

Magazine

FOKUS women

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Colombia



National Strike,
November 21, 2019

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With the support of NORAD

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EDITORIAL

In Colombia, after more than five decades of armed conflict, the Accord for the End of the Conflict was signed between the national government and the FARC-EP in 2016. While next November marks four years since its signing, the country has not overcome the dynamics of war, the armed conflict, drug trafficking, and the assassinations of social leaders, all of which represent what the Colombians most affected by this long war had most hoped would be resolved by the Accord.

In signing an accord of this nature, the people of any country would see a road that permits access to the truth and justice necessary to advance toward a horizon wherein everyone has space to be who they are, exist, live, and dream as best they can. This country is strange; sometimes it seems that many horizons are opened, only to have them closed moments later, leaving us without the air we need to breathe and dream.

This is why many women's organizations in Colombia—including both young women and adults—remain steadfast in their search for truth, justice, and reparations for themselves, their families, and their communities.


Many of those who signed the Peace Accord remain equally steadfast in the hope that there will be compliance with the treaty.

The winds of war and fundamentalism, however, force women and LGBTQI+ organizations to remain ever more steadfast in the revindication of their rights; grounded though they each are in their specific, lived realities and supporting the cause from small stages, they come together with the common aim of **transforming lives in the midst of war to be able to fully enjoy their rights and have real opportunities to freely make decisions about their own lives.**

Today we are focused on the implementation of the Peace Accord, as a central means of turning the page on war, and on the revindication of the total decriminalization of abortion, as key to ensuring women's autonomy and liberty.

In this second issue of the magazine, we bring together the voices of diverse women—campesina, indigenous, Afro-descendent, young, urban, and working class, all of whom are part of FOKUS's partner organizations—with our own voices to analyze what has happened during these years of implementation and in the midst of a contingency like the COVID-19 pandemic which has deepened the challenges facing peacebuilding in Colombia.

From Colombia and around the world, we also bring together women's organizations which claim Resolution 1325 as an important tool for peacebuilding by and for women. For this reason we join them in celebrating these twenty years since the Resolution was enacted by the UN Security Council.

FOKUS appreciates the trust that has been built over these years and reaffirms its commitment to provide counseling and support for peacebuilding by women and for the full enjoyment of their sexual and reproductive rights. 

NORWAY: AN ALLY FOR PEACE

Norway, a country recognized for its peacebuilding work, will join the UN Security Council beginning in 2021 until 2022.



TEXT AND
PHOTO: FOKUS
IN COLOMBIA

We interviewed Fredrik Laache, First Secretary of the Norwegian Embassy in Colombia, responsible for issues relating to gender. During our conversation, we talked about Norway's role in peacebuilding and the process of implementing the Peace Accord in Colombia.

A COMMITMENT TO PEACE

FOKUS (FK): We've seen the role of Norway as a guarantor nation in several peace processes. Why is this so important for the Norwegian government?

Fredrik Laache (F. L.): For some time now, one of the priorities of Norwegian diplomacy has been working for peace and reconciliation in various countries around the world. We have the capability and the position to communicate with diverse actors, with the biggest powers in the world and with armed groups, establishing Norway as a neutral country. We also

enjoy the trust of the groups that participate in these processes.

The Ministry of Foreign Relations has an area dedicated to Peace and Reconciliation, which has the knowledge and expertise to facilitate peace processes and the inclusion of diverse actors that ought to participate in these processes, such as civil society, women, indigenous peoples, among others.

FK: How did Norway build its neutrality?

F.L.: We're a country prepared to work closely with actors in a conflict, with the international community, and with representatives from civil society to find ways of creating conditions that can promote peace processes that are inclusive and legitimate. In those processes in which we are active, we maintain our neutrality and keep a low profile; we are also careful with our declarations and avoid involvement in political controversies. To fill the role of facilitator or guarantor country with legitimacy and the trust [of the other actors] it is critically important that all parties see us as an neutral actor. After decades of working this way, we have built trust with other countries and societies, and in multilateral organizations, such as the UN system, we're seen as a constructive actor. This has allowed us to be facilitators in Israel/Palestine, Colombia, Venezuela, Sudan/South Sudan, among others.

WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS

FK: Why is it important for Norway to promote compliance with Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions in negotiation processes as part of its peacebuilding ideal?

F.L.: A peace process has conflict resolution as its objective but contributing to the development of society—by closing gaps between urban and rural populations, among different groups in society including its representatives—is also a goal. This is why it is important for Norway to promote the Women, Peace, and Security agenda.

From the first day that we received the mandate to be guarantors in Colombia's peace process, we began our work to include women and members of the LGBTQI+ population, who don't always receive the attention they deserve. In the places where we work, we always attempt to ensure that women are present at the negotiation table as peacebuilders or participants in consulting mechanisms. Likewise, the Embassy's and the Ministry of Foreign Relations' working groups have a high number of women participants.

FK: Female leadership among women peacebuilders is very important. How do you analyze the assassination of women social leaders? How does this affect peacebuilding?



Cauca Mission ECP
with the participation of
FOKUS and the Norwegian
Embassy, 2019.

F.L.: It is troubling and distressing that the attacks and threats against women leaders and human rights defenders continue in Colombia and have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is something that concerns us deeply, which is why we want to strengthen individual and collective protection and self-defense programs for women leaders. This year, we launched a program in collaboration with UN Women and the Colombian Ombudsman's Office called ProDefensoras (Pro-Women Defenders) whose objective is to strengthen and improve protection to women leaders and human rights defenders.

FK: Recognizing that the Peace Accord signed between the Colombian government and the defunct FARC-EP guerrillas is the first in the world that has a

gender-based focus, how do you see the development of its implementation?

F.L.: This peace accord is emblematic at a world-wide level because it incorporated a gender-based focus through measures included in each one of its points. In terms of the implementation of these gender-focused points, reports indicate that they are advancing at a slower rate than others, for example, those related to comprehensive rural reform, Comprehensive Crop Substitution Programs (PNIS), political participation, and economic reincorporation. Here, there are still many challenges to be overcome.

It is very important that the agencies focused on gender in the National Reincorporation Commission (CNR), the Commission for Security, Promotion, and Verification of Peace (Csivi), and

other relevant entities continue to monitor the implementation of the gender indicators and build bridges between themselves and the actors responsible for implementing the Accord and assuring that civil society reports on implementation are taken into account.

We see challenges to the participation of reincorporated women. While many of them receive support for productive projects, difficulties have been identified in many of the Territorial Training and Reincorporation Zones (ETCR) where they suffer pressure to return to more traditional roles.

FK: Considering that FOKUS is a Norwegian civil society organization that has an office in Colombia facilitating two programs—1325 Women, Peace, and Security Program, and the Sexual and Reproductive Rights Program—how does the Embassy appraise the work we're doing in Colombia?

F.L.: FOKUS is one of our most important allies in Colombia. We greatly appreciate the contact that you have with women's organizations in the territories, which are the ones that really know their realities and do impressive work.

It is worth highlighting that FOKUS's work has peace and sexual and reproductive rights components; I want to know more about this work and visit some of your partner organizations. Now that Norway is joining the Security Council, you are going to be an important partner, key to advising us on the 1325 agenda, sexual and reproductive rights, and other issues related to women's rights.

We greatly appreciate the dialogue with have with you. FOKUS in Colombia also has the direct support of NORAD, which allows us to intensify our contact and have a more fluid and frequent exchange [of information and ideas]. **FM**



Green kerchiefs raised for women's reproductive autonomy and the right to decide about our own bodies.

UNRESTRICTED AND SAFE ABORTION IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Abortion services are essential and urgent during the pandemic, a time which has seen the rise of many obstacles for women and girls who wish to access voluntary termination of pregnancy (IVE) in a timely manner.



TEXT: MESA
POR LA VIDA Y
LA SALUD DE
LAS MUJERES
PHOTO: DIANA
RAMÍREZ

Isolation measures enacted by the national government to contain the pandemic caused by COVID-19 have highlighted problems that disproportionately affect women and girls, such as an increase in violence,

femicides, and difficulties in access to birth control and the right to abortion.

During the public health crisis, access to IVE in particular represents a big obstacle for women and girls—especially the most vulnerable among them—owing to previously identified barriers which have grown more pronounced and the appearance of new ones that make accessing this procedure even more difficult.

Between March 1 and May 31, 2020, La Mesa por la Vida y la Salud de las Mujeres accompanied a total of 30 women

who were facing difficulties accessing this service, as documented in the **Informe Técnico Barreras de Acceso a la Interrupción Voluntaria del Embarazo en el Contexto de la Pandemia por COVID-19** (“Report on Technical Barriers to Access to Voluntary Termination of Pregnancy in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic”). This document provides evidence to advance timely and high-quality access to the right to abortion throughout the country.

*

One of the most common barriers observed during this period comes from some healthcare providers who do not consider IVE a priority service. Some of these (both EPS and IPS) use the excuse that they must attend to cases related to COVID-19 to avoid attending to IVE requests, delaying the procedure and failing to comply with the law which

mandates that healthcare providers have five calendar days to respond to such requests.

At the same time, some healthcare providers (EPS) are not guaranteeing medical transfer—as they are obligated to do—owing to an alleged lack of public transportation; they are also denying the use of ambulances, as these are prioritized for coronavirus cases. This,

Access to IVE during the public health emergency represents a significant challenge for women, especially the most vulnerable.

combined with the closing of airports and intermunicipal bus depots, has prevented timely access to IVE.

Isolation has also created new barriers to information access. Women do not know if they can go directly to their healthcare providers to request the medical appointments that guarantee holistic diagnosis or if they ought to do so through some virtual channel. This is due to the **scarcity of information about the routes and channels available to access IVE**. What is more, the lack of privacy women face at home hampers their ability to inform themselves and access abortions when they do not wish for the other people they live with to find out about their decisions.

The **implementation of virtual administrative paperwork for healthcare services** has likewise limited access to IVE in women who do not have the technological tools to send emails or make calls. The **suspension**

of childcare services normally provided by public and private institutions has also made it impossible for some women—especially single mothers—to access healthcare services, since they must care for their young children.

A STEP BACKWARD FOR ABORTION

Abortion services cannot be suspended or denied during the current public health emergency. For this reason, it is necessary for healthcare services to create routes of attention specifically for this context and set up accessible channels so that all women may request IVE and receive a timely response.

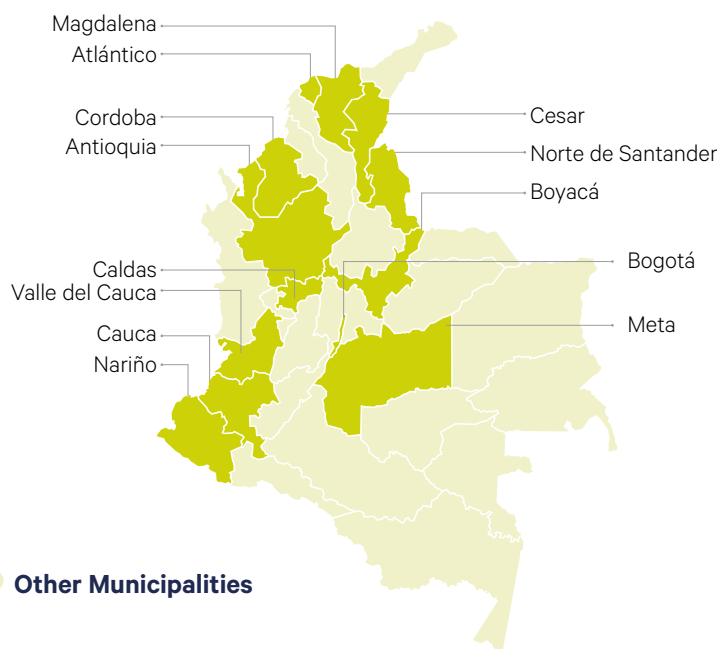
It is also important to recognize telemedicine's role in the safe, legal access to abortion at home. This health service is an opportunity for women in different regions in the country to access IVE under the counsel of specialized medical personnel, thus

contributing to the reproductive autonomy of women during this moment of crisis.

Through its legal accompaniment work, the Mesa por la Vida y la Salud de las Mujeres will continue to document the barriers women and girls face to access IVE. We will also continue to offer information about the requirements for each of the three conditions for legal abortion recognized in Ruling C-355 (Sentencia C-355) of 2006, routes of attention, telemedicine services, among others. More information available in **Guía para acceder a la IVE durante la Pandemia por COVID-19** (“Guide for Accessing IVE during the COVID-19 Pandemic”).

We will likewise continue advocating through legal, political, and cultural means to eliminate all barriers and to ensure that women can take autonomous decisions about their bodies and life projects. **FM**

Of the cases that La Mesa attended between March 1 and May 31, 2020, only 20% of these correspond to women who reside in Bogotá; the other 80% reside in other municipalities in the country: 16.6% in the department of Atlántico; 13.3% in Antioquia; 6.6% in Caldas; 6.6% in Boyacá; 6.6% in Cesar; 6.6% in Magdalena; 6.6% in Nariño; followed by 3.3% each in the departments of Valle del Cauca, Norte de Santander, Cauca, Córdoba, and Meta.



WOMEN CAUGHT IN THE GEARS OF THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

On top of the humanitarian crisis in the Tumaco region in Nariño, the COVID-19 emergency has created new challenges for leadership, new bets, and new ways of life for rural women.



nous, Afro-descendent, and campesina communities reside. It is also a place marked by violence stemming from disputes between different legal and illegal armed actors as well as organizations that benefit from drug trafficking. The latter is caused by a decades-long absence of government presence in the region and the population's limited access to rights and services. Specifically, campesino communities living in this territory have been forced to work with illicit crops as the only means to earn

Women's leadership must grapple with armed actors' efforts to silence them.

a living. This, in turn, puts them into contact with armed actors who profit from drug trafficking and, of course, makes them a target for repressive state intervention, as the government notices them only insofar as they appear within the framework of their criminalizing and stigmatizing policies.

In this context, which is already complex due to its territorial reality, campesina women, especially those in some kind of leadership role, face additional challenges, since their lives and the development of their activ-

Today, in the territory of Alto Mira y Frontera in the municipality of Tumaco, Nariño, a grave humanitarian crisis is found, one which is reflected in the lives of everyone in the municipality. This is a multicultural area where indige-



TEXT AND
PHOTOS:
**CORPORACIÓN
JURÍDICA YIRA
CASTRO**

ities occur in hostile and guarded spaces. This is the case of campesina women from Asominuma (Asociación de Juntas de Acción Comunal de los Ríos Mira, Nulpe y Mataje) who face great challenges in the development of their leadership roles in the current context. This is due to the demands made by armed actors for community members to remain silent and the government's total abandonment and noncompliance with its obligations, something which completely contradicts the potential solution to the illicit drug problem outlined in the Final Peace Accord. This inattention has allowed armed groups and criminal bands in the region to expand their control, to which the government has responded by militarizing the territory. As a consequence, confrontations between armed groups present in the area have intensified, which has in turn intensified the conflict and increased forms of victimization, such as confinement or restrictions on mobility, selective assassinations, "message sending" crimes, and sexual and gender-based violence.


Added to this problem, the current government under Iván Duque, in its eagerness to adhere to United States policy, has insisted on forced crop eradication, without any kind of conciliation or dialogue with campesina communities. What is more, it has encouraged the reactivation of aerial spraying with Glyphosate as its policy to attempt to diminish the increase in coca crops in

The complex machinery of this crisis has clearly generated increases in the care work of women.

some parts of the country. At the beginning of the state of emergency decreed by the President due to the arrival of COVID-19, a tense calm occurred in the region. However, not even the pandemic could stop the advance of forced eradication, which has caused multiple confrontations between the armed forces and residents, leaving many people wounded. The community has denounced that while they adhered to

preventative isolation in their homes, mobile eradication groups composed of police officers, soldiers, and civilians from other regions of the country, have arrived to pull up and fumigate coca crops. This has put the community at risk for contracting the coronavirus.

On top of this, despite being a border territory, the authorities have done nothing to control the exit or entrance of people into the country through this area, which could explain why this is one of the municipalities with the highest number of cases of infections. According to Nariño's Departmental Institute of Health, as of July 16, 2020, there were 1,623 cases of COVID-19 in Tumaco, which represents 32.22% of the total population of the municipality, a rate which is even higher than that registered in the capital of the department, and in an area with much more precarious health services.

The complex machinery of this crisis has clearly generated increases in the care work of women. Although their work in the fields has not stopped, their work in the home has increased, as they are often the ones in charge of caring for the sick, those with disabilities, and children and adolescents, who are now permanently at home. This situation limits women's possibilities of participating in work and community leadership spaces. It is therefore urgently necessary to not only adequately address the humanitarian crisis affecting the Tumaco region due to the wave of violence in the territory and the arrival of the coronavirus, but also design strategies that address the specific needs of these women and which guarantee their rights to a decent life and to participate in all community, political, national, and local spaces. 



PEACEBUILDING IN COLOMBIA

10 Years Working to Build Peace with Women in Colombia and Celebrating 20 Years of United Nations Resolution 1325



TEXT AND
PHOTO: **FOKUS
IN COLOMBIA**

October marks the twentieth anniversary of United Nations Resolution 1325 as well as ten years since FOKUS first began working with women in this country to promote peace. Given these milestones, we consider it important to take stock and remember our history as well as measure the transformations that we have experienced in this political context.

In January 2011 we began a new phase in our collaboration with women's organizations in Colombia with the launch of Programa Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad (the Women, Peace, and Security Program), better known as Program 1325.

In 2010 in Colombia we organized an internal event for FOKUS partners across the globe. Women from diverse countries attended and we celebrated the tenth anniversary of Resolution 1325 as members of the Mesa de Género de la Cooperación Internacional (the International Partnership's Board on Gender). These events were the highlight that marked the beginning of our program.



We began this program at a challenging time for discussing peacebuilding, even though diverse organizations—including women's and feminist ones—had for decades insisted on the need to seek negotiated exits to the armed conflict.

In the program's second year, in mid-2012, we celebrated news that dialogue processes between the government and the FARC-EP were advancing. We embraced this process from the very beginning, supporting the women's organizations that are our partners and some alliances that formed at that time. One of these was Mujeres por la Paz (Women for

Peace), a platform that unites the voices of diverse women to support the negotiation process and bring proposals to the Discussion Table in Havana.

From the beginning, we participated in the creation of the Espacio de Cooperación para la Paz (Cooperative Space for Peace) where more than 30 international civil society organizations dedicated to peace human rights in Colombia gathered.

On September 26, 2016, we traveled to Cartagena, beyond excited to be present at this historic moment for Colombia

which we dreamed would divide our history into a *before* the conflict and an *after*.

We cried along with so many others on October 2nd when we watched the results come in, dumbfounded that peace lost, even by only a little. When a process comes down to counting votes, only one side can win. This side, unfortunately, was not the one that supported peace.

We remained alert to changes to the original Accord, analyzed the final Accord, and based on it, we began supporting platforms such as Gpaz and spaces created by the peace agreement, such as the La Instancia Especial de Mujeres para el Enfoque de Género en la paz (Special Women's Agency for a Gender-Based Focus in Peace), and we continued to support Program 1325 partner organizations.

Conscious of the fact that peace implies negotiating with all the armed actors, we supported the Juntanza de Mujeres (Women's Board). This space, which some of the Program's partner organizations joined, was created to continue insisting on dialogue and negotiation with the ELN, something which is still pending in peacebuilding work.

Having begun another Program in 2015 related to sexual and reproductive health, we sought points of contact between both in order to support women who had signed the Peace Accord and who were living in the Rural Transitional Normalization Zones (later Territorial Training and Reincorporation Zones, ETCR) to help them access sexual and reproductive health services through a partner organization.

Through this new Program, we were able to back the decisions of women and young people in Colombia as they freely and autonomously took decisions regarding maternity, such as relates to IUDs and voluntary termination of pregnancy.

We support women's and LGBTQI+ organizations who see in the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Non-Repetition a cause for hope that the violence suffered for decades will cease and Colombia will transition to peace without losing its memory.

We also continue to accompany lower class, indigenous, and Afro-descendent women who continue constructing peace agendas in the middle of a conflict that has not ended.

Twenty years after Resolution 1325, we still consider it to be a fundamental tool for peacebuilding.

We maintain our commitment to these women and organizations who will not be silenced on sexual violence whatever its origin, be the victimizer a family member, an acquaintance, or a legal or illegal armed actor.

Although we understand that the road to peace is complicated, we continue to believe in the need to accompany women's organizations that demand an end to violence against women, young people, and girls, against women leaders and human rights defenders, and against those who do not conform to heterosexual norms, among many others.

Twenty years after Resolution 1325, we still consider it to be a fundamental tool for peacebuilding. In the case of Colombia, this peacebuilding depends on maintaining a watchful eye on the implementation of the Peace Accord, especially the points with a gender-based focus.

We wish to thank all the organizations that have partnered with our programs

at some point over the years: Cabildo Indígena del Resguardo Kankuamo, Centro de Promoción y Cultura, Colectivo de Mujeres al Derecho (Colemad), Colectivo de Mujeres Excombatientes de la Insurgencia, Corporación Cartografía Sur, Corporación Colombiana de Teatro, Corporación Comunidad de Juristas Akubadaura, Corporación de Apoyo a Comunidades Populares (Codacop), Tejido Mujer ACIN, Corporación Humanas, Corporación Jurídica Yira Castro, Corporación Otra Escuela, Escuela de Estudios de Género de la Universidad Nacional, Fondo Lunaria Mujer, Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuu, Fundación Oriéntame, Liga Internacional de Mujeres por la Paz y la Libertad (Limpal), Mesa por la Vida y la Salud de las Mujeres, Proyecto Colombia Diversa, Fundación Chiyangua, Red de Mujeres Matamba y Guasá and Fondo de Acción Urgente.

We also wish to thank the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) for its financial and programming support; the Norwegian Embassy in Colombia for its political backing/support for the work we develop as an organization with women from Norwegian civil society in the country; the entities that comprise the Mesa de Género de la Cooperación Internacional (Gender Roundtable for International Cooperation) for opening spaces for dialogue between civil society and the government on the issues of women and peace; and those who joined us in the Cooperative Space for Peace in the International Office for Human Rights Action on Colombia (Oidhaco), and Foro Colombia, for their constant willingness to listen and their dedication to peace and human rights in Colombia and the inclusion of women's agendas. 

OUR STORY, OUR VOICES

The story of young women building peace through memory.



TEXT AND
PHOTO: FONDO
LUNARIA
MUJER

“They ask me about the history of my territory but they don’t ask about me, how I felt, how I survived.”

These words, spoken by a woman from San Vicente del Caguán, represent the feelings of many more women in Colombia who still preserve the memories of what they lived during the armed conflict. Below we share the stories of four young people from organizations supported by Fondo Lunaria which receive financing from FOKUS in Colombia through the Mujeres jóvenes construyendo paz (Young Women Building Peace) initiative, which works to build memory through the voices of women as a way of supporting peace, reconciliation, and non-repetition.

LUISA

“Here, memory is not built,” says Luisa Fernanda Pedraza, a leader from **Asociación Fortaleza de la Montaña**, speaking about the

Guavio region, a province in Cundinamarca composed of eight municipalities. During the conflict, this area suffered the presence of paramilitary groups and various FARC-EP fronts. It was also a strategic location due to its geographic and environmental riches, which spurred the construction of a hydroelectric plant and a high concentration of emerald mines.

Yet despite the violence the people and environment have suffered, there have been few attempts to build collective memory. Luisa and her colleagues at the Association

“The essence of historical memory is in the details, in each person telling their story their own way.”

have decided to reconstruct the history of women in the region and their relation to the environment through a particular element: seeds. **“The seeds are themselves memory,”** says Luisa, who tells of how they have brought together women from Guavio Alto and Bajo to talk about planting traditions and their experiences as women.

MAR

“Palenque’s roots are very strong but we have to continue along that path,” says Mar, leader of the organization **Madre Monte**. San Basilio de Palenque is an Afro-descendent town in the region of Montes de María recognized as the first free town in the Americas. During the conflict, the residents of Palenque suffered multiple victimizations and their close relationship with the land suffered. “The hills, which were a place of life, became one of death, of fear,” she says. According to Mar, caring for the trees—something traditional in her community—also fell by the wayside.

Because of this, Madre Monte decided to return to the hills and work to recover these traditions. Working together with women and men of the community, they have managed to recultivate some crops, such as peanuts, known as ngubá in the Palenque language. For Mar, **“memory is not in books or a photo. Memory is in the seeds, in the infestations, in everything that appears when the land is cultivated.”** They have also created spaces for dialogue among women of various ages to rescue ancestral knowledge and the experiences of their elders and to break stigmas they have about the younger generations, thus creating a support network.



Fondo Lunaria.

CLAUDIA

“Talking with other women has given me strength,” says Claudia Marcela Benavides, leader of **Corporación 8 de marzo**, from Policarpa, Nariño. Her territory has served as fort and refuge for armed groups for many years. It was not easy for Claudia when these groups killed friends and neighbors, even less so when young people came to view illegal businesses as the only way to make a living.

A desire to change coupled with her own history motivated her to become a leader for peace in her community. Through the corporation, they collected the stories of lesbians in their territory and the violence they suffered—the first time such a task was undertaken—and broadcast them through communications outlets. They also trained young women on how to talk about gender and violence. For Claudia, sharing with other Afro-descendent, indigenous, or ex-guerrilla women has

San Basilio de Palenque is an Afro-descendent town in the region of Montes de María recognized as the first free town in the Americas.

been liberating. **“Hearing others’ voices motivates you, it makes you think that you need to talk more, say more. I suffered several incidences of sexual violence and being part of a group of women that discuss it drove me to speak about it and free myself,”** she says.

MAYRA

“The essence of historical memory is in the details, in each person telling their story their own way,” says Mayra Moreno, leader of **Red Juvenil Comapaz** from San Vicente del Caguán. For Mayra, as a young campesina leader, it has been a battle to make people look beyond the stigmas of war and see San

Vicente as a territory full of virtues and natural and social resources.

On this journey, the Red took on the task of collecting the stories of women in their territory along-

side the Comité de Mujeres Campesinas de los Andes por la Paz (Comapaz), but this time, they asked the women write about their experiences themselves. **“It isn’t the same when someone tells the story for me as when I write it myself. There are details and emotions that only come out in those moments with ourselves. All this affects the construction of a territory.”** They have also organized spaces such as the Campamento Feminista (Feminist Camp) which brought together women from urban and rural areas of San Vicente to build a network of sisterhood, peace, and reconciliation that allows them to continue defending their rights as young campesina women. **FM**

BETTING ON PEACE

Despite the intensification of the social, political, and armed conflict in Colombia, Cartografía Sur is convinced that new generations can use different language and alternative communication to participate in and build processes regarding the meaning of peace.



BY:
**CARTOGRAFÍA
SUR**

Colombia is facing a difficult human rights situation, one made evident by the different war strategies that continue to be visible in communities' daily life. According to an Indepaz report, sixty-one massacres have occurred so far in 2020, claiming the lives of 246 people. On top of this, forced displacements and assassinations of social leaders and FARC-EP ex-combatants are a daily reality. Every morning we awaken to another news bulletin and a new reason to mourn.

We are also confronting a crucial moment in the world as victims of a crisis

of capitalism made conspicuous by the current health emergency. In Colombia, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused approximately **25.290 deaths** through September 2020 and deepened the country's economic crisis. According to the "No es hora de callar" campaign ("Now is not the time to be silenced"), there have been more than **178 femicides** and an increase in all indicators of violence against women.

During the pandemic, different women's organizations have declared Red Alert in response to the increase in femicide rates, demanding the government provide answers and protective measures. The state response, however, has been indifference.

Social contingency measures, such as basic income, have not been adopted. The federal government has not publicly denounced the femicides, not even emblematic cases such as the murder of Juliana Giraldo at the hands of the armed forces. Instead, it has continually sought to minimize its responsibilities and use the public arena to make revictimizing statements and deny that a crime has been committed. What is more, President Iván Duque has recently made statements in op-

position to certain measures to ensure women's body autonomy, such as the legalization of abortion, openly declaring himself pro-life.

On a daily basis, young people see themselves exposed to a country where war is perpetuated and the possibility of accessing a decent life is further and further reduced. In Cartografía Sur, we continue to be convinced that our strategy must continue, that art and culture should knock on every community's door, inviting them to depict their stories and establish a voice of participation and action to confront this war that they seek to impose on us.

For approximately the past ten years, we have worked to create spaces to strengthen the voices and actions of young women; spaces that, through art and culture, plant seeds of change and transformation in a system that seeks to segregate and eliminate the Other. This year, the pandemic notwithstanding, we have continued to think up new ways to be together despite the distance. One of our principal strategies has to establish schools for memory and audiovisual training which seek, through alter-

PHOTO: Foto Karina Santos. Periscopio Invertido Bogotá



native methodologies, to encourage young women to analyze their own contexts and capture through video the realities they confront as well as the country they wish to build.

In 2019, our school in Bogotá presented four short documentaries that show different ways of seeing this country through the narratives of the young people featured. This year, despite the distance we must maintain due to the pandemic, we continue to create alternative schools for young Sikuani indigenous people and girls from Puerto Gaitán, Meta; girls from the municipality of Evitar and the village of Mahtes, Bolívar; and the youth group from La Nupa in Tumaco, Nariño.

Alexandra Marín, who participated in Periscopio Invertido 2019 and helped produce the documentary *Al aire: Radio Utopía* (“On Air: Utopia Radio”), says, “One of the most basic things is to make clear that the Peace Accord wasn’t just an agreement between the signatories; peace is something that belongs to and depends on all of us. It is a right and we have to fight for it, even more so now, when they want us to go back and live another fifty years of war.”

This year, we developed a pedagogical kit for young women in the territories so they can continue to learn to express themselves and document their realities through video. Sikuani indigenous women, who are members of the groups Jóvenes Progreso y Futuro de Evitar and Juvenil de la Nupa in Tumaco, Nariño have received the kit which includes educational material, a pocket film, a pamphlet with instructions, and materials. With this kit, we are developing the school remotely. These young women have accessed the material and, with great dedication, have begun their educational process which will result in a collection of short films

that reflect the ways they observe their territorial realities.

These experiences have taught us the importance of context work which does not seek to impose a lesson from the outside but rather employs a vision of collective learning constructed by and for the communities with whom we work. We are staking our bets on

We are staking our bets on continuing to make inroads in the construction of a critical pedagogy that is capable of understanding differences and transforming imposed realities.

continuing to make inroads in the construction of a critical pedagogy that is capable of understanding differences and transforming imposed realities.

These experiences with using alternative methodologies and pedagogical tools developed by and for each context, has brought us closer to the communities and transformed allowing us to critically analyze the realities of communities and open dialogues from the perspectives of nationhood that the new generations have: a country where difference is not eliminated but allowed to participate; a country in which we are not assassinated for being women, for being critical, for defending our human rights.

While war statistics continue to dog us, we firmly believe it is possible to build another country; we believe in the new generations, in the power of social movements, and, above all, we believe that a camera, a paintbrush, paint, music, and

art can transform Colombia.

We remain alert and determined to build peace! **FM**

Indigenous Sikuani woman from the Palomeko community of the Wacoyo Reservation. Meta department, Colombia. Escuela Warmi Nayra 2020



PHOTO: Lidia Yepes Cortes

KANKUAMA WOMEN ARE THE TERRITORY'S **ANCESTRAL HARMONIZERS**

To build peace is to return to our origins, reharmonizing the imbalances caused by all forms of violence against the families and ancestral traditions of the Kankuamo people. All these forms of violence are embodied in alterations to the sacred link with the spiritual mother.

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Resolution 1325 of 2000, the ancestral value of being an indigenous woman of the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta (SNSM) has structures that connote peace through the Natural Law or Sé Law, with its roots in the wisdom of the peoples who have created points for reharmonization in order to resist, return, and preserve their tradition despite the history of violence carried out in their territory.

While not a word that comes from the indigenous peoples, *peace* can be understood as maintaining equilibrium, harmony, and the order of everything that our spiritual mothers and fathers have left us. This work is fundamental given that each woman is the representation of the Origin Mother as a territory and within her are found the materials for the people's material and cultural preservation. For this reason,

beyond causing personal suffering and a transgression of her fundamental rights, every mistreatment or form of violence against indigenous women above all creates an imbalance in the life of the four indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada of Gonavindwa—the Kankuamo, Wiwa, Kogi, and Arahua— that inhabit that

While not a word that comes from the indigenous peoples, peace can be understood as maintaining equilibrium and harmony.

place, especially because they are the guardians of this sacred territory which is considered the Heart of the World, owing to its function and contribution to the environmental and energy balance of the planet.

It is important to bear in mind that the history of disharmony suffered in



TEXT AND
PHOTO:
**MUJERES
KANKUAMAS**

the SNSM does not stem solely from the armed conflict of the past three decades—which has left around 800 homicide victims and more than 3,000 families displaced to locations throughout the country—but also from the continuity of violence that has accumulated since the days of colonization and the subsequent Capuchin evangelism. The territory has come to be considered the primary victim of violence and the alteration of the Original Mother that sustains them naturally follows. What is cause for concern is that these imbalances continue to occur due to threats against traditional customs and ways of life stemming from the implementation of a development model that privileges legal and illegal economic projects that today threaten the effectiveness of Decree 1500 of 2018 governing the protection of sacred spaces that guarantees the completeness and interconnection of the elements that underlie life. These elements are expressed in Jaba **Séshizha** or “Black Line,” the spiritual order of the territory since its Origin, which was integrated into the existence of the Universe.

For this reason, it is within the Kankuamo Indigenous People's community that the Commission of Indigenous Women and Kankuama Families (CMIFAK) was created, which includes the Cabildo Mayor, the directive and representative entity of the Kankuamo


People, under the spiritual counsel of Los Mamos, Sagas, and Mayores as a guarantee of recognition of this important contribution to their preservation and safeguarding as a People. These women have been concentrating their work on advancing compliance with the spiritual principles of Unity, Territory, Autonomy, and Culture as support for the Ancestral Harmonization of all these disharmonies.

This is to say that in the Kankuamo community, peacebuilding—one of the country's national endeavors with in transitional justice and overcoming violations to human rights—is considered an ancestral function permanently linked to the indigenous cosmology of

the SNSM; this people's peacebuilding work is an important point of reference for the country in terms of the approaches its women have for peace. Nevertheless, for this to occur, there needs to be intercultural dialogues rooted in a decolonial perspective.

However, to advance in the work of reharmonization beyond the SNSM, returning to our origins has been a priority. We have been working to cancel the debt left by current and accumulated violence against women and families both within and outside the territory. To achieve this, we have made available the Community Councils that were ratified as a mandate of the IV Kankuamo Conference in 2016

as a means of supporting the application of our own justice in the Councils of Elders, facilitating woman-to-woman access in cases which allow for greater understanding of the spiritual imbalances the ancestral mother and the territory have suffered, in order to cleanse, confess, and pay.

In conclusion, given the road already traveled and the reharmonization efforts of indigenous Kankuama women, the establishment of an intercultural peace agenda was proposed, one that would allow every Kankuama woman to be a body again and reestablish her link with the Origin Mother as sacred representation. This is the true realization of peace. 



Indigenous Women. SPECIAL JURISDICTION FOR PEACE WORKSHOP. MAKUGUEKA, SIERRA NEVADA DE SANTA MARTA, 2018.

LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, AND TRANS WOMEN **IN RESOLUTION 1325**



We interviewed Daniela Díaz Villamil, Peace Coordinator for Colombia Diversa, about her vision for LBT women and their place within UN Resolution 1325 as well as hopes and challenges on its twentieth anniversary.



United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 was created to integrate a gender-based focus into the global

agenda seeking to combat threats to peace and security throughout the world, as reflected in armed conflicts, dictatorships or authoritarian regimes, among others. Colombia, a country

with one of the longest-running armed conflicts in the world, has incorporated this resolution into its legal code.

However, there **have been some gaps** in the Resolution's implementation. Of these is related to **lesbian, bisexual, and trans women (LBT)**. For this reason we interviewed **Daniela Díaz Villamil**, Peace Coordinator at **Colombia Diversa**, so she could tell us more about the challenges, expectations, and achievements of implementing Resolution 1325 as it relates to the rights of LBT women.

Regarding Colombia Diversa's work on sexual and gender diversity, what has been your perspective on Resolution 1325's implementation and lesbian, bisexual, and trans women? The Colombian government's **implementation** of this agenda **has been overwhelmingly restrictive** in that it does not officially distinguish the differentiated impact that lesbian, bisexual, and trans women have suffered in the conflict.

The transition mechanisms that have been put into place to exit the armed conflict have trouble recognizing the disproportionate affects that LBT women have suffered. The biggest attempt to change this situation has been carried out by the **National Center for Historical Memory**, which has taken a chance on revealing the double harm suffered by this population: for being women and for their sexual orientation or gender identity.

How has civil society confronted these restrictions?

We have used the most recent international standards regarding sexual orientation and gender identity to say that the measures outlined in Resolution 1325 also cover LBT women. This with the goal of pointing out that

these two categories (sexual orientation and gender

Secondly, **thanks to the support of FOKUS, we have raised awareness about violence against LBT women**, increasing the recognition of this population by Colombia's transitional justices apparatuses (Special Jurisdiction for Peace, Truth Commission, and the Disappeared Persons Search Unit).

Lastly, we are going to participate for the first time in the joint report of the committee for the commem-

The transition mechanisms that have been put into place to exit the armed conflict have trouble recognizing the disproportionate affects that LBT women have suffered.

oration of the twentieth anniversary of Resolution 1325, in which we will talk about the four pillars: political participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery, and its relation to LBT women.

What has been the role of the feminist movement in this work?

It has been indispensable as part of a **fundamental alliance** which recognizes that talking about violence against women is an obligation that does not distinguish among sexual orientations or gender identities. This means that they are all women and all

have received the differential impact of the conflict, either due to their gender or their sexuality.


Finally, what are the expectations that organizations such as Colombia Diversa have for the future of Resolution 1325 and LBT women?

Ideally, the **United Nations Security Council** would recognize that the sexual orientation and gender identity of women **are vulnerability factors** and that, in this sense, the Resolution's four pillars must establish specific mechanisms for governments that guarantee a place for lesbians, bisexuals, and trans women in their security and peace agendas.

It is also very important that these spaces recognize the reach of gender-based violence against women with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, specifically sexual violence, since Resolution 1325's work agenda **highlights how sexual violence is used in war**, especially against women,

however, it does not recognize the specific uses of said violence against LBT women.

Why is this recognition so important? Because if we understand the ends, we can understand the causes of this violence.

We will have more clarity not only to identify those responsible for these atrocious acts but also to understand what it is that we do as a society that drives someone to feel that they can harm the physical, emotional, and sexual integrity of a person in response to prejudices against their sexual orientation or gender identity. 

PEACE CONTINUES TO BE A CHALLENGE

What awaits peace in this country? What hopes can we have in the current climate?

At the start of 2020, we had a lot of plans for advocacy during the incoming local government of Bogotá, including some activities that would have brought attention to the Peace Accord between the FARC-EP and the government in 2016.

In fact, the new administration proposed some policies and plans to recognize peacebuilding in the Bogotá area, though not as clearly as we would have liked. A significant objective of the District Development Plan (PDD, for its initials in Spanish) is sustainable development—taking into account the UN Sustainable Development Goals—linked to peace, which was called “LIVING WITHOUT FEAR: Peace, Justice, and Security,” and named the first goal of the PDD. This included components such as:

- Build confidence and legitimacy to live without fear and be an epicenter of civic culture, peace, and reconciliation.
- Peace and reconciliation: Position the Bogotá area as the epicenter of peace and reconciliation in the country, enacting out a rural Territorial Development Program (PDET) in Sumapaz and an urban

one in Soacha. Make Bogotá a territory of reconciliation and constructing memory, truth, justice, reparations, and guarantees of no-repetition. Special attention for victims of the armed conflict.

- Foster social dialogue.
- Reduce criminal markets, crime, homicides, and violent acts with an emphasis on those that affect women, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation users, among others.

We ourselves create hope through the union of diverse social processes of women and demands for compliance with the Accord.

All the above gave us space for advocacy from the territories to make visible the urgent need for peacebuilding by urban and campesina women in Bogotá. However, the role of reincorporated women worries us, because they were made conspicuous by their absence from the district proposal, as if they did not exist for the incoming administration.



TEXT: CENTRO
DE PROMOCIÓN Y
CULTURA - CPC
PHOTO: FOKUS



From the organizational processes of working class women, we began to take actions that allowed us to strengthen what we had already built in terms of a district agenda for peace. But then COVID-19 arrived and everything was chaotic. New and difficult realities arose, affecting people socially, culturally, and politically, and with them, more burdens placed on women. For the first time, men are confined in their homes and violence against women is one way they attempt to escape this confinement, by employing violence as a means of exercising power against the women who once again find themselves confined in the private world of the home.

And everything harbored hopes for peace from January through July 2020 is in question, since the national government has used the pandemic as an excuse to dip into resources earmarked for implementing the Accord in priority zones and used these funds to finance things such as government communications on the pandemic. Meanwhile, in the district, budgets for peace have been reduced.



Carnival for Life:
We are All Peace
—CPC.

The direction of local spending has not yet been determined. At the same time, there are concerns about low citizen participation—especially by women—in these newly virtual processes, not because they do not want to participate but because of low or non-existent internet connectivity. The total silence on the subject of peace at the local level is also worrisome. The greatest concern for organized women is that these new ways of conducting politics virtually will remove our status as political actors and our means of participation, returning us to the status of “transversals,” meaning that we are present in everything but not included in anything. These days, analyses indicate that a new war is being waged, and this war is against women—especially if we demand peace, because peace seems to be falling out of fashion in Colombia.

With so much national silence on implementing the peace process, coupled with the total absence of government commitment to the treaty and its constant indictment of the entities created for reparations and judicialization of illegal acts committed during the armed conflict, such as the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), what awaits peace in this country? What hopes can we have in the current climate?

Right now, many questions for the country remain unanswered, particularly the question of when Colombia and the world will again recognize the

The role of reincorporated women worries us, because they were made conspicuous by their absence from the district proposal.

value of Resolution 1325 as a guarantor for women’s participation in peacebuilding and when it will recognize the responsibility governments have to implement it. Could it be that, in Colombia, the twenty years that Resolution 1325 has existed have served for nothing? It would seem they have not.

Meanwhile, the CPC does not cease its work. Now we participate virtually in local political processes and counsel women and youth living in critical situations in self-care online. We defend and raise awareness about peacebuilding in the district, and we

continue to build and promote solidarity among ourselves. We ourselves create hope through the union of diverse social processes of women and demands for compliance with the Accord. **FM**

WOMEN'S SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH: A CHALLENGE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Women face multiple barriers to access to sexual and reproductive health services, something that has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Fundación Oriéntame has adjusted existing activities and developed new ones with FOKUS to help mitigate these barriers.



CCOVID-19 changed what was considered normal. Its appearance has made visible—and deepened—multiple situations that aggravate the difficulties women have faced when attempting to receive high quality sexual and reproductive health services in a timely fashion.

Barriers related not only to precarious economic situations, radically-changed labor conditions or difficulties earning a living, but also to social and cultural factors that make women feel unsafe even in their own homes.

Based on our work with women, we have identified various classes of barriers. See Table 1.

In general, these barriers to access to sexual and reproductive health services clearly demonstrate that women are more affected during emergencies. This suggests the importance of implementing actions to address women's sexual and reproductive health needs and to accompany them, thus ensuring

Table 1. Barriers to Accessing Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare in the Pandemic

On movement and mobility	Women fear contracting COVID-19 when they leave their homes or use public transportation. They also fear being fined without just cause and they doubt that the permission that they are sent to attend their medical appointment will be useful as justification for their movements. This is an even more complicated situation for migrant women.
On economic resources	Women have difficulty covering transportation costs and especially the cost of procedures ranging from IVE (voluntary termination of pregnancy) to birth control. This means that, in many cases, women depend on informal sources of income, which have been reduced due to restrictions put in place to manage the pandemic; others have lost their jobs.
On women's support networks	In general, women's support networks are inadequate, which makes it difficult to access sexual and reproductive health services in a timely manner. For adolescents, making decisions about their sexual and reproductive health is further hindered by their minor status: they are dependents of their parents or other adults they do not trust which forces them to ask for permission or approval. At the same time, social isolation reduces their access to support spaces, such as schools, universities or friends, to whom they turn when seeking help.
On women's privacy and intimacy	Contact center calls fell by 27% during the period of social isolation, due to the fact that, in their homes, women lack the privacy and confidentiality they need to schedule appointments or freely express the motives of their consultations. They are also exposed to violent situations in their homes; the home is not always the safest space for them.
On the situation of the healthcare system	Women express that they cannot easily schedule appointments, procedures or other health services (such as receiving hormonal birth control for daily, monthly, or quarterly use). They typically hear restrictive messages that recommend against accessing the service if they are not sick.
On information and knowledge about sexual and reproductive rights	Women do not have full access to information about their sexual and reproductive rights, which is why they do not know that sexual and reproductive services—such as birth control and IVE—are essential services; as a result, they comply with the recommendations made by the system to defer medical attention.

WHEN YOU TEACH SEX EDUCATION



YOU TEACH US TO
PREVENT SEXUAL
ABUSE

TO CARE FOR
OUR BODIE



YOU GIVE US TOOLS
FOR A SAFE SEX LIFE

YOU TEACH US TO
PREVENT UNWANTED
PREGNANCIES



If you are a teacher and
are interested in having us
facilitate a day of sex
education workshops with
your students, contact us
at

atrujillo@orientame.org.co
or by cellphone:
3102686907.



their sexual and reproductive rights are fully respected.

To that end, through the projects **Mujeres sin Barreras** (Women without Borders) y **Autonomía Reproductiva: Un camino hacia la paz** (Reproductive Autonomy: A Pathway to Peace), Fundación Oriéntame, in conjunction with FOKUS, has transformed its activities to make it possible for women to fully enjoy their sexual and reproductive rights. To achieve this, the following measures were implemented:

1. The Punto D (Point D) strategy was implemented to prevent unwanted pregnancy and gender-based violence. This strategy was carried out in conjunction with public and private, formal and informal educational institutions where digital strategies were employed to raise awareness about sexual and reproductive rights, voluntary termination of pregnancy, sexual diversity, and care for pregnant teens. Digital classes aimed at

healthcare and education professionals and women and men of diverse ages were also created. Additionally, virtual chats in educational institutions—developed in alliance with public and private institutions—have been adapted to digital work environments, which represents a more direct means of reaching people.

2. Sexual and reproductive health supplies have been provided to social, community, and women's organizations: 5,000 pregnancy tests, 7,200 condoms, oral and injectable birth control, and emergency contraceptives. Masks, thermometers, condoms, and pregnancy tests were also provided to community leaders.
3. Since it is impossible for Sexual and Reproductive Health Brigades to circulate in specific zones in the country—such as Putumayo, Caquetá, Meta, and Guaviare—institutional coordination has been put in place to seek alternatives

{ Opportunities }

that allow these services to reach the people who need them.

4. COVID-19 represents a serious risk for women specifically and communities in general. For this reason, a strategy is being developed to respond to sexual and reproductive health needs, which includes birth control, menstruation products (such as menstruation cups), and protection against the virus. To achieve this, alliances were formed with neighborhood and community leaders in order to reach women in diverse cities and contexts and guarantee their sexual and reproductive rights. At the same time, access to partially or totally subsidized sexual and reproductive health services has been arranged. Women are supported with birth control and voluntary pregnancy termination vouchers through public and private institutions, community leaders, and social and women's organizations.
5. By guaranteeing sexual and reproductive rights, these strategies respond to the sexual and reproductive health needs of women both during the coronavirus outbreak and beyond it. This allows for an understanding of sexual and reproductive health as a process wherein these rights are strengthened and barriers to access are lowered.

Because of this, the task of confronting barriers created by the COVID-19 health emergency is a challenge that stresses the advocacy capabilities and impact of actions that are moved into virtual spaces. It also forces us to use these new methods, or others, to provide attention to women. Perhaps this is one of the things that can be salvaged from this situation: the possibility of reinventing and rearranging pertinent actions to understand and address the sexual and reproductive needs of women. **FM**

Trip to Corinto



WOMEN, WEAVERS OF PEACE

Nasa women refuse to let stories laden with pain and shame be the only ones told, which is why they raise their voices to lead actions for peace.

For more than twenty years, the indigenous Nasa people—especially women—have filled **Codacop** with critical sense, spiritual openings, and political lessons and motives to reaffirm the construction of resistance and peace. Today, these years of walking this path intersect with the anniversary of Resolution 1325, a political tool that has been interpreted based on Nasa women's experiences and their tireless work to defend a dignified life and demand a demilitarized territory.

Northern Cauca is a renowned territory in our country. The people there

have witnessed an armed confrontation that has disproportionately impacted the bodies and lives of women, girls, and indigenous, Afro-descendent, and campesina populations. If Colombians know anything about Cauca, it is because of the armed conflict, which has caused social leaders and grassroots organizing processes to be stigmatized.

These twenty years of the Women, Peace, and Security Resolution represent a journey along a road built by millions of women by hand

Yet Nasa women refuse to let stories laden with pain and shame be the only ones told, which is why they raise their voices to lead actions for peace. Together, they have supported **Tejido Mujer** in order to confront the presence of armed actors, position their voices at the interior of the organization and inhabit *wët fxizenxi*—meaning living well and in harmony—through words and spirit.

This past year, their work was emphatically centered on making **memory** a guide for progress, something they achieved by looking retrospectively at both their pain and the resistance, strength, and tenacity with which the people use the dignified rage and happy rebellion invoked by the Zapatistas. Their most recent publication, *Tejemos la historia para sanar la memoria* (“We Weave History to Heal Memory”), is a compilation of testimonies that name and describe war from the perspectives of feeling and political analysis.

These twenty years of the Women, Peace, and Security Resolution represent a journey along a road built by millions of women by hand; women who sow actions for a life free of war and injustice throughout the world. Nasa

women today plant their seed: one of memory, a set of stories that add up to dignity, bravery, resilience, and thousands of motives for continuing to bet on the right to peace in Colombia. **FM**



10 YEARS OF PEACEBUILDING ACCOMPANIMENT



Fotos FOKUS.

RESOLUTION 1325 OVER HUMANAS COLOMBIA'S **15 YEARS OF WORK**

Luz Piedad Caicedo, subdirector of Corporación Humanas and one of the organization's founders, refers to the organization's history and lessons they have learned relating to the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Colombia and the challenges of the current context.



TEXT AND
PHOTO:
**CORPORACIÓN
HUMANAS
COLOMBIA**



Why did Humanas become interested in Resolution 1325 (R1325)?

Luz Piedad Caicedo: The beginning of Humanas' institutional life coincides with the paramilitary demobilization, a process that was clearly rigged, with an armed actor that was not against the state, quite the opposite; it had been useful in the government's anti-subversive policies. Despite this, we exposed a very complicated reality for women, for as the process advanced, an increase in violence against women was reported in the areas where [the paramilitaries] were demobilizing.

Our involvement was tied to trying to understand what was happening and what effects a disarmed masculinity had on the lives of women. That is the **first investigation that Humanas conducted** with the support of UNIFEM, who also proposed guidelines that should be taken into account at the moment of conducting a demobilization, disarmament, and reincorporation process, so that the receptor community—women especially—can protect themselves from a masculinity that needs to readjust to a new reality.

What is the relationship between the participation of women in

Colombia's peace processes and R1325?

L. P.: The participation of women in peace processes in Colombia predates the appearance of R1325. During the era of Caguán there was a very important women's movement that participated in the Negotiations Table; their place there was earned through alliances and their own enormous organizing capability. Yet this space suffered a huge rupture when Uribe Vélez was elected and began the process of paramilitary demobilization. It was a very complicated negotiation, with the compounding factor that the president named two women as civil society representatives

to the National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation, appealing to compliance with R1325. And, of course, these nominations did not have political or legal support. This generated a lot of hostility toward R1325.

For Humanas, some of the benefits of the Resolution have been that it guarantees that women are recognized as fundamental actors in negotiations and that it demands compliance with protections to victims. Additionally, it is a useful instrument that has had enormous potential in Colombia since, undoubtedly, it allowed us to appeal to our right as women to be part of the negotiations with the FARC-EP.

What lessons has Humanas learned about R1325 over the fifteen years the organization has existed?

L. P.: For us, the Resolution has some interesting elements. For example, it arose out of the efforts of feminists who believed that such an instrument born out of the United Nations—especially the Security Council—was going to have a significant impact. The first lesson is that this has not been the case. R1325 has proved insufficient; it has been instrumentalized by pro-arms positions to the extent that many governments have bet on involving women in their armies [as a means of compliance with the Resolution].

Owing to [governments and other institutions] questioning the obligatory nature of the Resolution, Humanas conducted a study to show that it is binding and that, therefore, its compliance is mandatory. However, its language is not mandatory; instead, it *urges* governments. In other words, it encourages and suggests, but does not *require* anything. All these aspects make the resolution a very fragile instrument. But the fact that it compiles women's rights that have been included in other


international treaties, which are indeed binding, is interesting. What is more, it has been useful for participating in peace processes, however it must not be considered the only means of demanding rights.

Highlighted: The participation of women in peace processes in Colombia predated the appearance of R1325.

What challenges do you believe face the feminist movement with respect to the issues of women, peace, and security in this post-accord context and the COVID-19 pandemic?

L. P.: The fundamental challenge has to do with ensuring that the Peace Accord's decisions regarding women are enforced. We are losing a golden op-

portunity to be able to make some important changes in the country. There are elements there that, if they could be implemented, would be a step forward toward resolving some of the conflict and inequality that exist.

Regarding the pandemic, it has highlighted inequalities in a cruder fashion. It shows that we have an unviable, inefficient, incompetent health system; an insufficiently focalized social policy; an economic model that fractured because of its dependence on consumption; and a system that went into crisis but which has not generated a deep discussion about measures—such as the implementation of a basic income—that could create important changes, yet these are not being proposed in the country. 



ALLIANCE 1325: THE RESOLUTION AT 20 YEARS



TEXT AND
PHOTO: FOKUS
IN COLOMBIA

FOKUS is pleased that women's organizations are contributing to building this alliance and that they have taken the time to recognize this important date despite the current challenges facing the world due to COVID-19.

After listening to members and learning about the process to build this alliance—in which the majority of our Program 1325 partner organizations in Colombia as well as another 20 women's organizations participate—as the director of the FOKUS office in Colombia, I have had the opportunity to talk with the representatives of different organizations about the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of Resolution 1325. I spoke with Adriana Benjumea Rua, from Corporación Humanas; Marisol Avendaño Avendaño, from the Centro de Promoción y Cultura; Yenny Cobos Guerrero, from the Fundación Oriéntame, and Elsy Rodríguez Vergara, from Cartografía Sur. This is what they said.

Why is it important to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of Resolution 1325 and the subsequent resolutions?

Adriana Benjumea: We approached the women's movement with the proposal to commemorate this date because we know that it has been part of

our agendas as women's organizations working for peace. Given that Resolution 1325 has framed FOKUS's work, we invited first their partner organizations; after that, the commemoration was opened up to other organizations. For HUMANAS, 1325 is part of its origin; in 2005, when we began working with issues of reproductive rights and later, when we participated in the

We value the alliance between Norway and the women's movement which allows us to create reflections like these. They are critical for peacebuilding.

FOKUS event celebrating the tenth anniversary of the resolution. It is an instrument that has allowed women to make demands for peace and security.

Yenny Cobos: Oriéntame does not have a long history of implementing Resolution 1325, however we have been supporting it through [our work addressing] sexual and reproductive health issues in women in the process

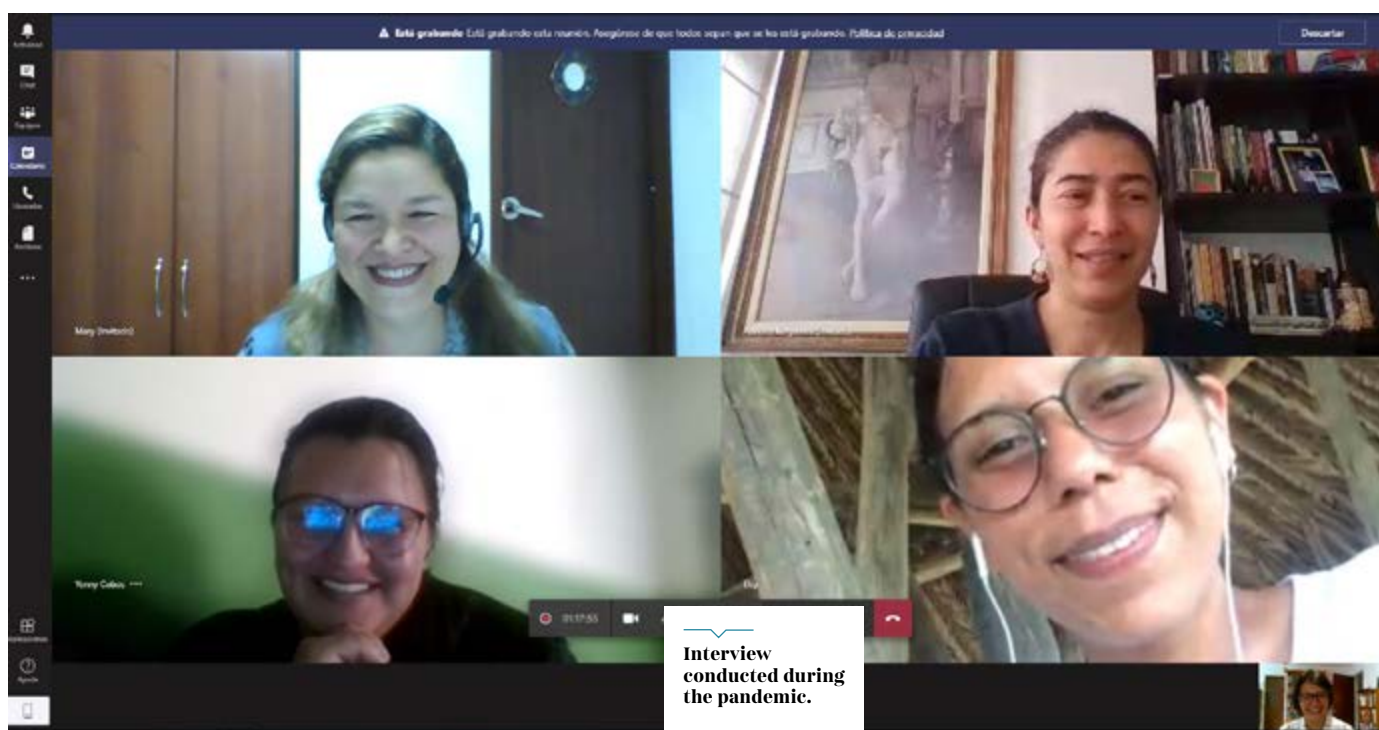
of reincorporation through the framework created by Resolution 1325 and FOKUS's programs. So it's through these two issues that we've supported the commemoration.

Marisol Avendaño: Resolution 1325 was our point of contact with FOKUS. It has meant the possibility of speaking of "women's political action in peacebuilding processes" in the territories. For the women in Bogotá, connecting through this tool has been very important, as it has helped us promote peace work in the city which we previously carried out only in the city's outskirts. We participated in the course organized by FOKUS and the National University's School of Gender Studies in 2011 and then we dared to train women on these topics. A good part of what the women talk about now when they discuss peacebuilding is linked to this.

Elsy Rodríguez: We've participated in distinct phases of 1325 in Colombia. We received training on the Resolution. Later we participated in territorial processes with Fondo Lumaria. In this last stage with FOKUS we believe that, as young people, we have been able to actively participate in different advocacy spaces, joining other women's social movement organizations on issues related to peace.

What has made it possible for so many diverse organizations to come together?

A. B.: There are two elements that allow this to happen. First, there's the



positive aspect, since in the midst of the differences that exist between organizations, today there is no doubt that 1325 has been important in peace processes; it was important in the negotiations with the FARC[-EP] and can also play a similar role in dialogues with the ELN. However, the unfortunate aspect is that, in this government, demands for peace have become so necessary and urgent that [diverse organizations] ended up joining forces.

Y. C.: Being part of this diversity of organizations means important lessons and meetings and motivates the unification of common causes, such as achieving comprehensive actions in peacebuilding. Sharing other lessons from the territories is key, especially because we see that peace for women is still a long way from becoming a reality.

M. A.: In the logic of relations and connections, this has been possible because of the organization that has called us together. Humanas has convened us very humanely, they have made us feel

part of something. We have been working on this issue for ten years, so we also feel like we're doing the convening too. We have something to say about this and today it is necessary to think that there are other things beyond the pandemic, that we have to defend the peace accord.

E. R.: We still work in a dynamic of flux. The social movement has learned to dialogue. The Colombian reality has evolved beyond individuals and this is the opportunity to come together with common political goals.

What opinion do you have about the possibility of the government launching National Action Plan (PNA) 1325? Some organizations have mentioned that the Havana Accord is one way of making 1325 a reality. How do you see it?

This is a celebration of the movement, not of governments. Advances are made in peace thanks to society.

A. B.: Humanas has not been a banner organization for the PNA 1325. We believe that a legal recourse that forces the government to apply the resolution is important. But if there is a process rooted in the movement to elaborate a PNA, we'll be there. What worries us is the idea of the government making a PNA with the support of the corporation and that the government hasn't convened the women's movement that has been working for peace in Colombia.

M. A.: Peace is not limited to the Accord; the Accord is an important part of it, but it's not the only part, and in this context, in which the conflict has intensified, how can we back a 1325 action plan from a government that has intensified the conflict? We would create a parallel action plan. **FM**



Photo FOKUS
Ermina Bejarano,
Captain of the Fundo
Bonito community
of the Wacoyo
Sikuani Reservation.
Puerto Gaitan, Meta.

