

PazDiversa

Strengthening gender equality and participation to promote peace in Colombia

Introduction

In 2016, the Colombian Government and the former guerrilla group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP) signed a peace agreement. Since then, both progress and setbacks have been observed in the implementation of the agreed measures. Eight years on, progress has been slowest with measures aimed at women, people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, and ethnic communities. The PazDiversa project therefore seeks to help improve the conditions for implementing the peace agreement’s gender measures with regard to political participation and the Comprehensive Rural Reform, specifically for women and people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. In doing so, the project is making a contribution towards the principles of the German Government’s feminist development and foreign policy.

Our approach

The target group of the PazDiversa project comprises population groups directly affected by the armed conflict in the regions of Caquetá, Meta and Norte de Santander, and indirectly the entire population of these regions and the public institutions supporting them.

Mainstreaming the gender approach in the peace agreement in Colombia serves as both an example and a milestone at international level. It is also consistent with the recommendations of United Nations Resolution 1325 (2000), which calls for more direct involvement of women in security issues and peacebuilding.

However, the agreement’s achievements are being overshadowed by the sluggish implementation of its 130 gender-focused measures, only 52% of which had been carried out by 2022. The biggest challenges in this context relate to the inadequate participation of the rural population and its representatives in various areas of decision-making.

The current status of implementation demonstrates the necessity of carrying out the relevant gender-specific measures while upholding the principles of feminist policy, which address (1) non-discrimination and equal opportunities, (2) participation and empowerment, and (3) transparency and accountability towards vulnerable population groups.

Project name	Strengthening gender equality and participation to promote peace in Colombia (PazDiversa)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Budget	EUR 6,000,000
Project regions	Caquetá, Meta, Norte de Santander (Colombia)
Lead executing agency	Colombian Presidential Agency for International Cooperation (APC-Colombia)
Implementing partner	Vice Presidency of the Republic of Colombia
Duration	February 2023 – January 2026

The institutions involved in implementation include the Vice Presidency of the Republic of Colombia, the Ministry of Equality and Equity, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Agriculture and its directorate for rural women (*Dirección de la Mujer Rural*), the National Land Agency (ANT), the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP), and the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, particularly through its Women Entrepreneur Fund programme (iNNpulsa Colombia).



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Promoting political participation and the Comprehensive Rural Reform are key elements in driving the implementation of the final Peace Agreement in Colombia forward.

The project operates in the following thematic fields:

Output 1: Promoting participation and representation in decision-making areas

The political participation of women and people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities is strengthened within the gender-specific measures set out in the peace agreement. For example, barriers to political participation are identified and removed. In addition, the project improves the capacity of civil society stakeholders to monitor accountability for implementation of the relevant gender-focused measures and to cooperate with government actors.

Output 2: Securing the socio-economic resources needed to implement gender measures

The social and economic capacities of civil society stakeholders are developed to facilitate the implementation of gender-focused measures within the peace agreement, particularly with regard to the Comprehensive Rural Reform. This field promotes the formation of alliances with existing economic support programmes targeting women and people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. In addition, the technical and methodological capacities of government and civil society institutions are developed to support the creation of new initiatives for development programmes with a territorial approach, as provided for in the peace agreement.

Output 3: Changing gender biases and rights to reduce gender gaps

The project supports government institutions and civil society organisations that are working to promote implementation of the gender-focused measures, with a view to countering unequal power relations and gender-based discrimination as the peace agreement is executed. The aim is to develop a critical approach to gender roles, and to promote conflict transformation, non-violent communication, recognition of women's movements and different population groups in peacebuilding, and implementation of an intersectional approach. This field also promotes mechanisms for the protection and self-protection of women and people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, as well as psychosocial support for these groups in the framework of peacebuilding.

What we have achieved so far

- 416 people (women and LGBTIQ+ individuals) have improved their capacities for participation and representation of their political, economic and social interests.
- We have carried out training sessions designed to develop the capacities of civil society organisations with a view to strengthening the citizen supervisory bodies in the three project regions, enabling them to exercise social oversight and monitor the implementation of the gender-focused measures specified in the peace agreement.
- Advisory services have been provided to government and civil society stakeholders on integrating gender, sexual diversity and peacebuilding indicators in the development plans of the three project regions (Caquetá, Meta and Norte de Santander), and on boosting the socio-economic resources of the target groups.
- 533 persons have enhanced their ability to work against unequal power relations through creative dialogue, experience sharing, and in-person and virtual training on human rights, peacebuilding, self-protection measures, violence prevention and alternative models of masculinity.
- In Caquetá, Meta and Norte de Santander, specific risks to the physical integrity of LGBTIQ* activists have been identified. We have trained 121 individuals to assist in producing protection and self-protection plans.

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