U.S.-funded strategies for coca eradication in Colombia - disproportionately impacted the health and environment of rural communities.

Plan Colombia originally involved a lucrative \$170 million contract with DynCorp International to oversee aerial fumigation operations. Although never confirming or denying that they were one of the suppliers of herbicide falling from the crop-dusting planes, Monsanto's controversial and risky glyphosate-containing product: Round Up, has been widely cited as the chemical of choice in use since the 1990s to destroy hundreds of thousands of acres of coca and surrounding farmland. The spraying of glyphosate reached a peak period in 2006 when some 405,000 acres were sprayed.

Aerial fumigation is credited with reducing coca hectares from around 400,000 to an estimated 120,000 by 2012. Despite this often-cited statistic, the UNODC reported cocaine output remaining relatively stable from 2000-2010. More recently, cocaine production has been on the rise. By mid-2015, Colombia once again became the world's top cocaine producer.