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# JUSTICE FOR A SUSTAINABLE PEACE ACTIVITY

FINAL REPORT

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# JUSTICE FOR A SUSTAINABLE PEACE ACTIVITY

FINAL REPORT

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**Cover photo:** Beneficiaries of the Activity (Credit: Justice for a Sustainable Peace Activity)

## DISCLAIMER

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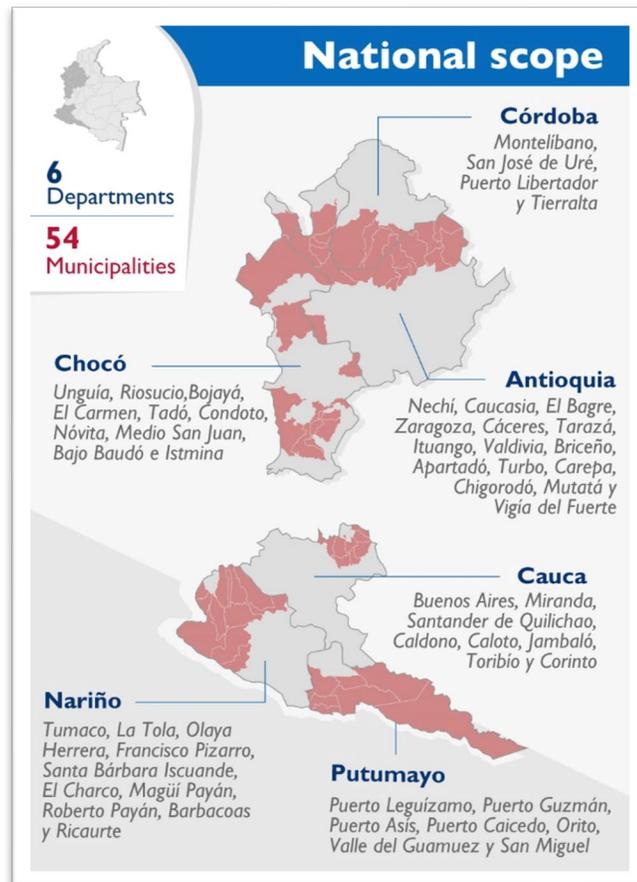
# ACRONYMS

<b>AAR</b>	Regional Anchor Stakeholder	<b>HRDSL</b>	Human Rights Defender and Social Leader
<b>ACJS</b>	Afro-Colombian Justice System	<b>INMLCF</b>	National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Services
<b>ADR</b>	Alternative Dispute Resolution	<b>IWG</b>	Interjurisdictional Working Group
<b>ANT</b>	National Land Agency	<b>JHCCs</b>	Justice House and Coexistence Centers
<b>CC</b>	Community Council	<b>JSP</b>	Justice for a Sustainable Peace
<b>CCJ</b>	Colombian Commission of Jurists	<b>LJC</b>	Local Justice System
<b>CEV</b>	Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition Commission	<b>LGBT</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
<b>CJCCC</b>	Justice Houses and Coexistence Centers	<b>LJS</b>	Local Justice System
<b>CNGRJ</b>	National Gender Commission of the Judicial Branch	<b>MJD</b>	Ministry of Justice and Law
<b>COCOIN</b>	National Commission for the Coordination of the National Judicial System and the Special Indigenous Jurisdiction	<b>MJS</b>	Mobile Justice Session
<b>COP</b>	Colombian Pesos	<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>CORDUPAZ</b>	Development and Peace Corporation of Córdoba and Urabá	<b>PDET</b>	Territorial Development Activity
<b>CSJ</b>	Superior Council of the Judiciary	<b>PGN</b>	Inspector General's Office
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization	<b>P2P</b>	Peer-to-peer
<b>DJC</b>	Departmental Justice Committee	<b>PPP</b>	Public-private partnership
<b>DNP</b>	National Planning Department	<b>RTVC</b>	Radio Televisión Nacional de Colombia
<b>EJRLB</b>	Rodrigo Lara Bonilla Judicial School	<b>SENA</b>	National Learning Service
<b>FCO</b>	Family Commissioner's Office	<b>SIJS</b>	Special Indigenous Justice System
<b>FARC</b>	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia	<b>UARIV</b>	Unit for the comprehensive support and reparation to victims
<b>FGN</b>	Attorney General's Office	<b>UBPD</b>	Unit for the Search of Disappeared Persons
<b>FIP</b>	Fundación Ideas para la Paz	<b>URT</b>	Land Restitution Unit
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based Violence	<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>GOC</b>	Government of Colombia	<b>USD</b>	United State Dollars

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Colombia (GOC) started negotiations with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in 2012 to end the 50-year armed conflict that had devastated the lives of so many people, especially in remote and rural areas of the country. The signing of the peace accord in 2016 increased people's hope for a peaceful future. However, implementing the accord has been a monumental task and bringing justice services to these areas is a top priority for the government towards the transition to peace.

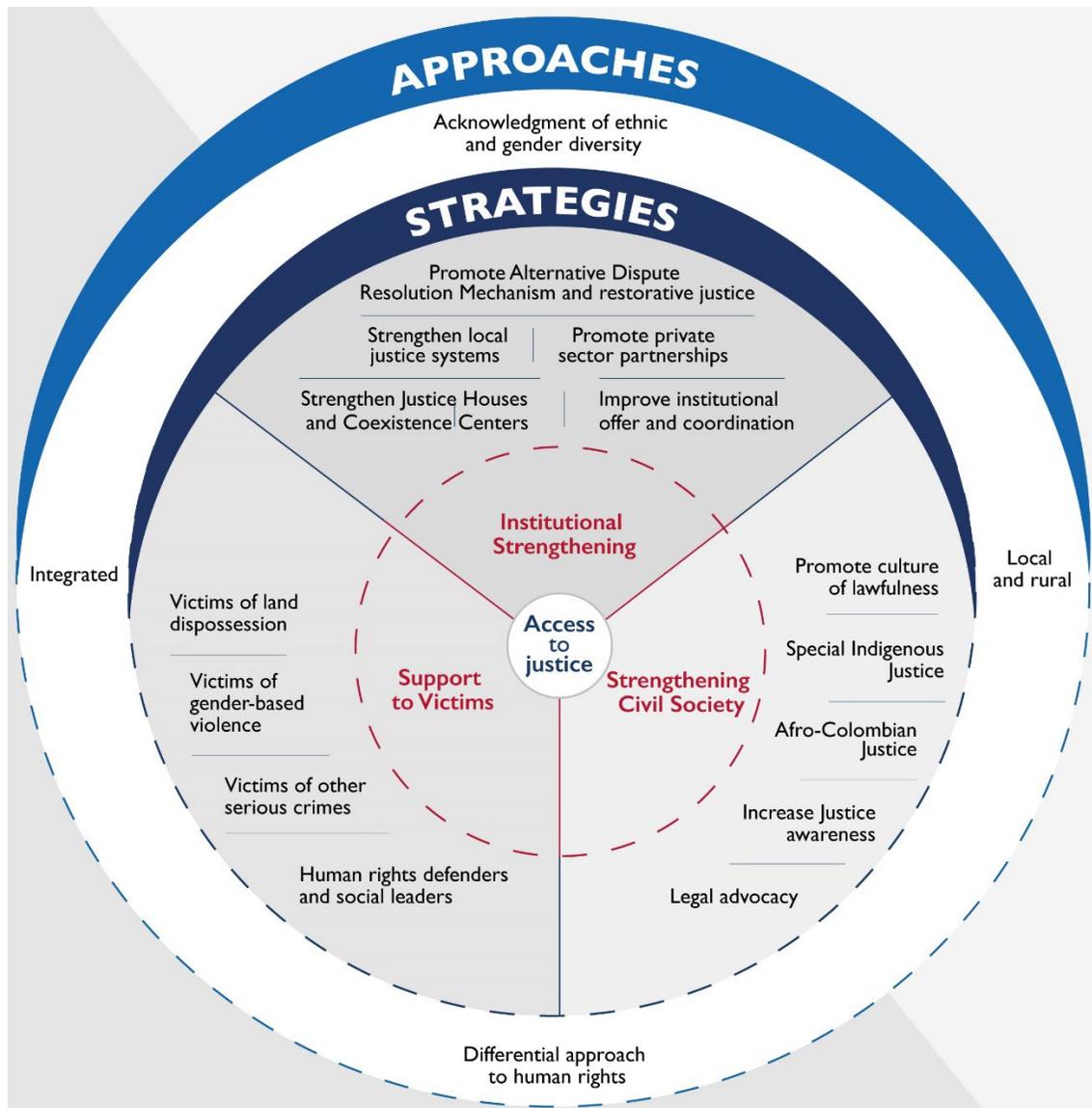
The USAID Justice for a Sustainable Peace Activity (JSP or “the Activity”) was launched in 2017 to support GOC in its efforts to strengthen access to justice, increase citizen support for the rule of law, and improve the judicial response for victims in 54 municipalities most affected by the armed conflict. To achieve this, JSP used a systemic, holistic, and comprehensive approach by bringing together national and local governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), the private sector, and academia to ensure a contextualized, participative, and differential response to the justice needs of the most vulnerable groups including women; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities; and indigenous and Afro-Colombian Groups.



Guided by USAID's Local Systems Framework and the GOC's framework for community participation, JSP concentrated its efforts in improving Local Justice Systems (LJSs) and fostering the active participation of key local government and civil society actors. The Activity also endeavored to strengthen the capacities of these actors and raise awareness of justice issues by partnering with key justice actors, including the Ministry of Justice and Law (MJD),<sup>1</sup> the Superior Council of the Judiciary (CSJ), the

<sup>1</sup> The acronyms of most of the organizations and institutions in this document correspond to their Spanish names.

Attorney’s General Office (FGN), and the Inspector General’s Office (PGN), as well as by leveraging grants and subcontracts with national and local CSOs.



**Institutional Strengthening:** JSP worked with government actors, CSOs, and the private sector to promote technical and financial support to justice-related activities through the inclusion of priority technical and budget lines in national, departmental, and municipal plans and public-private partnerships (PPPs) to fill gaps. The Activity also strengthened the participation of government and community justice actors in local and departmental justice committees, and improved coordination between members, to increase the quality and availability of justice services that are responsive to the needs of each context. The Activity also partnered with Regional Anchor Stakeholders (AARs) to

promote Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms and support the activities of LJSs beyond the life of the project.

**Strengthening of Civil Society:** The Activity endeavored to create a culture of lawfulness in which government and community actors understood and supported their respective rights and responsibilities in the justice system. To this end, JSP worked with AARs to implement the “*Todos en Sintonía con la Justicia*” (All in Tune with Justice) strategy and to strengthen the capacities of indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups, women, youth, and members of the LGBT community to engage with local authorities and LJSs to increase representation and foster trust between government and community justice actors. JSP implemented a transversal communications strategy to promote justice issues and the Activity’s initiatives at the national, regional, and local levels through partnerships with LJSs and national and local actors to strengthen the capacities of communication collectives, local journalists, and local CSOs. These strategies not only increased people’s awareness of justice government entities and local organization providing and services, but also leaves a comprehensive library of educational materials, documentaries, infographics, photographs, podcasts, and other media to facilitate the replication and further expansion of these initiatives.

**Support to Victims:** Through partnerships with national government actors and CSOs, JSP promoted the efficient and effective use of existing protocols, tools, and guidelines to strengthen the judicial response for victims of high-impact crimes including gender-based violence (GBV), land dispossession, and forced disappearance, as well as to raise awareness of gender, LGBT, and human rights issues. The Activity also promoted the institutionalization of a gender perspective, advocated for the protection and support to victims, and implemented a peer-to-peer methodology to facilitate the prosecution of high-impact crimes and to fight against impunity. Lastly, JSP worked with the PGN; the Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition Commission (CEV); and the Unit for the Search of Disappeared Persons (UBPD) to facilitate public dialogue spaces, including

#### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- 54 local and 5 departmental justice committees strengthened
- 26,454 people assisted through mobile justice sessions
- 21,127 disputes resolved by 2,302 individuals trained in Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms
- 904 community leaders, public officials, and youth trained on the promotion of a culture of lawfulness.
- COP 3,006,518,106 in mobilized funds
- COP 1,103,545,049 in public investment for justice initiatives
- 28 indigenous groups and 140 Afro-Colombian groups supported
- 122,809 individuals visited the “Rural Justice” web page
- 2,517 people legally represented in land restitution cases
- 519 public officials trained on human and gender rights and response to grave crimes
- 16,712 downloads of the “*Ellas App*”
- 112 criminal investigations and 33 disciplinary processes related to abuses against human rights defenders and social leaders prioritized on the Attorney General’s Office

“Mesas por la Protección a la Vida” (Life Protection Roundtables), “Lidera la Vida” (Lead Life) forums, and “Circles of Knowledge” to promote reconciliation and non-repetition.

## **CHALLENGES**

From the beginning, the Activity was aware of how challenging this process would be given the power vacuum arising from the FARC’s disarmament and the risk of it being filled by other illegal armed groups. Although JSP diligently worked to establish relationships and strengthen local justice actors to minimize this risk, there were other challenges that affected the speed and reach of implementation of planned activities, such as obtaining the continuous support from outgoing and incoming government actors and managing the government’s limited understanding of indigenous and Afro-Colombian justice systems. In order to deal with these challenges, JSP fostered spaces for mutual understanding and established and maintained continuous dialogues with public officials holding and seeking office to advocate for support to justice initiatives. Likewise, to manage the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and social protests that periodically affected the country, JSP ensured constant communication and collaboration with all stakeholders to comply with all biosafety protocols while continuing to implement activities by using virtual platforms and other telecommunication channels, including radio, television, and social media, to continue fostering improved access for rural communities.

## **LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Throughout implementation, JSP continuously monitored its activities collecting the following key recommendations, drawn from lessons learned, to guide future implementations:

- Increase rural justice through a holistic and people-centered approach
- Empower victims to become leaders
- Continue promoting the transfer of knowledge between national and local actors
- Identify and strengthen regional anchors early on and ensure their continuous participation
- Foster continuous dialogue with technical areas within national government entities
- Engage local actors and identify strategic cases before expanding
- Ensure coordinated and collaborative interventions
- Utilize appropriate information and communications technology

# INTRODUCTION

The USAID-funded Justice for a Sustainable Peace Activity (JSP or “the Activity”) was launched in 2017. It sought to increase access to justice for communities located in some of the most affected areas by the 50-year armed conflict in Colombia that had devastated the lives of so many people, especially in remote and rural areas of the country. While the signing of the peace accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in 2016 increased people’s hope for a peaceful future, implementing the accord has been a monumental task and bringing justice services to these areas has been a top priority for the Government of Colombia (GOC) towards the transition to peace. The intervention originally prioritized 45 municipalities in six departments (Antioquia, Cauca, Chocó, Córdoba, Nariño, and Putumayo,) adding another nine<sup>2</sup> afterwards to support Antioquia Free of Coca Plan.

To achieve this, the Activity fostered a systemic approach that sees justice as the social fabric where a multiplicity of actors interact to ensure a participative and differential approach to justice. JSP implemented a set of strategies that together contribute to the strengthening of the system in a holistic manner through facilitated collaboration between local and national actors and strengthening government institutions and mechanisms, especially at the local level. A key aspect of the Activity involved promoting trust in justice institutions by bridging the gaps between the population and public officials through various capacity-building and awareness-raising initiatives, collaborative training activities, and by jointly facilitating support to victims, including the provision of legal and psychosocial assistance.

Although JSP successfully implemented most of its planned activities, a few were severely impacted by the government-mandated restrictions to curb the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the social protests that occurred in Colombia throughout the life of the Activity. To adapt to these challenges, JSP utilized alternative means of communication (e.g., virtual rather than in-person events) and ensured compliance with all biosafety protocols, as needed, to continue facilitating its activities and achieve its objectives.

## OBJECTIVE I

# Increased access to justice

Guided by USAID’s Local Systems Framework and the Government of Colombia’s (GOC’s) framework for community participation, JSP implemented the following five strategies to increase access to more effective, inclusive, and responsive justice-related services in conflict-affected regions of Colombia: 1) strengthen Local Justice Systems (LJSs), 2) advocate for increased inclusion of justice policies in municipal and

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<sup>2</sup> Briceño, Cáceres Cauca, El Bagre, Ituango, Nechí, Tarazá, Valdivia, and Zaragoza in northern Antioquia and the Bajo Cauca area.

departmental development plans, 3) establish and foster private sector engagement in justice activities, 4) promote the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Toolbox, and 5) strengthen Justice Houses and Coexistence Centers (CJCCCs).

In order to successfully implement these strategies, JSP partnered with the Ministry of Justice and Law (MJD),<sup>3</sup> local and departmental government actors, and civil society organizations (CSOs), among others, to strengthen local government entities and increase the communities' access to justice. A key component of this approach was the partnership established with selected regional anchor stakeholders (AARs), including local universities and CSOs, to support the work of Departmental and Local Justice Committees (DJCs and LJsCs respectively) by promoting the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

## **LOCAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS**

The LJS is a GOC mechanism designed to increase the institutional supply of justice in areas particularly affected by the conflict where justice systems were weak or controlled by illegal armed groups. Although the successful implementation of LJSs relied on DJCs and LJsCs, many of the areas targeted by JSP did not have existing or active committees, and those that existed, needed support to successfully foster coordination and collaboration among actors. Through a systemic approach, JSP supported the MJD to create, reactivate, and strengthen DJCs and LJsCs to improve the availability and quality of justice services, make these committees more visible and accessible to communities, and promote the active participation of community members for the identification of needs and solutions appropriate to each municipality.

JSP worked with regional and local partners to create 54 municipal actor maps, six regional overview maps, a national map on national justice entities, and a separate national map of the Justice House Activity and the Family Commissioner interdisciplinary teams. These tools, which were updated in 2020, were key to evaluating the presence of judicial and administrative justice actors, identify the gaps in service provision, and guide the creation (or reactivation) and strengthening of 54 LJsCs and five DJCs (Cauca, Chocó, Córdoba, Nariño, and Putumayo), which now bring together representatives from the local government, ordinary justice system (judges, prosecutors, public defenders, police, etc.), traditional justice systems (indigenous and Afrocolombian), community justice (equity conciliators, community action groups, etc.), and CSOs (women, youth, and LGBT organizations, among others) to foster community participation and inclusion.

The Activity supported these committees to design, implement, and monitor 46 LJC and two DJC action plans to increase the institutional justice offer and promote citizen engagement; these action plans include specific activities to strengthen justice pathways, promote conflict-resolution methods, coordinate capacity-building activities for public officials and CSOs, and promote support for gender-based violence (GBV) and conflict-

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<sup>3</sup> The acronyms of most of the organizations and institutions in this document correspond to their Spanish names.

affected victims. A key example of these activities is the construction of the *Palacio de Justicia* (Justice Tribunal) in the municipality of El Charco, in Nariño, which will greatly increase the availability of justice services in this community.

Likewise, JSP closely supported LJs to bring justice services through mobile justice sessions (MJSs) to communities in remote rural areas whose populations are usually not able to travel the long distances required to reach these services. During these MJSs, local governments and justice actors offered legal and psychosocial support and disseminated information on available services and how to access them. In total, JSP supported 159 MJSs benefiting 26,454 people living in rural areas, as seen in the accompanying graphic. These MJSs registered 29,779 requests for support during 110 general MJSs (69.2 percent) and 49 focused on conflict-affected issues with 63.2 percent of all requests being for Unit for the Comprehensive Support and Reparation to Victims (UARIV) assistance for victims of armed conflict, 16.4 percent related to document-processing services, such as new registrations or modifications to GOC programs, and 4.9 percent related to other services, including health and family issues.



This systemic approach empowered LJs to advocate for the needs of their communities and ensure targeted solutions as applicable for each context. As such, the Activity facilitated the addition of 89 officials and other personnel to provide justice services in targeted municipalities and the strengthening of their capacities through various training sessions and workshops; these professionals include social workers, psychologists, justice and gender liaisons, legal support, ombudspersons, managers, and coordinators, among others. Most remarkably, the MJD used the lessons learned and best practices gathered by JSP during this process to develop the 2020 Local and Rural Justice Model, a national strategy to provide more inclusive and personalized justice to Territorial Development Activity (PDET) municipalities.

## PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY

A key factor in ensuring the sustainability of LJs is the ability to advocate for the inclusion of continuous technical and financial support in public policies at the local, regional, and national levels. To this end, JSP worked with LJs and DJCs to successfully advocate for the inclusion of priority lines for justice activities in various public policy instruments by fostering continuous dialogues with governors and mayors in office, as well as with those promoting their candidatures during the 2019 election period. The relationship established with candidates early on, and throughout their campaigns,

served to inculcate the importance of supporting justice activities, which was key to gaining their support right from the start of their terms of office.

This advocacy work resulted in the inclusion of specific strategic lines in the 54 municipal and six departmental development plans to prioritize justice-related initiatives achieving an increase of Colombian pesos (COP) 1,103,545,049 (USD 310,858 at an exchange rate of COP 3,550 per USD 1.00) in public investment. These multi-year development plans now provide concrete support to at least one justice-related activity, from among the following: LJSs, Afro-Colombian and indigenous justice systems, gender equity and GBV public policies, CJCCCs, the ADR toolbox, and the protection of human rights defenders and social leaders. JSP also worked with committees to advocate for the inclusion of technical and budgetary priority lines for justice activities in the PDET, the Comprehensive Security and Coexistence Plans, and in other public policies at the national level to further strengthen reconciliation and peacebuilding initiatives in the areas most affected by the conflict.

At the national level, JSP worked with the MJD and the National Planning Department (DNP) to include specific support in the 2018-2022 National Development Plan for justice mechanisms, including the LJSs. Likewise, JSP provided technical and logistical support to the MJD and PGN to advocate for the Family Commissioner Reform Bill, which was passed by Congress in June 2021. This reform bill seeks to strengthen and make Family Commissioner Offices (FCOs) more effective and efficient by making the director's position a meritocratic position to be held for four years, establishing at least one additional FCO per 100,000 inhabitants, ensuring the progressive increase of services in rural areas through mobile offices, and creating a path for future intermunicipal FCOs.

### **PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (PPPs)**

The strengthening of PPPs has been at the center of USAID's work in Colombia as they play a key role in the economic and political development of the country. Knowing how essential the private sector is to the LJSs, JSP worked with various private sector actors to create pilot models to strengthen their involvement in justice-related activities.

JSP collaborated with the MJD and Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP) to create a model to generate an innovative PPP engagement strategy to connect private entities with the public justice sector. After completing an extensive research and analysis with public and private actors, FIP developed the "Con Justicia" model to creating PPPs under the leadership of MJD and with the participation of LJSs and CSOs. This model provides information on identifying and promoting engagement opportunities, establishing PPPs, monitoring implementation, and identifying best practices and lessons learned to inform future partnerships. In addition, FIP also created a guide for the private sector, especially for smaller entities, on how to engage with government actors to support local justice activities.

Through this process, JSP learned that PPPs for justice can only be put in place if both the public and private sector understand the benefits of engaging for this goal and how

to identify opportunities to do so. As such, JSP also focused on facilitating sensitization and training activities to promote this initiative among local governments and small- and medium-sized enterprises working at the municipal level. The team facilitated three awareness-raising sessions for local businesses, business associations, and the Chambers of Commerce from Antioquia, Cauca, Nariño, and Putumayo to increase their knowledge of justice-related issues, strengthen their sense of ownership around justice, and discuss the perceptions of justice and the role the private sector plays in supporting local justice.

As a result, JSP collaborated with local governments to establish and maintain working relationships with local private entities to promote cooperation between these local stakeholders for the benefit of their communities, achieving the mobilization of COP 3,006,518,106 (USD 846,907 at an exchange rate of COP 3,550 per USD 1.00). Some of these PPPs include partnerships with local private hospitals to build National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Services (INMLCF) offices, with local businesses to equip FCOs and police stations, and with chambers of commerce and private universities to host the virtual dissemination of information on CJCCCs.

JSP partnered with national and international actors to create and promote a restorative justice pilot for adults (individuals over the age of 18) sentenced to less than five years of imprisonment in the Urabá Antioqueño through PPPs to develop a restorative pathway, build the capacity of stakeholders, and facilitate restorative sessions to foster dialogue between aggressors and victims and to encourage alternative punitive measures, such as community work. As a result, JSP and restorative justice experts reviewed 432 cases and selected 10 to pilot the mechanism. Out of these, three successfully achieved restorative agreements and all parties involved received additional support from the government and private sector, including participation in the Family Welfare's employment workshops and National Learning Service (SENA) courses. Furthermore, JSP trained more than 50 judges, public defenders, social leaders, and representatives from the private and academic sectors on restorative justice and its pathways; created 10 animated short films to sensitize the community on these issues; and developed the *"Protocol for the implementation of the restorative approach and the inclusion of restorative agreements and results in the judicial process."* Most importantly, this pilot demonstrated the importance of supporting restorative processes as a healing mechanism that strives to address some of the underlying needs of affected individuals, increase trust in justice actors, and promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

## **ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS**

The GOC created a set of ADR mechanisms to promote the use of nonviolent approaches to address everyday conflicts between individuals, especially in remote rural areas previously under the control of illegal armed groups. Nonetheless, the implementation of these ADRs still needed additional support from the various stakeholders as not many people were aware of their existence or how to use them in their contexts. To address these challenges, JSP closely collaborated with the MJD, the DNP, academic institutions, and local partners to raise awareness on ADRs by developing and promoting the ADR Toolbox in 30 PDET municipalities.

The Toolbox is a free and flexible mechanism, available online, that provides information to public officials on promoting the use of ADRs through activities that can be implemented locally and at a very low cost. The Toolbox offers three modules to guide and adapt the process according to the needs of each municipality:

- 1) *Decision Making Module* – Guides users through the decision-making process of choosing or prioritizing the ADRs to implement using a participative approach that involves government and community actors from the early planning stages.
- 2) *Implementation Module* – Guides users through the implementation of one or more ADR as agreed by the stakeholders involved in the previous stage. This module includes a step-by-step guide for local officials on organizing the implementation of trainings and related activities for the proper dissemination of chosen ADRs, a training guide for facilitators, and other learning materials for trainees and the community on the importance of ADRs and how to use and access them.
- 3) *Strategic Communications Module* – This module provides information on how to promote the use of ADRs through communication pieces and participative sensitization activities and guides users on implementing various communication strategies throughout the entire process.

#### ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS

1. Conciliation in Law
2. Equity Conciliation
3. Community Mediation
4. School Mediation
5. Intercultural Mediation

In order to guide and support the implementation of the Toolbox in each targeted region, JSP facilitated strategic partnerships with the following AARs: Universidad de Antioquia and the Development and Peace Corporation of Córdoba and Urabá (CORDUPAZ) to support Antioquia, Córdoba, and Chocó; the Universidad del Cauca and the Cauca Chamber of Commerce Union to support Cauca; Corporación para el Desarrollo Agroempresarial de Tumaco to support Nariño; and Corporación Culturama Colombia to support Putumayo.

In collaboration with the Temporary Union of Chambers of Commerce and LJSs, JSP facilitated a series of training of trainers for 67 members of identified AARs on the implementation of the Toolbox. These trainers then led training sessions on the use of the Toolbox and selected ADRs for public officials, community members, and CSOs working at the municipal and departmental levels. In total, JSP and AARs trained 971 individuals as conciliators and mediators, including 517 people trained as community mediators, 124 students trained as school mediators, 70 community leaders trained as equity conciliators, and 49 people trained as intercultural mediators; all 971 individuals, including 211 public officials, were trained in conciliation in law. As a result of this process, in addition to the other trained or reactivated conciliators by the Activity, JSP facilitated the resolution of more than 21,100 conflicts in targeted areas, as detailed in Table I below.

**TABLE 1: NUMBER OF DISPUTES RESOLVED THROUGH ADR MECHANISMS**

	Family Disputes	Neighbor Disputes	Community Disputes	Civil and Commercial Disputes	Land Use Disputes	Other	Total
Community Mediator	2,598	3,105	3,011	234	266	1,037	10,251
School Mediator	0	4	0	0	0	171	175
Equity Conciliator	272	382	139	312	168	20	1,293
Intercultural Mediator	59	24	77	8	32	4	204
Conciliator in Law	3,370	2,099	1,507	1,131	575	522	9,204
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,299</b>	<b>5,614</b>	<b>4,734</b>	<b>1,685</b>	<b>1,041</b>	<b>1,754</b>	<b>21,127</b>

JSP also worked with MJD and other stakeholders, including AARs, to develop a national sensitization campaign on the ADRs and the Toolbox. This campaign involved the dissemination of key messages and seven animated training videos on national and community radio stations, social media, and through community means, such as public loudspeakers.

The ADR Toolbox has increased the capacity of local justice actors and members of the community to use ADRs to find peaceful resolutions to their conflicts by creating spaces for dialogue and positive mediation. Most importantly, JSP facilitated the appropriation of this strategy by national and local governments who now see the Toolbox as an essential component in the strengthening of local justice systems, particularly in rural areas.

Nonetheless, to ensure the sustainability of the ADRs and the Toolbox as mechanisms for peacebuilding, JSP created a series of recommendations for the GOC, including:

- Furthering the decentralization of these mechanisms by empowering local actors to proactively include the ADR Toolbox in their development plans and to advocate for regional and national support for the implementation of related activities as listed in their action plans.
- Extending the coverage of this strategy to additional – and eventually all – municipalities in the country.
- Increasing the number of trained mediators and conciliators and providing continuous education courses available online to strengthen their capacities and encourage their continuous participation in ADR activities.
- Strengthening the use of a differential approach for the application of ADRs under the leadership of CSOs, especially of indigenous and Afrocolombian organizations.
- Supporting the Network of ADR Toolbox Implementors and Promoters.

## **JUSTICE HOUSES AND CO-EXISTENCE CENTERS**

CJCCCs are government mechanisms supported by USAID to provide information on and deliver justice services to communities. However, in most of the areas targeted by

JSP, these mechanisms needed additional support to strengthen their ability to assist communities and offer justice services through a differential approach.

As CJCCCs are an important component of LJSs, the Activity worked with various government actors, including the MJD, the National Justice House and Citizen Co-existence Program, the National Land Agency (ANT), the Land Restitution Unit (URT), and CSOs such as Caribe Afirmativo and Colombia Diversa to strengthen the 15 targeted CJCCCs located in Puerto Asís and Puerto Caicedo (Putumayo); Apartadó, Chigorodó, Turbo (Antioquia); Buenos Aires, Caloto, Corinto, Santander de Quilichao, and Toribio (Cauca); Istmina, Nóvita, and Condoto, Tadó (Chocó); and Tumaco (Nariño) by:

- 1) Fostering effective coordination at the national and local levels
- 2) Strengthening the capacities of local justice actors providing services at these centers
- 3) Increasing the communities' awareness about available services, especially those related to gender, family, and land restitution

Some of JSP's achievements include the development of 15 municipal LGBT response protocols and referral pathways for GBV survivors, the training of CJCCC staff on indigenous and Afrocolombian justice issues, 233 equity conciliators on mediation techniques, and 665 high school students on justice issues and referral pathways; the creation of a 76-hour, open-access virtual platform titled "Gender perspective, family, and access to justice" to increase access for those unable to attend in-person trainings or with limited internet access; the facilitation, in coordination with local actors and the ANT, of thematic mobile justice sessions focusing on land restitution; and the implementation of mass information campaigns on CJCCCs, available services, and the previously mentioned protocols and referral pathway. In addition, JSP supported the MJD and DNP's evaluation of the CJCCC program and provided concrete recommendations to ensure better coordination with other GOC entities, increase technical capacity of officials, lower conflict of interest, strengthen private sector engagement, and increase available justice resources.

Nonetheless, JSP's main achievement was the development of strategic platforms, adapted to the needs of each CJCCC, to improve service and response practices following guidelines defined by the DNP's National Program of Citizen Services. These guidelines, along with the inclusion of technical and financial resources in municipal development plans, will continue supporting these targeted CJCCCs and the communities they serve.



PHOTO: Justice for a Sustainable Peace Activity

Community member receiving services from the Justice House during a mobile justice session. Santander de Quilichao, Cauca. May 2018.

# THE DEPARTMENTAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE OF NARIÑO PROMOTES ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS AND VULNERABLE POPULATION



PHOTO: Justice for a Sustainable Peace Activity

**Members of the Departmental Justice Committee of Nariño.**

*“The interjurisdictional coordination roundtables promoted at the DJC have allowed us to understand the Special Indigenous Justice system. We now know each other and are able to work in a coordinated manner.”*

— Magistrate of the Nariño Sectional Council of the Judiciary

The Pacific area of the department of Nariño has been one of the regions most affected by armed conflict in Colombia. According to the Office of the Ombudsman, 4,711 families were victims of forced displacement in 2020 alone, and the map of actors developed by JSP showed that of five the 10 municipalities prioritized by JSP in this region do not have consistent representation from the FGN, the Judicial Police, or the INMLCF.

To address these issues, JSP supported the creation of the DJC of Nariño, a space for dialogue, coordination, and planning to resolve the main justice needs of victims of the armed conflict and vulnerable population. JSP provided mentoring and technical guidance to this DJC, supporting the creation and monitoring of action plans, which strengthened the supply of justice in the region and the articulation between administrative, ordinary, and ethnic justice and CSOs. Nowadays, the DJC of Nariño is a recognized public space that uses a rights and gender approach to discuss social and gender issues important to its inhabitants, and that benefits from having an allocated budget to implement the activities included in its action plan.

As a result of this support, the DJC of Nariño, in alliance with JSP, strengthened the technical capacities of 10 Local Justice Committees in the municipalities prioritized by the Activity in the Pacific area of Nariño, and facilitated access to services such as custody, humanitarian assistance, and consultations on displacement and reparation processes for 4,631 people. It also facilitated coordination with the MJD for the formulation of 10-year departmental public policy on justice and, together with the Governor's Office of Nariño, promoted the expansion of the coverage of training in legal conciliation throughout the department, from three to 64 prioritized municipalities.

The Nariño DJC also negotiated before the CSJ the construction of the courthouse in the municipality of El Charco and the creation of two specialized courts in Tumaco, one administrative and one criminal. It also promotes and supports the development of inter-jurisdictional coordination roundtables with the participation of indigenous authorities, the FGN, INMLCF, Family Welfare and the Sectional Council of the Judiciary.

## OBJECTIVE 2

# INCREASED CITIZEN SUPPORT FOR THE RULE OF LAW

The municipalities targeted by JSP have been particularly affected by the armed conflict, impacting the ability of ordinary and traditional justice systems to operate in these areas. This, coupled with the population's limited knowledge of justice rights and the mechanisms available to access justice, deteriorated people's trust in justice actors and hindered support for the rule of law. Given this context, JSP collaborated and coordinated with national, municipal, and regional actors, public and private, to promote the use of participative and differential approaches in LJSs, increasing awareness of justice institutions and services, and strengthening civil society participation in justice-related activities. To achieve this, the Activity implemented a series of strategies to increase civic engagement in justice activities, including 1) promoting a culture of lawfulness among community members and CSOs, 2) strengthening Afro-Colombian justice mechanisms, 3) strengthening the Special Indigenous Justice system, 4) raising awareness of justice mechanisms through a transversal communications strategy, and 5) providing legal support to the most vulnerable.

The Activity focused on improving people's perspectives on the quality and suitability of public officials and the nature of the justice system to transform it from a purely punitive resource to one that has as its primary goal the support and empowerment of individuals. JSP worked to increase the communities' understanding of their rights and their roles in LJSs, and to promote their participation in justice mechanisms. Likewise, JSP worked to improve the government's limited understanding of the customs, traditions, and justice system of black and indigenous communities in the country and to strengthen the ability of these groups to participate in LJSs. Through this, the Activity was able to increase understanding of the social, cultural, institutional, and constitutional recognition of traditional and ethnic practices and knowledge around justice issues, as well as foster better collaboration between ordinary and traditional justice systems.

## CULTURE OF LAWFULNESS

JSP worked to foster a culture of lawfulness in order to strengthen citizens' support for the rule of law as people's understanding of their rights and responsibilities increase while also emphasizing the government's obligations to enforce these rights and responsibilities to ensure equitable access to justice. To this end, the Activity implemented educational activities to increase citizens' awareness of justice actors and available services, promote trust between the community and the government, and strengthen some of the most vulnerable groups in society: women, youth, and the LGBT community.

### *Todos en Sintonía con la Justicia*

JSP collaborated with Corpovisionarios to design “*Todos en Sintonía con la Justicia*” (All in Tune with Justice), an awareness-raising campaign targeting local government actors and members of the community in 24 municipalities. This educational strategy focused on implementing in-person and virtual outreach activities to increase public awareness of LJS, available justice actors, mechanisms, and referral pathways, and promote coexistence by tackling and preventing violent interpersonal behaviors and reducing stereotypes and prejudices toward justice actors.



To accomplish the campaign’s objectives, JSP partnered with local government actors, community leaders, and four AARs (Cauca’s Temporary Union Uni Cauca-Chamber of Commerce, the Development and Peace Corporation of Córdoba and Urabá (CORDUPAZ), the Agrobusiness Development Corporation of Tumaco, and Culturama) as leaders and co-creators of activities. First, JSP facilitated virtual trainings for AARs on community outreach, collective action, and the government’s Open Justice initiative and guided the adaptation of these tools to the context of each municipality.

JSP then engaged with government actors and the community by creating groups of collaborators under three “lines of action”: The first entailed working with public justice officials to improve communication channels with the community and facilitate the dissemination of information about LJSs and the government’s Open Justice initiative. This involved facilitating mini workshops and roundtables to discuss their experiences and co-create “Justice Mail” (graphic material with relevant information on LJSs and LJS actors) and other educational pieces exemplifying positive behaviors – respectfulness, professionalism, etc. – toward the community. The second line encompassed community leaders and CSOs, bringing them together to discuss the concept of co-responsibility and their role in promoting a culture of lawfulness through the participation in LJSs and the use of ADRs. Lastly, the third line of action involved youth groups through workshops and group discussions on justice issues, mediation and resolution of conflict, their role in community justice, and creating relevant messages to be disseminated through painted murals.

The Activity then brought together representatives from these three groups at *Puntos de Sintonía* (In-tune Points) and *Puntos de Sintonía Juvenil* to interact with passersby at stalls located in public spaces. These *Puntos de Sintonía* guided participants through self-regulation, mutual regulation, and legal regulation steps to learn about the available mechanisms to deal with certain conflict situations and identify related LJS actors as applicable for each municipality. These spaces also served to create spontaneous conversations between collaborators and other members of the community guided by

the educational material previously created. As the COVID-19 pandemic restricted the team's ability to implement these in-person activities, JSP created social media content and a free online game ([www.todosenSintonía.com](http://www.todosenSintonía.com)) to facilitate the dissemination of positive approaches to conflict resolution and the pertinent response referral pathways. The game prompts visitors to analyze four examples of community conflicts and, through a series of multiple-choice questions, decide on the steps to follow in order to achieve a peaceful resolution.

In order to promote the sustainability of the strategy, JSP created an implementation manual with diagrams on basic concepts, implementation protocols and phases, key components, and methodologies to facilitate the replication of some or all of these activities. CORDUPAZ further supported these activities by developing an educational kit for youth groups to motivate their participation in Open Justice processes, provide information on LJS actors and public justice officials, and incentivize the use of self-regulation and school mediation mechanisms.

In total, “*Todos En Sintonía*” reached 904 community leaders, public officials, and youth. Furthermore, the evaluation team noted an overall positive increase in people's perceptions of LJS, local government actors, and justice in general. Those who reported an increase in positive perceptions were also more inclined to use a peaceful approach to resolve their conflicts and to reach out to an LJS actor if needed. Local government actors and community leaders openly expressed their satisfaction with these activities as well as their commitment to continue supporting them after the end of the intervention. JSP transferred educational and other implementation materials to local government entities and CSOs wishing to continue these activities; this was the case of CORDUPAZ, which agreed to continue supporting the web app. Likewise, the local SENA campus volunteered to host the *Puntos de Sintonía* to ensure the continuation of this and other educational justice activities in Apartadó, Antioquia, as did the Armed Forces unit in Francisco Pizarro, Nariño.

These activities helped participants be “in tune with Justice” or, in other words, being able to identify the various mechanisms and entities to utilize when there are conflicts and understanding that justice is also a tool that all should use to promote coexistence and peace.

### ***Political advocacy strategy***

The Activity's second initiative to promote a culture of lawfulness involved empowering 32 CSOs focusing on women's, LGBT, and youth issues to promote their active engagement with local authorities and LJS in an effort to increase representation and foster trust between government and community justice actors.

Throughout the intervention, JSP supported the following women's and LGBT organizations: the Asociación Mujeres del Plantón and Reconstruyendo Vida in Antioquia; Corporación Mujer, Niñez y Juventud Norte Caucana and Asociación Afromirandena in Cauca; Red Departamental de Mujeres Chocóanas and Pastoral Social Mujeres Indígenas in Chocó; Fundación Colombiana Gestión Ambiental y Social and

Asociación de Mujeres Víctimas del Conflicto Armado Calzado y Artesanías Nazaret in Córdoba; Fundación Piernas Cruzadas, UNIPA Mujeres Indígenas, and Fundación Afrocolombiana Arco Iris in Nariño; and Corporación Casa Amazonía in Putumayo. With the Activity’s support, these organizations strengthened the capacities of women and LGBT individuals to participate in DJCs and LJs and influence public policies, created safe spaces for women to discuss their role and contributions to the justice systems, and supported women and LGBT individuals to become conflict resolution leaders in their municipalities.

JSP also supported several organizations, including the Corporación Cultural Camaleón de Uraba in Antioquia, Chocó Joven in Chocó, Catholic Diocese of Montelíbano in Córdoba, the Cabildo Mayor Awa de Ricaurte (Camawari) in Nariño, and Fundación Makikuna in Putumayo to strengthen their ability to participate in LJs and public policy debates to advocate for young children, and support youth participation in school mediation and community leadership activities.

*“Thanks to the support of JSP, we now actively participate in three local justice committees in southern Córdoba and have greater influence over the decision-making process.”*

— COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING LEAD, CÓRDOBA DIOCESE

With support from JSP, these organizations developed strategic documents and communication activities to strengthen youth groups, promoted dialogues on the role of young people in LJs, and facilitated trainings on participation mechanisms and school mediation techniques. The Diocese of Montelíbano designed and implemented “Me Uno” (I Join), a civic culture campaign to promote a culture of lawfulness and encourage healthy coexistence. Likewise, Camawari redesigned and implemented the Youth Activity of Camawari to strengthen leadership skills among indigenous youths and promote their participation in justice systems. Lastly, JSP collaborated with CORDUPAZ and Corpovisionarios to organize the “Youth Citizenship as an Advocacy Tool for Peacebuilding,” an inter-regional panel that brought together these CSOs to discuss the role of youths in justice systems and their initiatives to support these.

Through this second initiative, JSP achieved the inclusion of these CSOs in LJs transforming them into active participants in LJs. As a result, these CSOs successfully advocated for the increasing support of justice actors, achieving the inclusion of priority lines in departmental and municipal development plans and LJS action plans. These mechanisms now acknowledge the gender and sexual diversity of their communities, support the use of a differential approach to public policies, and include concrete action lines to support youth and gender rights, GBV referral pathways, shelters, and more inclusive and comprehensive services for women, youth, and members of the LGBT community.

## **SPECIAL INDIGENOUS JUSTICE SYSTEM**

The Special Indigenous Justice System (SIJS) is rooted in ancestral or traditional forms of justice and, although not always structured in similar ways as the ordinary justice system, it is recognized under the current constitution, which established the judicial

autonomy of indigenous groups in Colombia under a Special Indigenous Jurisdiction. Nonetheless, the participation of indigenous groups in local peacebuilding processes has been limited, reducing their ability to advocate for their rights and needs within the national justice system.

In order to empower indigenous groups,<sup>4</sup> JSP focused on strengthening the interaction and coordination between the ordinary justice system and the SIJS by strengthening indigenous organizations, increasing the recognition of indigenous autonomy, and securing their participation in LJSs.

At the national level, JSP supported the *National Commission for the Coordination of the National Judicial System and the Special Indigenous Jurisdiction (COCOIN)* to develop action plans detailing justice-related activities and created coordination and collaboration guidelines between the FGN, INMLCF, and the SIJS to facilitate increased effectiveness of indigenous justice and ensure a differential approach in the forensic services provided by the INMLCF. At the regional and local levels, JSP collaborated with justice actors to ensure the inclusion of indigenous groups in LJSs through the participation of SIJS leaders in LJsCs, DJCs, and interjurisdictional working groups (IWGs); JSP specifically supported the reactivation of six IWGs, which meet periodically and bring together ordinary, ethnical, and traditional justice actors at the departmental level.

*“The departmental committee allowed us, as indigenous authorities, to generate understanding and trust with the ordinary justice system. For example, now we know how to coordinate with institutions such as the FGN in cases of disharmony or grave crimes in our communities, such as sexual violence or homicides.”*

— HEBERTO CHIRIMÍA, CHIEF  
COUNSELOR OF THE  
ASOCIACIÓN DE CABILDOS  
INDÍGENAS DEL PUEBLO EPERARA  
SIAPIDARA

The inclusion of SIJS in these mechanisms allows for greater recognition of SIJS, contributes to positive intercultural dialogues and coordination among formal and informal justice actors, allows SIJS leaders to influence public policies in favor of indigenous groups, and provides a space to exchange information on ordinary and traditional justice systems and how these systems are applied/operationalized, and discuss any challenges encountered. An example of the positive impact of this process is evident in the fact that, in many cases, SIJS leaders have directly participated in the design and implementation of LJS strategic action plans ensuring the integration of SIJS elements into these tools.

The Activity also coordinated with government actors, including the Superior Council of the Judiciary (CSJ) and Rodrigo Lara Bonilla Judicial School (EJRLB), and CSOs to

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<sup>4</sup> The indigenous groups supported by JSP include the Nasa and Misak in Cauca; Embera, Wounaan, and Tule in Chocó; Embera Katío and Zenú in Córdoba; Away and Eperara Siapidara in Nariño; Nasa, Awa, Cofán, Inga, Embera, Pastos, Siona, Pijao, Misak, Camensa Biya, Kicwa, Koreguaje, Murui, and Yanacona in Putumayo; and Embera Eyabida, Embera Chamí, Embera Dobida, and Tule in Urabá.

increase the capacities of the SIJS through various events and training sessions. Some of the most significant include:

- The training of more than 500 indigenous women, through support provided to women-focused indigenous organizations, and the production of training materials on SIJS, inter-jurisdictional coordination, promotion of indigenous women's rights, prevention of sexual crimes, response referral pathways, and participation in justice settings to promote the participation of indigenous women in justice settings.
- Developing and facilitating an intercultural and indigenous law training program for more than 700 individuals from the public and private sectors working in justice-related issues as well as community members interested in SIJS, ethnic diversity, and pluralism.
- Providing technical assistance, in collaboration with Colombia Diversa, to ethnic authorities in Cauca to develop a response referral pathway for LGBT members of indigenous communities. These pathways have been translated into Nasa and Yuwe to facilitate access to this information.
- Facilitating, in coordination with local actors and the Ethnic Justice Strengthening Group, several workshops to strengthen the capacities of indigenous groups on indigenous traditional law, the national indigenous legislation, and indigenous rights enshrined in the constitution. JSP facilitated these workshops in the Arquia reservation (Unguía, Chocó) for 70 leaders and young people from the Emberá and Tule communities, and in Cauca for 60 men and women.
- Facilitating the National Forum of Special Indigenous Jurisdiction, which brought together more than 200 people, including indigenous leaders and ordinary justice actors, to exchange information of the ordinary and indigenous justice systems and foster mutual trust and respect.
- Coordinating with CSJ to facilitate the "Dialogue of Intercultural Knowledge Regarding Indigenous Justice," a virtual forum that brought together 61 participants, including justice sector actors and international experts from Colombia, Panama, and Canada, to share these countries' experiences on indigenous justice and pluralist justice systems.

In addition, JSP collaborated with indigenous groups to facilitate cultural spaces for dialogue and to document these exchanges through the production, publication, and dissemination of various resources. Likewise, JSP collaborated with government actors and CSOs to create guiding documents for the effective coordination between ordinary and indigenous justice systems. Some of the most significant resources include:

- Three publications documenting the laws of origin, worldviews, and the perspectives on justice of various indigenous groups. These books, titled "Narratives of Autonomous Spaces, Approach to Natural Law," "Traditional Justice for Indigenous Communities," and "*Memorias de la Ley de Origen y del Derecho Mayor de los Pueblos Indígenas*," contribute to the recognition and understanding of the SIJS among indigenous and non-indigenous actors.
- The "*Baston Jurídico JEI*," produced in collaboration with the MJD, which contains practical tools and decisions made by the Constitutional Court for the interaction

between ordinary justice actors and SIJS authorities. More than 2,000 copies of these publications were shared with various indigenous organizations and government justice entities, including the CSJ and sectional councils of targeted departments and local district attorney offices.

- 21 videos documenting indigenous practices and application of justice. These videos were shared on various online platforms, academic film forums, and during working groups and COCOIN meetings to raise awareness of the preventive and restorative dimensions of the SIJS and strengthen coordination with ordinary justice system actors.

Through these various activities, JSP increased the ability of ordinary and indigenous justice actors to understand how these justice systems work and how to coordinate and collaborate with each other to strengthen access to and support for the rule of law. However, the involvement of young men and women in these activities is essential to ensuring the sustainability of these efforts by creating a consciousness around the SIJS in future indigenous leaders. It is also essential to continue inculcating the importance of indigenous participation in LJS forums to foster trust and coordination between actors, as well as the inclusion and continuous support of justice-related activities in development plans.

## **AFRO-COLOMBIAN JUSTICE**

The rights of Colombia's black communities, defined as a group of people with their own traditions, customs, and shared history living in a collective territory, are enshrined in the Constitution under Law 70 of 1993.<sup>5</sup> The purpose of this law was to establish mechanisms for the socioeconomic development and the protection of the cultural identity and rights, including land protections of Black Communities living along the Pacific Basin. Nonetheless, they continued having limited participation in the country's justice systems, which affect their ability to advocate for the recognition of their ethnicity and support for their development. To address these issues, JSP worked with 140 Community Councils (CCs), recognized legal entities responsible for the administration of Black Communities, and government justice actors to promote increased social, institutional, and legal recognition of the Afro-Colombian Justice System (ACJS) through increased participation of Black Communities in LJSs and increased coordination and collaboration between stakeholders.

At the national level, JSP collaborated with Afro-Colombian CSOs and local government actors to advocate for the strengthening of initiatives targeting black communities in national public policies, such as PDETs. At the regional and local levels, JSP facilitated the participation of Afro-Colombian leaders in the six reactivated IWGs previously mentioned, as well as in DJCs and LJs, to promote coordination between Afro-Colombian and ordinary justice actors, foster the exchange of information and ideas, and design joint agendas to strengthen access to justice and the rule of law. JSP also facilitated participation in the Municipal Transitional Justice Committees to advocate for the support to Afro-Colombian victims of forced displacement.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.minagricultura.gov.co/Normatividad/Leyes/Ley%2070%20de%201993.pdf>

The Activity also concentrated its efforts on strengthening CCs through its support to regional associations and federations of CCs, in collaboration with local government actors and academic institutions to facilitate trainings and workshops and provide technical support for the design and implementation of activities.

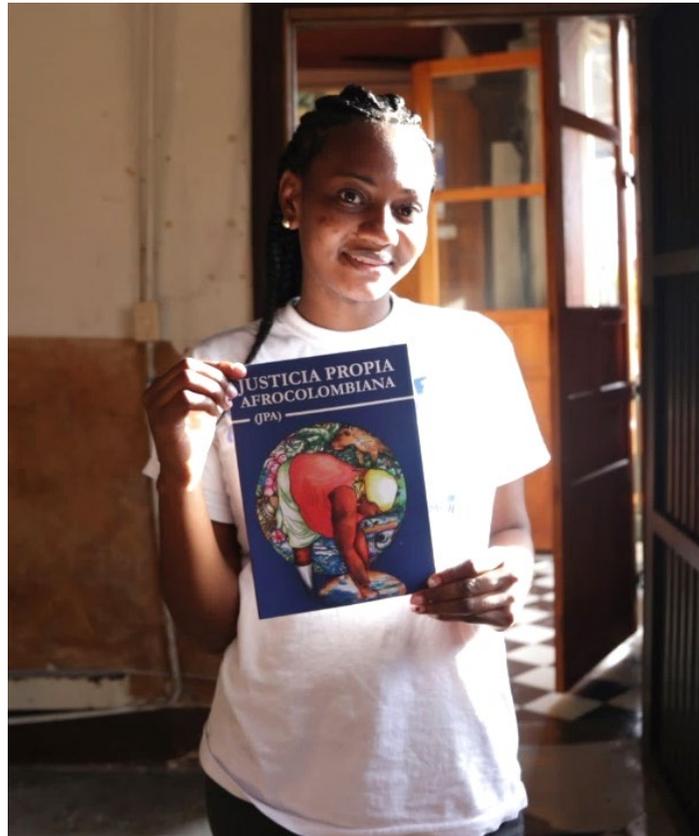


PHOTO: Justice for a Sustainable Peace Activity

Afro-Colombian woman holds a copy of the Afro-Colombian Justice booklet. Quibdó, Chocó. March 2021.

The Activity collaborated and coordinated with the Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios del Norte del Cauca, Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios de Magüi Payán, Consejo Comunitario Bajo Mira y Frontera, Consejo Comunitario de San José de Uré, Corporación Centro de Pastoral Afrocolombiana, Federación de Consejos Comunitarios del Putumayo, Foro Interétnico Solidaridad Chocó, and Corporación Red de Consejos Comunitarios del Pacífico Sur. With the support of JSP, these associations and CCs strengthened the capacities of Afro-Colombians and Black Communities through:

- The creation/modification of internal bylaws and strengthening plans of CCs and Afro-Colombian justice mechanisms, such as ethical courts and elders' councils. This not only strengthened organizational capacities, but also provided guidelines to participate in LJSs and advocate for support to ACJS initiatives in departmental and municipal development plans and other public policies.

- The creation of minimum response protocols to strengthen the response capacities of CCs through the inclusion of principles and binding rules for the resolution of conflicts under the traditional and ordinary justice systems. JSP worked with targeted CCs to identify and document 71 cases – 56 in Cauca, 15 in Córdoba – addressed by the ACJS since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that now serve as examples of the implementation of Afro-Colombian justice. These cases include examples of mediation between neighbors, resolution of land disputes, management of threats posed by illegal armed groups and illegal resource extraction, implementation of preventive justice, and administration of CCs.
- Facilitating listening sessions between leaders, elders, and other members of the CCs to discuss the dimensions of ACJS and promote the recognition of traditional Afro-Colombian practices for the resolution of conflicts; these included sessions specifically targeting younger Afro-Colombians to ensure the passing of traditional justice practices from generation to generation. The Activity helped document these exchanges in several booklets and audiovisual pieces disseminated through radio and television broadcasts, press reports, social media, and LJS events to raise awareness among members of the public, especially ordinary justice actors.
- Facilitating regional and national forums on the roles of Afro-Colombian women in traditional justice systems and how to promote and support their participation in both Afro-Colombian and ordinary justice systems.
- Training 40 women leaders (in Nariño) on participative mechanisms and advocacy strategies.
- The design and implementation of a 90-hour virtual training for Afro-Colombian leaders on strategic litigation; strategic social advocacy; Colombia’s multicultural constitutional system; access to justice; and environment, land, and territorial protections for Afro-Colombian communities in Chocó and Nariño. These trainings empowered CCs to advocate for their rights – as in the case of the Bajo Mira y Frontera CC, which successfully advocated for the support of the URT to ongoing collective land restitution procedures registered with the ANT. In this particular case, JSP facilitated the creation of a short handbook on social mapping to guide and support their advocacy efforts in this matter.

JSP also collaborated with the Universidad de los Andes to advocate for the legal recognition of the Afro-Colombian justice system and to file judicial actions against violations of their ethnic rights. These cases argue for the inclusion of Afro-Colombian justice traditions and practices in the law, the exclusion of Afro-Colombian youth from the country’s mandatory military service, and the protection of Afro-Colombian leaders’ autonomy in the administration of justice in Black Communities.

In summary, JSP’s support to CCs increased their ability to advocate for the recognition of the Afro-Colombian justice system, foster trust and mutual understanding with the ordinary justice system, engage and collaborate with other Afro-Colombian groups and LJSs, and design and implement justice activities within their communities and external partners. Nevertheless, black communities still need support to ensure their rights are not only included in the law but also respected and the fulfillment of initiatives included in departmental and municipal action plans.

## COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

As an essential component of the entire intervention, JSP implemented a series of activities to increase the availability (quality and quantity) of information on justice-related issues and people's access to it, particularly among rural populations. To this end, JSP collaborated with news outlets, academic institutions, government justice actors, and community members to foster trust among local, regional, and national actors, and help bridge the gap between government and communities through the production and dissemination of information on justice systems, available mechanisms, and the communities' experiences.

### *Community engagement*

JSP established partnerships with five local communications collectives in Cauca, Córdoba, Nariño, Putumayo, and Urabá to strengthen the role of the media in LJs. As such, JSP promoted the active participation of communication collectives in LJs, improving the flow of communication and the level of trust among actors as journalists were able to learn about the challenges and issues affecting their communities directly from local leaders. As a result of their involvement in LJs, collectives were able to provide vulnerable groups with documentation and information to support legal processes, such as those presented by Afro-Colombian victims of forced displacement in Nariño. Collectives also worked closely with LJs to develop local communication plans to disseminate information and the community's work on SIJS, ACJS, and ordinary justice systems; gender, LGBT, land, and territorial issues; and ADRs resulting in the production and dissemination of 231 articles, 134 radio programs, and 12 video clips and documentaries. In addition, JSP facilitated nine photographic exhibitions and six photojournalism contests to raise awareness of justice issues among rural communities. In order to ensure the sustainability of this activity, JSP supported these communication collectives and LJs by training 10 additional collectives on journalism and justice issues.

#### COMMUNICATION COLLECTIVES SUPPORTED

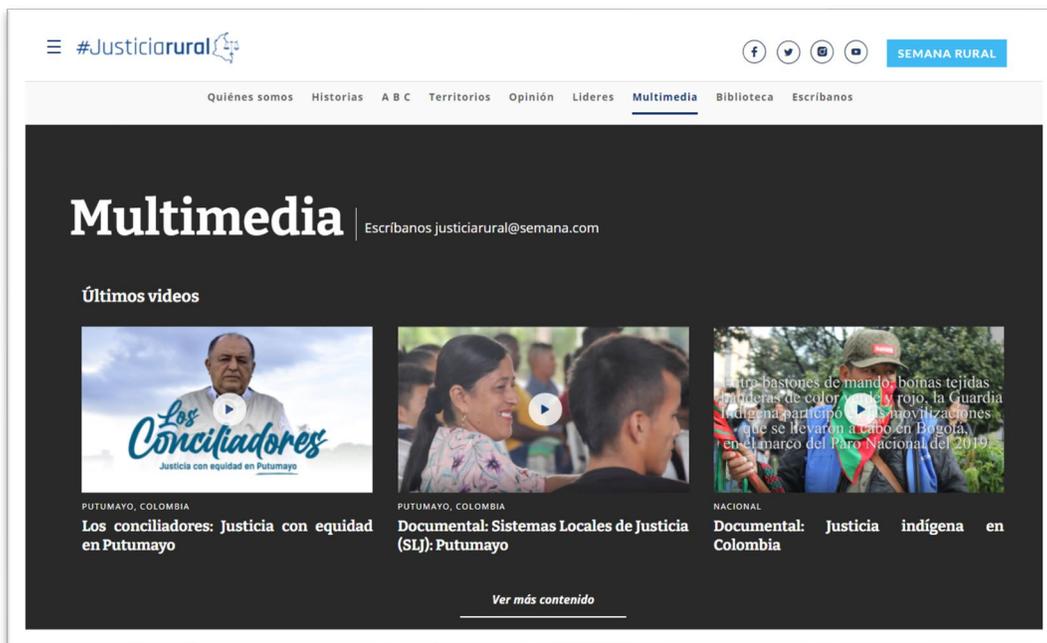
- Sinergia Comunicaciones – Córdoba
- Fundación Tengo Ganas – Cauca
- Makikuna – Putumayo
- Corporación cultural Camaleón – Urabá antioqueño
- Agencia de Comunicaciones del Pacífico – Nariño

JSP also engaged with members of the community through the “*Empellicate con la Justicia*” cinema forums where the Activity partnered with Justice Houses, *Juntas de Acción Comunal*, communication collectives, Afro-Colombian and indigenous groups, local government officials, the Unit for the Search of Disappeared Persons (UBPD), FGN, UARIV, law schools, and members of the film industry to screen and facilitate follow-up discussions of films portraying justice-related issues. These forums aimed at increasing awareness and encouraging participation in LJs as the films' central themes related to promotion of rights of vulnerable communities, ethnic and special indigenous justice systems, conflict resolution and reconciliation, and a culture of lawfulness. In total, JSP facilitated 27 in-person and 102 virtual forums in the 54 targeted municipalities, reaching more than 5,500 participants. Forty-seven of these forums promoted JSP documentaries on special indigenous jurisdiction.

### Partnerships with national and local media

JSP partnered with national media to raise awareness of rural justice mechanisms and empower local journalists to disseminate articles on local justice issues on national platforms. Furthermore, these partnerships provided a platform to reach the highest government levels, decision-makers, and key opinion leaders.

JSP partnered with Publicaciones Semana, one of the most important media groups in the country, to create and host “Justicia Rural” (Rural Justice) ([www.justiciarural.com](http://www.justiciarural.com)), which seeks to promote traditional justice systems and foster trust in ordinary justice systems to increase the nation’s culture of lawfulness. The website, which has recorded almost 123,000 visitors since its launch in 2019, hosts stories highlighting the successful application of justice and showcases journalistic articles, special reports, infographics and other educational tools, videos, and op-ed pieces on justice-related matters from targeted territories. In order to reach an even larger audience, Semana also disseminated this content through radio and television advertisements, articles in the *Revista Semana* magazine, and videos on the *Semana en Vivo* television activity. “Justicia Rural” has become a key source of information for the public as evidenced by the fact that national and local CSOs not only use the platform as a resource, but also as a main vehicle to propagate their information.



In addition, JSP and *Revista Semana* facilitated three webinars reaching more than 30,000 people. The first webinar focused on raising awareness on the fight against LGBT stigmatization in Nariño’s Pacific coastal region, while the second centered on the importance of using a gender approach in justice issues in conflict-affected areas. These webinars included the participation of women from Red de Mujeres de Caldono (Cauca), indigenous women from the Nasa and Misak communities, and Sisma Mujer, a national women’s organization.

Similarly, JSP partnered with Colprensa, one of Colombia's largest media groups, to improve media coverage of justice-related issues in the targeted regions through a series of workshops for local radio, television, and online reporters and the production of an accompanying handbook. The Activity and Colprensa facilitated six two-day workshops for 90 journalists on investigative journalism and the inclusion of judicial and gender approaches in regional news. Through discussions with local justice actors and members of women's, indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and LGBT organizations, participants learned best practices for ensuring a differential approach to media coverage, and how reporting on justice issues contributes and impacts society. The accompanying handbook, "*Cómo Narrar la Justicia en Colombia*," was widely shared in printed journals, mobile platforms, and regional forums with national and local journalists, women and youth organizations, Afro-Colombian and indigenous leaders, communication collectives, judges, prosecutors, conciliators, and mediators, among other justice actors. The MJD also supported this initiative and acknowledged its importance for establishing effective relationships with the mass media to facilitate the dissemination and collection of justice information.

Lastly, JSP partnered with *Radio Televisión Nacional de Colombia (RTVC)* to produce and broadcast an eight-episode animated series titled, "Weaving Justice in the Regions," which presents successful experiences of access to justice on gender-related issues, local and ethnic justice systems, MJSs, ADRs, CJCCCs, and communication collectives. The series premiered on *Canal Institucional*, a government-run national television channel, and is available online through RTVC's free access portal (<https://www.rtvcpay.co/series-documentales/tejiendo-justicia>).

These communication activities, as well as all the other ones mentioned throughout this document, helped JSP achieve its objective of increasing access to justice by increasing the availability of information and channels for its dissemination. Most importantly, JSP created and disseminated a comprehensive booklet titled "*Justicia en las Regiones – Caminos para el acceso a la justicia*," detailing the Activity's main strategies and achievements, as well as a vast digital library of audiovisual materials to support the replication and expansion of the activities by government actors and CSOs. JSP distributed 300 printed copies of these items to key national, regional, and local stakeholders, including the MJD and LJSs.

## **LEGAL ADVOCACY SERVICES**

As some of the available justice services are still inaccessible to some members of the community, JSP partnered with various universities, including the Universidad del Cauca and the Universidad EAFIT, to support individuals in need of legal assistance through *Consultorios Jurídicos* (legal virtual offices) held at CJCCCs and other justice offices. The cases supported included land disputes (tenancy, possession, titling, and dispossession), ownership proceedings, family custody, traffic accidents, and neighbor disputes. To promote the continuation of this initiative, JSP worked with these and other universities, as well as with *Juntas de Acción Comunal*, to hold these *Consultorios* for at least another seven months.

### OBJECTIVE 3

# STRENGTHENED JUDICIAL RESPONSES FOR VICTIMS OF THE ARMED CONFLICT

Under the third objective, JSP supported GOC's judicial initiatives (particularly those under Law 1448, 1257, and 1761) to promote an efficient and effective use of existing protocols, tools, and guidelines at the local level in order to foster a legal, regulatory, and social environment that empowers victims of the armed conflict and of GBV and ensure an adequate judicial response. The Activity also designed a gender strategy as a transversal approach to strengthen access to justice for some of the most vulnerable members of society. In addition, this objective included a Rapid Response component under which JSP supported the GOC's efforts to strengthen the rights of victims to justice, truth, and reparations as a means to achieve a durable and stable peace.

As such, JSP implemented a series of activities to strengthen the capacities of victims, local CSOs, and public officials, including judges, magistrates, prosecutors, investigators, and forensic teams to promote greater equality, equity, and understanding to minimize all forms of discrimination and vulnerabilities. To achieve this, JSP partnered with the CSJ, FGN, the EJRLB, National Gender Commission of the Judicial Branch (CNGRJ), PGN, CEV, UBPD, and several national CSOs with expertise in advocating for land, gender, and other human rights, as well as in providing legal and psychosocial support to victims.

## LAND RESTITUTION

The GOC has in place a number of mechanisms and entities to ensure the land rights of vulnerable populations and victims of the armed conflict. However, the limited understanding of land restitution laws and mechanisms by local officials and communities and the lack of coordination between government actors continued impacting the efficient and effective resolution of land restitution claims. In order to address these issues, JSP partnered with government actors and CSOs, including the CSJ, Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ), the EJRLB, and the Office of the Ombudsman, to strengthen the skills of public officials and improve institutional coordination and collaboration. JSP also implemented activities to increase people's knowledge and understanding of the land restitution laws, processes, and procedures, and created spaces for dialogue and collaboration between government actors and claimants to increase transparency, foster trust among actors, and empower victims to advocate for this fundamental right.

### *Institutional support to the Superior Council of the Judiciary*

JSP provided technical support to each of CSJ's four specialty committees (training, processes and procedures, technical, and interinstitutional coordination) created by the GOC to strengthen the judicial response on land restitution.

With the support of JSP and the EJRLB, the CSJ's Training and Processes and Procedures Committees strengthened the capacities of public officials through:

- A training of trainers for 118 magistrates, judges, and public defenders, through in-person and virtual sessions, to consolidate and standardize criteria for the interpretation of pertinent laws.
- Three virtual forums for 233 public officials on precautionary measures to be used during the pandemic, best practices in post-rulings, and facilitation probation phases through virtual media.
- Dialogue spaces for 890 magistrates, judges, and land restitution officials in Bogotá, Cali, Cartagena, Cúcuta, and Medellín on using a differential approach to support victims of forced displacement and the available institutional offer by facilitating discussions on gender and environmental issues and interethnic conflict with Afro-Colombian and indigenous representatives, the National System for the Comprehensive Attention and Reparation to Victims, the Universidad del Rosario, and the Universidad Externado de Colombia.
- The creation and publication of a self-paced virtual introductory training for public officials, based on the experiences of judges and magistrates, with several modules on land restitution topics, including minimum requirements, gender and ethnic perspectives, and process and procedures; this free tool is available to the public.
- The creation of an evidence protocol with standardized procedures for judges and magistrates and a guide with best practices for public officials, which are also available to the public.

JSP also collaborated with the Technology Committee to upgrade the “*Portal de Tierras*,” a cloud-based filing system for land restitution cases, by improving interface tools, extending its access to all land restitution offices in the country, and training 93 judicial officers on its use and effective management. The enhanced portal allowed the analysis of almost 800 court orders previously stored and 450 recently issued as the platform now allows judges to organize the orders issued to each agency and follow their implementation to ensure compliance by all actors. In addition, JSP supported the creation of an electronic format to facilitate the submission of restitution requests by private lawyers (i.e., those not associated with the URT).

Lastly, JSP facilitated periodic meetings of the Interinstitutional Coordination Committee to improve information sharing, identify gaps in implementation, and define steps to improve land restitution processes, all of which resulted in the expedited resolution of cases and improved quality of services. JSP also supported this committee's efforts to disseminate information on land restitution issues to members of the community through television broadcasts on social media showcasing interinstitutional coordination, training guides, and the online filing system, among others.

The Activity also developed a best practices and recommendations document for the CSJ to support the sustainability of this judicial management model.

### ***Support to victims of forced land dispossession***

JSP partnered with the CCJ, the ANT, regional academic institutions, and LJSs to provide assistance to victims of the armed conflict by strengthening the capacities of CSOs, including farmers' groups and indigenous and Afro-Colombian organizations, to engage with land restitution actors; facilitating the identification and review of restitution requests for their possible resolution; providing legal counseling and representation to victims; advocating for increasing institutional support; and increasing the visibility of restitution processes.

In collaboration with the CCJ and the Universidad Externado de Colombia, Universidad de Antioquia, Universidad del Cauca, and the Universidad del Sinú, JSP created five training modules and four handbooks for victims of forced displacement on territorial and land restitution rights; the formalization, constitution, expansion, legalization, and sanitation of community territories; community strengthening and advocacy; protection and self-protection processes; and community information collection tools. Using these tools, the Activity trained 241 community leaders and mentored 18 CSOs, including 10 indigenous organizations, two Afro-Colombian organizations, five farmers' groups, and three regional universities, to advocate for the resolution of restitution cases and engage with land restitution actors.

To enable the resolution of restitution requests, JSP provided technical and logistical support to land restitution actors and victims through:

- The creation of spaces for dialogue between public officials (including magistrates, judges, and ombudspersons), national land agencies and CSOs, and victims of forced displacement to foster mutual recognition and understanding. These spaces increased transparency and accountability promoting trust in the justice sector.
- In-person and virtual public hearings, led by judges, for people located in rural areas affected by the conflict. These public hearings promoted community participation and facilitated follow-up on compliance with judicial decisions on collective and individual reparation cases.
- Collaboration with LJS actors in each targeted area to accompany claimants and support follow-up activities with land restitution actors as compliance with court orders issued for territories of indigenous and black communities tend to be

*“The spaces for dialogue with land government officials and national organizations expert in supporting the displaced population has been vital to our restitution efforts. This would not have been possible without the support and coordination of JSP.”*

— CORPORACIÓN PARA EL  
DESARROLLO SOCIAL  
COMUNITARIO DEL SUR DE  
CÓRDOBA

the most challenging. This support inculcated the concept of justice as a collective effort that accounts for and relies upon traditional customs and should be guaranteed by local governments and organizations.

- Support to the ANT to identify and review, thanks to the *Portal de Tierras*, more than 600 court orders issued to this entity achieving advances for over 50 percent of these orders. Some of the most notable results include land titling to 14 families in Putumayo, the award of contracts to 20 families for pepper and cocoa production, and the implementation of 19 new housing projects for victims.

JSP also supported the CCJ in providing legal representation for 2,566 people, including more than 7,700 cases from farmers and more than 1,800 cases from indigenous people, as detailed in Table 2 below.

**TABLE 2: LEGAL REPRESENTATION PROVIDED BY CCJ**

Department	Farmers		Indigenous People		Total
	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Antioquia	46	41	0	0	87
Cauca	45	39	11	1	96
Chocó	0	0	392	244	636
Córdoba	290	306	0	0	596
Nariño	0	0	0	1	1
Putumayo	0	0	555	595	1,150
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>2,566</b>

Despite the continuous support of JSP and its partners, there is still a large number of cases in need of legal counseling and representation. As such, the Activity continued advocating for increased protections for victims of forced displacement, resulting in a 10-year extension of the Victim’s Law under Law 2078 of 2021; the production of investigative reports submitted to the CSJ on transparency and accountability systems; and the documentation of lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations to strengthen CSJ’s land restitution system.

Lastly, the Activity collaborated with the CCJ, the Office of the Ombudsman, and the community to produce and disseminate articles, videos, and other educational materials on land restitution processes and related challenges through social media, dialogue spaces, and LJs. One example of these efforts is “*Volver a Nuestras Tierras, un Derecho Inaplazable*” (Returning to Our Lands, an Imperative Right), a series of documentaries relating the stories of local organizations and groups of claimants in the targeted territories.

Although the restitution of land is still a challenging and time-consuming process, most individuals and CSOs expressed their commitment to continue the implementation of dialogue spaces and strengthening of government and community actors.

## **GENDER ISSUES AND GBV RESPONSE**

JSP implemented a comprehensive approach to support victims of GBV, especially of sexual violence, by promoting the institutionalization of a gender focus in public policies,

expanding the government's ability to prosecute GBV cases, and promoting the legal and psychosocial support to victims.

### **Institutionalization of gender perspectives**

Institutionalizing a differential approach to gender issues and assuring improved coordination and collaboration between government actors were crucial to ensuring a strengthened judicial response to women and LGBT victims of GBV. Some of the most important achievements include strengthening the capacities of local justice officials and LJS actors, including local office personnel from the FGN, the INMLCF, and the FCOs. In addition, JSP collaborated with the CNGRJ and other government actors to foster national coordination and promote gender equality in the Constitutional Court of Colombia.

JSP partnered with Caribe Afirmativo and Colombia Diversa, two national CSOs, to strengthen local LGBT organizations and encourage their participation in LJSs. These local organizations included Tejiendo Vida and Corporación Todos Somos Iguales in Antioquia; Fundación PazArte El Derecho, Fundación Quilichao Diversa, Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Norte del Cauca, and Funquidiversa in Cauca; Fundación Latidos Chocó and Fundación Johana Maturana in Chocó; Córdoba Diversa and Corporación Montelibano Afirmativa in Córdoba; Fundación Afrocolombiana Arcoiris in Nariño; and Así Somos Diversidad Sin Fronteras and Orito Diverso in Putumayo. With the support of JSP, these organizations facilitated virtual training sessions for members of DJCs and LJs in six municipalities of Antioquia and 10 municipalities of Chocó on LGBT rights and differential approach to GBV response, incorporated and strengthened local GBV protocols and response referral pathways, achieved the inclusion of priority lines in municipal development plans, and advocated for special assistance and constitutional protections for the LGBT community, including LGBT people members of indigenous communities.

Likewise, JSP partnered with LJs to build the capacities of and foster collaboration between justice actors and communities to strengthen local support to victims of GBV by:

- Promoting and participating in roundtables with women and LGBT groups and government representatives for the inclusion of gender equality and GBV response in municipal and departmental development and action plans.
- Collaborating with all stakeholders to establish referral pathways for victims of GBV and develop diagnostic tools on women's access to justice.
- Facilitating spaces for interinstitutional dialogue and information sharing, including exchanges between municipal and departmental women secretariats.
- Training 240 people, including government officials, health and forensic personnel, teachers, and CJCCC's coordinators on gender, LGBT, and family issues and rights; using a differential approach to improve victim's access to justice; GBV forensic techniques; and referral pathways.

- Facilitating Decentralized Monitoring Committees, as required by Law 1257 of 2008, to ensure the involvement of government actors and the community in monitoring the status of women and LGBT community in their areas.



**Orlinda  
Pernia**

*Kachici Community Governor,  
Drua Wandra Cabildo*

**“I work so that women from my community, the Embera, can be free of violence and learn how to defend their rights.”**

PHOTO: Justice for a Sustainable Peace Activity

Indigenous leader beneficiary of activities implemented by Fundación Abrigando Sueños. Tierralta, Córdoba. October 2019

JSP partnered with Sisma Mujer and Corporación Humanas to strengthen the capacity of FCOs as the main local entity responsible for the protection and restoration of an individual’s rights in cases of domestic violence. The team trained 45 personnel from FCOs, through in-person and virtual sessions, on women’s and LGBT rights and interinstitutional coordination, using a differential approach to domestic violence, protection measures, psychosocial support, referral pathways, and the efficient and effective recording, follow-up, and evaluation cases and response. The team further strengthened this support by creating a tracking tool to record and monitor cases and related protection measures; facilitating information sharing between FCO officials through private social media groups on legislation, new and updated norms, and tools developed by JSP; and providing equipment and temporary staff support to FCOs in Putumayo, Nariño, Cauca, Chocó, and Antioquia to support the increasing numbers of GBV cases registered during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In collaboration with the FGN's Office of Advanced Studies, JSP institutionalized a peer-to-peer (P2P) methodology to strengthen the capacities of local prosecutors and fight against impunity. The P2P approach involved facilitating periodic meetings with specialized prosecutors and interdisciplinary experts, including forensic experts from the INMLCF, on the rights of women and LGBT victims of GBV, prioritization of GBV cases, effective follow-up, and referral pathways. Through this support, local prosecutors were able to review 3,315 cases of domestic and sexual violence and prioritize 1,315 cases for procedural advancement; of these, 863 cases resulted in procedural advancements and the activation of 610 referral pathways. To further these efforts, JSP developed guidelines for the prioritization of GBV cases and trained 272 local prosecutors and members of the judicial police on GBV response and reparations. These trainings also facilitated the dissemination of the P2P methodology to promote its continued use and extension to other municipalities.

Seeking to further strengthen the coordination among national and local government entities, JSP worked with the CSJ, EJRLB, and the CNGRJ to design and facilitate a training for 107 judges on gender rights, gender equality, non-discrimination principles, and the mainstreaming of gender in justice activities; these modules will continue being available through a mobile application to facilitate future trainings. In addition, JSP also collaborated with the CNGRJ and Corporación Humana to develop a didactic tool for public officials and the public on using CNGRJ's online search tool to access gender-related rulings. The tool, which offers seven modules and a glossary of GBV-related concepts, is available at GOC's Judicial Branch website and through a mobile application accessible offline.

In order to promote the use of a gender focus when issuing court orders, JSP collaborated with CNGRJ to organize three annual competitions for judges, and separate ones for magistrates, from targeted regions. Participants submitted orders issued during the previous year and a panel of key experts from JSP and CNGRJ selected the ones that demonstrate the most innovative, inclusive, and effective use of their gender approach.

Finally, JSP conducted a study on gender equity in the Constitutional Court in order to evaluate the roles of women, identify barriers to professional development, and determine concrete opportunities to strengthen gender equity and equality in the Constitutional Court. JSP ensured the dissemination of these findings and recommendations to more than 300 public officials and Constitutional Court staff, and provided technical support for the creation of the "Gender Equity and Zero Tolerance of Violence Against Women Policy" to further support the institutionalization of gender equality within the GOC. The Activity presented this policy to the Supreme Court and its formal adoption is expected by the end of 2021.

#### **Advocacy and support to victims of GBV**

As supporting victims of GBV is not only the responsibility of government actors but also of civil society in general, JSP partnered with CSOs and local governments to

support victims of GBV and advocate for the rights of women and members of the LGBT community.

The Activity partnered with five national CSOs – Sisma Mujer, Corporación Humanas, Colombia Diversa, Caribe Afirmativo, and Fundación Círculos de Estudios – to implement an umbrella mentorship program to reinforce the capabilities of local organizations to support women and LGBT victims of GBV. These national CSOs then trained 12 local organizations on the use of strategic litigation for cases of GBV, facilitating psychosocial support for victims, coordinating with ordinary and traditional legal systems, and advocating for the rights of women and LGBT communities in LJSs and other public policies. In addition, JSP partnered with Fundación Círculo de Estudios to enable an emergency psychosocial hotline to provide immediate assistance to victims of GBV. As a result, the national and local CSOs supported a total of 209 victims of GBV, including 170 women and 27 members of the LGBT community, with 33.8 percent involving cases of psychosocial abuse, 34.1 percent physical violence, and 21.5 percent sexual violence.

As local CSOs became more empowered, rural, indigenous, and Afro-Colombian women and members of the LGBT communities increased their participation in LJsCs and other local justice mechanisms. These organizations also increasingly advocated for the rights of women and the LGBT community, in collaboration with local governments and the support of JSP, by commemorating national and international gender events, such as International Women’s Day; 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence; and the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia. JSP further supported these outreach efforts by producing various media pieces (articles, videos, podcasts, radio programming, and social media content) and the “*Ellas App*” to disseminate information on violence against women and members of the LGBT community, national and international legislations, and referral pathways for GBV victims.

JSP collaborated with the National Women’s Network to adapt the “*Ellas App*” to the needs of each targeted municipality. The mobile application provides users with access to a glossary of the types of GBV (domestic, sexual, economic, political); information on available services, referral pathways, and a list of CSOs working in each municipality; and features a panic button that alerts a person designated by the user in case of imminent danger, which was particularly impactful during the COVID-19 pandemic when the number of domestic violence cases increased. The application also allows users to provide feedback on the application’s utility and the support received, including the judicial system. JSP partnered with various local government entities, CSOs, and national influencers to widely promote the mobile application through podcasts, national and local news outlets, and workshops with community members and LJsCs, resulting in more than 16,700 downloads so far.

Through the mentorship initiative, JSP not only developed and strengthened the skills of local organizations, but also facilitated the identification of relevant differences between diverse contexts and the most appropriate techniques to facilitate the legal and

psychosocial support of women and the LGBT community in each setting. This approach fostered collaboration and cooperation between local government actors, CSOs, and the community to advocate for the inclusion of technical and material support in development plans and increased awareness of the rights and needs of women, LGBT communities, and victims of GBV.

## **HIGH-IMPACT CRIMES**

The Activity collaborated with government entities and local, national, and international organizations to build the capacity of government officials and CSOs to provide legal and psychosocial support to victims of high-impact crimes, including forced disappearances of human rights defenders and social leaders (HRDSLs).

In order to strengthen the investigation and prosecution of high-impact crimes, JSP partnered with the United Nations' Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to facilitate a 120-hour virtual training for 34 members of FGN's Special Investigation Unit and six from the INMLCF on international standards and techniques, including victim profiling, for the investigation of human rights crimes and crimes committed against human rights defenders. As a result, the Special Investigation Unit efforts achieved the registration of 311 United Nations-verified HRDSLs cases and the prioritization of 112 of these. Unfortunately, mobility restrictions caused by COVID-19 and social unrest delayed the advancement of these cases in the judicial process during the last few months of the intervention.

The Activity also facilitated a 50-hour training for 140 public officials from the judicial branch, the FGN, and CSO representatives on the documentation, investigation, and prosecution of high-impact crimes against human rights defenders. Hoping to further strengthen their representation capacities, CCJ mentored five local organizations through training sessions on documentation and procedural accreditation of cases, handling evidence, and conducting analysis on criminal responsibility of possible perpetrators. Due to this mentorship, and with the support of the Ombudsman's Office and OHCHR, three CSOs successfully implemented these skills by documenting and reporting 10 cases involving 17 victims from the Nasa and Zenú indigenous communities, and another two cases involving four victims, to the FGN for appropriate investigation. In collaboration with Fundación Circulo de Estudios, the CCJ provided legal representation and psychosocial support to 76 victims of forced disappearance or displacement, including 34 people forcibly displaced in Turbo, Antioquia, and assassinated leaders of the Embera and Awa indigenous groups.

Seeking to ensure the sustainability of this activity, JSP conducted a study on the gaps and challenges judicial officials face during the investigation and prosecution of high-impact crimes through interviews with public officials from Córdoba, Chocó, and Antioquia, departments with a high number of human rights violations. The Activity widely disseminated the results and recommendations of this study among FGN officials and CSOs in all JSP-targeted areas.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE BUILDING OF PEACE

### *Human rights defenders and social leaders*

Through its rapid response component, JSP supported the PGN to implement Directive 002 of 2017 for the promotion and protection of HRDSLs by co-facilitating nine “Mesas por la Protección a la Vida” (Life Protection Roundtables) and the “Lidera la Vida” (Lead Life) campaign.

The regional roundtables brought together government actors, HRDSLs, social organizations, and representatives of ethnic and indigenous justice systems, among others, to discuss immediate actions for the protection of HRDSLs and the promotion of human rights. These spaces encouraged national and local actors to design and implement regional action plans for the institutionalization of the National Protection Unit at the local level, establish permanent follow-up roundtables to follow up on protective measures issued, support the development of Comprehensive Prevention and Protection Plans, and strengthen regional and local PGN offices. The *Lidera la Vida* campaign, implemented in collaboration with the Ombudsman’s Office and national and international organizations, brought together representatives from the highest levels of government to advocate for the protection and non-stigmatization of HRDSLs. The campaign hosted in-person events and promoted targeted messages on its website ([www.lideralavida.com](http://www.lideralavida.com)), social media, national and local radio, and television channels.

#### LIDERA LA VIDA PARTNERS

- The Office of the Ombudsman
- OHCHR, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Women
- Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement
- Association of Displaced Afro-Colombians
- Organization of American State’s Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia
- National Indigenous Organization of Colombia
- Pastoral Social – Cáritas Colombiana
- Sisma Mujer
- Colombian Federation of Departments
- El Espectador
- Caracol Television

These two initiatives helped position the rights of HRDSLs as a priority for the GOC resulting in the creation of the *Plan de Acción Oportuna* for the prevention and protection of HRDSLs and journalists. The Plan details concrete actions to identify and prevent situations placing these leaders at risk and promote a coordinated government response that accounts for the difference local contexts. Nonetheless, the implementation of these national and regional action plans should continue receiving the support of the international community.

In addition, JSP supported the PGN to advance 29 disciplinary processes against public officials accused of violating the rights of HRDSLs. These violations include homicide, stigmatization, and omission of official duties by members of the Armed Forces, National Police, and the National Protection United, among others.

### *Truth and Reconciliation*

The Activity also supported the CEV in its reconciliation efforts by facilitating events with families and communities of victims of forced disappearance to promote the recognition of these victims and their work, and foster coexistence and non-repetition through the right to truth. The Activity collaborated with Foros Semana to create the

*“Historias para cambiar la HISTORIA”* (Stories to Change HISTORY), a space for collective reflection. This initiative collected more than 50 stories of people and organizations working on human rights and the building of peace to highlight the hope, dignity, and solidarity that exists among Colombians. JSP facilitated several virtual discussions with CEV commissioners and members of the community to share some of these transformative stories (focused on gender and youth issues, justice, arts, and culture) and their impact on the transition to peace; more than 1,300 people attended these live events.

Finally, JSP supported the UBPD by:

- Facilitating capacity building activities for UBPD officials on strategy and management; effective communication; and search, recovery, and identification of missing persons.
- Establishing spaces for dialogue, “Circles of Knowledge,” between UBPD officials and family members to exchange information on the search and identification of victims.
- Creating the National Mass Graves, Illegal Cemeteries, and Gravesite Registry for the systematic classification of informal sources of information on presumed missing persons due to the armed conflict.
- Facilitating the registration and verification of almost 5,700 unidentified human remains in the INMLCF’s Disappeared Persons and Cadaver Network Information System.

# THE FUNDACIÓN ABRIGANDO SUEÑOS AND ITS VISION OF JUSTICE WITH A GENDER FOCUS IN SOUTHERN CÓRDOBA



PHOTO: Justice for a Sustainable Peace Activity

*"One of the most important achievements of this strategy was the strengthening of assistance with a differential and gender focus that responds to the reality of women in the territory and guarantees adequate and effective access to justice."*

— Yeimis Paternina,  
founder of the Fundación  
Abrigando Sueños

Four years ago, a group of women and men decided to create Abrigando Sueños, a foundation dedicated to providing protection and psychosocial support to women victims of GBV in Tierralta, a municipality in southern Córdoba with one of the highest levels of violence against women. Over the past year and with support from JSP, the foundation has provided legal representation to eight victims of domestic and sexual violence. Thanks to this support, 80 percent of the cases have progressed two or three stages in the procedural process, including two cases that reached the final stage and provided favorable decisions to the victims.

*"Abrigando Sueños helped us find justice. We didn't have the strength to fight for our rights and everything was going to stay as it was, without justice. But then justice came to my town, to my house, and now I am grateful for the foundation's willingness to help us move forward with my daughter. Now we are waiting for reparations and non-repetition."*

— Victim's mother, Tierralta

With the support of Corporación Humanas, one of the most recognized organizations in the defense of women's rights and gender justice in Colombia and a national partner of JSP, Abrigando Sueños designed and implemented a training plan for 125 prosecutors, judges, family commissioners, and public defenders from southern Córdoba to strengthen their capacities to improve access to justice for women victims of gender-based violence.

These trainings were possible thanks to the coordination enabled by the Local Justice Systems in each municipality, which bring together local justice actors and members of civil society, such as Abrigando Sueños, within each municipality to jointly resolve issues related to access to justice and GBV.

# LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## **Increase rural justice through a holistic and people-centered approach.**

Designing justice projects where all components are implemented systematically and are mindful of gender, indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and other cross-cutting issues, ensures delivery of justice services that are sensitive to people's needs. This holistic approach must be implemented with the help of multidisciplinary teams, including a communications team, to provide a greater breadth of responses and ensure effective communications with communities and partners, and among project staff.

**Empower victims to become leaders.** Support the needs of vulnerable groups while, at the same time, empowering them to be leaders and effective advocates of their rights. Promoting spaces for self- and mutual recognition ensures that vulnerable groups are able to actively participate in local justice systems.

**Continue promoting the transfer of knowledge between national and local actors.** Engaging national actors to build the capacity of local actors ensures the availability of organizations and public officials that are trained to support the needs of their communities. At the same time, national actors benefit from learning about the different contexts and particularities of each area. Key examples of this approach include the P2P methodology and the partnerships established between national CSOs, such as Sisma Mujer and Caribe Afirmativo, with local women's and LGBT organizations.

**Identify and strengthen regional anchors early on and ensure their continuous participation.** Local anchors should have the technical expertise and be recognized and respected members of their communities. Engaging these organizations from the start of the intervention facilitates the design and implementation of activities while ensuring sustainability of implementation as they support the contextualization of knowledge and initiatives and further empower other local organizations in carrying out their activities.

**Foster continuous dialogue with technical areas within national government entities.** Efforts to establish strong working relationships with technical experts are as important as the advocacy work carried out with elected or appointed officials to ensure the harmonization of actions and the sustainability of an intervention.

**Engage local actors and identify strategic cases before expanding.** Effective justice-related interventions rely on designs that respond to the socio, political, and economic particularities of each municipality. This can be more effectively achieved by partnering with local public and private actors and identifying strategic cases to promote a progressive buy-in and inform future expansion of activities to other municipalities and departments. Moreover, the type of public-private partnerships established by the

Activity where local businesses supported local justice providers, for example, demonstrated how the use of local resources could have a greater and more relevant impact.

**Ensure coordinated and collaborative interventions.** Engaging with other USAID projects and other international implementing actors ensures the design and implementation of harmonized and sustainable activities. Effective and continuous coordination with other implementors also reduces duplicative efforts and fatigue among local actors and communities.

**Utilize appropriate information and communications technology.** Using virtual platforms and other forms of communication became essential to continue implementation under government-imposed restrictions. However, identifying appropriate and relevant means is key to reaching remote, poor or marginalized communities who may have limited connectivity or access to information.



PHOTO: Justice for a Sustainable Peace Activity

Member of the community interacting with representative from the Office of the Ombudsman during a mobile justice session. Carepa, Antioquia. August 2019.

## ANNEX A. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

#	Code	Indicator Name	Life of Activity Target	Cumulative Results as of FY2021 Q2	Percentage Achieved
1	JSP-ObG-01	Grade of satisfaction of Activity beneficiaries that access justice offer at the local level based on orientation received for the resolution of their justice needs.	4.2/5.0	3.92/5.0*	93.3%
2	JSP-ObG-02	Grade of satisfaction of GBV victims in the effective delivery of justice services.	4.0/5.0	3.35/5.0*	83.8%
<b>Objective 1: Increased access to more effective, inclusive, and responsive justice-related services in conflict-affected regions of Colombia</b>					
3	JSP-Ob1-03	Number of JSP municipalities that achieve an increase in the local justice offer (administrative and formal) as a result of the work of Local Justice Committees.	32	30	93.8%
<b>1.1: Increased presence, capacity, staffing, funding, and other resources for select GOC justice sector institutions in conflict-affected departments and municipalities.</b>					
4	CC PPP/F-04	Value of funds allocated for access to justice activities in annual municipal budgets.	COP 1,135,981,606	COP 1,103,545,049*	97.10%
<b>1.2: Increased inter-institutional coordination between justice sector actors at the regional and local level.</b>					
5	JSP-Ob1-05	Number of judicial personnel trained with USG assistance (DR.1.3-1).	1,312	2,033*	155.0%
6	JSP-Ob1-06	Number of protection measures for victims of GBV (Ley 1257) ordered by Family Commissioner's Offices.	9,667	9,797	101.3%
<b>1.4: Establishment of effective, inclusive, and responsive rural justice services in select conflict-affected municipalities.</b>					
7	JSP-Ob1-07	Number of people served in mobile justice sessions supported by JSP outside of urban areas.	25,353	26,454	104.3%
<b>Objective 2: Citizen support for rule of law increased in conflict-affected regions.</b>					
8	JSP-Ob2-08	Number of disputes resolved by trained alternative dispute resolution providers in target areas.	19,574	21,127	107.9%

<b>2.3: Increased citizen use of formal and informal justice-related services that promote the rule of law.</b>						
9	JSP-Ob2-09	Number of cases in the special indigenous jurisdiction documented and disseminated by virtual means.		47	47	100.0%
<b>Objective 3: Judicial responses for victims of the armed conflict strengthened.</b>						
10	JSP-Ob3-10	Number of cases supported by US Government in FGN and PGN related to allegations of abuses against human rights defenders and social leaders that have progressed at least one procedural activity in the disciplinary and/or judicial process	FGN	36	45	125.0%
			PGN	29	29	100%
<b>3.1: Increased effectiveness and transparency in land restitution judicial processes.</b>						
11	JSP-Ob3-11	Number of adjudication orders included in sentences issued by land restitution judges and magistrates that do not have an adjudication resolution by ANT.		10	10	100.0%
<b>3.2: Impunity for conflict-related GBV cases addressed through strengthened judicial services and more engaged civil society (not to include work related to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace).</b>						
12	JSP-Ob3-12	Number of gender-related/sexual violence cases receiving investigative support that have progressed at least one sub-stage in the judicial process.		954	1,072	112.4%
<b>3.3: Impunity for crimes committed in the context of the armed conflict addresses through strengthened justice services and more engaged civil society (not to include work related to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace).</b>						
13	JSP-Ob3-13	Number of individuals from low-income or marginalized communities who received legal aid or victims' assistance with USG support (DR6.3-1).		4,518	4,536	100.4%
<b>Cross-cutting Tasks</b>						
14	CC PPP/FUNDS-14	Value of Leveraged Funds.		COP 3,000,000,000	COP 3,004,518,106	100.2%

\*This indicator was measured through October 2020 – completion of activities

### Notes on indicators with a deviation above or below 10 percent:

- JSP-ObG-02: Grade of satisfaction of GBV victims in the effective delivery of justice services

This indicator presents a deviation of 16.2 percent below its estimated target as it measures the perception of justice actors that intervene in the victims' cases. Unfortunately, the Activity was not able to collect data from all beneficiaries receiving services from actors across the board. In addition, people's perception is directly affected by the limited advancement of their cases, which they see as one of the most important factors affecting their satisfaction. Nonetheless, JSP concentrated its efforts in evaluating the level of satisfaction of victims who received assistance from CSOs, which shows a high level due to the direct support these CSOs provided to their communities.

- JSP-ObI-05: Number of judicial personnel trained with USG assistance (DR.1.3-1)

This indicator presents a deviation of 55.0 percent above since the total number includes personnel trained in land rights and restitution issues, topics not originally contemplated. Nonetheless, JSP identified this gap in knowledge during the implementation and adapted its strategy to strengthen this area.

- JSP-Ob3-10: Number of cases supported by USG in FGN and PGN related to allegations of abuses against human rights defenders and social leaders that have progressed at least one procedural activity in the disciplinary and/or judicial process

This indicator presents a deviation of 25.0 percent above the estimated amount since the FGN improved its tracking mechanisms and focused on increasing the investigative processes to facilitate advancements.

- JSP-Ob3-12: Number of GBV/SV cases receiving investigative support that have progressed at least one sub-stage in the judicial process.

This indicator presents a deviation of 12.4 percent above since the use of virtual communications facilitated the prioritization and monitoring of cases, especially in the municipalities of Bojayá en Chocó and Vigía del Fuerte in the department of Antioquia; Caldon, Caloto, Buenos Aires, Corinto, Miranda, Jambaló, and Toribío in Cauca; Bojayá and Riosucio in Chocó; Puerto Libertador, San José de Uré, and Montelíbano in Córdoba; and Puerto Leguizamo in Putumayo. These municipalities are particularly affected by social unrest and the presence of illegal armed groups, and have few, if any, roads limiting the constant monitoring of activities. In addition, the FGN increased its efforts to prioritize cases of GBV in 2020 and created three thematic areas to support domestic violence, sexual violence, and femicide. These efforts allowed follow-up meetings to be more effective.

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