



Corporación Participación Ciudadana

Project

Strengthening Democracy in Ecuador

Cooperative Agreement No. AID-518-00-03-00054

Final Report



I. Executive Summary

This final report details the fundamental aspects of the work that Corporación Participación Ciudadana carried out during 11 years, under USAID cooperative agreement “Strengthening Democracy.” This report contains a brief summary of Ecuador’s sociopolitical context, the origin of the organization, its work areas, the agreement objectives, and the most important activities and goals, as well as results achieved. This report contains the principal accomplishments and milestones achieved in the eleven years of the agreement. The summary is divided by Participación Ciudadana’s work areas so that the document is more clearly understood.

Background

Between 2002 and 2008, Ecuador was immersed in an environment of discontent because of the poor political practices of traditional political parties. The price of crude oil was quite low and the government was unable to find a suitable way to enhance employment, housing, health and education. The division between the rich and the poor was quite large and government services were sub-par.

The removal of the government of Lucio Gutierrez in the year 2005 generated a new citizen based movement that pursued radical changes in government; the Constitutional Assembly was established, and there were dialogues focused on a change in the political and philosophical view of the country, and oriented towards recognition of human rights.

In 2008, a new Constitution was approved which guaranteed rights related to citizen participation. During the last six years, implementation of the Constitution has been difficult and, in many cases it has been politicized. On various occasions, the Constitution was ignored in order to pursue political decisions. For example, members of the Judiciary must be appointed by the Citizen Participation and Social Control Counsel (Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social (CPCCS)), but the President appointed three delegates without the input of the CPCCS.

Now, Ecuador is a complex environment for civil society organizations because regulations, such as Decree 16, make the right of association difficult.



The origin of Participación Ciudadana (PC) as a non-governmental organization dates back to the year 2002, when it was evident that there was a need to create a citizen observatory to oversee the electoral process that were about to take place.¹

Thus, PC was born as a nonpartisan, not-for profit entity, formed by a diverse group of citizens from many different backgrounds, who sought the strengthening and deepening of democracy under a broad and pluralist vision. PC obtained its legal status as an organization on July 12, 2002.

Additionally, PC created a network of volunteers that was in charge of a specific task: to be citizen observers and guardians of the transparency of electoral process. In this way, PC's national volunteer network was formed, which included a national network of provincial coordinators as leaders.²⁽³⁾ PC now counts on these contingents of people that are active in each electoral process and contributed to the development of the rapid count process.

Even though PC was created for electoral observation, it was clear that its activities should have a greater impact, and it should focus its efforts on the strengthening of social responsibility through activities such as fostering social control, civic education, promoting dialogues and debates about topics of national significance, and encouraging citizen participation and promoting transparency and accountability of public activities in all democratic processes.

With this idea in mind, in the year 2003, PC expanded its activities in civic education, social control and reinforcement of accountability. From 2012 until the end of the agreement, PC focused on issues such as transparency in local governments, implementation of mechanisms of citizen participation and strengthening civil society organizations.

Principal Objectives and Work Areas

- Strengthen Participación Ciudadana as an institution by encouraging a greater interaction with: Assembly, Technical Team, Provincial Coordinators and Network of Volunteers.
- Contribute to the improvement of the legal system through reform proposals on election law and similar topics.
- Establish mechanisms of interaction, dialogue and agreement between the different political actors that foster the possibility of reaching governance accords.

¹ Two particular facts contributed to identify this need; one consisted in the results of a seminar developed in the middle of 2001 about the problems of democracy, directed by the Latin American Development Corporation (CLD), and the other fact was the lesson learned through the experience acquired by Transparencia Perú in their 2001 elections.

² On the 26th of July of 2002, the first training workshop for volunteers was organized on electoral monitoring and enhancement of campaign quality.



- Promote among citizens, authorities and officials a set of practical regulations with respect to attitudes and behaviors that will deepen and improve the quality of our democracy within a framework of ethical and moral values.

The work areas of *Participación Ciudadana* were modified as a function of the objectives of the Agreement and also in view of the country's priorities. From 2008 to date, PC work areas were:

- Social Control
- Citizen action
- Dialogue and governability
- Democracy education
- Information for citizens
- Institutional strengthening of PC

Principal Achievements

Upon closing the Strengthening Democracy in Ecuador project the following accomplishments can be highlighted:

Social Control

Social control is a citizen right to demand transparency and accountability from authorities. It has been publicized, strengthened and instilled within the general population.

It was possible to promote activities of observation and vigilance of electoral processes such as providing voters with useful information on their rights to suffrage and sensitizing the general public on the importance of acquiring information before voting, so that they can make a better decision. All electoral processes monitored by PC were compared to the results provided by the electoral authorities on each occasion. This helped to generate electoral law reform initiatives to improve the transparency of electoral processes.

Likewise PC contributed to the transparency of the electoral processes by developing citizen observation activities during the six national and local elections since 2003. PC provided qualitative support, through careful monitoring of the Elections Tribunal, demanding transparency and providing comments and suggestions on the electoral legal structure. In 2004, PC presented a proposal to the legislature to implement the Law on Electoral Spending (*Ley de Gasto Electoral*).³ This has been the first and only successful and practical case in which a citizen organization exercised its democratic right in Ecuador. This proposal was accepted, debated and approved by the Legislature.

The presence of PC in the development of electoral observation has been an important and relevant achievement. Approximately 20,000 citizens were recruited as observers, and they have taken advantage of PC's education and training program for electoral observers, and furthermore, these people have become capable agents that have replicated our mission and democratic vision.

³ It is noteworthy to mention that the law of electoral spending (*Ley de Gasto Electoral*) has functioned as a basis for what is now known as the Democracy Code (*Código de la Democracia*), and in the latter, even today there are still regulations that were proposed by PC, such as Art. 219 that restricts the employment of public resources in activities of personal promotion of authorities.



The rapid count processes, carried out by PC, have also contributed to validate the activities of electoral organisms; likewise, they have decreased the political tensions inherent in these processes. PC has maintained an error margin close to 0.5 percent during the last six rapid count activities, which has been recognized by the general public, the media and various government institutions.

Monitoring public funds spent on official promotion and advertising activities during campaigns has resulted in reaching an important goal in this project in the area of social control. Thousands of people at the national level, as well as political figures and public opinion leaders, have applauded PC's capacity to demand transparency on the utilization of public resources. Now, the idea that the general public can demand the proper use of public funds is accepted and citizens expect this information from authorities during elections.

Additionally, PC has contributed considerably to creating a collective consciousness regarding the importance of a transparency and accountability system at the local level. PC has collaborated with over sixty local governments to promote accountability according to what is established by law since 2004. Strategic alliances were signed with mayors and prefects from 20 municipalities to include citizen participation and accountability mechanisms such as the Empty Chair (*Silla Vacía*).⁴ (5)

PC also created observatories and oversight groups to monitor legislative activities which has been quite significant. In 2005, PC created an Observatory of the National Assembly in order to provide the public with a permanent system for monitoring the legislative process, analysing legal norms, and generating an educated public opinion about members of Congress. To date, this activity has allowed PC to be present for the most important political-legislative processes in the past ten years. The Constitutional National Assembly relied on the presence of an oversight group from PC during 2008 while drafting the current Political Constitution. Likewise, PC participated as an observer in the Transitional Legislative Assembly and has been permanent ever since.

PC also improved the judicial order by introducing proposals to modify of existing legal bodies, regulations, and the issuing of new norms particularly in the area of institutional labor. In addition to the introduction of proposals, PC constantly monitors the legal reform process, and participates by introducing observations, suggestions and language modifications to drafted texts such as the proposal of the Electoral Spending Law (2005); the proposal of Political Regime to the design of the Political Constitution (2008); the proposal of the Citizen Participation Law (2009); the critique to the Democracy Code (2012 and 2013); observations to the guidelines on CSO regulations (2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014) and related decrees; and analysis on content of the Communications Law (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013), among others.

PC worked on the Public Management Surveillance (*Vigilancia de la Gestión Pública*) project from 2009 to 2012. This initiative consisted of measuring the compliance of articles 7 and 12 of the Organic Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information (*Ley Orgánica de*

⁴ Silla Vacía is a democratic model that was included in the 2008 constitution. The Empty Chair mechanism provides a literal empty chair for any citizen to sit in and participate in local or national level assembly meetings or other processes. . This figure was initially designed so that it only had a voice, but not a voting capacity; however, in the law of citizen participation and social control (*ley de Participación Ciudadana y Control*), which was later approved, voting rights was given to the person in the empty chair.



Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública, LOTAIP)⁵ through monitoring the web sites of thirty public institutions that received funding from the government. Additionally, PC created compliance manuals and conducted training programs for public employees and for civil society. For this activity, PC worked with the Public Defender's Office (*Defensoría del Pueblo*).

Citizen Action

From its inception, citizen action has been one of PC's mechanisms to encourage public participation in the endorsement of ethical values and civic democratic practices. PC has given birth to a public that knows its rights to participation and has a pro-active and positive attitude towards dialogue with the government. Under this project, PC carried out civic campaigns such as "Punctuality" and "Clean walls and honest candidates" which were milestones in terms of public participation and mobilization at the national level during PC's start-up period. The "Responsible Vote" campaign and "Citizen Watch" (*ojo ciudadano*) were initiatives that involved a massive number of young men and women who promoted an educated and responsible vote. About twenty thousand people throughout the entire country participated in these campaigns.

Dialogues and Governability

Within its institutional mission and vision, PC promoted a permanent dialogue in search of agreements among political and social actors. Generating initiatives to strengthen democracy as an institution was also a priority. PC created spaces so that diverse actors could build new democracy concepts with pluralist views and links the many sectors of the country. This drove PC's decision to host six annual fora to debate topics of national interest, through what PC called termed Democratic Breakfasts (*Desayunos Democráticos*). At these events, various subjects were discussed, such as "the role of civil society in a participative democracy", "the importance of freedom of expression", "Analysis of the new Political Constitution", "The law of citizen participation", and "The role of CPCC",⁶ among others. Approximately five thousand people participated in these events

Education for Democracy

PC supported civil society organizations through the program "Outlining a roadmap for CSOs" ("Marcando una Hoja de Ruta para las OSCs"). This initiative, which was co-financed by USAID and the Canadian Embassy, intended to bring together several civil society organizations to train and empower them in terms of their role in the current Ecuadorian democracy.

5

The Organic Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information (*La Ley Orgánica de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública*) demands that all public institutions that receive funding from the state comply with certain norms of transparency that are included in articles 7 and 12 of the aforementioned law.

⁶ Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social



In this context, PC started carrying out training workshops in 2010 with the active participation of sixty-five CSOs. Topics at these workshops were a) constitutional tools for citizen participation, b) oversight and social control tools, c) political incidence, d) communication strategies. As a result of these activities, the Pluralist Network of Civil Society Organizations (*Red Pluralista de Organizaciones de Sociedad Civil*) was formed with twelve organizations partnering at various levels. Some of these organizations have replicated this training in their own regions, and they are contributing to fortify civil society in their areas. These replications have been successful and many of them continue to this date.⁷

PC maintains its commitment to build democracy through basic education. PC developed a program to train journalists in democratic values and instruments of social control and management of information, as well as in research techniques and digital tools for journalism. More than 600 journalists participated in this training program.

Citizen information

PC strived to provide information and generate broad range communication spaces from and for the general public that would allow greater access to information, and would also improve people's political assessment capacity.

PC developed spaces of information and formation in democracy (*espacios de información y formación en democracia*) for newscasters and communications media, and through its electronic periodical, ***Ciudadanía Informada***, generated analyses and objective and pluralist information. This newsletter acquired high tech devices in order to satisfy the demand for timely and trustworthy information from web audiences. The newsletter had approximately 700,000 hits annually during the past three years.

⁷ A replication example involved the province of Loja where public monitoring was carried out in the Coordinación Provincial of zone 7: El Oro, Zamora y Loja where the goal was to oversee the application of policy 3.6 from the *Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir*.



II. FINAL REPORT

NARRATIVE SECTION

AREAS, OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES AND PRINCIPAL RESULTS

1. AREA OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Participación Ciudadana has developed initiatives that support the strengthening of democracy through the promotion of transparency, accountability and exercise of social control as effective participative tools executed by civil society. The principal landmarks of the project throughout the last eleven years have been:

1.1 Incidence and contribution of legislative products

- *The Proposal on the Law on Electoral Spending (Propuesta de Ley de Gasto Electoral) through the exercise of Direct Democracy (Democracia Directa), envisaged in the 2005 Political Constitution.* Over 70,000 signatures were collected that supported this proposal. This Law was approved and was applied until 2009 when it was replaced with the Democracy Code (*Código de la Democracia*), which included many of the articles from the original law. An example of this is Art. 219 that prohibits public officials from promoting their own names in public works.
- *Presentation of the Proposal on Political Regime Reform of the Political Constitution of Montecristi: Political Parties and Electoral System (Propuesta de Reforma al Régimen Político a la Constitución Política de Montecristi: Partidos Políticos y Sistema Electoral).* This was an initiative that sought to reform the regime of political parties and the electoral system. In 2005, PC performed an analysis and provided a tangible proposal that was presented to the Constitutional National Assembly of Montecristi in 2008.⁸ The National Assembly incorporated the elements of the proposal involving the separation of electoral powers into the current Political Constitution. Additionally, PC introduced a renewed-registration of political parties, which was brought forward by the National Electoral Council (*Consejo Nacional Electoral - CNE*). This proposal was accepted and is now part of Provision 11 (*Transitoria 11*) of the current Political Constitution.
- *Institutional proposal of Citizen Participation Law (Propuesta institucional de la Ley de Participación Ciudadana).* With the support of the political expert Mr. Simón Pachano, who is a reputed public opinion leader, columnist and Director of the Department of Political Science at the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), PC drew up a proposal on the Organic Law of Citizen Participation and Social Control (*Ley Orgánica de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social*). This initiative was presented to the National Assembly's Commission on Citizen Participation and Social Control in October 2011. None of the articles in the proposal were accepted.

⁸ It is important to mention that this proposal was announced extensively to the national level through citizen discussion fora in 16 provinces.



- *Remarks and contributions to the regulations of legislative products, as well as regulations and processes to select control authorities.* One of the activities that PC developed involved influencing the design of public policies and laws regarding the democratic life of the country, through the introduction of contributions and observations. Laws and regulations over which PC contributed are listed next:
- Remarks on the Project of Law of the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control (*Proyecto de Ley del Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social*), 2009.
- Observations on the Project of Regulations for the Conformation and Operation of the Citizens Commissions for the Selection of Authorities (*Proyecto de Reglamento para la Conformación y Funcionamiento de las Comisiones Ciudadanas de Selección de Autoridades*), 2009.
- Observations to the Organic Code on Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization (*Código Orgánico de Organización Territorial, autonomía y Descentralización - COOTAD*), on the issues involving the Empty Chair (*Silla Vacía*), 2009.
- Contributions to the project of the reformed Law on the Electoral Organic Law on Political Organizations – Code of Democracy and Law of Citizen Participation (*Ley Orgánica Electoral y de Organizaciones Políticas – código de la Democracia y Ley de Participación Ciudadana*), 2010.
- Legal contributions to the proposal of the Communications Law (*Ley de Comunicación*), 2010.
- Remarks on the Regulation to the Law on Non-profit Organizations; Decree 982, 2011.
- Observations and constitutional analysis to the questions presented in the Public Referendum (*Consulta Popular*) in May 2011.
- Legal analysis on the process to select the members of the Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control (Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social CPCCS), 2011.
- Presentation of an *Amicus Curiae* to the Constitutional Court regarding the Communications Law, 2012.
- Analysis of the content of the regulation to assign seats, reformulated by the CNE, 2012.
- Observations on the proposal to reform Article 203 of the Democracy Code, 2012 and 2013.
- Contributions to the Law to Reform the Organic Law on Citizen Participation to regulate the revocation the term of office (*Ley Reformatoria a la Ley Orgánica de Participación Ciudadana para la regulación de la Revocatoria del Mandato*), submitted to the National Assembly and to the CNE, 2013.



- Analysis and observations to the content of Decree 16, which regulates non-profit organizations, 2013.
- Analysis and observations to the Regulation of Electoral Campaign (*Reglamento de Promoción Electoral*), 2013.

1.2 Surveillance

During the Strengthening Democracy project, Participación Ciudadana had accomplished some important goals in the exercise of social control through citizen surveillance activities; the most important ones are:

- Observation of the designation of the National Court (2005).
- Observation of the National Congress (2005). Observation of the Constitutional National Assembly (2008)⁹.
- Observation of the Provisional Legislative Commission (2009).
- Observation of the CPCC and the merit competitions to select control authorities (2009-2013)
- Observation of the Legislative function through the formulation and dissemination of citizen pulses (*Pulsos Ciudadanos*) (2008-2014)¹⁰.



⁹ 10 PC was present as an observer in the drafting of the Political Constitution of the Republic in the years 2007 and 2008 and presented the institutional proposal on political regime.

¹⁰ 11 The so-called “Pulsos Ciudadanos” are periodic (bimonthly) publications where PC informs the general public about its activities as citizen observer, and contributes with analyses of topics of legislative importance, usually regarding Legal projects.



1.3 Accountability

One of the codes for citizen participation that was included in the 2008 Constitution was accountability from local authorities.

- During the life of the project, Participación Ciudadana implemented a system of information, transparency and accountability of local governments under which PC promoted training, technical assistance, and citizen organization, among other activities.
- PC was able to organize Accountability Fora (*Foros de Rendición de Cuentas*) thanks to the work it carried out with PC volunteers throughout all the provinces in the country. The following activities were carried out:
 - Design and drafting of the manual for the presentation of work plans; and organization of Citizen Fora (*foros ciudadanos*) to present work plans from candidates to city mayors and prefects in 2004¹¹.
 - Design and implementation of a methodology of accountability and answerability according to the parameters established by the National Secretariat of Transparency (*Secretaría Nacional de Transparencia*) (2008 to date).¹²
- Analysis of the regulatory framework that permits the general public to demand accountability from local governments.
- Training to the general public and authorities on the methodology and key aspects of accountability.
- Corroboration of the different forms of participation in fora, so that the legal and institutional objectives are respected in these processes.
- Three provinces and seven parishes trained and involved in processes of accountability.
- A total of 15,567 citizens benefited from these processes.

¹¹ In July 2004, PC proposed to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (Tribunal Supremo Electoral), today CNE, the idea of a manual for the presentation of work plans from the candidates for city mayor and prefect. This proposal was accepted and from then on, candidates for mayor and prefect are obligated to present their work plans. PC hosted several citizen fora in 2004 with this purpose, as an exercise of accountability from the candidates to the voters.

¹² 13 The National Secretariat of Transparency (*Secretaría Nacional de Transparencia*) has established a set of basic technical parameters that local governments must employ in their efforts to be accountable to the people.



The municipalities benefited in these processes were: Santa Lucía, Playas, Daule, Puyo, Mira, Pallatanga, Colta, Pimampiro, Bucay, Cumandá.

1.4 Empty chair (*Silla Vacía*)

The Political Constitution approved in 2008 established a novel mechanism of direct democracy called the “empty chair” (*Silla Vacía*). The empty chair allows average citizens an opportunity to speak at local and national assembly meetings.¹³

In order to promote the application of the empty chair, PC endorsed alliances with a total of ten autonomous and decentralized governments (*Gobiernos Autónomos y Descentralizados*, GADs) and developed activities to raise consciousness and to train authorities, municipal representatives, and the general public. The most important activities were:

- Following up the results of the GAD sessions where the empty chair was employed.
- Registering the interventions and the votes that were cast by people in the GAD sessions.
- Organized approximately sixty workshops for citizens and local authorities regarding the implementation of the empty chair mechanism.
- Through the ordinance model delivered by PC, ten districts are debating application of the empty chair.
- Aiding one district to draft the ordinance.
- Two districts published empty chair ordinances 2012 and 2013.
- 5,200 citizens were trained on the application of the empty chair and the Law on Citizen Participation.

The benefited districts in this training process were: Santa Lucía, Daule, Puyo, Mira, Pallatanga, Colta, Pimampiro, Bucay, Cumandá.

1.5. Monitoring Public Management

From 2006 to 2012, Participación Ciudadana carried out the “Monitoring Public Management” (*Vigilancia de la Gestión Pública*) project. The objective of this project was to increase the transparency of management practices in public and private institutions that received funding

¹³ 14. Art. 101 of the Constitution of Ecuador; Art. 77 of the Organic Law of Citizen Participation and Social Control; and Art. 311 from COOTAD.



from the state according to Articles 7 and 12 of the Organic Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information (*Ley Orgánica de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública, LOTAIP*).

The responses to requests for information were also monitored as was people's perceptions of public services provided by institutions.

PC monitored thirty public institutions and achieved impressive results on the compliance with LOTAIP. As of December 2011, the thirty public institutions had a 97.55 percent compliance rate with Article 7 of LOTAIP. Additionally, PC was able to work in collaboration with the Public Defender's Office (*Defensoría del Pueblo*) on this activity.

Following this result, PC monitored eight GADs who were provided technical support. These GADs showed significant interest in improving their compliance with the regulation. Toward the end of the project, PC worked with an additional four GADs. Overall, directly and indirectly, technical assistance was provided to twelve GADs. The most important actions of this project were:

- Monitoring web sites from thirty government institutions from 2008 to 2012.
- Seven institutions developed their own broadcasting initiatives of the LOTAIP.¹⁴
- Eight institutions developed broadcasting programs in their action plans.¹⁵
- Twenty nine workshops were organized with employees from institutions and civil society. Approximately 2,000 employees benefited from these workshops.
- Twenty six fora and events of dissemination of results were organized at universities.
- A reform proposal of the LOTAIP was prepared to be presented before the National Assembly.
- Fifteen municipalities were monitored for their compliance with LOTAIP from 2013 through part of 2014.

¹⁴ National Corporation of Telecommunications, Municipal Association of Ecuador, Attorney General Office, Constitutional Court, Council for Citizen Participation, Internal Revenue Service and Municipality of Milagro

¹⁵ National Electoral Council, Ecuador Central Bank, Comptroller General of the State, Provincial Justice Courte, National Finance Corporation, Provincial Directorate of Education, Guayaquil Electric Public Company, Municipality of Santa Lucía.



Table of Municipalities' Program on LOTAIP. 15 GADs monitored on-line.

Municipality		Second Pre-Monitoring %	Percent Improved
1	Rumiñahui	100%	50%
2	Latacunga	97%	36%
3	Cotacachi	88%	27%
4	Mira	85%	32%
5	Cayambe	82%	49%
6	Antonio Ante	81%	32%
7	Tena	78%	2%
8	Mejía	76%	3%
9	Otavalo	72%	4%
10	Esmeraldas	68%	39%
11	Ibarra	55%	10%
12	Lago Agrio	47%	4%
13	Shushufindi	45%	21%
14	Cascales	41%	3%
15	Rio Verde	19%	1%
TOTAL		69%	21%

2. AREA OF CITIZEN ACTION

2.1. Monitoring Official Publicity

PC monitored the government's official publicity from 2005 to 2010. PC independently kept track and evaluated government publicity broadcasted in the media using government funding. Additionally, PC monitored the compliance and non-compliance of what is stated in the current Article 219 (former Art. 121), which prohibits the promotion of authorities in public works.



This activity allowed the general public to have qualitative and quantitative information regarding the use of written press, radio, and TV for political purposes. Regarding electoral campaign spending and the use of public funds for publicity or public works, PC monitored 32 national communication sources, eight TV channels, 12 radio stations and 12 written press media sources. The following results and achievements are highlighted:

- Fifty reports were drafted, edited and circulated among the general population, public organizations and media.
- Over 5,000 news items were published in radio, written press and TV.
- Twenty-one special reports were produced regarding monitoring of electoral campaigns of authorities, with particular concentration on campaign spending.
- Seventy-nine media establishments used PC reports and articles in interviews, information notes and other journalistic products in press, radio and television.
- Twenty-one special reports were produced regarding monitoring the electoral campaigns of public authorities, highlighting the employment of funds for electoral promotion and the presence of candidates in public media spots during the campaign.
- The main newspapers in Ecuador presented 200 articles which included data from PC reports.

2.2 Civic Campaigns

Over the past 11 years, PC designed several civic campaigns that were carried out at the national level with the help of volunteers in many provinces in Ecuador. These initiatives sought to promote civic values by creating awareness within the public about the importance of a responsible society that fulfills its duties and promotes values such as tolerance, respect, transparency, accountability, punctuality and a responsible electoral vote. In this process, over 30,000 people were instructed on civic values starting in 2002. The principal campaigns were the following:

- Meet on time (*Cumplir a tiempo*). This was an initiative to emphasize the importance of punctuality for all citizens and particularly for public officials.
- Eye on Democracy (*Ojo con la Democracia*). This campaign intended to sensitize the community on transparency issues.
- Clean walls and honest candidates (*Paredes limpias, candidatos honestos*). This campaign was created to prevent the use of public spaces, such as walls, fences and light posts for electoral advertising.
- Responsible vote (*Voto Responsable*). This campaign intended to create a public conscience on the need to obtain accurate information on the candidates before voting.
- Citizen Watch (*El Ojo Ciudadano*). This was a campaign on civic values such as tolerance, honesty and inclusion.



- The Value of Voting (*El valor de Elegir*). This campaign built conscience on the importance of choosing a candidate responsibly.

3.- AREA OF DIALOGUE AND GOVERNABILITY

During the past 11 years of the Strengthening Democracy project, Participación Ciudadana has continued to generate engagement spaces through dialogue and public debate on topics of national interest. Through the organization of fora, discussion meetings and debates, PC assembled various sectors of civil society, representatives of the public sector, and common citizens, with to generate atmosphere for dialogue on issues of common interest.

Several discussion events were arranged that were able to bring together various sectors of society around topics of common interest and of important significance at the national level. Among the most relevant there are:

- “Civil society and its role in a participative democracy”
- “Presentation of the monitoring results of 18 web sites from public institutions based on the application of LOTAIP”
- “Presentation of the results of electoral monitoring 2009”
- “The Citizen Participation Council (*Consejo de Participación Ciudadana*) dialogues with the public”
- “Assessment of the Organic Code on the Judicial Function (*Código Orgánico de la Función Judicial*)”
- “Civil society and transparency”
- “New political parties, norms and projections”
- “The administration of justice in Ecuador”
- “The people dialogue on the consultation and the referendum”
- “Electoral democracy versus citizen democracy”
- “First CSOs meeting: in search of a reform for the Democracy Code”
- “Challenges for civil society and modern democracies”
- Overall, 8,000 citizens actively conversed on topics of national interest.

4. AREA OF EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

4.1 Long Live Democracy (*Vive la Democracia*)



This initiative was directed towards high school students in Guayaquil. These students were, or planned to be, part of the student government in their schools

PC was able to guide and influence in this educational electoral system at the provincial and national level where this initiative was implemented. PC focused on the democratization of the student governments from its inception, through campaigns, campaign monitoring, proposal presentations and activities related to the organization of a student electoral process. This activity had a considerable degree of influence through the following activities:

- In 2008, an agreement was signed with the Ministry of Education in order to be able to work with the selected high schools.
- In 2009 an agreement was signed with the Regional Sub-Secretary of Education (*Sub-Secretaría Regional de Educación*) to include the project as one of the options students could select in order to meet their Student Participation requirement.
- Thirteen participating schools democratized their student government bodies through campaign monitoring, proposals presentations, and activities linked to an electoral process.
- Thirteen student government elections were assisted.
- Forty-five training workshops for students and professors were offered on leadership and conflict resolution.
- Thirteen campaigns to promote civil values were carried out in Guayaquil.
- 676 people were trained in 41 schools.
- 376 workshops on how to be a responsible citizen were offered.
- A total of 1,212 young people were trained on democratic values.

4.2. Sub- Grants programs to CSOss to strengthen citizen participation in activities of social control

This initiative was developed during the year 2013 and attempted to select two organizations of civil society - that had been trained by PC by the project “Designing a Roadmap for Civil Society” (*Marcando una Hoja de Ruta para la Sociedad Civil*) - to finance their proposals for strengthening activities of social control.

The selected organizations were: Internet Help Foundation (FUNDAPI) and Association Network of NGOs in Guayaquil (AROG). These CSOs fostered monitoring processes. The most remarkable initiatives in this activity were:

- Monitoring the electoral process for local authorities in the province of Guayas (*veeduría cantonal en Guayaquil*).



- A proposal to create a social observatory was presented at two events involving public participation.



Veeduría a la Participación Ciudadana Cantonal

INVITACION
A la presentación de los primeros resultados de seguimiento a la implementación de los Sistemas de Participación Ciudadana en los cantones de la provincia del Guayas

Con el apoyo de



Fecha	Martes 12 de noviembre de 2013
Lugar	Fundación Leonidas Ortega Moreira, FLOM.
Dirección	Rocafuerte y Tomas Martinez
Hora	16H00 (4pm)
Entrada libre	

- Forty-six civil society organizations in the province of El Oro were unified in a process of electoral monitoring (*veeduría cantonal*).
- Four modules of workshops for training programs were executed on the following subjects: Standards for Citizen Participation, Tools for Citizen Monitoring and Social Control, Political Incidence of CSOs and Communications Strategies.
- The Women’s Organization of El Oro formed a team to implement the empty chair mechanism.
- A civic campaign “By practicing values, we generate democracy” (*Con Valores Practicando, Democracia vamos generando*), where over 3,600 people were involved.

4.3 Project “Designing a Roadmap for Civil Society” (*Marcando una Hoja de Ruta para la Sociedad Civil*)

Through this initiative PC linked several CSOs in an initial dialogue and identified strengths and weaknesses in CSOs at the national level. The principal accomplishments in this initiative were:

- Two workshops on “Challenges, opportunities and threats to CSOs”
- Development of four training modules that have been replicated by several participating organizations. For example, in Loja, various workshops were carried out on “Constitutional tools for social control from the people” (*Herramientas Constitucionales de Control Social desde la Ciudadanía*).
- The four main topics of this training were: a) citizen participation, b) monitoring tools and social control, c) political incidence, d) communications strategies.
- Twelve organizations established the “Pluralist Network of CSOs” (*Red Pluralista de OSCS*).



The Pluralist Network of Civil Society has been a great accomplishment for PC because it represents a serious commitment by the CSOs that are part of this network to continue carrying out training and guidance processes to strengthen other CSOs in the country.¹⁶

4.4 Training Journalists

The commitment to build democracy through education cannot leave out the important task of instructing the media in democratic values and tools of social control and good information management. This was one of the most important activities that PC pushed forward under this project. With this, PC not only strengthened the quality of the information it delivered and transmitted from through its electronic newsletter *Ciudadanía Informada* and website but also improved the quality of media coverage on democratic issues and in order to promote further participation in the democratic process.

PC carried out several training workshops in different cities in the country with themes of current interest. Relevant topics presented were: Transparency tools, accountability and journalistic ethics, and research tools. The following activities were carried out:

- Five hundred and fifty journalists were trained in the workshops organized under this project.
- Online research was done on “transparency, accountability and journalistic ethics” (*Transparencia, Rendición de Cuentas y Ética Periodística*).
- Eight workshops on “New challenges for journalism: LOTAIP, legal framework and investigative journalism” (*Nuevos Desafíos para el Periodismo: LOTAIP, marco legal e investigación periodística*) were organized in Imbabura, Guayas, Azuay, Manabí, y Pichincha.
- One workshop on “journalism and elections” was conducted in February, 2013.

5. AREA OF CITIZEN INFORMATION

5.1 Electronic Newsletter Informed Citizen

This newsletter offered the public up-to-date information and encouraged readers to participate in opinion polls. As a digital instrument, this journal has maintained an average of 700,000 hits per year. In 2013, it reported a total of 1,360,461 visits.

5.2 Research and Opinion link on Informed Citizen (*Ciudadanía Informada, CI*)

¹⁶ 17. Several of the OSCs that participated have already carried out their own replication processes. Such is the case of Loja, for this province carried out a public monitoring program in zone 7 of the provincial coordination (*coordinación provincial de Zona 7*), that is in the nearby provinces of El Oro, Zamora and Loja. Likewise, in the province of Azuay, several replication processes were performed with communities such as Mancomunidad del Collay, where there was an implementation of monitoring activities in the design of guidelines, programs and projects that guaranteed the conservation of forests in those areas. All of this was done according to the model provided in PC’s training workshops.



This novel component of PC's electronic newsletter Informed Citizen was designed in 2013 and its goal is to offer the public analyses of some problem issues in Ecuador, inviting the reader to register, to maintain a thoughtful dialog with experts and to browse through the data on each topic or issue. This research and opinion link is called "Public perspective: not-for-profit journalism" (*Enfoque Ciudadano: periodismo sin fines de lucro*)

Three subjects were addressed in 2014: 1) illiteracy and the number of women living this reality; 2) single-teacher schools in the country; and 3) people deprived of their liberties.