



**Colombia – U.S. Human Rights Law School
Partnership
Initial Institutional Assessment Report**

February 19 – March 2, 2012

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I. Executive Summary

The Office for Higher Education for Development of the American Council on Education (HED), in collaboration with USAID/Colombia, will implement a program to establish partnerships between U.S. and Colombian law schools to strengthen the capacities of Colombian schools of law in the outlying and frequently conflict-prone regions of the country to provide formal and informal training in human rights. The program will 1) strengthen Colombian law schools' institutional capacity through improved legal education in human rights, 2) enhance their outreach capacity to better serve vulnerable populations with limited access to or knowledge of the legal system, and 3) to equip future legal professionals with a better understanding of national and international standards of human rights. The program will advance Colombian human rights practices to prevent and remedy human rights violations and to support a culture of human rights. This initiative will address the needs of those groups disproportionately affected by human rights violations, including indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, women, children and youth, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) community, human rights activists, journalists, labor union members, and victims of the armed conflict.

HED assembled a design team of four professors from U.S. and Colombian law schools who traveled to Colombia from February 20 through March 2 to survey and assess the present and potential capacities and interest of 17 universities (16 law schools) in five regions of Colombia regarding their education and community outreach in human rights. The regions visited are some of the most affected by violence and concentrate significant vulnerable populations. To better understand the context in which these law schools work, the team also met with national, regional and local human rights experts in state and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and officials in USAID national and regional programs.

Based on this assessment, the design team has developed the present report to outline specific recommendations in the following areas:

1. **Curriculum Development:** a human rights course should be mandatory; offer a human rights course university wide, create opportunities for interdisciplinary study of human rights; promote innovative, participatory teaching and learning methodologies, strengthen and increase postgraduate offerings in human rights; support student participation in regional, national and international human rights competitions; and improve the use of resources in student research and learning.
2. **Community Outreach and Service:** strengthen and expand the human rights capacity of Practice Law Centers; establish and develop legal clinics; maintain and strengthen relationships with state human rights enforcement agencies; strengthen links with civil society organizations; increase the use of faculty/student groups for research and action on human rights (*semilleros*); teach about human rights in high schools, elementary schools, and other community settings.
3. **Faculty Development:** provide support for faculty in obtaining advanced degrees and conducting research in human rights; increase the number of full time faculty dedicated to

research and teaching of human rights; promote exchanges, visits, and research opportunities for faculty; create institutes, centers and observatories in human rights; support research and projects that improve municipal and regional human rights policies and practices; promote human rights publications; and increase participation in networks, conferences, and associations.

4. **Institutional Strengthening**: strengthen the teaching of English; encourage scholarship programs for poor, minority and vulnerable populations; and promote exchanges, foreign study, and internships for students; and increase availability and student access to law databases.

II. Institutional Assessment Process Description

A. Context

The Colombia-U.S. Human Rights Law School Partnership supports the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Colombia's plan to strengthen respect for and protection of human rights (HR) in Colombia. Within the USAID/Colombia Assistance Objective (AO) framework, the Colombia-U.S. Human Rights Law School Partnership seeks to contribute to AO 3: Strengthened Democratic and Economic Governance and Respect for Human Rights. This partnership also complements the 3rd stage of the USAID Human Rights Program (HRP) in Colombia, the highest U.S. funded HRP in the world, intended to consolidate prior gains and to increase the capacity and institutionalization of Colombian actors and entities. The 3rd stage added the goal of supporting a culture of human rights to the longstanding objectives of preventing abuse and violation of human rights, and providing meaningful and efficient responses to violations of human rights. While new institutionalized structures, laws, approaches and seminal court orders have all laid the foundation for significant progress and reform, they are still developing. Other new emphases include developing regional capacity close to remaining areas of conflict, and appropriately differentiated approaches addressing the needs of groups disproportionately affected, including indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, women, children and youth, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) community, human rights activists, journalists, labor union members, and victims of the armed conflict. This work will involve collaboration across sectors, e.g., civil society working with state entities on the same issues toward the same goals in such areas as the National Education Plan on Human Rights (*Plan Nacional de Educación en Derechos Humanos*, PLANEDH), law schools, the Inter-American Courts, public servants, police, and community outreach.

B. Objectives

The Office for Higher Education for Development of the American Council on Education (HED), in collaboration with USAID/Colombia, will implement and monitor a comprehensive program to establish up to three partnerships between U.S. law schools and approximately five Colombian law schools to strengthen the capacities of Colombian regional schools of law in the outlying, and frequently conflict-prone, regions of the country to provide formal and informal training in HR. This will be accomplished through 1) strengthening Colombian law schools' institutional capacity through improved legal education in HR, via, for example, curriculum enhancements and experiential methodology, such as clinics and externships, 2) enhancing their outreach capacity to better serve vulnerable populations with limited access to knowledge of the legal system, and 3) equipping future legal professionals with a better understanding of national and international standards of HR and the skills to support a reform consistent with preventing and remedying HR violations and supporting a culture of HR.

C. Methodology

1. Overview

In order to determine the final program design that identifies the beneficiary institutions and opportunities for creating and/or strengthening regional law school human rights programs, HED assembled and deployed a “design team” of four law professors with knowledge and expertise in HR and Colombia, two from U.S. and two from Colombian law schools, to survey and assess the present and potential capacities and interest of 17 law schools. These law schools are located in five regions of Colombia most affected by violence and with significant vulnerable populations. The team, divided into two sub teams, met on site with faculty, administration and in some cases students at the law schools. The teams also met with national, regional and local HR experts in state and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and officials in various USAID national and regional programs to examine the legal and social context of human rights, specifically regarding vulnerable populations, from the perspective of these groups pertaining to the present and possible roles of law schools, faculty and students in the communities. The teams were accompanied for many of the site visits by USAID staff or the HED partnership manager.

The interviews typically lasted 2-4 hours with law schools, sometimes including visits to the Practice Law Centers (*consultorios jurídicos*¹) and tours of the law school and university, and 1-2 hours with governmental agencies and NGOs. Some of the law schools completed short questionnaires asking for basic data regarding faculty, student body, and curriculum in advance of the visits. The teams also reviewed the law schools’ web sites and used them to gather additional relevant information. Based on the visits, the teams completed customized questionnaires to record the collected data in a consistent and systematic format. The team members then compared their findings across the regions, extracting common themes and developing recommendations. These were consolidated into preliminary findings presented to USAID following the site visits. After the trip, the team members prepared separate reports recommending specific regions and the corresponding law schools. This report was derived directly from both the data and the team members’ assessments.

2. Law School Visits and Organizations Interviewed by Region

Table 1. Law Schools and Organizations visited

Region	Universities and Organizations
Antioquia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Universidad de Antioquia (Medellín)</i>• <i>Universidad de Medellín</i>• <i>Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, (Medellín)</i>• <i>Universidad Católica de Oriente</i>

¹ Consultorios jurídicos are not legal clinics. Consultorios differ from U.S. legal clinics in that they are not as tied to considerable seminar instruction on substantive law, legal analysis and advocacy skills; have fewer and less qualified supervisors; and limited linked instruction.

	<p>(Rionegro)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Medellín Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights</i> • <i>Personería de Medellín (Ombudsman)</i> • <i>Corporación Jurídica Libertad</i>
Valle del Cauca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Universidad Santiago de Cali</i> • <i>Universidad Javeriana de Cali</i> • <i>Defensoría del Pueblo (Human Rights Defender)</i> • <i>Ruta Pacífica de Mujeres</i>
Chocó	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fundación Universitaria Claretiana (FUCLA)</i> • <i>Defensoría del Pueblo</i> • <i>Personería Municipal de Quibdó</i> • <i>Casa de Justicia</i> • <i>Universidad Tecnológica del Chocó</i>
Caribbean Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (Montería)</i> • <i>Universidad del Sinú, (Montería)</i> • <i>Universidad del Norte (Barranquilla)</i> • <i>Universidad Simón Bolívar (Barranquilla)</i> • <i>Universidad del Atlántico (Barranquilla)</i> • <i>Universidad del Magdalena (Santa Marta)</i> • <i>Universidad Sergio Arboleda (Santa Marta)</i> • <i>Defensoría del Pueblo (Montería)</i> • <i>Defensoría del Pueblo (Barranquilla)</i> • <i>Comité de Solidaridad con Presos Políticos (Barranquilla)</i>
Meta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Universidad Santo Tomás, Facultad de Derecho</i> • <i>Universidad del Meta, Facultad de Derecho</i> • <i>Defensoría del Pueblo</i> • <i>Personería</i> • <i>Casa de Justicia</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Programa Regional de Acceso a la Justicia de USAID</i>
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3. Brief overview of legal education in Colombia

In Colombia, legal education consists of a five year long course of study following high school at a law school (*facultad de derecho*), a separate and largely autonomous entity among various schools at a university. Law is an undergraduate study (*pregrado*) option in comparison with a J.D. degree from a U.S. law school, which is a post graduate program of study. Postgraduate studies in Colombia offer various certifications or degrees: a *Diplomado* (short course, typically 120 hours, in a specific field of law), a Specialization (year-long study of a more comprehensive nature), Master’s Degree and Doctorate Degree. In the outlying regions, specifically, few law faculty have Master’s or Doctorate degrees.

The curriculum is largely fixed, with some room for electives. Human rights courses are sometimes required, sometimes optional; in the law schools surveyed, 8 of the 16 (since FUCCLA does not have a law school) required human rights courses. Participation in Practice Law Centers is required, typically in the 4th and 5th years, for around 10 hours per week. Practice Law Centers tend to provide a service function versus a focus on learning. Compared to clinical legal education, which typically has a strong teaching function (often tied to considerable seminar instruction on substantive law, legal analysis and advocacy skills) coupled with some client service, and significant supervision by highly qualified attorneys, Practice Law Centers have fewer and less qualified supervisors and little linked instruction. Students also gain legal experience with government agencies and NGOs, with which law schools have memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and agreements, both formal (*convenios*) and informal (e.g. arrangements for student’s internships, or *judicaturas*).

III. Initial Institutional Assessment Findings by Region

The design team interviewed a total of 17 universities during the assessment – main findings are described in Table 2 below and detailed by university in Appendix A.

A. Antioquia

The team interviewed three universities in *Medellín* and one in *Rionegro*, as well as several HR agencies. The general perception is that the law schools should reach not only the city of *Medellín* but also the entire Antioquia region; evidence of a regional focus was not apparent from the assessment, however. The bulk of the cases brought via the law schools centered on victims, particularly forcibly displaced persons. Greater emphasis should be placed on other populations, such as children and adolescents, handicapped, Afro-Colombians, indigenous, incarcerated, and lesbian, gay, transsexual, bisexual and intersexual (LGTBI) persons. Additionally, the UN office indicated that impunity, corruption, and economic marginalization are priority issues to which law schools should direct some attention.

Table 2. Antioquia Universities

University	Main findings
<u>Universidad de Antioquia</u>	The law school has branches in Medellín (1400 students), Turbo, Santa Fe de Antioquia and Sonson (300 in these three cities). Study of HR is an elective course. Postgraduate, the school offers <i>Diplomas</i> in human rights and humanitarian law (interdisciplinary), displaced persons, and the recently passed Law of Victims and Land Restitution ² . It has a Practice Department with a working group serving Internally Displaced People (IDPs) that has supported the registration of IDPs into the Unified Registry for Displaced People (<i>Registro Único de Población Desplazada</i>).
<u>Universidad de Medellín</u>	The law school, with 2800 students, has an elective course in human rights; a Diploma in human rights; a Diploma in human rights, social development and management; and a continuing education seminar on international humanitarian law. The Practice Law Center primarily serves displaced persons and also provides legal services in Lower Cauca valley and the <i>Montes de María</i> region. It also has radio legal clinics and two legal clinics, one on Afro-descendants.
<u>Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB)</u>	The law school, with about 650 law students, offers an elective course on human rights for all students, an interdisciplinary seminar for continuing education in human rights and humanitarian law and a Masters in law and globalization in partnership with the Free University of Brussels. The Practice Law Center works in several neighborhoods of <i>Medellín</i> . Students work in the office of the Mayor of Medellín with displaced persons and also counsel victims of sexual violence. There is a legal clinic and a mediation center. The clinic is linked to human rights research through a pilot project on women's rights.

² The “*Ley de Víctimas y Restitución de Tierras*” passed in June 2011, is directing increased attention to human rights throughout the country and raising demands for vindication and reparation for thousands of past victims of human rights abuses resulting from years of conflict and the exploitation that has frequently accompanied the killing and forced dislocation of Colombian indigenous, Afro-Colombian and peasant farmer populations.

<p><u>Universidad Católica de Oriente (Rionegro)</u></p>	<p>The law school currently has about 400 law students and a department of human rights. Required courses in the HR area are international humanitarian law and the social theory of conflict. It offers courses in human rights law in the community, and sponsors a <i>semillero</i> on human rights. The School of Education offers a Masters in the culture and teaching of human rights, towards applied research and social impact. The Practice Law Center serves victims from northeastern Antioquia in particular, includes work in conciliation, and has MOUs with civil society and state agencies, some foundations, and UN agencies. The law school coordinates the <i>Mesa</i> on human rights which brings together state and government entities, human rights NGOs, and international agencies to discuss and coordinate around human rights themes.</p>
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B. Valle del Cauca

In Cali the team interviewed two private law schools: *Universidad Santiago de Cali*, and *Universidad Javeriana de Cali*. These have distinct and complementary characteristics, both in the population they serve and the type of programs they offer. Cali has a public university but it does not have a public law school. Cali has a large Afro-Colombian population. It has some of the common problems arising from the violent conflict in Colombia, ranging from internally displaced populations to endemic violence in marginalized neighborhoods of the city.

Table 3. Cali Universities

University	Main findings
<p><u>Universidad Santiago de Cali</u></p>	<p>The <i>Universidad Santiago de Cali</i> has the oldest school of law in that city, with 2224 students in the school of law and 117 faculty, 44 of which have full- time appointments. It also has a campus in Palmira, a medium-sized city in the Department of Valle. The law school serves middle, middle-low and low income students in Cali. Approximately 50% of the student body is Afro-Colombian. The university has a Center of Afro Studies. The main thematic focus of the law school is criminal law; it offers a human rights course as an elective. Law students can work at a Center for Human Rights, which conducts substantial</p>

	<p>outreach to and develops projects on issues related to indigenous communities. The law school has a “<i>semillero</i>” on human rights. The Practice Law Center’s work includes a group of Afro-descendant students working on Afro-Colombian issues. The university has admission policies that benefit student applicants from vulnerable populations (e.g., indigenous, Afro-descendants).</p>
<p><u>Universidad Javeriana de Cali</u></p>	<p><i>Universidad Javeriana de Cali</i>’s law program was established in 2001 and has 568 law students and 94 professors, with 14 full time and two in human rights. This university is recognized as an elite institution, serving students of families with higher income. However, it provides scholarships for students with scarce resources, or from indigenous or Afro communities. The law school offers an elective human rights course. In the Practice Law Center, students work with issues related to LGTBI and displaced populations. They also collaborate with a range of state agencies and NGOs working in the area of human rights. An emerging clinic carries out public interest litigation. The law school also has a “<i>semillero</i>” that litigates anti-corruption cases and works on human rights education issues, including education of women in indigenous communities and displaced populations in the north of Cauca.</p>

C. Chocó

Chocó, a tropical, particularly wet and isolated area in the northwest, is a marginalized and poor region of Colombia, with an endemic problem of mismanagement and corruption in official institutions. The population is more than 95% Afro-Colombian. *Quibdó*, the region’s capital, is located in a highly conflicted zone, with the consequent presence of displaced communities in the city. It has approximately 100,000 inhabitants.

Table 4. Chocó Universities

University	Main findings
<u>Universidad Tecnológica del Chocó (UTCh)</u>	This public law school has 1600 students, a large number considering the population of Quibdó. It has 77 faculty members with 11 of

	<p>them under full-time contracts, and an academic focus in environmental law. While it has an obligatory human rights course, elective courses relevant to human rights have recently decreased. Students participated in the national human rights moot court competition and created a “<i>semillero</i>” on human rights. The Practice Law Center provides legal services to displaced persons, with the support of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) local office. It also works with almost all public institutions in Quibdó in providing legal services to the community³. It also deploys students through “<i>brigadas</i>” to serve marginalized neighborhoods of Quibdó. The university carries out research activities in issues related to Afro-descendants.</p>
<p><u>Fundación Universitaria Claretiana (FUCLA)</u></p>	<p>This private university was the only one interviewed which does not have a law school. FUCLA has a large network of social actors and extensive work with disadvantaged communities in the entire department of Chocó (not limited to Quibdó). FUCLA has departments on Social Work, Anthropology, and Research Methods, among others. It offers a Diploma on Human Rights Public Policy. It also offers a Diploma in Previous Consultation (<i>consulta previa</i>) regarding indigenous rights, and it is associated with the <i>Foro Interétnico Social</i> and the <i>Observatorio del Pacífico</i> based in Cali. It offers an online course on human rights and its programs are guided by a rights-based approach to all disciplines. It also has a special focus on women’s rights through collaboration with local NGOs. FUCLA appears to have a strong reputation in Quibdó. It is operated by a recognized religious organization likely to ensure a transparent and efficient program operation.</p>

D. Caribbean Coast

³ Partner institutions include: *Defensoría del Pueblo*, *Personería Municipal*, *Fiscalía*, SIJIN (criminal investigation unit), *Codechoco* (regional development agency), *Casa de Justicia*, among other institutions.

The Caribbean Region has been largely affected by all forms of violence related to the guerrillas, paramilitaries and new criminal bands that have impacted Colombia during the last 60 years. Other issues affecting this region include: the inequality in the distribution of the land and the struggle for the recovery of lands that were abandoned due to violence - the greatest amount of land to be redistributed in the country is in the North Coast; forced displacement and need for urgent humanitarian assistance for displaced population; attention to other victims including victims of floods in the region (displaced by environmental causes); high levels of poverty of the population (approximately 30% of the poor in Colombia are located in the Caribbean Coast); violation of the rights of women and high rates of domestic violence; violation of the rights of children (guerrilla recruitment, trafficking, violence); and; corruption of the political class of this region.

Table 5. Caribbean Coast Universities

University	Main findings
<p><u>Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana UPB (Montería)</u></p>	<p>This private university, a branch of the UPB of <i>Medellín</i>, is new to the region (eight years), with 480 students currently enrolled in the Law School. The law school offers an elective course on human rights; conducts community outreach through its Community Center - where law and other students conduct workshops on law, psychological counseling, education on human rights, and computer training for vulnerable populations in the area, including displaced people. UPB also has <i>semilleros</i> working in research and teaching in human rights consistent with PLANEDH, and demonstrated commitment to interdisciplinary work. It has a Practice Law Center located in the city center that works on a full range of cases, including human rights. It has a diverse student body, with student scholarships and other funds to support students from vulnerable groups as well as an English Training Center.</p>
<p><u>Universidad del Sinú (Montería)</u></p>	<p>It is the oldest private university in the region (32 years). The law school has 1238 students. In 2011 it achieved high quality accreditation for four years from the Ministry of Education. It has a Center for Political and Social Studies, high quality research work, projects and publications on issues related to the region, networking and national and international recognition. The curriculum includes a compulsory course in Human Rights; it has established <i>semilleros</i> and a network of trainers in human rights in high schools. The</p>

	<p>Practice Law Center is a leader in the region. <i>Brigadas</i> are conducted in municipalities of Córdoba. It has good facilities and shows particular attention to victims, displaced persons and clients in general. It provides grants to indigenous and Afro-Colombians.</p>
<p><u>Universidad del Norte (Barranquilla)</u></p>	<p>This private, highly regarded university has recently emphasized a focus on public service. Its law school emphasizes human rights, International Humanitarian Law, and Public and Private International Law, which are required courses. It has a growing societal presence in the region. This law school has 700 students. Universidad del Norte has a significant interdisciplinary emphasis, such as collaboration with the political science career (Center of Political and Legal Practices combined with a research group); strong service to communities: including work with displaced people, women, domestic violence, disabled, children and adolescents in human rights education, and <i>brigadas</i>. It offers adequate support for postgraduate training for faculty; supports a significant participation of students in legal competitions such as moot courts; and maintains relations with a variety of government agencies. Its Practice Law Center is located in the city center but with also with decentralized services at a local hospital and in conflict-prone neighborhoods. It has published the Law Journal (see http://rcientificas.uninorte.edu.co/) for the past 20 years, as well as yearly faculty publications; their <i>semillero</i> has existed for three years. It has established over 50 MOUs with universities in the United States and Europe, and has received international donor support as well.</p>
<p><u>Universidad Simón Bolívar, USB (Barranquilla)</u></p>	<p>USB is a private university that sees itself as the "People's University," and has one of the lowest tuition rates in the country. It has 1788 students in the law school. USB receives</p>

	<p>students from stratum 1-3 coming from high conflict zones.⁴ Human Rights is a compulsory course for all students, it has a recently created human rights center and library and a HR <i>semillero</i>. A Master's Degree is compulsory for all faculty members. Faculty members litigate cases before Inter-American Court. It has offered Diplomas in Human Rights and International Humanitarian law free and open to the public. The law school uses virtual classrooms and other tools to broaden its teaching reach.</p>
<p><u>Universidad del Atlántico (Barranquilla)</u></p>	<p>The law school offers a compulsory course in Human Rights and electives on protection of women and children and domestic violence. It is accessible to low-income students. It has a <i>semillero</i> that works in teaching about the constitution. There is very limited research in human rights and few formal MOUs with other institutions.</p>
<p><u>Universidad del Magdalena (Santa Marta)</u></p>	<p>Universidad del Magdalena is a public university where the law school is relatively new (nine years) and belongs to the School of Humanities. The law school will implement a Specialization in Human Rights and has submitted a proposal for a Masters in Human Rights. It has a new <i>semillero</i> where law students in a pilot project teach law and human rights classes in 10 local high schools. It also conducts significant field work with local communities. The law school has a Practice Law Center and mediation program located in the city center, directed at the displaced population as well as a radio Practice Law Center. All students participate in human rights course taught at the Practice Law Center in the seventh semester. English is required in six of the first seven semesters and all students must pass an English competency exam to graduate.</p>
<p><u>Universidad Sergio Arboleda (Santa Marta)</u></p>	<p>This is a private university, an extension of the <i>Sergio Arboleda University in Bogotá</i>. Currently the Law School at Santa Marta has</p>

⁴ Colombia's social strata, ranging from stratum 1: lowest income, to stratum 6: wealthy has been extensively used by the government as a reference to develop social welfare programs, statistical information and to some degree for the assignment of lands.

	770 students.
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E. Villavicencio

The armed conflict is active in the Department of Meta. Of the 29 municipalities, the *Defensoría* considers 11 to be high risk (designated “early warning” by the Ministry of Interior). In rural zones of Meta, there is virtually no state presence; paramilitary organizations are replacing this void. Forced migration of peasants and indigenous peoples is said to be caused by the armed conflict, drug trade and unspecified large agricultural interests.

Table 6. Villavicencio Universities

University	Main findings
<u>Universidad Santo Tomás</u>	This private, new (five years old) law school with around 600 students is a branch of <i>Universidad Santo Tomás</i> in <i>Bogotá</i> . The law school has a compulsory human rights course; it awards a specialization in HR and International HR before courts and tribunals. It also sponsors a <i>semillero</i> in projects involving research and human rights education, in conformance with PLANEDH. Many faculty have advanced degrees. Its new, well equipped Practice Law Center in the city center also conducts <i>brigadas</i> . It works extensively with indigenous people and conducts a law education program in high schools and elementary schools. It showed high level of interest by bringing together faculty members and administrators as well as eight students, who made presentations on their three <i>semilleros</i> .
<u>Universidad del Meta</u>	This is a private law school with 120 students, located along with the university in the city center. It has a strong regional vision as to issues and services to be provided regarding HR. The human rights course is compulsory; professors are enthusiastic about HR. <i>Semilleros</i> are developed out of work with municipalities in the region. The Practice Law Center is the leader in the region in dealing with displaced persons. The office includes a mediation center, which is supported by USAID. The office has a regional reach, which includes virtual legal consultation sessions via the internet, a call-in radio

	<p>program, and <i>brigadas</i> in more distant communities. Many inter-institutional formal agreements and informal agreements with state and nongovernmental institutions have been established. A flexible curriculum with opportunity for electives allows for interdisciplinary studies. English is required for graduation and taught throughout the university years.</p>
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IV. Opportunities and Suggestions for Additional Support

As a result of the initial institutional assessment of human rights education in these law schools, the design team was able to identify a number of key issues, topics, and actions that are needed to: strengthen the institutional capacity of law schools to improve human rights education; meet the needs of vulnerable populations in terms of prevention and enforcement of human rights violations; and; provide students with a better understanding of and adherence to national and international standards of human rights. The end goals of this process include both building a university-based infrastructure of learning and service in human rights and contributing towards transforming the Colombian culture to where respect of human rights become the norm. Key strategies for arriving at those goals are suggested below. These recommendations are numbered consecutively in order across main areas to simplify reference to them.

A. Curriculum Development

1. Require a mandatory course at the undergraduate level in human rights. Human rights law should be elevated to a required course at all law schools. Law schools could include this requirement given that Universities have the authority to determine their own curriculum. Such a course should include both the study of national and international standards and incorporate a *differential* approach. The first step to establish adequate preparation of students in the human rights field is to establish a required human rights course. This instruction is essential to preparing the law students to participate effectively in the Practice Law Centers. It could be taught prior to or in conjunction with such participation.

2. Provide an optional course on human rights for all students at the university with an interdisciplinary approach. Every student in the university needs to learn about human rights in an integrated manner not only in a legal sense but also from ethical, policy, and psychosocial perspectives, among others. A good way to contribute to a culture of human rights is to promote them in all areas, including universities.

3. Create opportunities and courses for interdisciplinary study of human rights. Throughout the interview process, university administrators, faculty and students as well as state and civil society human rights defenders described the attainment of human rights as a socioeconomic as well as a

legal matter. Practice Law Centers and community justice centers approach the problems presented by clients in dynamic ways, drawing on both legal and non-legal resources and approaches to fashion solutions and remedies. Human rights courses should include some interdisciplinary elements. Moreover, the undergraduate law curriculum should be sufficiently flexible to allow students to take courses in other disciplines. Additionally, the expansion of elective courses in issues such as women's rights, rights of the elderly, economic, social and cultural rights, among other issues especially relevant to the local reality, can be a valued complement to the legal curriculum. Emphasis should be placed on strengthening the students' skills to provide services to the victims of conflict considering their special conditions and vulnerability. This approach would allow law schools to adequately train students to provide legal services when working in the Practice Law Center, legal clinic, or agency placement, and subsequently in their legal careers.

4. Introduce innovative, participatory teaching and learning methodologies. Providing HR courses in regions where human rights issues pervade the daily landscape creates both the need and the opportunity for integrating creative, interactive, participatory teaching and learning methodologies, such as case studies, problems, experts, field trips, experiential learning, and other innovative methods. The Colombian practices of Practice Law Centers and *semilleros*, themselves forms of interactive learning, should provide the context for the introduction of other innovative methods.

5. Strengthen and increase postgraduate offerings in human rights. At the postgraduate levels, law schools should increase their offerings of Specializations, Diplomas, Masters and Doctorates. Increasing the capacities of practitioners, adjunct faculty and full time faculty is essential to strengthening the provision of HR across the board.

6. Support student participation in regional, national and international human rights competitions. The learning experiences in moot court and mock trial competitions, both organized by the *Defensoría* and by other universities in Colombia and abroad, are valued very positively by students. This is not only for learning in the field of international law of human rights, but also because these are exemplary ways to encourage the exchange of knowledge and experience with other learners in an authentic context. These competitions build knowledge, skills, visibility and a sense of the importance of and belonging to the field of HR. They can contribute to the formation of a cadre of HR practitioners as well. Additionally, local and regional competitions should be established, addressing issues that are close to home.

7. Promote the use of resources for student research and learning. The design assessment determined that resources that exist in universities and law schools, such as databases and libraries, are quite underutilized by students. Law schools should emphasize the use of authentic legal resources in the various courses and instructional activities throughout the curriculum. Additionally, courses in legal research and writing could be offered or expanded.

B. Community Outreach and Service

8. Strengthen and expand the human rights capacity of Practice Law Centers. Presently, the Practice Law Centers deal with a wide variety of legal issues, of which a portion is related to human rights issues. One way to emphasize human rights practice is to create an area of human rights in all the Practice Law Centers of the participating law schools. These offices should increase attention specifically to victims of human rights violations. This includes informing, assisting and representing

them in the exercise of their rights, in particular in the Law of Victims and Land Restitution. The nature of the human rights practices will vary according to the region (in Cali, for instance, almost 50% of the displaced communities were reported to be Afro-Colombians). The Practice Law Centers should be known as “the place to go” for victims of human rights violations. Although the law schools are in the process of making HR a priority for student legal services, they should increase their efforts considerably. The opportunity and momentum created by the HR needs of the nation and the regions in conjunction with vigorous application of the Law of Victims provides a window of opportunity that should not be missed. Many of the HR agencies and organizations interviewed reported that law students lacked adequate training in human rights. Additional areas for improvement regarding these offices include: increasing the skills training of the law students by offering skills courses or workshops in connection with the law office service, increasing the quantity and quality of supervision in these offices by encouraging supervisors to attain higher levels of qualifications (such as Specializations, Diplomas or Masters), and providing scholarships or other financial support for advanced study for faculty and supervisors. Improvements in law office systems, case management and record keeping are also needed.

9. Establish and develop legal clinics at the law schools. This is important both to strengthen legal education in substance, analysis and advocacy and to engage in strategic litigation in matters of public interest, which fosters the protection of human rights. The creation or consolidation of legal clinics for impact/strategic litigation is a crucial step for the regional law schools⁵. Until now all practical experiences for students are focused in the Practice Law Centers, with the legal limitations imposed on them⁶. Alternative models of practical experience, such as clinics, could offer ample opportunities for students to engage in more sophisticated legal practice in the field of human rights. The Colombian Constitution provides for class actions, “*tutela*” (special autonomous injunctive relief available to protect human rights in certain cases) and other individual or collective forms of litigious redress, which could enhance the pedagogic experience of students involved in such litigation. In fact, human rights law provides for enhanced litigation possibilities, as students could also access international human rights forums such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court on Human Rights. Almost every legal dispute, especially in the field of public interest law, could fall under the jurisdiction of these international bodies. It is particularly important to introduce structural changes in national law by using these international mechanisms. Legal clinics could also support the work of judges and magistrates by providing qualified research and analysis.

10. Maintain and strengthen relationships with state enforcement agencies. In particular, collaboration with those agencies with human rights mandates needs to be strengthened, such as the Local Human Rights Ombudsman (*personero*)⁷, the *Defensoría*, *Casas de Justicia*, and the Attorney General's Office. The number of student placements available in these agencies was observed to be from 3-90 per semester. They are valuable complements to service in the Practice Law Centers. The learning gained in the actual practice of providing legal services is an invaluable experience for students in the protection of human rights, and this not only needs to be continued, but also improved upon. Moreover, increasing the number of students doubles the impact of human rights advocacy, as

⁵ For information on the emerging network of Colombian legal clinics, see www.clinicasjuridicas.org and Londono, Beatriz et al, *Educación Legal Clínica y Defensas de los Derechos Humanos*, Editorial Universidad del Rosario, 2009.

⁶ Law 583 of 2000 outlines the legal framework that allows students to practice law in the *consultorios*, which can be accessed here: http://www.secretariasenado.gov.co/senado/basedoc/ley/2000/ley_0583_2000.html

⁷ *Personeros* are municipal-level autonomous representatives responsible for monitoring human rights and protecting citizens from the arbitrary actions of local government.

the students develop knowledge and skills in HR awareness and advocacy and more clients are served, many of whom are victims of human rights violations.

11. Strengthening links with civil society organizations. Collaboration is particularly valuable with non-governmental human rights organizations, creating opportunities for both faculty and students in multiple dimensions of law practice from intake, client service, and advocacy to research, law reform and public policy.

12. Form *semilleros* and groups for research and action on human rights. The most practical way to stimulate research and experiential, active learning in undergraduate human rights is through any of these initiatives. *Semilleros* are a unique form of instruction that defies direct translation. In a sense, they are like research-action seminars, directed by a faculty member, on a particular theme or subject. For example, one university has a *semillero* that litigates cases related to administrative morality (anti-corruption litigation). This same *semillero* works on human rights education issues, including education of women in indigenous communities and displaced populations in the north of Cauca. One under-emphasized aspect still in its early stages in the law schools visited is research, which should be encouraged under any of these formulas. The institutions and NGOs that were visited expressed their lack of capacity to conduct in-depth research on human rights issues. *Semilleros* could provide specialized support to that work.

13. Teach human rights in high schools, elementary schools, and community settings. Many of the law schools reported emerging programs where students developed lessons and taught in a variety of formal and informal settings to children and adults. School based programs are thoroughly consistent with human rights education encouraged under PLANEDH. Law students can provide direct instruction or can support regular classroom teachers in their work. Law students also can teach about human rights in community centers, *Casas de Justicia*, prisons, Practice Law Centers, CSOs and other settings. Workshops can be targeted to particular groups of vulnerable people with specific legal issues. Educational efforts can also be integrated with advocacy classes, *semilleros*, and substantive courses as practicums. Workshops can also be provided for public officials and news media. One important aspect of law-related educational interventions, as they are termed in the U.S., is that through interactive, participatory, and learner-centered inquiry, projects or activity-based methodology that respect and teach to the full human personality of the students, law instruction to children and adults can not only teach about the substance of HR but also be an example of human rights in action.

C. Improving Faculty Capacity

14. Improve the quality of human rights institutions and faculty. All schools visited stressed the need to enhance the quality of their teaching staff in both substantive and pedagogical aspects. Very few faculty engaged in research and in teaching human rights have Masters or Doctoral Degrees. Faculty members should be supported and incentivized to attain advanced degrees in human rights, both generally and with an emphasis on international human rights standards. Faculty should also be encouraged to diversify and improve their teaching methods, and their human rights teaching and researching in particular. Research opportunities and activities in the field should be priorities,

particularly as they relate to the prevention and remediation of human rights abuses experienced by vulnerable populations.

15. Increase the number of full time faculty dedicated exclusively to research and teaching of human rights. Most of the law schools visited mentioned that the lack of full time faculty devoted to human rights presents a challenge in terms of advancing their human rights work. With full time human rights professors, law schools would be able to, for instance, lead a greater number of research projects in the *semilleros*, write and publish scholarly articles, and mentor students interested in research, thus making substantive advances in human rights legal education.

16. Promote exchanges, visits, and research opportunities for faculty. Although the interviews mentioned some specific cases, there are few regular programs to encourage exchanges with national or foreign universities for faculty overall, let alone in human rights. This is an ideal approach to enhance the experience and training of faculty and administrators. U.S. law schools could readily and efficiently host Colombian faculty as observers of substantive and clinical courses or as visiting researchers with library, workshop and other privileges. Similarly, U.S. faculty could visit Colombian law schools as guest lecturers for students and to lead training seminars for faculty.

17. Create institutes or centers of human rights. The creation of centers or institutes on specific human rights topics or with emphasis on particular groups of vulnerable people will promote human rights academic research within universities. These institutes could also create opportunities for augmenting any agreements with other national and international universities or institutions. These will be particularly valuable over the medium to long term. Also, these settings may be the ideal places to establish specialized library collections in the field. (See, e.g., the list of 20 research institutes and centers at Georgetown University Law Center at: <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/scholarship.html>).

18. Establish human rights observatories. Universities, as centers of thought and analysis, are the ideal settings for spearheading observation and monitoring of and research into actual human rights conditions in the local and regional areas. The human rights situation in many northeastern regions warrants a constant monitoring of the realities there. The activities and research by Universities of Antioquia and Rionegro to observe and monitor the local human rights situation, for instance, demonstrates the feasibility of this proposal. These observatories could also serve as a resource and linkage to government agencies working in the field and other stakeholders.

19. Promote research and projects to shape the design, development and implementation of municipal and regional human rights policies and practices. Law schools cannot be behind the curve with respect to regional realities. One of their best contributions can involve research and projects that can shape the formulation and implementation of public policies and practices in human rights. The academy can and should contribute to advocacy and policy development efforts as much as possible.

20. Promote human rights publications. Presently, there are few publications for scholarly research in Colombia besides the Law Review published by *Universidad del Norte*. Increasing human rights publications can be a valuable tool to further promote human rights. Articles for specialized or general periodicals can be generated from faculty research, student *semilleros*, and legal clinics, for example. Having a source for publications could be a real incentive for research, which will in turn

significantly improve faculty qualifications and credentials. A Colombian journal of human rights should be established, with articles selected either by peers (i.e., juried) or run by students, to publish articles, research and opinions by faculty and students in a manner similar to US law reviews.

21. Increase participation in networks, conferences, and associations. There are two emerging Colombian networks and a number of US and international networks where participation could be particularly valuable. First, the Socio-Legal Network (*Red Socio-jurídica*), established in 2000, has 72 member universities in the country, including all the universities visited as part of the project. The Network has a website, www.redsociojuridica.org, and meets annually with the participation of teachers, researchers and *semillero* students. The network has eight regional groups. Second, the Colombian Network of Legal Clinics: founded in Bogotá in 2010 as part of a meeting at the University of Rosario, www.clinicasjuridicas.org, has a website, currently has eight member universities. Although very few law schools in Colombian regions have legal clinics, the network can be a space for debate, discovery and learning for all universities interested in the clinics. Also, legal clinics might be motivated to handle cases jointly, due to the substantive and political complexity of human rights cases.

D. Improve English language abilities of faculty and students

22. Strengthen the teaching of English. Although all law schools are calling for greater study of English, in interviews it was noted that there are serious shortcomings in learning this language both for faculty and students. Significant progress is needed in this area, especially for Colombian law schools to benefit from the partnership program with U.S. universities and other potential or existing international partners. One law school described plans for a course combining English with trial advocacy and legal/analytical skills. This “learning through practice” could be examined to determine if it is a model worth replicating.

E. Other recommendations

23. Encourage scholarship programs. Special funds to support civic leaders and people from vulnerable populations most at risk of HR violations to attend law school at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels should be made available. Although all private universities have established scholarship programs, these programs should be increased considerably, especially for persons belonging to particularly vulnerable and at risk groups. In addition, financial support should be offered at all universities not only in undergraduate studies but also at the graduate level, particularly for Masters and Doctoral programs in human rights. U.S. law schools could provide assistance in developing strategies to provide financial support for vulnerable and financially needy populations. Private sector and government institutions tasked with responsibilities of repairing or maintaining the memory of victims could be allies for a scholarship-to-victims program.

24. Promote exchanges, foreign study, and internships for students. Exchange programs, foreign study and internships can be mutually beneficial to both U.S. and Colombian law schools for several reasons. First, students in developing programs can gain expertise from more experienced programs. Second, from a comparative perspective, students exposed to different legal systems and approaches not only gain new knowledge but also gain insights into their own legal systems.

25. Adopt security measures: Security conditions remain a concern to differing degrees in the target regions. Some of the security risks identified during this assessment included urban crime, especially in the larger cities, and presence of armed groups in some outlying regions. For example, the *Universidad de Antioquia*'s campuses in Turbo and Sonsón and the *Universidad Católica de Oriente*'s campus in Rionegro were areas with a significant presence of armed groups until 2005. In Cali, illegal groups and criminal bands are present in some of the communities served by law schools through *brigadas* or *consultorios*, such as Aguablanca and Buenaventura, as well as in various cities in the nearby Cauca department. The Caribbean Coast presents similar challenges; illegal groups that emerged after the demobilization of paramilitary organizations remain present in this area. While the security situation has certainly improved during the past few years, appropriate measures should be adopted by the partners. Moreover, human rights work remains a highly sensitive topic. Human rights activists continue to be targets of violent actions by paramilitary and other armed groups. While research and educational activities conducted by universities are not typically targeted, public activities organized around human rights issues should be planned and conducted only when adequate security measures are taken. The Colombian law schools interviewed systematically adopt security precautions when conducting activities outside of their campuses, such as *brigadas jurídicas* and community legal education and outreach programs. Security measures frequently employed by these institutions include:

- Conduct a risk assessment of the areas where the activities are planned to take place and evaluate whether potential security risks in those areas are high, medium or low. High-risk areas are avoided, and security measures are adjusted accordingly to mitigate medium or low risks.
- Coordinate with local actors such as *Juntas de Acción Comunal* (Community Action Boards) to facilitate access to students and faculty to high-risk communities. Law schools work with community leaders, church members, foundations and local schools to plan their field activities. By partnering with local actors who have an established presence in the communities, law schools are able to secure a neutral and safe venue (typically a school, main square or church location); obtain assistance to inform community members of the planned activities and services that will be offered; and ensure the safety of students, faculty and activity participants.
- Reach out to local authorities when deemed appropriate: law schools also coordinate with local state agencies such as the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, *personería*, Ministry of Labor, police, and others to conduct field activities.
- Provide insurance to students (*seguro estudiantil*) that also offers coverage outside of campus.
- Provide private transportation for students and faculty members going to the communities and schedule these activities during the day only (typically from 9am to 3pm).
- Avoid addressing high-risk topics (e.g. corruption and labor rights).

V. Partnership Results Framework

Purpose of the Colombia-U.S. Human Rights Law Schools Partnership Program: The overarching purpose of this effort is to support national and local initiatives to improve respect for and protection of human rights.

Goal: The goal of the Colombia-U.S. Human Rights Law School Partnership is to strengthen the capacities of Colombian regional law schools in the outlying and frequently conflict-prone regions of the country to provide formal and informal training in human rights.

Objective 1: To strengthen the institutional capacity of Colombian law schools to train future legal practitioners in human rights by introducing or strengthening curriculum in human rights as well as experiential models of legal education, such as clinics and externships

Outcome 1.1: Colombian law schools are able to offer an enhanced curriculum in human rights.

Output 1.1.1: New or improved curricula in the broad area of human rights.

Illustrative Activities

- Support initiatives aimed to make human rights courses accessible to all university students as an elective.
- Establish a course on advocacy and strategic litigation skills as an elective for law students.
- Establish a mandatory human rights course for law students.
- Identify elective courses offered in other schools (*facultades*) university-wide that could be offered to law students to advance the interdisciplinary study of human rights.
- Develop annual strategic plans aimed at increasing the number of faculty and students involved in *semilleros*.
- Organize events to present and disseminate the work of exemplary *semilleros* at each law school.
- Conduct regional and national faculty/student conferences on human rights *semilleros* and provide incentives or some form of honor, award, or reward for exemplary *semilleros* in various categories, or pertaining to specific vulnerable populations.
- Develop new certificate courses in human rights protection and litigation for civil society and public sector actors (government officials, members of the press, and community leaders).

Output 1.1.2: Legal clinics in specific human rights areas.

Illustrative Activities

- Provide opportunities for Colombian faculty and students to observe, attend, and participate in U.S. clinical legal education programs.
- Establish thematic legal clinics with integrated teaching and client representation functions, intensive seminar instruction on substance and skills, and case supervision.

Output 1.1.3: Development or strengthening of formal externship programs with state and civil society agencies as learning opportunities for law students.

Illustrative Activities

- Sign agreements with state human rights agencies (*Defensoría, personeros, judges, and Casas de Justicia*) and civil society organizations in the target regions to increase the number of externships available to law students.
- Create an externship program that allows Colombian law students to gain practical experience in U.S. state and civil society agencies.
- Devise a strategy to ensure enhanced monitoring of the externship placements, supervision of the students, and student self-evaluations (e.g., maintaining journals).

Output 1.1.4: New or strengthened post-graduate educational offerings in human rights in target law schools.

Illustrative Activities

- Facilitate the establishment of new offerings of Specializations, Diplomas, and Master's and Doctorate degrees by the law schools through assistance with training, curriculum development and innovative teaching methodology.

Output 1.1.5: Courses to improve students' learning of English.

Illustrative Activities

- Support the law schools to devise strategies to increase law students' competence in English as a second language, and provide multiple levels of quality language instruction throughout law school.
- Collaborate with the law schools to provide a course on legal English.
- Explore the possibility of creating a short-term English language course that integrates language learning with development of legal subject matter content and advocacy skills.

Outcome 1.2: Increased faculty capacity and human rights credentials, knowledge and pedagogy.

Output 1.2.1: Faculty training manuals or materials on methods for teaching human rights.

Illustrative Activities

- Support the Colombian law schools to develop materials regarding a wider variety of teaching methods, including participatory and interactive methods, such as case studies, problems, small groups, inquiry-based learning, and other innovative methods.
- Integrate real life experiences in classroom instruction, including use of experts from state and civil society, human rights agencies and field trips.

Output 1.2.2: International exchanges or internship programs for human rights professors to study and/or gain experience on human rights in the U.S.

Illustrative Activities

- Facilitate access to courses leading to Master's and Doctorate degrees in partner U.S. law schools for Colombian human rights professors.

- Facilitate the assistance of visiting faculty from U.S. law schools to Colombia to teach advanced post-graduate courses.
- Establish a comprehensive incentive package to encourage faculty capacity development in the area of human rights. Incentives could include financial support, such as scholarships, fellowships, loans or discounts, as well as other support such as participation in international conferences and other events.

Output 1.2.3: Joint research projects, particularly those that address vulnerable populations in Colombia, are carried out by Colombian and U.S. law professors.

Illustrative Activities

- Identify incentives to encourage and facilitate faculty research in the area of human rights.
- Explore the possibility of pairing Colombian and U.S. law professors to conduct joint research projects on local issues pertaining to human rights.
- Establish a regular forum to present white papers or similar publications on joint research projects conducted.
- Liaise with state and government human rights agencies to offer them faculty expertise as it pertains to local human rights issues.

Output 1.2.4: Courses to improve English language learning for faculty.

Illustrative Activities

- Support law schools to provide incentives for faculty to learn English at all levels.
- Collaborate with the law schools to provide a course on legal English that is also available to faculty.

Outcome 1.3: Increased access to legal reference materials and information resources in international humanitarian and human rights law.

Output 1.3.1: Human rights resource networks among participating Colombian law schools, U.S. and other Colombian law schools in the region.

Illustrative Activities

- Identify opportunities to increase access to and usage of web-based, digital law libraries and other digitized law resources among participating Colombian and U.S. law schools.
- Establish a web-based resource collection of formal and informal human rights curricula, lesson plans, and materials for learners at the law school level; the high school and elementary school levels; and at the adult and community levels.

Output 1.3.2: A regularly published law review of human rights in Colombia and other publications on human rights.

Illustrative Activities

- Provide incentives to encourage faculty and student research, analysis and policy recommendations that can be published.
- Identify locally relevant flagship cases (*casos emblemáticos*) that can be analyzed and discussed in the law review.

- Establish or strengthen linkages with other Colombian law schools to invite them to contribute articles to the law review.
- Leverage existing legal networks of Colombian law schools to encourage human rights research that can be published in the law review.

Outcome 1.4: Increased number of students from vulnerable populations accessing Colombian law schools.

Output 1.4.1: New or revised policies or initiatives to support access to law school education for members of vulnerable populations.

Illustrative Activities

- Identify and leverage financial and administrative incentives for members of vulnerable populations to attend law school.
- Develop a plan to recruit and retain members of vulnerable populations in law school.
- Create an outreach strategy directed to disseminate the incentives and support available to members of vulnerable populations to enroll in law school.
- Explore the possibility of establishing an internship program specific to members of vulnerable populations and providing them with a stipend.
- Meet with private sector representatives to seek supplementary financial support to initiatives benefiting vulnerable populations.

Objective 2: To enhance the outreach capacity of regional law schools to better serve vulnerable populations with limited access to or knowledge of the legal system.

Outcome 2.1: Increased access to and knowledge about the legal system as it pertains to human rights by vulnerable populations.

Output 2.1.1: Legal clinics for high-impact and strategic litigation are established or strengthened.

Illustrative Activities

- Develop a pilot clinical legal education program with specific substantive or client focus, i.e., targeted to specific vulnerable populations.
- Develop human rights publications seeking to educate users of Practice Law Centers and state and civil society-sponsored legal services and legal services providers.
- Conduct workshops on how users of Practice Law Centers, members of vulnerable populations, or members of the general public can recognize, prevent and in some cases resolve legal problems.

Output 2.1.2: Human rights centers, institutes or observatories to gather data and conduct research on local and regional human rights issues.

Illustrative Activities

- Develop short-term practical research programs for students and faculty to conduct research in the centers or observatories established.
- Facilitate visits by Colombian faculty and students to U.S. law school human rights centers or institutes during the summer or other vacation periods to learn of outreach strategies being employed to target vulnerable populations.

- Meet with state and/or civil society human rights agencies and other relevant stakeholders to identify substantive themes or local issues that should be addressed through this research.
- Disseminate relevant information among vulnerable populations by partnering with state agencies and civil society organizations in a variety of communities, and taking into account special communication needs of these populations.

Outcome 2.2: Collaboration and communication among law schools, civil society groups, Colombian government agencies, and international organizations supporting human rights protection and compliance is enhanced.

Output 2.2.1: Working group of law schools that convenes frequently to increase communication among civil society, state actors, and law schools regarding regional legal needs and strategies for prevention and remediation, particularly with respect to vulnerable populations.

Illustrative Activities

- Meet with civil society and state actors working to protect the human rights of vulnerable populations to better prepare law students for practice in externships in these agencies and in Practice Law Centers serving these populations.
- Establish regular communications mechanisms to increase communication and collaboration among law schools and state and civil society actors (e.g. newsletters).

Output 2.2.2: Increased participation of Colombian law schools in regional, national, and international networks on human rights and legal education.

Illustrative Activities

- Encourage the participation of Colombian law school faculty and law students in themed associations with respect to human rights, legal education, and vulnerable populations.
- Support the law schools to join emerging Colombian legal networks, such as the Socio-Legal Network and the Colombian Network of Legal Clinics.
- Provide incentives for the Colombian law schools to participate in international legal education or human rights associations, such as the Global Alliance on Justice Education (GAJE), the International Journal of Clinical Legal Education (IJCLE) annual conference, or one or more of the many human rights associations.

Objective 3: To equip future legal professionals with an understanding of national and international standards of human rights and the skills to support human rights reform in Colombia.

Outcome 3.1: Increased experiential learning opportunities, under appropriate and necessary faculty supervision, are provided for law students that allow them to apply human rights skills and knowledge.

Output 3.1.1: New and strengthened Practice Law Centers (*consultorios jurídicos*) in target law schools.

Illustrative Activities

- Develop a plan to create or strengthen Practice Law Centers in target law schools.
- Establish mandatory training courses for supervisors assigned to Practice Law Centers.
- Ensure that all students participating in Practice Law Centers complete a mandatory human rights course prior to their service at these centers.
- Develop and offer a course on skills needed for student practice, such as client intake, interviewing and advocacy skills and topical substantive law and procedure.
- Design initiatives aimed to increase the number of students participating in “brigadas” (groups of students going into the community to provide legal consultation outside of the student law office); virtual legal consultations over the internet; and radio call-in sessions for populations outside of direct service areas.

Output 3.1.2: More students participate in national, U.S., or international human rights moot court or mock trial competitions.

Illustrative Activities

- Provide increased administrative and/or financial support through school-sponsored or informal activities, for students to participate in national and international human rights moot court competitions.
- Leverage financial or material support from private sector actors to increase funds destined to assist students to participate in national and international human rights events.
- Create a pilot regional human rights moot court competition in the target Colombian regions.

Output 3.1.3: Career development programs with job placement services established at law schools.

Illustrative Activities

- Organize job fairs, site visits, and guest speaker series to generate networking opportunities for students that can lead to internships and jobs placements in the area of human rights.
- Invite human rights practitioners as guest speakers to educate law students about the specifics of their day-to-day work.
- Offer career advising for law school students that emphasizes information on career paths on human rights work.

Outcome 3.2: Increased access by Colombian students to U.S. law school institutes, workshops or training in human rights, advocacy, and related knowledge or skills.

Output 3.2.1: New or expanded initiatives to support student practical learning of human rights.

Illustrative Activities

- Support opportunities for student exchanges or foreign study in the area of human rights.

- Establish short courses for Colombian law students that can be attended during vacation periods in either the U.S. or Colombia.
- Explore the possibility of offering fellowships in U.S. law schools for Colombian students to deepen their understanding of specific human rights areas. Establish an internship program that would allow both Colombian and U.S. law students to gain practical experience in a wide variety of legal education and service settings, such as human rights agencies and Practice Law Centers.

Output 3.2.2: Student-led human rights courses conducted in school and community settings.

Illustrative Activities

- Mentor law students to develop human rights curriculum targeting the general public in their communities.
- Support law students to conduct courses, workshops and classes in local elementary and secondary schools consistent with the Government of Colombia's National Human Rights Education Plan (*Plan Nacional de Educación en Derechos Humanos*, PLANEDH).

VII. Conclusions

The initial institutional assessment resulted in a clear picture of the current capacities and gaps of the selected Colombian law schools with respect to human rights programs. The visits and interviews conducted by the design team were successful in eliciting substantive information from key university figures from 17 higher education institutions across Colombia. An analysis of this information revealed that almost all law schools included in this study are, first, acutely aware of the human rights needs in their regions, and second, already engaged in conducting noteworthy efforts in the area of human rights education. From dynamic *semilleros* to roving *consultorios jurídicos* that function in hospitals, city halls and other locations, to committed faculty members who mentor students after hours to participate in human rights competitions, the findings of this assessment demonstrate a growing interest in the area of human rights education, which is an extremely positive foundation for this program.

While four main areas to be strengthened through HED's Human Rights Law School Partnership were identified during this assessment - curriculum development; community outreach and service; faculty development; and institutional strengthening – a number of strengths and opportunities that should be leveraged through this program were also distilled from the interviews with law school leadership, faculty and students. Some of these include: 1) multidisciplinary approaches to problems and issues, in addition to the purely juridical solutions; 2) the idea of Colombia as a leader or model for HR worldwide, both legally and as a dynamic system; 3) the readily available Constitutional and statutory context of HR law and remedies (indigenous people's rights in the Constitution, access to the framework of the Inter-American Commission and Inter-American Court on Human Rights, and legal remedies such as Right to Petition, *Tutela*, *Acción Popular* and *Acción de Grupo*) ; 4) the highly innovative and unique concept and practice of *semilleros*, where students and faculty conduct research and action projects on identified topics; 5) the Practice Law Center model, which gives direct access with little red tape or special requirements

for students to work on cases; 6) the dramatic intensity and extent of human rights needs in Colombia; 7) the human rights needs across a wide range of affected populations, such as indigenous peoples, Afro-Colombians, women and children, farm workers, labor organizers and others; 8) Government of Colombia's PLANEDH and its emphasis on human rights education in high school and earlier education; 9) opportunities for research and publication; 10) opportunities for work in both English and Spanish; 11) competitions, such as moot courts and mock trials; 12) working in the context of state and private human rights agencies; and, 13) the value of cross-cultural studies to understanding one's own culture — to name a few.

As a complement to the meetings with law schools and the interviews with CSOs, state agencies and government entities working on human rights protection provided valuable contextual information that helped the team better understand the human rights situation in each one of the five regions visited. These interviews also offered a different perspective on the needs and challenges related to human rights education, which allowed the design team to incorporate different viewpoints into this assessment. Regional nuances related to how the human rights of different populations are affected, as well as other elements that need to be taken into consideration going forward – impact of poverty, security situation and the local political context – were reinforced through these meetings.

Based on the assessment, it is clear that close collaboration between U.S. law schools with law schools in Colombia should be the starting point for a successful development of the partnerships. This will include working together in the design of curricula and teaching methodologies, criteria to promote internships and exchanges of faculty and students, language programs, legal clinics, and advanced degree support to be provided as part of this program. While the main purpose of the Colombia–U.S. Human Rights Law School Partnership is designed to strengthen the Colombian human rights capacity through legal education and outreach to the community, many of the partnership activities will be mutually beneficial. Encouraging a continuous presence of faculty, researchers and students from U.S. universities with law schools in Colombia – through exchanges, joint research projects, or other activities - will also give U.S. partners greater awareness and understanding of Colombian society, law and human rights context, which is essential for developing appropriately tailored approaches to enhancing Colombian capacity in human rights.

Appendix A: Detailed Initial Institutional Assessment Findings by Region

A. Antioquia

The team interviewed three universities in *Medellín* and one in *Rionegro* (see below), as well as several HR agencies. The general perception is that the law schools should reach not only the city of *Medellín* but also the entire Antioquia region; evidence of a regional focus was not apparent from the assessment, however. The bulk of the cases brought via the law schools centered on victims, particularly forcibly displaced persons. Greater emphasis should be placed on other populations, such as children and adolescents, handicapped, Afro-Colombian, indigenous, incarcerated, and lesbian, gay, transsexual, bisexual and intersexual (LGTBI) persons. Additionally, the UN office recommends that impunity, corruption, and economic marginalization are priority issues to which law schools should direct some attention.

a) Universidad de Antioquia

- The School of Law and Political Science has branches in *Medellín* (1400 students), Turbo, Santa Fe de Antioquia and Sonson (300 in the remaining three). Study of HR is an elective course. On a postgraduate level, the school offers *Diplomas* in human rights and humanitarian law (interdisciplinary), displaced persons, and the recently passed Law of Victims and Land Restitution⁸. Starting this semester in 2012, it offers a Specialization in HR and humanitarian law. The Practice Law Center has a specific focus on displaced persons, also dealing with *seguridad social* (social security) relating to the Law of Victims and land restitution. Services are also provided in several sectors of *Medellín*. It offers psychosocial assistance to families of the clients through help from the United Nations (UN) and the Norwegian Consul. There are two “*semilleros*” (faculty sponsored student action research groups), one on prison law and the other for indigenous students. Universidad de Antioquia also runs an observatory on human safety (with the *Personería* of *Medellín* and the local civil society organization (CSO) *Instituto Popular de Capacitación*).
- The Universidad de Antioquia has established numerous MOUs with local and international institutions, including the *Universidad de Medellín* and the *Pontificia Universidad Bolivariana* locally, others from Cali and Bogotá, and with foreign universities such as the University of Bradford (United Kingdom); University Carlos III (Spain); and the Autonomous University of Barcelona (Spain). Other MOUs have been established with agencies such as the *Personería* of *Medellín*, the National Institute of Prisons and Jails, the UN High Commissioner on Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the National Office of the Attorney General, and with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as the *Corporación Región* y la *Corporación Jurídica Libertad*. Through another MOU with the Mayor of *Medellín* and the Minister of the Environment, the Practice Law Center obtained land titles for 10,000 families.
- The law school is considering the possibility of initiating human rights work in the department of Chocó and in developing a network of human rights focused on displacement.

⁸ The “*Ley de Víctimas y Restitución de Tierras*” passed in June 2011, is directing increased attention to human rights throughout the country and raising demands for vindication and reparation for thousands of past victims of human rights abuses resulting from years of conflict and the exploitation that has frequently accompanied the killing and forced dislocation of Colombian indigenous, Afro-Colombian and peasant farmer populations.

It has good library services and databases for research, and some resources and incentives for research and faculty development.

b) Universidad de Medellín

- The 2,800 student law school has an elective course in human rights; a Diploma in human rights; a Diploma in human rights, social development, and management; and a continuing education seminar on international humanitarian law.
- The Practice Law Center primarily serves the displaced and provides representation on the Law of victims and land restitution, with MOUs with the Attorney General's Office and the Houses of Justice in the city. It also provides legal services through a *consultorio jurídico* in Lower Cauca valley and the *Montes de María*, the latter in partnership with the University of Cartagena. It also has radio legal clinics. It has two legal clinics, one on the environment in conjunction with the environmental engineering school, and the other on Afro-descendants. Students participate in national and international human rights competitions as an extracurricular activity.
- *Universidad de Medellín* has agreements with the Universidad Central de Chile, Universidad de Córdoba in Argentina and the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos of Spain, the latter on gender and human rights. There is limited support from the college for faculty for advanced degrees. It requires proficiency in a second language, which students study in the language center; an estimated 30% of researchers have some knowledge of English.

c) Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB)

- The School of Law and Political Science, with about 650 law students, offers an elective course on human rights for all students (beginning in the first half of 2012), an interdisciplinary seminar for continuing education in human rights and humanitarian law, and a Masters in law and globalization in partnership with the Free University of Brussels.
- The Practice Law Center works in several neighborhoods of *Medellín*, providing psychological support. Students work in the office of the Mayor of *Medellín* with displaced persons and also counsel victims of sexual violence. In downtown *Medellín* there is a legal clinic and a mediation center with a human rights coordinator who works particularly with displaced persons. UPB has established MOUs with NGOs (e.g. Mothers of the Candelaria); the Mayor; the Personera of *Medellín*; the Attorney General's Office; the Department of Justice and Peace; and the Comptroller General of the Republic, among others.
- There is a legal clinic at the School of Law and Political Science linked to human rights research. The clinic has a pilot project on women's rights, particularly displaced women heads of households.
- A research group on the Sinú Indians released a publication on administrative reparations. A research group on restorative justice investigates the criminal responsibility of adolescents and conducts an annual human rights conference.

- The law school has links with the University of Antioquia (Institute for Regional Studies and Institute for Policy Studies) and conducts student exchanges with other universities of *Medellín*. It also has an exchange with the University of Miami, where students receive one-week trainings in international litigation, addressing issues of rights of Afro-descendants, indigenous people and gender issues. International cooperation has included a course on human rights, peace and security by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) in 2010.
- UPB also has access to research resources (databases, library), merit-based scholarships and support for low-income students, two radio stations, and an elective course in legal English.

d) Universidad Católica de Oriente (Rionegro)

- The School of Law and Social Sciences currently has about 400 law students and a department of human rights. Required courses in the HR area are international humanitarian law (which includes the international law of human rights) and the social theory of conflict. The School of Education offers a Masters in the culture and teaching of human rights, towards applied research and social impact.
- It offers a course with the Association of Victims of Northeastern Antioquia (*Asociación de Víctimas del Nororiente Antioqueño*, APROVIASI) on the Law of Victims serving women from 10 municipalities. The law school has developed a 30-hour seminar on the Inter-American system of human rights protection, and sponsors a *semillero* on human rights, as well as research initiatives on violence and society.
- The Practice Law Center serves victims from northeastern Antioquia in particular, includes work in conciliation, and has MOUs with the Rionegro Personería, the *comisarías de familia* (government offices at the municipal level focusing on family rights protection); the National Rehabilitation and Reconciliation Commission (*Comisión Nacional de Rehabilitación y Reconciliación*, CNRR), the Presidency of the Republic, some foundations, and UN agencies, among others. It plans to systematize the experience of the past three years regarding the care of victims through the CNRR.
- The law school coordinates the *Mesa* of human rights and humanitarian assistance in eastern Antioquia. This *Mesa*, which brings together state and government entities, human rights NGOs, and international agencies to discuss and coordinate human rights issues, has been publishing an annual report on the human rights situation in eastern Antioquia for the last five years.
- In 2011, students began participation in the national human rights moot court competition organized by the *Defensoría del Pueblo* (Human Rights Ombudsman); the current Dean was the sponsoring professor.
- The law school has strong linkages with civil society organizations, both in northeastern Antioquia and Medellín. It has fewer connections with universities in Medellín, but it has established an agreement with the University of Antioquia and began to work with the

Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. It also has MOUs with several universities in other regions and countries on various issues.

B. Valle del Cauca

In Cali the team interviewed two private law schools: *Universidad Santiago de Cali* and *Universidad Javeriana de Cali*. They have distinct and complementary characteristics, both in the population they serve and the type of programs they offer. While Cali has a public university, it does not have a public law school. Cali has a distinctively large Afro-Colombian population. It has some of the common problems arising from the violent conflict in Colombia, ranging from internally displaced populations to endemic violence in marginalized neighborhoods of the city.

a) Universidad Santiago de Cali

- The *Universidad Santiago de Cali* has the oldest school of law in the city. It currently has 2224 students in the school of law and 117 faculty, 44 of which have full-time appointments (with different types of contracts). It also has a campus in Palmira, a medium-sized city in the Department of Valle. The law school serves middle, middle-low and low income students in Cali. Approximately 50% of the student body is Afro-Colombian. The university has a Center of Afro Studies. Governance is shared among faculty, students, alumni and associate founders.
- The main thematic focus of the law school is criminal law, featuring a Masters in Criminal Justice. The undergraduate law curriculum includes a human rights course as an elective (it was obligatory until 2010), and human rights topics in the course “Constitutional Mechanisms.” The Public International Law course has special focus on the rights of individuals in international law. It also has a course on transitional justice and will offer a course in 2012 on Democracy, Power and Conflict. The law school has participated in the national human rights moot court competition and in other international human rights moot courts several times.
- Law students can work at a Center for Human Rights, based in the Department of Humanities; there is an ongoing effort to integrate this Center to the law department. This Center conducts substantial outreach to and develops projects on issues related to indigenous communities (Misak communities in Valle and Cauca) and is involved in a network of universities (*Red Nacional de Universidades*).
- The law school has a “*semillero*” on human rights that carries out research and develops publications. Students in this *semillero* work in Pradera and Florida, two local towns with acute social and conflict problems. Also, students, with the support of faculty, develop research on issues such as Inter-American human rights system, foreign policy, refugees, environmental law, international criminal law and internal displacement.
- The Practice Law Center has several areas of work. Among other areas, a group of Afro-descendent students work in training related to Afro-Colombian issues. While it was carrying out “*brigadas*,” - teams of faculty members and students who visit sections of a city to

provide legal services to the population - in marginalized neighborhoods of Cali, the deterioration of the security situation caused these activities to be suspended in 2011.

- The university has agreements with several institutions in Colombia (*Defensoría del Pueblo*, the *Procuraduría*) and abroad (Inter-American Court on Human Rights and the Inter-American Institute on Human Rights, Florida International University (FIU), etc.) Coordination with other law schools in Cali seems very limited, however.
- The university has admission policies that benefit student applicants from vulnerable populations (indigenous, Afro-descendants).
- A Masters degree in human rights law has a lengthy approval process.

b) Universidad Javeriana de Cali

- The *Universidad Javeriana de Cali*'s law program was established in 2001 and has 568 law students and 94 professors, with 14 under full time contracts. Two of those professors work in human rights. This university is recognized as an elite institution, serving students of families with higher income. However, it provides scholarships for students with scarce resources, or from indigenous or Afro communities.
- The law school offers an elective human rights course. It also has courses on transitional justice (*justicia restaurativa*), international jurisprudence, and conflict resolution and theory. Law students can take courses in other departments of the university, and some credits can be applied to a subsequent Masters degree. It offers a course for police officers on human rights and has participated in a follow-up commission of the Law of Peace and Justice⁹ (*Ley de Justicia y Paz*) on issues related to indigenous communities and women's rights, in collaboration with several non-governmental organizations of Cali.
- In the Practice Law Center, students work with issues related to LGTBI and displaced populations. They also collaborate with a range of state agencies and NGOs working in the area of human rights, such as the House of Justice, *Defensoría del Pueblo*, and *Fundación Paz y Bien*. They also provide with legal advice to Colombian returnees. Significantly, an emerging clinic carries out public interest litigation. The law school also has a "semillero" that litigates anti-corruption cases and works on human rights education issues, including education of women in indigenous communities and displaced populations in the north of Cauca.
- Students participate in a wide variety of human rights related activities, including several national and international human rights moot court competitions, internships in other institutions and participating in international human rights courses for law school credit. Professors are also able to access some of these internships with research funding.

⁹ The Law of Peace and Justice was adopted by former President Uribe's administration as the legal framework for the demobilization of paramilitary groups throughout Colombia.

- The law school has several agreements with universities in the United States, Spain and Costa Rica, among others. They also have agreements with national institutions and local NGOs¹⁰.
- The law school offers faculty access to further master or doctoral studies abroad (in Germany, the U.S., and Canada, among others). It also has ample research resources, such as data bases and a well-equipped library.

C. *Chocó*

Chocó, a tropical, particularly wet and isolated area in the northwest, is a marginalized and poor region of Colombia, with an endemic problem of mismanagement and corruption in official institutions. The population is more than 95% Afro-Colombian, with a very small presence of white or *mestizo* merchants coming from Antioquia. *Quibdó*, the region's capital, is located in a highly conflicted zone, with the consequent presence of displaced communities in the city. *Quibdó* is very small compared to Cali or *Medellín*; it has approximately 100,000 inhabitants.

a) Universidad Tecnológica del Chocó (UTCh)

- This public university is one of two law schools in the city and the only one that was assessed. Its law school, established 13 years ago, was initially a private institution but became public four years ago. It has 1600 students, a large number considering the population of *Quibdó*. It has 77 faculty members with 11 of them under full-time contracts, and an academic focus in environmental law. While it has an obligatory human rights course, elective courses relevant to human rights have recently decreased. In 2011 the law school participated for the first time in the national human rights moot court competition sponsored by the *Defensoría* and created a “*semillero*” on human rights that just began its work in 2012.
- The Practice Law Center provides legal services to displaced persons, with the support of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) local office. They also work with almost all public institutions in *Quibdó* in providing legal services to the community¹¹. It also deploys students through “*brigadas*” to serve marginalized neighborhoods of *Quibdó*.
- The university carries out research activities in issues related to Afro-descendants and environmental law. It has agreements with other institutions, such as the *Universidad de Medellín* on criminal law issues and administrative law. A USAID-funded program led by Phelps Stokes with Howard University includes activities to strengthen the Practice Law Center. Since 2010, in an agreement with the *Universidad Nacional de Colombia*, two legal specializations are now being offered: Specialization in Administrative Law and Specialization in Institutions of Procedural Law.

b) Fundación Universitaria Claretiana (FUCLA)

¹⁰ NGOs with which the Javeriana collaborates include: *Ruta Pacífica de Mujeres*, CRIC and ONIC (indigenous rights), among others.

¹¹ Partner institutions include: *Defensoría del Pueblo*, *Personería Municipal*, *Fiscalía*, SIJIN (criminal investigation unit), *Codechoco* (regional development agency), *Casa de Justicia*, among other institutions.

- This private university was the only one interviewed which does not have a law school. It was included in the assessment to obtain insights about the work of UTCh and the human rights context in Quibdó. FUCLA has a large network of social actors and extensive work with disadvantaged communities in the entire department of Chocó (not limited to Quibdó).
- This university has departments on Social Work, Anthropology, and Research Methods, among others. It offers a Diploma on Human Rights Public Policy which is co-financed by USAID through Management Sciences for Development (MSD). It also offers a Diploma in Previous Consultation (*consulta previa*) regarding indigenous rights, and it is associated with the *Foro Interétnico Social*¹² and the *Observatorio del Pacífico*¹³ based in Cali. It offers an online course on human rights and its programs are guided by a rights-based approach to all disciplines. It also offers an online course on displacement, jointly with *Universidad Nacional de Colombia* and UTCh (with which it has established a framework agreement). FUCLA invites legal experts to develop legal curricula when necessary. It also provides social services, including legal services with two law interns from UTCh.
- Finally, it has a special focus on women's rights through collaboration with the local NGOs *Red Departamental de Mujeres*, *Ruta Pacifica de Mujeres* and *Mujer y Vida*.
- FUCLA appears to have a strong reputation in *Quibdó*. It is operated by a recognized religious organization likely to ensure a transparent and efficient program operation.

D. Caribbean Coast

The Caribbean Region has been largely affected by all forms of violence related to the guerrillas, paramilitaries and new criminal bands that have impacted Colombia during the last 60 years. Other issues affecting this region include: the inequality in the distribution of the land and the struggle for the recovery of lands that were abandoned due to violence - the greatest amount of land to be redistributed in the country is in the North Coast; forced displacement and need for urgent humanitarian assistance for displaced population; attention to other victims including victims of floods in the region (displaced by environmental causes); high levels of poverty: approximately 30% of the impoverished population of Colombia can be found in the Caribbean Coast; violation of the rights of women and high rates of domestic violence; violation of the rights of children (guerrilla recruitment, trafficking, violence); and corruption of the political class of this region.

a) Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana UPB (Montería)

- This private university, a branch of the UPB of *Medellín*, is new to the region (eight years), with 480 students currently enrolled in the Law School. The university feels that because its

¹² The *Foro Interétnico Social* is a space of debate and discussion of issues related to the social movement in Chocó.

¹³ The *Observatorio del Pacífico* is a coalition of several institutions including FUCLA and CINEP (in Bogotá) that monitor and promote the human rights of Afro-descendant communities in the pacific region. For more information, please visit www.pacificocolombia.org.

humanistic mission is to train the whole person, teaching and learning about human rights pervades the entire curriculum.

- UPB *Montería* offers an elective course on human rights; conducts community outreach through the Community Center Marie Poussepin through which law and other students conduct workshops on law, psychological counseling, education on human rights, and computer training for vulnerable populations in the area, including displaced people.
- UPB also has *semilleros* working in research and teaching in human rights consistent with PLANEDH and demonstrated commitment to interdisciplinary work. It also conducts human rights education programs in high schools with vulnerable populations both to increase knowledge of human rights and to raise interest in university studies.
- High levels of women's participation in all levels of management and particularly in the law school were evident.
- It has a Practice Law Center located in the city center, whose director and coordinator are both recent graduates, with 1400 users in 2011 on a full range of cases, including human rights.
- It has established MOUs with USAID and Microsoft, demonstrating sustainability after completion of agreements and resources.
- It has a diverse student body, with student scholarships and other funds to support students from vulnerable groups as well as an English Training Center.
- Main challenges for UPB include: need for more courses in human rights - despite its emphasis on humanism, no specific human rights course of study exists; low daily users of the Practice Law Center and very few teachers with training in human rights.

b) Universidad del Sinú (Montería)

- *Universidad del Sinú* is the oldest private university in the region (32 years). The Law School has 1238 students. In 2011 it achieved high quality accreditation for four years from the Ministry of Education, the first institution in the Department of Córdoba to have this accreditation.
- It has a Center for Political and Social Studies, with an excellent coordinator, high quality research work, projects and publications on issues related to the region, networking and national and international recognition.
- The curriculum includes a compulsory course in Human Rights; it has established *semilleros* and a network of trainers in human rights in high schools.
- The Practice Law Center is a leader in the region. *Brigadas* are conducted in municipalities of Córdoba. It has good facilities and show particular attention to victims, displaced persons and clients in general.
- It provides grants to indigenous and Afro-Colombians.
- Challenges include the low number of teachers with Masters and Doctorates (a regional issue) and few faculty with bilingual abilities.

c) Universidad del Norte (Barranquilla)

- This private, highly regarded university, founded to develop entrepreneurs in the Caribbean region, changed its mission 20 years ago to create lawyers dedicated to the public interest as well as the private sector. A more aggressive reform was implemented in 2004 to emphasize human rights, Public International Law and International Humanitarian Law. It has a growing societal presence in the region. This law school has 700 students.
- Universidad del Norte has a significant interdisciplinary emphasis, such as collaboration with the political science career (center of political and legal practices combined with a research group); strong service to communities: including work with displaced people, women, domestic violence, disabled, children and adolescents in human rights education; and *brigadas*.
- It offers adequate support for postgraduate training for faculty, supports a significant participation of students in legal competitions such as moot courts, and maintains relations with a variety of government agencies.
- Its Practice Law Center is located in the city center but with also with decentralized services at a local hospital and in conflict-prone neighborhoods. Students spend 9 hours per week practicing for the last four semesters.
- It conducts a forum for “landmark” cases (*casos emblemáticos*) where students present real cases and include the victims’ perspective.
- It has published the Law Journal (<http://rcientificas.uninorte.edu.co/>) for the past 20 years, as well as yearly faculty publications; their *semillero* has existed for three years.
- It has established over 50 MOUs with universities in the United States and Europe, and has received international donor support as well.
- The law school has had difficulty recruiting faculty with advanced degrees in human rights; only one, the director of the Practice Law Center, has a Masters in HR. In general, there is very limited research on human rights and few professors dedicated to it in the region. Other challenges include: difficulties in participating in legal competitions due to scarce training regarding oral arguments and low student interest in participating; lack of strong bilingual training for faculty; not many relationships with NGOs; the need to combat the paradigm of a human rights lawyer as counter-culture, or "backpacker" or "hippie."

d) Universidad Simón Bolívar, USB (Barranquilla)

- USB is a private university that sees itself as the "People's University," and has some of the lowest tuition in the country. It has 1788 students in the law school. USB receives students from social stratum 1 through 3¹⁴ coming from high conflict zones.

¹⁴ Colombia's social strata, ranging from Stratum 1: lowest income, to Stratum 6: wealthy has been extensively used by the government as a reference to develop social welfare programs, statistical information and to some degree for the assignment of lands.

- Human Rights is a compulsory course for all students and USB has a recently created human rights center and library and a HR *semillero*.
- The law school has visible institutional support for its work in HR as well as to prepare students to participate in legal competitions nationally and internationally. Master's degree is compulsory for all faculty. Faculty members litigate cases before Inter-American Court;
- USB works with Ombudsman (*Defensoría*), municipalities, police (human rights courses for police) and prosecution offices. It has offered Diplomas in Human Rights and International Humanitarian law free and open to the public.
- The law school uses virtual classrooms and other tools to broaden its teaching reach.
- The excellent work of the professor who hosted the visit and runs the human rights program was evident in the visit.
- It also faces challenges in recruiting qualified faculty with Masters and / or Doctorate degrees and a second language.

e) Universidad del Atlántico (Barranquilla)

- The law school offers a compulsory course in Human Rights and electives on protection of women and children and domestic violence. It is accessible to low-income students given its low costs and a comprehensive program of scholarships.
- There is only one professor with a Doctorate. It has a *semillero* that works in teaching about the constitution.
- It has few faculty on academic tracks, and also experiences difficulties recruiting teachers with Master's and Doctorate degrees.
- There is very limited research in human rights and few formal MOUs with other institutions. Only a few young teachers have mastered a second language.

f) Universidad del Magdalena (Santa Marta)

- Universidad del Magdalena is a public university where the law school is relatively new (nine years) and belongs to the School of Humanities.
- The law school is beginning to implement a Specialization in Human Rights that was recently approved and has submitted a proposal for a Masters in Human Rights to the Ministry of Education.
- It has a new *semillero* where law students in a pilot project will teach law and human rights classes in 10 local high schools (five public and five private). It also conducts significant field work with local communities.
- The law school has a Practice Law Center and mediation program located in the city center, directed at the displaced population as well as a radio Practice Law Center. All students participate in human rights course taught at the Practice Law Center in the seventh semester.
- It has informal connections with government agencies such as the *Defensoría* for student internships.

- Law students have access to the Language Center; all students must pass an English competency exam to graduate.
- Only one faculty member is full time; the other faculty members are part time adjunct faculty, teaching individual courses. This law school also has difficulty recruiting faculty with Masters, although most faculty have Specializations. There is a need to strengthen research and publications.
- There is a great need to increase support displaced populations, to bring attention to the human rights of children and adolescents, and for general education in human rights and also about domestic violence.

g) Universidad Sergio Arboleda (Santa Marta)

- This is a private university, an extension of the Sergio Arboleda University in Bogotá. Currently the law school at Santa Marta has 770 students.

E. *Villavicencio*

The armed conflict is active in the Department of Meta. Of the 29 municipalities, the *Defensoría* considers 11 to be high risk (designated “early warning”). In rural zones of Meta, there is virtually no state presence; paramilitary organizations are replacing it. Forced migration of peasants and indigenous peoples is said to be caused by the armed conflict, drug trade and unspecified large agricultural interests.

a) Universidad Santo Tomás (Villavicencio)

- This private, new (five years old) law school with around 600 students is a branch of Universidad Santo Tomás in Bogotá. It is situated on a hill overlooking the city of Villavicencio with a view over the expansive plains beyond.
- The law school has a compulsory human rights course; it awards a specialization in HR and International HR before courts and tribunals, with 74 graduates in its three offerings. It also sponsors a *semillero* in projects involving research and human rights education, in conformance with PLANEDH.
- Many faculty have advanced degrees (one doctorate, three in process; 11 Masters (five in HR), seven in progress).
- It has recently created a new, well equipped Practice Law Center in the city center that also conducts *brigadas* although few law students were present in the clinic and supervisors seem to have little experience.
- It works extensively with indigenous people, specifically the Huitoto, and conducts a law education program in high schools and elementary schools with a curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education, with a particular attention to research and instruction in the poorer sections of the city.
- The law school has formal ties with Master Degree program in Strategic Litigation in Bogotá

- It showed high level of interest by bringing together eight faculty members and administrators for the visit and eight students, three of which presented on their *semilleros*.
- Women have ample access to enrollment and administration (dean and Practice Law Center director are women).
- Law school leadership also identified the lack of professionals with Masters and Doctorates in the region as a challenge.
- It is implementing improvements in language programs in English for both faculty and students.

b) Universidad del Meta

- This is a private law school with 120 students, located along with the university in the city center. It has a strong regional vision as to issues and services to be provided regarding HR.
- Human rights course is compulsory; professors are enthusiastic about HR. *Semilleros* are developed out of work with municipalities in the region.
- The Practice Law Center is the leader in the region in dealing with displaced persons, located in city center, first floor of the law school. The office includes a mediation center, which is supported by USAID. The office is highly visible and has a regional reach, which includes virtual legal consultation sessions via the internet (voice communication only due to limited bandwidth in the outlying areas) and a call-in radio program for information and advice. They also conduct *brigadas* in more distant communities.
- Many inter-institutional formal agreements and informal agreements with state and nongovernmental institutions have been established.
- A flexible curriculum with opportunity for electives allows for interdisciplinary studies;
- English is required for graduation and taught throughout the university years.
- The law school has not yet completed plans to create a legal clinic; there is very limited stimulus or means for professors to develop their skills or qualifications, including English language ability which is lacking among faculty members.