

Colombia Case Study

2024 PBF Thematic Review: Synergies between Human Rights and Peacebuilding in PBF-supported Programming

Cristal Downing and Raphael Bodewig

This case study is an excerpt from a larger 2024 PBF Thematic Review examining synergies between human rights and peacebuilding. It examined a select sample of PBF programming – 92 projects implemented in 45 countries and territories – that were supported between 2017 and 2022, with a view to collecting best practices and lessons learned, and contributing to better understanding of how human rights and peacebuilding tools and strategies may complement each other in advancing peace and preventing conflict. This case study appears on pages 24 to 35 of the full report.

The Peacebuilding Fund

The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) was established in 2006 by the Secretary-General at the request of the General Assembly as the primary financial instrument of the UN to sustain peace in countries at risk of or affected by violent conflict. The PBF provides funds to UN entities, governments, regional organizations, multilateral banks, national multi-donor trust funds, and civil society organizations. From 2006 to 2023, the PBF has allocated nearly \$2 billion to 72 recipient countries.

Since 2006, PBSO has commissioned Thematic Reviews to examine past practices and promising innovations in peacebuilding, and to reflect on the performance of the PBF in designated areas. The Review that this case study was part of was commissioned by PBSO in partnership with OHCHR and the Government of Switzerland. Research was led by United Nations University Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR), and conducted between January and October 2023. Field research was conducted in Colombia in February 2024. Full methodology details are provided in the full Thematic Review.

Colombia, home to Latin America's longest standing conflict, has received support for dozens of current and recent PBF-funded projects focused on building and sustaining peace. Many of these projects have shared a focus on promoting human rights and justice, which are seen as critical to addressing and resolving the conflict dynamics in Colombia. PBF support has enabled the initiation and expansion of the country's transitional justice process at several stages and contributed to advancing the rights and participation of women and marginalized groups (including rural, indigenous, and Afro-Colombian communities).

These projects have not only contributed to greater rights advancement and protection but have also been a means of taking forward commitments of the Colombian peace process. As such, the promotion and advancement of human rights has been deeply intertwined with broader peacebuilding and conflict prevention goals. The Colombia case study presents one of the strongest examples of complementarities and synergies between human rights and peacebuilding in the 2024 Thematic Review.

The full Thematic Review is available at: <https://unu.edu/cpr/report/2024-pbf-thematic-review-synergies-between-human-rights-and-peacebuilding-pbf-supported>.

Figure 3: Location of Projects in the Colombia Case Study



The projects in this case study were implemented across a wide range of departments in Colombia. The three projects related to the Truth Commission had nationwide coverage, with CSO outreach activities in multiple departments. The project [PBF/IRF-266](#) was implemented in Meta; [PBF/COL/B-1](#) in Chocó, Nariño, and Norte de Santander; [PBF/IRF-400](#) in Chocó, Putumayo, Valle del Cauca, and Cauca; and [PBF/IRF-401](#) in Cauca.

In addition, the projects examined offer important programmatic insights into several key thematic areas considered in the 2024 Review.¹ The projects on transitional justice, women’s participation and gender equality, and on supporting inclusion for marginalized groups offer important insights into ways to improve the catalytic effect of PBF programming, including through iterative programming and attention to CSO capacity-building and linkage strategies. The case study also features several innovative projects exploring ways to strengthen government presence and protection avenues in areas dominated by non-state armed groups.

Background: Human Rights and Peacebuilding Context in Colombia

The peace agreement signed in 2016 by the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC-EP) marked a turning point in the history of the Colombian conflict. Civil conflict had ravaged the country for more than five decades, causing significant loss of life and limiting the population’s political and economic freedoms, particularly in certain regions and for vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities, women, those who identify as LGBTQI+, and others.²

The 2016 agreement was notable in addressing the root causes of the conflict, which included human rights violations and a lack of accountability. In particular, and as is important for understanding the projects examined, the 2016 peace agreement included strong provisions and chapters related to “comprehensive rural reform”, enhancing the political participation and inclusion of women and ethnic minorities (specifically Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities), and transitional justice.³

A comprehensive transitional justice system was launched with the signing of the agreement. Among its mechanisms, the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition (henceforth the “Truth Commission”) was established in 2017.⁴ The Final Report of the Truth Commission was published in June 2022 and the Commission was dissolved in August 2022, leaving a Monitoring Committee to disseminate the report and give continuity to its legacy.⁵

Perhaps because human rights concerns were so interwoven within the peace agreement itself and were also prominent in the Government of Colombia’s approach to the peace process, Colombia stands out as a country where human rights have been a central feature of the peacebuilding discussion. This includes discussions of the peace process of Colombia at an international level. The Government has raised transitional justice and other human rights issues relevant to the peace process in several sessions of the Peacebuilding Commission over the last several years, prompting overt consideration of the links between human rights, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention before the PBC in ways that are atypical (see box ‘Colombia before the Peacebuilding Commission’).

Notwithstanding the centrality of human rights within the peace agreement and peacebuilding process in Colombia, political and conflict dynamics have often challenged progress on these benchmarks in practice. Many communities still face substantial security challenges as armed groups new and old struggle over territory, continuing

to violate human rights and threatening to derail progress made through implementation of the agreement provisions. Some areas of the country that had seen a period of relative calm in the immediate wake of the agreement are now facing dynamics of conflict relatively similar to the pre-agreement period, including child recruitment, flourishing drug production and other illegal economies, and “confinements” in which armed groups force citizens to stay in their homes or communities.⁶

Elsewhere, some areas in which the FARC-EP was a stable presence now experience new battles between FARC dissident groups, the long-standing Ejército de Liberación Nacional paramilitary successor groups, and the Armed Forces.⁷ Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities have been disproportionately affected by this resurgence of violence. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the ongoing violence displaced or “confined” around 90,000 Colombians in the first half of 2023 alone – two-thirds of whom were members of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities.⁸

Many of these armed groups have threatened or committed violence against those who are on the frontlines of implementing the peace agreement, including social leaders and HRDs.⁹ In addition, there have been continued threats against other groups such as LGBTQI+ and ethnic minorities, and high levels of violence against former members of the FARC-EP in the process established by the agreement to support their transition to civilian life.¹⁰

The momentum behind seeing through the 2016 peace agreement has also fluctuated with changing political dynamics. President Juan Manuel Santos, who shepherded and signed the peace agreement, left office in 2018. He was succeeded by President Ivan Duque, backed by a party that opposed the peace agreement. At the local level, there was limited will and few resources to strengthen human rights and peacebuilding mechanisms – especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Colombia before the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)

Created in 2005, the PBC is currently comprised of 31 Member States, including the five permanent members of the Security Council; top financial and troop contributors to UN missions, Agencies, Funds and Programmes; and additional members elected by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the Security Council.¹¹ The PBC is supported by one of the three branches of PBSO.

The PBC has become an important forum for mobilizing political, technical, and financial support to countries and regions facing peacebuilding challenges. It also provides a space for sharing lessons learned and facilitating collaboration across regions.¹² In addition, important to considerations of the human rights and peacebuilding nexus, the twin resolutions on Sustaining Peace identified a “bridging role” for the PBC among different entities and organs of the UN system.¹³ It also reaffirmed that one of the main purposes of the PBC was “to promote an integrated, strategic and coherent approach to peacebuilding, noting that security, development and human rights are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing”.¹⁴ Nonetheless, the PBC operates by consensus and some of its Member States do not see human rights as within the PBC’s remit. Past reporting and interviewees for this Thematic Review observed that human rights remain a sensitive topic within the PBC, and there are limitations on how much human rights themes are overtly brought into PBC discussions and documents.¹⁵ Overtures by the HRC to deepen institutional links – through a recurring resolution that invites the Chair of the PBC to brief the HRC – have been rebuffed annually since September 2021.¹⁶

However, one way that human rights and peacebuilding issues have appeared before the PBC has been at the request of Member States, in both country- or region-specific and thematic sessions.¹⁷ Colombia has been a prominent example of this, raising issues of transitional justice, attacks against HRDs, and other human rights issues in no less than five discussions before the PBC since 2016.¹⁸ Among them, both Colombia and The Gambia presented at a PBC discussion focused on transitional justice’s role within peacebuilding in April 2023.¹⁹ The discussion touched on the challenges of dealing with past human rights abuses, including blocked constitutional reform and the influence of former elites in the security sector.²⁰

While these are positive examples of practice, they have so far been the minority. In the absence of larger structural reforms to the workings of the PBC (which would be at the discretion of its members), the initiative of countries like Colombia are likely to remain the most prominent way that human rights and peacebuilding issues are brought before the PBC.²¹ The PBC’s reluctance to engage on human rights has been viewed as a significant impediment to encouraging synergies between human rights and peacebuilding. As one senior UN official observed, “the PBC is more than a talkshop – it is viewed as a way to influence what is happening in a country”.²² As such, the same official observed, the reluctance to engage on human rights themes could present a “larger challenge” to surfacing either tensions or opportunities in addressing linked human rights and peacebuilding issues in a given country.

In June 2022, Colombia elected its first left-wing president, Gustavo Petro. Petro came to power with promises to bring about peace in part through full implementation of the 2016 agreement, including its human rights-centred objectives. In late 2022, he attempted to expand the peace process by proposing separate peace talks with other armed groups beyond the FARC (sometimes referred to as the “Total Peace” strategy).

Projects Examined in Colombia

A broad spectrum of UN entities has been present in Colombia for many years. The United Nations Verification

Mission was established by the UN Security Council in July 2017 to verify the 2016 peace agreement.

The efforts of the UN to build peace and promote human rights in recent years have been significantly guided by the benchmarks established in the peace agreement. Since President Petro announced his “Total Peace” strategy, UN entities and partners have continued to focus mainly on projects that contribute to the implementation of the 2016 agreement, but with a view to advancing any expanded peace process.²³ Supporting the implementation of the agreement (per the UN mandate) is seen as a way to demonstrate to signatories of future agreements that any commitments

made are credible and can be sustained, and to enable the Colombian public to realize the dividends of peace.²⁴

Most of the international funding for peacebuilding work in Colombia is guided through the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), which had supported 290 projects, worth \$188 million, since its creation in 2016 through October 2023. The PBF and the MPTF coordinate closely and, since 2018, the head of the MPTF also coordinates PBF in-country activities. Together, they aim to ensure the two funds complement each other, as well as the initiatives of bilateral and other multilateral donors. Half of the projects examined were coordinated and funded through the MPTF; however, some were funded by the PBF directly through GPI and YPI windows.²⁵

The seven projects included in this case study are only a sample of the projects funded by the MPTF and PBF in Colombia in the last five years, but they do include nearly all of the PBF-supported projects in this timespan that have a significant human rights component.²⁶

The seven projects address the range of UN priorities in Colombia, including (as discussed in turn) a focus on transitional justice; on increasing the participation and protection of women and marginalized groups; and on enabling state institutions to reach and advance the rights of those in rural areas. Another trend across all of these categories of work was an effort to expand peacebuilding across diverse geographies and to extend the reach of the peace agreement, and related peace processes to underserved or marginalized populations.

Transitional Justice

Three of the seven projects included in this case study were funded in sequence to support the establishment and successive work of the Truth Commission. All three projects were coordinated by the MPTF and implemented jointly by UNDP and OHCHR.²⁷ A fourth GPI project ([PBF/IRF-266](#)) also had strong transitional justice themes. This is discussed in the subsequent section, given that it also has strong themes related to advancing gender equality and women's access to justice and participation.²⁸

The first of the three projects supporting the Truth Commission, [PBF/COL/A-3](#), enabled the Commission to be established, providing support for personnel and any other resources or capacities needed.²⁹ The second, [PBF/COL/C-1](#), supported the next stages of the Truth Commission's mandate and activities, including support for evidence-gathering and research, efforts to reach out to those in remote areas, as well as activities to support the

Commission's Final Report. The third, [PBF/COL/A-5](#), (which was ongoing at the time of research) supports dissemination and awareness of the Final Report, particularly among rural communities. It also supports a "Monitoring Committee" tasked with ensuring that the recommendations are realized in policy and in practice.

Interlocutors lauded the Truth Commission as a model for a nationally owned and supported transitional justice mechanism. It was seen as a central commitment of the 2016 agreement and something that – if it succeeded in addressing past grievances and fostering reconciliation – could strongly promote peace. Nonetheless, the transitional justice process in Colombia has not been an easy one due to fluctuating political will and corresponding financial commitment, ongoing violence, and a lack of widespread awareness, especially among the rural population.

PBF support appeared crucial in keeping the Truth Commission going at successive stages of the work. In the initial phase, while there was relatively strong political will, the Government lacked capacity to rapidly support the judicial mechanisms and entities that would be necessary to take it forward.³⁰ In the second stage, with greater attention being given to the COVID-19 crisis and also a weaker degree of political will, PBF support kept the Commission going. In the third and final phase, with no other donors yet materializing, the roll-out of the Commission's findings to some of the most conflict-affected areas would have been impossible to realize without the PBF's funding. Without this degree of outreach and implementation follow-up, there was a risk that the Truth Commission Final Report could end up "dead on arrival".³¹ Overall, interviewees viewed PBF support as a lifeline that kept this flagship part of the peace process going.

The work of the Truth Commission, including that supported through the third project, is still ongoing, so it is difficult to appraise the full impact of these projects. Studies already suggest that access and connectivity issues have contributed to limited awareness of the Commission in the most conflict-affected areas.³² The last, ongoing project in this series seeks to address this issue by increasing understanding of the Final Report across all regions and departments, including rural parts. Nonetheless, given limited Internet and physical access, and limited awareness of the Commission in the most conflict-affected areas, this will prove challenging – particularly in the one-year time frame envisioned for this project.³³ As a result, it is difficult to judge whether the intended impact and legacy of the Truth Commission will be sustained.

Table 2: Projects in the Colombia Case Study

| Project Code/ Duration | Title* | Implementing Agency |
|--|--|---------------------------|
| PBF/COL/A-3 (2018) | Support for the Commission for the Clarification of the Truth – Phase 1 | UNDP, OHCHR |
| PBF/COL/C-1 (2019-2021) | Support for the Commission for the Clarification of the Truth – Phase 2 | UNDP, OHCHR |
| PBF/COL/A-5 (2022-2023) | Support for the Commission for the Clarification of the Truth, and the finalization and dissemination of its legacy and final report – Phase 3 | OHCHR, UNDP |
| PBF/IRF-266 (2018-2020) | Territorial model for non-repetition guarantees and citizen empowerment of youth and women victims of sexual violence and forced disappearance during the armed conflict | OHCHR, UN Women |
| PBF/IRF-400 (2021-2022) | “Allanando el camino”: Women and LGBTQI+ people paving a path from justice and memory toward sustaining peace in Colombia | Christian Aid Ireland |
| PBF/IRF-401 (2021-2022) | Young and female peacebuilders in northern Cauca. Tradition meets innovation in community-led approaches to protection | Norwegian Refugee Council |
| PBF/COL/B-1 (2021-2023) | Territorial transformation towards a free and safe environment for human rights defenders, social leaders, and reincorporation of ex-combatants | UNDP, UNODC |

*Titles in Spanish were translated by author.

Despite this, stakeholders viewed PBF support to the Truth Commission as both strategic and necessary.³⁴ Transitional justice and redress of past human rights abuses was such a central element of the 2016 peace agreement that had it failed, it would have risked de-legitimizing the process as a whole. This would have likely slowed momentum for legal reform and implementation of other parts of the process, and might also have negatively impacted the prospects for expanding the peace process to include other groups.

Transitional justice and redress of past human rights abuses was such a central element of the 2016 peace agreement that had efforts surrounding the Truth Commission failed, it would have risked delegitimizing the process as a whole.

Expanding Access to Rights and Participation for Marginalized Groups

Enhancing the access and participation of women and previously marginalized groups is a cross-cutting theme that can be seen across all of the Colombia projects, and interwoven throughout the strategic documents on Colombia.³⁵ This is seen as important for carrying forward commitments to expand political participation and rights – particularly for women and marginalized groups – in the 2016 peace agreement.

Although this is a cross-cutting theme across all of the Colombia work, three projects in particular help illustrate some of the strategies and learning within this stream of work:

- [PBF/IRF-266](#) (implemented by UN Women and OHCHR with local CSOs ASOMUDEM and Yo Puedo, among others) aimed to expand access to justice, including transitional justice, for women, particularly victims of forced disappearance and sexual violence, in the municipality of Vista Hermosa, Meta.



The three iterative projects related to the Truth Commission supported the full range of activities of the Truth Commission, including outreach and consultation with victims of past violence and in conflict-affected areas, as captured in the photo above. Photo provided by OHCHR Colombia.

- [PBF/IRF-400](#) (implemented by Christian Aid Ireland with local CSO partners) supported LGBTQI+ people and Afro-Colombian and Indigenous women in conflict-affected areas to participate in decision-making around implementation of the peace agreement and other peacebuilding processes.
- [PBF/IRF-401](#) (implemented by the Norwegian Refugee Council) worked with CSO and media partners to promote the political participation of youth and women in the conflict-affected northern Cauca region.

In addition, there were positive success stories from the projects, offering best practices for future programming. Project stakeholders and the independent evaluation of the Vista Hermosa project ([PBF/IRF-266](#)) found measurable success in increasing participation and access to justice among women.³⁶ These achievements were credited to the interconnection between the project’s political participation strategy and its socioeconomic components (discussed further in the subsequent section).

The two other projects also showed demonstrable effects, more via the way that the projects as a whole supported CSO development and linkages than due to any single activity or component in itself. The project [PBF/IRF-400](#)

helped reinforce and strengthen the LGBTQI+ and women’s rights groups involved. Linking the two groups helped to nurture the relatively newer LGBTQI+ groups, while both benefited from identifying synergies between the two movements and from the capacity-building and empowerment activities.³⁷

Interviewees and the evaluation of the project focused on women and youth in the northern Cauca region ([PBF/IRF-401](#)) noted a similar positive effect in terms of empowering women’s groups. The project offered the first opportunity to unite in women-only dialogue spaces, which then raised awareness and led to the creation of community council mechanisms to counter domestic and intra-community violence against women and girls.³⁸

Another notable feature of these three projects is that the inclusion strategies both targeted diverse groups and underserved areas. All three took place in areas hardest hit by the conflict, among them, some quite remote communities. As a result, these three projects helped respond to the double vulnerability and marginalization of the groups in question. One of the greatest challenges in Colombia has been realizing the 2016 peace agreement’s promise to expand participation and inclusion, and ensure

that any peace dividends reach rural and conflict-affected areas. **Because these projects targeted vulnerable groups in conflict-affected and remote areas, stakeholders viewed them as extremely important in realizing the aims of the peace process and contributing to future conflict prevention.**

Strengthening the State and Community-Based Protection

In 2022, about half of all global killings of HRDs took place in Colombia.³⁹ In addition to representing a serious human rights concern, this protection gap was viewed as undermining the credibility of the peace process: “In the territory, people see and feel very little of the peace agreement. They do, however, see the threats and killings of human rights defenders,” one UN official observed.⁴⁰

Two recent projects appeared to directly respond to this trend. One of the core aims of the project [PBF/COL/B-1](#) (implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UNDP) was to try to strengthen state responses and control in conflict-affected areas. This was not unique to this project – many of the projects in Colombia worked with state entities to strengthen their responses, whether as related to justice or transitional justice services, or to fulfil their duties in terms of protection. The project [PBF/COL/B-1](#) is notable because it is trying to strengthen the state’s ability to address criminality and threats to civilians in areas that are among the most affected by criminal and armed group violence – the Pacific region on the Venezuelan border.⁴¹

The training sessions organized through this project provided opportunities for the Interior Ministry’s unit dedicated to the protection of HRDs to attend workshops and establish connections in remote communities, in some cases for the first time.⁴² UNDP representatives expressed their hope that this direct engagement between the state entity and the communities, paired with the targeted support of the CSOs in the area, could lead to a more effective state response in areas that are under non-state armed group (NSAG) control.⁴³

In addition to these state-strengthening measures, the project [PBF/COL/B-1](#) also provided resources to communities at risk, including self-protection training and provision of communications equipment to enable rapid response to threats by non-state armed actors. A similar community-based approach was taken in the northern Cauca project ([PBF/IRF-401](#)). This project recognized that armed groups thrived in the absence of the state, in part, because they could exploit disorganized and impoverished communities

for recruitment and illicit activities. In response, the project aimed to strengthen the community’s social fabric, to reinforce and expand civic space, and to empower women and youth to more effectively organize as a means of self-protection.⁴⁴

Both [PBF/COL/B-1](#) and [PBF/IRF-401](#) had recently closed at the time of research, so it was difficult to determine project results. Given recent conflict dynamics and continued state weakness, some experts and observers suggested that greater investment in community protection schemes and support for HRDs should continue to be prioritized in Colombia. The approach taken so far by many peacebuilders and partners in Colombia has been to try to do this through extending and strengthening the presence of the state; this is not limited to the efforts in the two projects listed above.

Linkages with ESCR

Programming in Colombia has had a strong nexus with ESCR. The CCA for Colombia explicitly notes that “lack of access to economic, social, and cultural rights for these populations affects the exercise of their civil and political rights, creating conditions for the perpetuation of violence and maintaining barriers to the strengthening of the state in these areas”.⁴⁵ More than half of the projects examined placed socioeconomic needs at the core of the project design and strategy – with elements like livelihood support or efforts to improve access to health care, education, land, and property positioned as integral to the peacebuilding strategies in question. Two rationales for the centrality of ESCR in peacebuilding in Colombia stood out.

Improved access to education, health, and sustainable livelihoods among women in Vista Hermosa made the peace agreement’s dividends demonstrable for the first time – increasing its perceived legitimacy.

First, given the substantial attention to economic and social issues within the peace agreement, promoting and advancing ESCR was seen as central to advancing the peace process and to neutralizing conflict drivers. The peace agreement contained significant chapters related to rural livelihoods and land reform, reducing gaps and inequity in education, health and public services, economic reintegration of combatants and conflict-affected regions, as well as cultural and environmental concerns.⁴⁶ Many of the PBF-supported projects emphasized the way that

project components related to advancing socioeconomic conditions or rights helped realize the peace agreement's commitments. For example, one implementing partner in the Vista Hermosa project ([PBF/IRF-266](#)) observed that the beneficiaries only appeared to perceive the peace agreement as succeeding, and bringing something to their lives, through the project's socioeconomic components. Through this, there was a realization, they said, that the peace process "not only provides amnesties and assistance to the demobilized perpetrators" – but also brought opportunities for themselves.⁴⁷ Improved access to education, health, and sustainable livelihoods among women in Vista Hermosa made the peace agreement's dividends demonstrable for the first time – increasing its perceived legitimacy. These perspectives, and development of similar programming, will be important to keep in mind if the ongoing peace process enables the demobilization of further groups, and successive waves of transitional justice.

The project [PBF/COL/B-1](#) (implemented by UNODC and UNDP) presented a slightly different rationale, but one that is equally important for understanding how a focus on economic rights or components can advance conflict prevention. It was focused on responding to threats to HRDs and to communities by NSAGs by addressing the conditions that led to the empowerment of these NSAGs. This included both extending and strengthening the reach of the state and also trying to encourage sustainable and legal livelihood options – the lack of which had enabled illicit activities and groups to thrive in the targeted areas.⁴⁸ The project incorporated substantial development and sustainable livelihood activities, including vocational training, financial assistance to smallholder farmers, and seed funding for small community cooperatives. These were portrayed as a way to empower those communities both economically and politically, and a way to counter or negate some of the underlying economic drivers in conflict-affected areas.⁴⁹

Second, implementing partners observed that **addressing socioeconomic rights can be a prerequisite to pursuing other human rights objectives, such as encouraging greater political participation.**⁵⁰ In the Vista Hermosa project ([PBF/IRF-266](#)), which attempted to address sexual and gender-based violence, the first stage focused on improving livelihood options for SGBV victims, particularly women, for example, through provision of seed funding for entrepreneurship and job or skills training,⁵¹ as well as other activities that allowed participants better access to health care and childcare. Without basic livelihood and family care necessities, women would not have the time or resources to participate in additional political or public engagement.⁵²

As one of the staff members working on the Vista Hermosa project observed, "It was hard [for the beneficiaries] to participate in politics without an income."⁵³ As such, attention to women's socioeconomic rights and needs, became a way to advance political participation and leadership, and to enable victims to bring their cases to the transitional justice system.⁵⁴

The results from [PBF/IRF-400](#), which sought to increase participation of LGBTQI+ people and Afro-Colombian and Indigenous women from conflict-affected regions, offered similar evidence. An implementing CSO representative highlighted that the socioeconomic component was needed so that members of the very recently formed local LGBTQI+ NGOs were able to continually attend workshops. Since their NGO work and advocacy were on a voluntary basis and they worked other full-time jobs, targeted livelihood assistance was a prerequisite to being able to "afford" capacity-building on political mobilization and advocacy. "It's hard to capacitate them on transitional justice or mental health and psychosocial support when they don't know where their next meal is coming from," one implementing partner explained.⁵⁵

"It's hard to capacitate them on transitional justice or mental health and psychosocial support when they don't know where their next meal is coming from." – Implementing partner on why attention to socioeconomic needs is important.

Beyond meeting basic financial and resource needs, those involved argued that encouraging awareness of ESCR also contributed to psychological empowerment, which then enabled beneficiaries to demand their rights. An example of this could be seen in the workshops provided in the Vista Hermosa project ([PBF/IRF-266](#)), which had a significant emphasis on socioeconomic rights issues: the workshops sponsored as part of this project attempted to raise participants' awareness of the significance of unpaid household labour, their sexual and reproductive rights and health, and, in some cases, their role as contributor to the household's income.⁵⁶ According to both the implementing partners and the independent evaluation, women who participated in these workshops left more economically and psychologically empowered.⁵⁷ This enabled them to contest



Key themes of the 2016 peace agreement were to encourage transitional justice and accountability processes, and to increase the participation and inclusion of women. These themes were strongly represented in PBF-supported projects in Colombia, including in the [PBF/COL/C-1](#) project depicted above, supporting women to participate in the activities of the Truth Commission. Photo provided by UNDP Colombia.

discriminatory patterns in their relationships and take on leadership roles in their communities.⁵⁸ One implementing partner observed that this contributed to long-lasting impact: it created a “turning point in their [beneficiaries] lives. It changed their idea of what they were capable of doing”.⁵⁹

One outstanding issue for these types of activities is that there was not always a clear linkage between the socioeconomic components and either the peacebuilding or human rights goals being advanced. Some PBF economic support activities, such as livelihood projects for community members including former members of the FARC-EP, were implemented separately from other peacebuilding components of the project, and also were not clearly identified as advancing socioeconomic rights (as opposed to simply providing economic benefits). **While socioeconomic components can be crucial for advancing human rights and peacebuilding goals, it is important to make sure the linkages to the underlying rights issues are there and are clearly followed through in project implementation.**

Findings: What Did We Learn?

While actors in other contexts described siloing between the human rights and peacebuilding communities, these two communities are solidly aligned in Colombia, and integrated with each other in terms of national and international actors. The consensus from stakeholders interviewed was that **human rights and peacebuilding are inextricably linked in Colombia – peace cannot be built and sustained if human rights are not upheld, and vice versa.**⁶⁰ In all the projects examined, human rights are consistently addressed and carried throughout the project design, often so seamlessly that this focus cannot be distinguished from the overall peacebuilding approach. Those interviewed said it was conceptually difficult to separate out human rights from peacebuilding in Colombia, given its central place within the ongoing peace process and across UN programming and initiatives.

Because of the strong anchorage of human rights within the 2016 peace agreement, pursuing key human rights objectives – including advancing transitional justice, addressing the rights of marginalized groups and socioeconomic inequity, and advancing women’s participation and gender equality –

were all seen as integral to advancing peacebuilding and conflict prevention in Colombia. They were ways to demonstrate to the population the dividends of peace and were also conceptualized as a means of addressing root causes in ways that would prevent conflict recurrence.

The deep integration of human rights and peacebuilding approaches in Colombia is facilitated by the country's robust national peacebuilding architecture, which includes a range of human rights components, from transitional justice to monitoring and reporting on human rights violations.⁶¹ However, ensuring that this national architecture reaches conflict-affected communities where human rights violations have taken place remains a challenge, and should be prioritized. The limited reach of the state and barriers to accessing conflict-affected areas has made it difficult to fully implement several of the peace agreement's provisions, including those related to transitional justice, rural reform, inclusion, and protection, both for civilians and reconciled combatants.

The significant challenges that the security situation presents to human rights and peacebuilding work in Colombia made PBF support all the more valuable. Across many of the projects examined, PBF support enabled key justice, rights, and peace initiatives to be extended to areas that are most directly affected by the conflict, but because of insecurity and inaccessibility are often least likely to receive attention and support. Human rights advocates and civil society argued that more support for areas suffering from extreme violence (for example, the communities targeted by [PBF/COL/B-1](#)) or underserved areas or groups that have been historically excluded, such as women (as addressed in [PBF/IRF-401](#), [PBF/IRF-266](#)) is needed. Given that greater consideration of rural and conflict-affected areas and of women were central commitments of the 2016 agreement, **the availability of the PBF to fund such work even in high-risk areas helped support the realization of the peace agreement.** The relative risk tolerance of PBF as a donor, and willingness to invest in innovation added value to its contributions, even in a donor landscape as crowded as that in Colombia.

PBF contributions also helped fill gaps and advance priorities of the 2016 agreement in other ways, as illustrated by its work on transitional justice. PBF support at each stage in the work of the Truth Commission was essential in helping to carry forward this flagship element of the peace process. Even though the legacy of this transitional justice process is yet uncertain, there was consensus among those interviewed – UN officials, civil society, and other peacebuilders – that PBF support for the Truth Commission

was extremely important within the Colombia context. Given the central role of human rights in the peace process, failure to advance transitional justice provisions of the 2016 agreement would have had knock-on effects for both rights protection and conflict prevention in Colombia.

Given the central role of human rights in the peace process, failure to advance transitional justice provisions of the 2016 agreement would have had knock-on effects for both rights protection and conflict prevention in Colombia.

In addition to these top-level findings, the Colombia case study also provided a number of programmatic insights that may guide future investments, either in Colombia or other countries:

- **Serial or iterative funding may help maximize impact**

PBF prioritizes support for projects with catalytic potential. The core model set up in PBF funding provisions is to support projects with an average duration of two to three years, with the hope that they will continue to catalyse successive effects, or be taken up by other funding sources after completion. The support provided to the three Truth Commission-related projects suggests a slightly different model. **The results suggest that in some situations, supporting serial or iterative projects, which are distinct projects but build towards related objectives, may enhance the catalytic effect and offer a more strategic approach to peacebuilding.** Funding of the Truth Commission over three consecutive projects certainly allowed for investment over a longer period of time, addressing some of the potential issues of sustainability. The PBF support for the Truth Commission across these three projects extended from January 2018 to August 2023, just over five-and-a-half years. This is a far cry from the average project duration in this sample of just under two years (21 months). The longer timespan was necessary to realize a project as ambitious as standing up a comprehensive, nationwide Truth Commission, which would attempt to kick-start reconciliation and address violations stretching back decades.

However, the benefit went beyond extension of time. To fulfill its mandate, the Truth Commission had to grow and evolve alongside the larger peace process. Having three

interconnected but distinct projects allowed for learning and refinement of design along the way. Without this evolving or iterative approach, the projects would have been less impactful.

Given the focus on catalytic impact, PBF should ensure that it is not simply funding longer duration projects. This iterative model does not contradict that – each of the Truth Commission projects had a discrete contribution and focus, such that, although connected, they were unique projects in themselves. However, iterative funding may help to advance change in areas of human rights and peacebuilding that require continued, iterative pressure, and/or that require adjustment in order to get around roadblocks. This model of iterative support could increase the impact of PBF investments in human rights in other countries and areas, while also partly responding to issues of sustainability. These issues are revisited in the sections on catalytic effects and sustainability in parts 4 B and 4 C.

- **Supporting the capacity of and linkages between CSOs may prove to be durable investments**

In discussions of the LGBTQI+ project ([PBF/IRF-400](#)) and the project in Vista Hermosa ([PBF/IRF-266](#)), representatives of lead implementing agencies spoke of how their work with local, small and, in some cases, informal CSOs enabled these organizations to formalize and build capacity. This positioned the organizations to sustain work and impact after the projects were completed and increased capacity to receive additional funding for expanded activities.⁶² After both projects (as well as [PBF/IRF-401](#)) partner CSOs sought follow-up funding with some success.⁶³ Furthermore, lead implementing CSO partners based in Bogotá reported that the projects had left them better positioned to work with national entities, such as the Special Jurisdiction for Peace,⁶⁴ and with stronger relationships to continue work on women’s and LGBTQI+ rights at both national and local levels.⁶⁵ The promotion of local organizations is both appropriate and necessary in an environment where expanded participation and inclusion are priorities for peacebuilding, and where access can be challenging for external actors.

A second, unexpected outcome of PBF efforts was to link previously distinct civil society actors at the national level, as seen in [PBF/IRF-400](#). The project allowed for substantial collaboration between organizations working on human rights at the national and local levels, and as a result, connected rights movements that were previously siloed. Although not anticipated in the project design phase, connecting newer, less established LGBTQI+ activists with well-established women’s rights movements in Colombia helped nurture and support the LGBTQI+ movement.⁶⁶ Civil

society members involved said they came out of the project stronger and better positioned to realize their work well beyond the project.⁶⁷

The Vista Hermosa project ([PBF/IRF-266](#)) played a similar linkage role connecting a better-established victims’ association (ASOMUDEM) with a relatively new, but tech-savvy young women’s group (Yo Puedo).⁶⁸ Bringing the two together led to the formation of an intergenerational alliance beyond the project’s scope, creating a unified, intergenerational women’s rights advocacy community.⁶⁹

These two examples suggest that **the ability of CSOs to carry out independent or joint human rights and peacebuilding work well beyond a project’s lifespan may be the real catalytic impact of these investments.** The implementing partners within Colombia seem to have internalized this lesson well in their project conception and design; nonetheless, it is worth highlighting as a best practice within the field.

- **Greater focus on socioeconomic rights components may yield advances in political participation, rights reinforcement, and conflict prevention**

Overall, in Colombia, socioeconomic components were seen as advancing civil and political rights, countering sources of violence, reinforcing the Government, and giving legitimacy to the peace agreement. Addressing gaps in ESCR helped realize commitments of the 2016 peace agreement, increasing its legitimacy among affected populations. Socioeconomic support in conflict-affected communities also helped to reinforce the Government and address some of the economic drivers or root causes of conflict, thus contributing to conflict prevention.

In addition, and even more broadly applicable, the project strategies and preliminary results suggest that **advancement of ESCR can be a lynchpin for realizing other civil and political rights.** Results from several of the projects that sought to address exclusion or lack of participation of marginalized groups, of victims and of women suggested that it may be necessary to address socioeconomic, psychological, or cultural needs and gaps first, in order to empower them to pursue greater political participation or to contribute to other peacebuilding aims. This suggests an important role for advancing ESCR in peacebuilding programming, both to advance other rights objectives and to contribute to peacebuilding. However, as noted earlier, it is important to consider such components not merely as economic inputs, but to ensure that the advancement of socioeconomic rights is clearly conceptualized and followed through both in project design and implementation.

Endnotes

- 1 Information for this case study was gathered through desk research and interviews (both virtual and in person in Bogotá) between January and February 2023, including in-person interviews during a field mission to Colombia from 24 January to 4 February 2023. Interviews were held with over 50 local experts, staff of UN and CSO implementing entities, and representatives of government entities that were also involved in implementation.
- 2 For more on past conflict dynamics and effects, see United Nations, “Common country analysis: Colombia 2019,” [https://minio.uninfo.org/uninfo-production-main/60cafec3-829f-4157-8625-15346bc110af_CCA-Colombia-2019\(1\).pdf](https://minio.uninfo.org/uninfo-production-main/60cafec3-829f-4157-8625-15346bc110af_CCA-Colombia-2019(1).pdf), p. 15; Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition, “My body is the truth: experiences of women and LGBTQI+ people in the armed conflict,” in “Final Report: There is a future if there is a truth,” (Bogotá, 2022), http://comisiondelaverdad.co/sites/default/files/descargables/2023-02/Final_IndigenousWomen-11%20de%20enero%202023.pdf; Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition, “Resistir no es Aguantar: Violencias y daños contra los pueblos étnicos de Colombia,” in “Final Report: There is a future if there is a truth,” (Bogotá, 2022), http://comisiondelaverdad.co/sites/default/files/descargables/2022-08/CEV_ETNICO_DIGITAL_2022.pdf.
- 3 See chapter 2.3.6. “Promotion of the political representation of populations and zones particularly affected by the conflict and neglect”, or chapter 2.3.7. “Promotion of women’s political and civic participation within the context of this agreement, “Acuerdo final para la terminación del conflicto y la construcción de una paz estable y duradera,” Justicia especial para la paz, p. 54, https://www.jep.gov.co/Marco%20Normativo/Normativa_v2/01%20ACUERDOS/Texto-Nuevo-Acuerdo-Final.pdf?csf=1&e=0fpYAO. While there has been relatively slow implementation of 2016 peace agreement’s chapters related to rural reform and ethnic inclusion, the Government nonetheless introduced new mechanisms to promote the political participation of ethnic minorities, some rural planning and development reforms, and initiatives to facilitate women’s participation in political and peacebuilding processes at all levels. Josefina Echavarría, “Quarterly report: Implementation status of the Colombian Final Peace Accord, July–September 2022,” *Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies*, 23 February 2023, <https://doi.org/10.7274/t435gb2326k>.
- 4 The Truth Commission sits within a more comprehensive transitional justice process known as the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition (SIVJNR). This comprises three entities: the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, the Unit for the Search for the Disappeared, and the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition (henceforth ‘the Truth Commission’). Work by the first two of these entities was ongoing at the time of research in February 2023.
- 5 “Acuerdo final para la terminación del conflicto y la construcción de una paz estable y duradera,” *Justicia especial para la paz*, 12 December 2016, https://www.jep.gov.co/Marco%20Normativo/Normativa_v2/01%20ACUERDOS/Texto-Nuevo-Acuerdo-Final.pdf?csf=1&e=0fpYAO; “Comité de Seguimiento y Monitoreo (CSM) a la implementación de las recomendaciones para la no repetición del conflicto armado,” *Comisión de la Verdad*, last accessed 27 November 2023 <https://www.comisiondelaverdad.co/lo-que-sigue/comite-de-seguimiento>.
- 6 United Nations Security Council, <S/2022/1004>.
- 7 Javier Cárdenas, Cristal Downing, Kyle Johnson, Ángela Olaya, and Juanita Vélez, “Perceptions of FARC dissident groups in Colombia: Implications for future peace,” *MEAC Findings Report 17*” (New York: UN University Centre for Policy Research, 2022), https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:8960/FARCDissidentColombia_FINAL.pdf.
- 8 UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: “Colombia: Informe de situación humanitaria 2023 – Enero a agosto de 2023,” 22 September 2023, <https://reliefweb.int/report/colombia/colombia-informe-de-situacion-humanitaria-2023-enero-agosto-de-2023-publicado-el-22-de-septiembre-de-2023>.
- 9 One UN official offered that HRDs may be being targeted because they are perceived as a threat to the dominance of armed groups in certain communities. Interview with UN official, Bogotá, 30 January 2023 (Interview #91).
- 10 Interview with UN official, MS Teams, 19 January 2023 (Interview #77); interview with a local human rights expert, Bogotá, 24 January 2023 (Interview #79).
- 11 For the current composition of the PBC as of 2023, see United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, “United Nations Peacebuilding Commission,” June 2023, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbc_brochure_eng_2023.pdf.
- 12 For further description of the activities of the PBC, see *ibid*; Foster, *Sustaining Peace*, supra note 1, p. 12; Universal Rights Group, “Building a coherent Human Rights Council–Security Council Relationship – The prevention of human rights crisis, violent conflict and atrocity crimes,” March 2021, https://www.universal-rights.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Building-a-coherent-Human-Rights-Council-Security-Council-relationship_print.pdf, pp. 15–16.
- 13 United Nations General Assembly and United Nations Security Council <A/RES/70/262-S/RES/2282>, (2016) ¶4(c). However, whereas the resolutions explicitly stressed closer cooperation between the PBC and the Economic and Social Council (as part of the development ‘bridging’) they did not add a similar stress on cooperation between the PBC and, for example, the Human Rights Council. *Ibid*, ¶¶10–11.
- 14 United Nations General Assembly and United Nations Security Council <A/RES/70/262-S/RES/2282> (2016), ¶4(b).
- 15 For example, those interviewed noted that references to human rights are generally not included in any collective statements and readouts of official meetings. Nonetheless, observers noted that PBC discussions often do probe important human rights issues – including on rule of law, transitional justice, youth participation, truth commissions, reparations, and gender equality – without referring to them as such. One civil society member pointed to a series of PBC sessions during and following the COVID crisis that discussed the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic as an example of a topic with human rights implications but that was not discussed as such. Others pointed to the fact that, consistent with the *Sustaining Peace* resolutions, steps have been taken to ensure that non-governmental and human rights-friendly voices – civil society, women’s groups, or members of National Human Rights Institutions – are included in country and thematic discussions as a positive step forward. For further discussion of the PBC and the human rights and peacebuilding nexus, see Foster, *Sustaining Peace*, supra note 1, pp. 9–12.
- 16 UNHRC <A/HRC/RES/45/31>, (2020), ¶9; Peacebuilding Commission, “Chair’s Summary: PBC Ambassadorial-level meeting. Briefing by the Secretary-General on Our Common Agenda,” 22 October 2021, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/chairs_summary_on_pbc_ambassadorial_meeting_on_our_common_agenda_-_final.pdf, p.2.
- 17 For examples of PBC sessions in which Member States or other presenters’ interventions have raised human rights issues, see Peacebuilding Commission, “Chair’s Summary: Ambassadorial-level meeting on the Sahel,” 23 June 2023; Peacebuilding Commission, “Chair’s Summary: Ambassadorial-level meeting on the Great Lakes

- Region,” 31 October 2022.
- 18 For examples of sessions in which human rights and peacebuilding issues are raised, see, e.g., Peacebuilding Commission, “Chair’s Summary: PBC meeting on transitional justice in Colombia, The Gambia and Timor-Leste,” 28 April 2023, <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/chairs-summary-pbc-meeting-transitional-justice-colombia-gambia-and-timor-leste>; Peacebuilding Commission, “Chair’s Summary: PBC meeting on Colombia,” 13 April 2022, <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/chairs-summary-pbc-meeting-colombia-0>; Peacebuilding Commission, “Chair’s Summary: PBC meeting on Colombia,” 15 November 2021, <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/chairs-summary-pbc-meeting-colombia>; Peacebuilding Commission, “Meeting Summary: PBC meeting on Colombia: Chair’s Summary,” 13 November 2017, <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/pbc-meeting-colombia-chair-s-summary>.
- 19 In addition to Colombia, the Government of The Gambia has also raised human rights and peacebuilding experiences, in particular, transitional justice and the rule of law, in its engagement with the PBC in 2017.
- 20 In the case of The Gambia, these related to the past regime’s human rights abuses predominantly. UN Peacebuilding Commission, “Chair’s Summary: PBC meeting on transitional justice in Colombia, The Gambia and Timor-Leste,” 28 April 2023, <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/chairs-summary-pbc-meeting-transitional-justice-colombia-gambia-and-timor-leste>. See also Minister of Justice of The Gambia Dawda Jallow, Intervention before the PBC, minute 12:20, <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1p/k1pfw4ifdj>.
- 21 It may be worth revisiting this issue for the next Peacebuilding Architecture Review, which will be in 2025. However, reinforcing the human rights and peacebuilding nexus was already among the most sensitive issues in the 2020 Peacebuilding Architecture Review, and may prove even more so in the next round. See, e.g., Security Council Report, “What’s in blue: Resolution on the 2020 Peacebuilding Architecture Review,” 19 December 2020, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2020/12/resolution-on-the-2020-peacebuilding-architecture-review.php>.
- 22 Interview with UN official, New York, 27 March 2023 (Interview #35).
- 23 Some UN officials observed that the Government’s new focus on “total peace” does present some challenges concerning human rights, but also creates some opportunities for “creating spaces for ongoing dialogue between institutions and communities” and for working with the Government to create a “more effective operational response to challenges related to prevention, protection, and human rights violations”. Written comments shared by UN official working in Colombia, 4 October 2023 (Comment #25).
- 24 Interview with UN agency representative, MS Teams, 19 January 2023 (Interview # 3); interview with local expert, MS Teams, 24 January 2023 (Interview #6).
- 25 In total, the PBF has supported 10 projects in Colombia through its GYPI call since 2016.
- 26 Between 2017 and 2022, PBF approved 25 projects in Colombia for the total of \$43,640,163 (or 3.85 per cent of total PBF approvals during this time frame). Seven of these are included in this review. The other 13 worked on thematic areas such as blended finance and environmental peacebuilding (PBF/COL/C-2, PBF/COL/A-4, PBF/IRF-461), protection and participation (e.g. PBF/IRF-454, PBF/IRF-455, PBF/IRF-293), as well as reintegration of ex-combatants (PBF/COL/H-1). While some of these projects are adjacent to human rights topics, the research team found that the projects with a strong human rights approach, particularly on transitional justice, were included within our sample. Further statistics are available at the website of the “Secretary General’s Peacebuilding Dashboard”, <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/secretary-generals-peacebuilding-funding-dashboard>.
- 27 All three projects are framed under the MPTF’s objective of contributing to the realization of the peace agreement, in part through work on the victims’ rights to truth and reparations among other transitional justice measures.
- 28 This project aimed to strengthen national transitional justice entities’ capacity to design localized gender-responsive approaches.
- 29 “Final Narrative Report Apoyo al proceso de alistamiento de la Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de la Verdad, la Convivencia y la No Repetición (CEV),” PBF/COL/A-3 – Phase 1; “Lessons Learned/Review Report Apoyar a la Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de la Verdad Naciones,” PBF/COL/C-1 –Phase 2.
- 30 Interview with UN official, Bogotá, 30 January 2023 (Interview #91); written comments provided by MPTF Colombia, 5 October 2023.
- 31 Interview with a civil society representative, Bogotá, 1 February 2023 (Interview #26).
- 32 Javier Cárdenas, Cristal Downing, Kyle Johnson, Ángela Olaya and Juanita Vélez, “Public perceptions of the transitional justice components of the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement: Implications for peace,” *MEAC Findings Report 16* (New York: UN University Centre for Policy Research, 2022), http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:8942/MEAC_FindingsReport_16.pdf.
- 33 Interview with a local peacebuilding expert, Bogotá, 31 January 2023 (Interview #106); interview with representatives of implementing entities, 1 February 2023 (Interview #101).
- 34 Interview with UN official, MS Teams, 19 January 2023 (Interview #77); interview with UN official, Bogotá, 30 January 2023 (Interview #91); interview with UN officials, 30 January 2023 (Interview #92); interview with a local peacebuilding expert, Bogotá, 31 January 2023 (Interview #106).
- 35 For example, in the CCA for Colombia, two of the four thematic areas for needs and opportunities identified are: a) “strengthening inclusion and equality”, and 2) means to “advance in the construction of peace, security, legality and coexistence to ensure the effective enjoyment of human rights and democratic participation”. It also references UPR commitments related to addressing discrimination against women, violence against women and participation of women in public life. See; United Nations, “Common country analysis Colombia 2019,” [https://minio.uninfo.org/uninfo-production-main/60cafec3-829f-4157-8625-15346bc110af_CCA-Colombia-2019\(1\).pdf](https://minio.uninfo.org/uninfo-production-main/60cafec3-829f-4157-8625-15346bc110af_CCA-Colombia-2019(1).pdf), pp. 6, 93-94.
- 36 Interview with a representative of an implementing entity, Bogotá, 27 January 2023 (Interview #14); interview with a representative of an implementing entity, 30 January 2023 (Interview #93); interview with UN official, 1 February 2023 (Interview #102); Mariangela Villamil Cancino “Informe de evaluación cualitativa final del proyecto ‘modelo territorial de garantías de no repetición y de empoderamiento de mujeres y jóvenes para su acceso efectivo al SIVJRN’,” 20 December 2020, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_irf-266_informe_final_evaluaci_n_proyecto_gypi.pdf, p. 43.
- 37 Interview with a representative of an implementing entity, 26 January 2023 (Interview #85); interview with a representative of an implementing agency, 27 January 2023 (Interview #89).
- 38 “Evaluación Externa proyecto jóvenes y mujeres constructores de paz en el Norte del Cauca,” 2023, p. 4; interview with representatives of an implementing entity, Bogotá, 31 January 2023 (Interview #97).
- 39 Iñigo Alexander, “Almost half of human rights defenders killed last year were in Colombia,” *The Guardian*, 4 April 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/04/colombia-human-rights-defenders-killings-2022>.
- 40 Interview with UN official, Bogotá, 26 January 2023 (Interview #83).
- 41 “Informe sobre presencia de grupos armados,” *Indepaz*, September 2021, <http://www.indepaz.org.co/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/INFORME-DE-GRUPOS-2021.pdf>.
- 42 Interview with UN official, 26 January 2023 (Interview #83); interview

- with Ministry, 3 February 2023 (Interview #104).
- 43 Written comments provided by UNDP Colombia, 5 October 2023.
- 44 Cristal Downing, Angela Olaya, Sofia Rivas, Dr Siobhan O’Neil, and Kato Van Broeckhoven, “Current dynamics of child recruitment in Colombia,” MEAC Findings Report 14 (New York: UN University Centre for Policy Research, 2022), http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:8891/MEAC_FindingsReport_14.pdf.
- 45 Notably, the CCA not only makes a direct linkage between ESCR and conflict prevention, but also explicitly references these recommendations in the UPR, see; United Nations, “Common country analysis: Colombia 2019,” [https://minio.uninfo.org/uninfo-production-main/60cafec3-829f-4157-8625-15346bc110af_CCA-Colombia-2019\(1\).pdf](https://minio.uninfo.org/uninfo-production-main/60cafec3-829f-4157-8625-15346bc110af_CCA-Colombia-2019(1).pdf), p. 48.
- 46 “Acuerdo final para la terminación del conflicto y la construcción de una paz estable y duradera,” Justicia especial para la paz, 12 December 2016, https://www.jep.gov.co/Marco%20Normativo/Normativa_v2/01%20ACUERDOS/Texto-Nuevo-Acuerdo-Final.pdf?csf=1&e=OfpYAO.
- 47 Interview with a representative of an implementing entity, Bogotá, 31 January 2023 (Interview #94).
- 48 “Deeply rooted: Coca eradication and violence in Colombia,” *International Crisis Group*, 26 February 2021, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/andes/colombia/87-deeply-rooted-coca-eradication-and-violence-colombia>.
- 49 [PBF/COL/B-1](#) (Colombia); interview with UN official, Bogotá, 26 January 2023 (Interview #84).
- 50 Interview with UN official, Bogotá, 27 January 2023 (Interview #87).
- 51 This component was expanded to offer seed financing for the women who participated due to COVID-related economic hardship during the project’s implementation. Mariangela Villamil Cancino “Informe de evaluación cualitativa final del proyecto ‘modelo territorial de garantías de no repetición y de empoderamiento de mujeres y jóvenes para su acceso efectivo al SIVJRN’,” 20 December 2020, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_irf-266_informe_final_evaluaci_n_proyecto_gypi.pdf, p. 47.
- 52 For example, among other activities, the women’s groups collaborated to ensure that they would share childcare burdens with others in the group at certain periods, in ways that would enable other beneficiaries to take part in the other political engagement envisioned as part of the project. Ibid, p. 54.
- 53 Interview with UN official, Bogotá, 27 January 2023 (Interview #87).
- 54 Mariangela Villamil Cancino “Informe de evaluación cualitativa final del proyecto ‘modelo territorial de garantías de no repetición y de empoderamiento de mujeres y jóvenes para su acceso efectivo al SIVJRN’,” 20 December 2020, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_irf-266_informe_final_evaluaci_n_proyecto_gypi.pdf, p. 43; interview with a representative of an implementing entity, Bogotá, 26 January 2023 (Interview #85); interview with UN official, 27 January 2023 (Interview #87).
- 55 Interview with a representative of an implementing entity, Bogotá, 26 January 2023 (Interview #12).
- 56 Mariangela Villamil Cancino “Informe de evaluación cualitativa final del proyecto ‘modelo territorial de garantías de no repetición y de empoderamiento de mujeres y jóvenes para su acceso efectivo al SIVJRN’,” 20 December 2020, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_irf-266_informe_final_evaluaci_n_proyecto_gypi.pdf, p. 4.
- 57 Ibid, p. 44.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Interview with a representative of an implementing entity, 30 January 2023 (Interview #93).
- 60 Interview with UN officials, MS Teams, 19 January 2023 (Interview #77); interview with UN official, 27 January 2023 (Interview #87); interview with UN official, 30 January 2023 (Interview #92).
- 61 Although beyond the scope of this report, deeper interrogation of this longer timeline of institutional development may offer lessons to share in terms of how to build national capacity in addressing human rights in the context of efforts to build peace.
- 62 Interview with a representative of an implementing entity, 27 January 2023 (Interview #88); interview with a representative of an implementing entity, 30 January 2023 (Interview #93); interview with a representative of an implementing entity, 31 January 2023 (Interview #94); interview with UN official, 1 February 2023 (Interview #104); interview with a representative of an implementing entity, 26 January 2023 (Interview #85); interview with UN official, 27 January 2023 (Interview #87); interview with a representative of an implementing agency, 27 January 2023 (Interview #89).
- 63 For the Vista Hermosa project, at least one follow-up grant by the UN’s Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund has been received by one of the local implementing agencies, with other applications in process. Interview with UN official, Bogotá, 1 February 2023 (Interview #102); WPHF Annual Report, 2022, https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023-05/wphf_annual_report_2022.pdf, p.40; [PBF/IRF-400](#) was still in the process of applying for potential funds. Interview with a representative of an implementing entity, Bogotá, 31 January 2023 (Interview #97).
- 64 Two civil society organizations highlighted that they were able to rely on capacities, relationships and testimonies gathered during the PBF-funded projects to feed into their legal strategic litigation work, including contributions to the investigations and prosecution of conflict-related grave human rights abuses before the special peace jurisdiction. Interview with a representative of an implementing agency, 27 January 2023 (Interview #89); interview with a representative of an implementing entity, 31 January 2023 (Interview #94).
- 65 Interview with a representative of an implementing entity, 31 January 2023 (Interview #94).
- 66 The women’s rights organizations involved in project implementation also expressed that the broader women’s rights movement in Colombia had been strengthened by the opportunity to find synergies with the LGBTQI+ movement.
- 67 Interview with a representative of an implementing entity, 26 January 2023 (Interview #85); interview with a representative of an implementing agency, 27 January 2023 (Interview #89).
- 68 ASOMUDEM is a victims’ association of survivors of sexual violence and forced disappearance that dates back to when the government surrendered Vista Hermosa to the FARC-EP in 1998. Yo Puedo is a youth-led women’s association that specializes in empowering emerging women leaders in their community, in the peace process, and in political spaces.
- 69 Mariangela Villamil Cancino “Informe de evaluación cualitativa final del proyecto ‘modelo territorial de garantías de no repetición y de empoderamiento de mujeres y jóvenes para su acceso efectivo al SIVJRN’,” 20 December 2020.