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# THE ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL PROCESSES PROGRAM IN COLOMBIA (2007-2012) PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

**April 2012**

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## **DISCLAIMER**

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# ACRONYMS

ASI	Alianza Social Independiente (ASI party)
AUC	United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia)
BACRIMs	Criminal groups ( <i>Bandas Criminales Emergentes</i> )
CEPPS	Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening
CNE	National Electoral Council ( <i>Consejo Nacional Electoral</i> ),
CSDI	Colombia Strategic Development Initiative
DANE	National Administrative Statistics Department (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística)
DNP	National Planning Department (Departamento Nacional de Planeación)
EMB	Electoral Management Body
EPP Program	Electoral and Political Processes Program
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia)
FUNCICAR	Fundación Cívico Social pro-Cartagena
ICP	Instituto de Ciencia Política
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFE	Federal Electoral Institute
IRG	International Resources Group
IRI	International Republican Institute
JAL	Juntas de Acción Local (neighborhood councils)
LAPOP	Latin American Public Opinion Project
MIRA	Movimiento Independiente para la Renovación Nacional (MIRA party)
MOE	Electoral Observer Mission (Misión de observación electoral)
NDI	National Democratic Institute
OAS	Organization of American States
PMP	Program/Project Management Plan
PSUN	Partido Social de Unidad Nacional

UIAF	Unit of Information and Financial Analysis (Unidad de Información y Análisis Financiero)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
URIEL	Immediate Reaction Unit for Electoral Transparency (Unidad de Reacción Inmediata para la Transparencia Electoral)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past 10 years, the Government of Colombia has made considerable progress in reducing conflict, improving security, attracting foreign investment, and reactivating the economy. As the government successfully combatted armed guerrillas, drug traffickers, and demobilized paramilitary groups, the government's approval ratings, and particularly, the President's, increased. Yet, the most important institutional infrastructure of any stable democracy – political parties and electoral institutions – remain weak, poorly institutionalized, underfunded, and vulnerable to capture by smaller criminal organizations with links to former paramilitary groups and/or drug traffickers active at the local and regional levels. As the prestigious International Crisis Group recognizes (2011, 7), by 2010, “prosecutors had passed to competent authorities evidence that 24 governors, 225 mayors, 11 members of departmental assemblies, and 55 local councilors have links with former paramilitary groups.”

Indeed, electoral institutions and political parties remain the Achilles' heel of Colombia's democratic consolidation. Paradoxically, the country is a longstanding democracy and an economic powerhouse, but with democratic infrastructure (parties and electoral institutions) which have been taken for granted and allowed to stagnate over decades of neglect, government authorities focused – understandably – on the more urgent battle of ending the violence and restoring order. However, strengthening political parties and electoral institutions in Colombia is critical for consolidating the Government of Colombia's achievements and guaranteeing stable democracy in the future.

The purpose of this performance evaluation is to assess the results of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Elections and Political Processes Program (EPP Program) in Colombia designed to strengthen political parties and electoral processes in Colombia. The Program was implemented by the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) from 2007 to 2012. This evaluation examines implementing partners' activities, evaluates their results, identifies lessons learned and best practices, and develops recommendations for possible future USAID support.

The performance evaluation was conducted by a team of four political scientists – Yemile Mizrahi and Todd Eisenstadt, from the United States, and Laura Wills Otero and Felipe Botero from Colombia. The International Resources Group (IRG) Team conducted field work in Bogotá, Chocó, and Montes de María from March 7-24. The Team conducted more than 90 interviews of USAID officials, implementing partners, sub-grantees, civil society organizations and direct beneficiaries of the EPP Program (political party leaders, government officials, Catholic Church leaders, and grassroots organizations). In addition, the Team conducted extensive reviews of IRI and NDI quarterly reports, program documents, academic articles, and other specialized reports.

## **COLOMBIA: STRONG DEMOCRATIC TRADITION BUT WEAK PARTIES AND ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS**

While Colombians are proud of their long democratic tradition and the absence of harsh military dictatorships, the prolonged internal conflict of the last several decades and its unparalleled levels of violence in the country left a lasting legacy on key democratic institutions. Colombia has one of the strongest and most independent justice systems in Latin America, and in particular, autonomous Supreme and Constitutional Courts. In 2006, the Supreme Court prosecuted members of Congress with alleged ties to illegal criminal organizations, most of them paramilitaries. By 2011, the Supreme Court had sentenced 25 members of

Congress (International Crisis Group, 2011, p. 6).<sup>1</sup> Also in 2010, the Constitutional Court ruled against a referendum seeking to amend the Constitution and allow President Uribe to run for a third term in office.

However, and in sharp contrast to these signs of institutional strength (and acts of genuine heroism by some judicial officials), political parties and electoral institutions remain weak and highly susceptible to political capture. Parties have high rates of electoral volatility, are unable to maintain their political presence, and often disappear after participating in one election. At the subnational level, political parties barely exist as political organizations. Parties operate as little more than “electoral machines” that lend their letterheads to candidates to compete in elections. Indeed, it is a truism in Colombia, confirmed by several interviewees that “the candidate chooses the party, not the other way around.”

A good indicator of the weakness of parties, especially at the subnational level, is the fact that in the 2011 elections, as demonstrated in Table 2, 42% of governorships were won not by stalwart candidates of the traditional Conservative and Liberal parties, but by candidates nominated by civic movements and upstart, non-traditional political parties.

The weakness of political parties is mirrored in the country’s electoral system. Colombia has one of the weakest electoral systems of any Latin American country of a similar size. As further elaborated in this report, electoral institutions are highly fragmented, understaffed and grossly underfinanced.<sup>2</sup> They lack the capacity to guarantee the integrity of elections and thus undermine citizen confidence in elections and electoral results. For example, the country lacks an independent and fully funded electoral management body that can effectively regulate and impose sanctions on political parties and ensure the integrity of electoral results; it lacks an independent electoral court that can resolve electoral disputes; and it lacks a system for ensuring that poll workers and vote counters are neutral and independent from the power of special interests groups.

It is not surprising that Colombia has one of the lowest rates of electoral turnout in Latin America –ranging between 40% and 45% – or less than half the turnout rates of other Latin American nations<sup>3</sup> – even as some citizens generally have positive attitudes about democratic institutions and are satisfied with the overall level of democracy in their country.

Perhaps nothing epitomizes the problems with elections and electoral institutions better than the fact that the *Consejo Nacional Electoral* (CNE), the institution responsible for regulating political parties, has not had the capacity to review the campaign financial information submitted by political parties after the 2011 elections. Although the information is now available electronically, parties still have to submit physical reports of complaint allegations. At the time of this report (March 2012), none of the 79 boxes of evidence submitted in connection with the October 2011 local elections had even been opened. They were all sealed and stored in CNE headquarters basement. To date, no one has been assigned by CNE to review and analyze this

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<sup>1</sup> According to data from Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris cited by the International Crisis Group (2011, p. 6), by 2011, at least 103 acting and former local officials elected between 1997 and 2010 had been investigated for alleged ties to paramilitaries.

<sup>2</sup> The level of funding for elections and electoral institutions is extremely low in Colombia. While post-democratizing nations like Angola and Cambodia spent well over \$20 USD per eligible voter in the 1990s, Colombia spent only about \$5 USD for each of the 30.7 million registered voters in 2011. This estimate was obtained by dividing the electoral registry total into total US \$160 million cost of the 2011 elections, from Martín, Juan. “¿Cuánto cuestan las elecciones?”, in Website: *La Oficina de Prensa del Senado*. Accessed March 30, 2012 at <http://www.senado.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/noticias/item/12686-cuanto-cuestan-las-elecciones?tmpl=component&print=1>; another critical analysis of election finance is “Financiamiento Electoral en Colombia” Misión de Observación Electoral. Accessed March 31, 2012 at [http://www.moe.org.co/home/doc/moe\\_nacional/CARTILLASMOE/Cartilla%20G.pdf](http://www.moe.org.co/home/doc/moe_nacional/CARTILLASMOE/Cartilla%20G.pdf); data on the number of registered voters for the 2011 elections was obtained from the Registraduría General de la Nación.

<sup>3</sup> According to IDEA, turnout in 2010 legislative elections was 43.75%, in contrast to Argentina (72.39% in 2009); Bolivia (94.5% in 2009); Brazil (81.8% in 2010); Ecuador (75.7% in 2009). For comparative data on electoral turnout rates see <http://www.idea.int/vt/>. It should be noted that, contrary to many of its neighbors, voting in Colombia is not compulsory. Furthermore, registration is automatic which makes the electoral census larger than in other countries where it is composed of those individuals who did actually register (Basset 2012, p.7-8).

information. When asked in an interview when the boxes would be opened, the chief magistrate shrugged his shoulders. Similarly, the *Registraduría*, the institution responsible for administering elections and releasing electoral information to the public, has been known to take months to process electoral results and to disclose them to the public. For example, the “preliminary results” from the 2010 congressional races were not posted for nearly six months. Furthermore, official electoral data is incomplete and poorly organized. For example, this Evaluation Team could not obtain official information on the rate of electoral turnout in the 2007 or 2011 local elections from any public official and had to locate it in a limited access document.

On the economic front, the protracted internal conflict also had a devastating impact on economic development, particularly at the subnational level. Although Colombia has experienced high rates of growth during the past years<sup>4</sup> – making it a middle income country – as the latest 2010 UNDP study demonstrates, Colombia has one of the highest rates of economic inequality in Latin America, with a Gini Coefficient of 0.578, higher than Honduras and Brazil.<sup>5</sup> Some regions of the country, particularly in the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, remain highly underdeveloped and a large portion of their populations, particularly women, Afro-Colombians, and indigenous people, continue to be politically and economically excluded. Afro-Colombians, estimated at 11% to 25% of the total population (census data are imprecise), are among the poorest and most underrepresented sectors of the Colombian population.

It is no coincidence then that these poor and underdeveloped areas remain most vulnerable to political capture by criminal organizations linked to former paramilitaries, *guerrillas*, and drug traffickers. In regions where people have few economic opportunities, where political parties are virtually inexistent as political organizations and government institutions are weak, criminal organizations find attractive opportunities to penetrate and control political parties and local governments, occasionally even exerting this control from their own jail cells (Ávila Martínez and Velasco 2011, p. 10). Political and economic exclusion of large sectors of the population, coupled with the weakness of political institutions to respond to their needs and address their demands, increases their vulnerability to criminal networks and, hence, their exposure to violent crime.

Endemic corruption, high levels of violent crime, and conflict will persist as long as these criminal groups, uncoupled from strong leadership hierarchies in the cease fire of 2006 – and via other government hard line policies of breaking up drug cartels – remain unchallenged. President Santos, unlike his predecessor, has explicitly recognized the persistence of these criminal groups (the BACRIM) and the risks they pose for the consolidation of democracy and stability in the country.<sup>6</sup> In 2011, the president formally launched a military and police offensive to crack down these groups, the so-called D-6 Strategy (International Conflict Group, p.9).<sup>7</sup> Yet a military strategy, for all it’s worth, can only help loosen the remaining pockets of state capture by illicit organizations and destroy their coercive bases. Such a strategy does little to create new democratic structures on the ruins of the old, authoritarian, and clientelistic ones, which had been in place long enough to overwhelm civil society and democratic practices in the zones they controlled.

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<sup>4</sup> According to the World Bank, between 2002 and 2009, the economy grew steadily with an average GDP growth of 4.4%.

<sup>5</sup> See UNDP, *Informe Regional sobre Desarrollo Humano para América Latina y el Caribe 2010*. See also World Bank, World Development Indicators, <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>. Among the countries with high rankings in the UNDP’s Human Development Index (like Colombia), Colombia is the single most unequal country.

<sup>6</sup> There is no reliable data on the strength, operations and/or numbers of these criminal groups. While they are commonly referred as “criminal bands,” they encompass far more than street gangs. Many of the members of these groups are former paramilitary combatants who were never demobilized or who were left out of the demobilization process. Many of these criminal bands also have ties to drug traffickers and are believed to be strong particularly in strategic drug trafficking zones. Unlike the *guerrillas*, these criminal organizations have no specific ideology and seek rents from local governments, especially in the areas of public procurement and health services (International Crisis Group, p.4).

<sup>7</sup> The President also supported a Victims and Land Restitution Law recently passed by Congress that seeks to compensate victims of the armed conflict and restitute their lands.

## MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The Elections and Political Processes program has been successful in many respects. Colombian partners and beneficiaries acknowledge the value of working with NDI and IRI and the importance of partnering with them to advance their interests. NDI and IRI were recognized by a vast majority of interviewees as critical players in Colombia, as unlike local organizations, these international Institutes achieved unparalleled convening power, and managed to reach agreements among often seemingly irreconcilable organizations and/or leaders on a range of issues.

Both Institutes demonstrated unparalleled capacities for leveraging domestic stakeholders to support the introduction of important legislation, such as the Political Reform of 2009, the Electoral Law of 2011, the Anti-Discrimination Law, and the Victim's Law. While neither NDI nor IRI can claim full credit for the passage of these laws, consensus exists among those interviewed for this evaluation that both Institutes played a critical role in garnering support for these laws, among civil society organizations and members of Congress.

Furthermore, the prestige of these Institutes was critical for shielding programs and proposals from manipulation, and protecting local stakeholders who might remain vulnerable without international backing and support. Both Institutes managed to reach post-conflict areas (in Montes de María) and remote municipalities in the highly impoverished and predominantly Afro-Colombian Department of Chocó, where few Colombian and international organizations had achieved a presence.

In five years of programming, NDI and IRI have provided valuable technical assistance and training to government officials, party leaders, candidates, legislators, and civil society organizations. Former NDI Leadership Program fellows are now actively engaged in politics and occupy important positions in political party and/or government offices. Acknowledging the relevance of these Institutes, one government official in the Department of National Planning (DNP) said that “if NDI and IRI were to leave the country, many in Colombia would feel orphaned.”<sup>8</sup>

The success of these Institutes derives in large part from their ability to recruit talented, energetic, and highly committed professionals. With relatively small but dynamic staffs, NDI and IRI have accomplished a wide variety of activities to support government officials, party leaders and civil society organizations. For the most part, implementing partners have completed their activities in an effective and timely fashion, and have often surpassed their established targets.

**However, after five years of implementation, some of the program's overall results and impacts are difficult to perceive.** Political parties in Colombia today are neither stronger nor more programmatic; Afro-Colombians, women, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and victims of criminal violence continue to be excluded and politically underrepresented; and electoral institutions continue to face serious weaknesses to guaranteeing the integrity of electoral results and ensuring greater citizen confidence in elections.

In part, the difficulty of identifying clear results of this program is that strengthening political parties, promoting clean, fair, and transparent elections, and including vulnerable and marginalized sectors of the population in the political process, are long-term development goals. Such programs take time to yield results, which are often only evident long after the programs are completed. Yet, to some extent, **the difficulty in identifying more concrete outcomes of this program is derived from the way USAID defined the overall objectives of the EPP program** (which may have been overly ambitious with regard to political party strengthening and beyond the scope of USAID implementing partner manageable interests), **and the way implementing partners formulated the results and indicators for their individual projects.**

Implementing partners did not identify outcomes in their Performance Management Plans (PMPs). Their Results were articulated as activities and/or processes, not as outcomes and/or outputs. As a consequence,

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<sup>8</sup> Interview with Mauricio Solano, Bogotá, March 13, 2012.

most of the indicators used to measure results were inadequate for tracking outcomes; they measured activities.

Importantly, both implementing partners failed to identify indicators for their highest level results (which they called “objectives”). Without indicators at this level, it is difficult to systematically measure and assess the extent to which partners actually achieved their objectives. **Indeed, both NDI and IRI managed their programs based on activities, not results.**

Their failure to measure and adequately articulate outcomes does not mean that these projects did not succeed. On the contrary, **the EPP program achieved extremely important results, but these are described in anecdotal fashion** in the implementing partners’ quarterly reports. There is clearly evidence of great successes, but this had to be located via concerted efforts to search beyond the implementing partners’ poorly articulated PMPs. IRI and NDI are recognized by partners and beneficiaries as valuable players in Colombia. They entered Colombia’s difficult circumstances and boldly agreed to work in an environment emerging from conflict. They implemented creative activities and achieved laudable successes, but grossly underrepresented their achievements by misclassifying their outcomes as activities. See Annex 3 and 4 for a thorough analysis of IRI and NDI results and indicators.

**Component 1 of the EPP Program** – “Promoting more effective and programmatic parties at the national and local levels” – was too ambitious and as mentioned before, the objective fell outside USAID and implementing partners’ manageable interests. Although the Program did support creative and interesting activities, such as assisting parties in formulating and publishing their statutes, training young political leaders, and strengthening the capacity of party officials to recruit members, process information, elaborate political platforms and conduct electoral campaigns, the outcomes are not obvious or readily apparent. In particular, the assistance provided for the establishment or support of parties’ think tanks did not prove to yield significant results. In large part, the problem was the failure of NDI and IRI to identify appropriate indicators to measure results. But the problem with demonstrating results in this area has to do with the very nature of working with political parties. Strengthening parties is a long-term process; results take years to materialize and are often achieved only after donor programs have been completed.

Furthermore, the Program’s strategic focus on a few municipalities was not the most appropriate for achieving the Program’s overall objective of strengthening political parties in Colombia. Since 2009, the EPP program concentrated most of its activities at the subnational level, especially in several municipalities in the Montes de María regions and in the Department of Chocó. Although from a development point of view there are valid reasons for intervening in these regions, questions exist about whether an Elections and Political Party strengthening program with finite resources can be effective at subnational levels, and particularly, at the municipal level where no party structure exists and political institutions are vulnerable to state capture and corruption.

Finally, the Program was punctuated by electoral cycles, which are disrupting for a program that works on long-term objectives such as strengthening political parties as organizations. Many NDI and IRI activities succumbed to the electoral logic, subordinating long-term party-building programs to short-term and more ephemeral electoral activities.

**Component 2 of the EPP Program** – “Inclusion of Afro-Colombians, Internally Displaced People and women in the political process” – was narrower in its objectives and more clearly defined within USAID and implementing partners’ manageable interests. Yet, many of the Program’s beneficiaries, and especially members of the Afro-Colombian community, were not sufficiently incentivized by Program objectives; they were – understandably – more interested in issues related to immediate poverty and economic development concerns than in elections, parties, and political representation. As discussed in greater detail below, many Afro-Colombian beneficiaries perceived that NDI and IRI were fulfilling their own agendas, without much regard for the actual needs and demands of the community. Furthermore, other USAID partners are working with the Afro-Colombian community precisely to address these economic development issues that matter most to them, making NDI and IRI’s activities less appealing and seemingly less relevant. Finally, while the

Program did achieve important results, like the establishment of the Afro-Colombian Caucus in Congress, the effectiveness of the representation of Afro-Colombians by this caucus remain in question. With respect to the introduction of departmental *Ordenanzas* (affirmative action regulations to improve minority representation in departmental programs) as a means to address Afro-Colombian needs and demands, no evidence was provided to demonstrate that these policies were effectively implemented after they were introduced.

To promote the inclusion of women in the political process, the Program implemented innovative activities and achieved important results, but as with the rest of the Program, the indicators to measure the results of these activities were inadequate, and therefore, only anecdotal evidence can be used to evaluate Program results. Political participation of women in political parties and elections increased considerably; some political parties created gender secretariats within their organizational structures and more women were included in party candidate lists for the 2011 elections. Yet, it is not clear whether this was a result of the Program's activities or rather the result of implementation of the new electoral law in 2011 mandating that parties allocate 30% of their candidacies to women.

In the Chocó region, the Program partnered with one of the most active and influential women organization, the *Red de Mujeres Chocoanas*. Anecdotal evidence suggests that members of this organization who benefitted from the Program's training and technical assistance activities acquired valuable skills that are helping them to advocate for greater equality and participation of women in Colombia. A good indication of the relevance and importance of this organization is that women groups in Montes de María explicitly referred to the *Red de Mujeres Chocoanas* as a good example, and expressed interest in replicating their experience in their region.

**Component 3 of the EPP Program** – “Support for inclusive and electoral processes” – was the most successful component of the Program. Like Component 2, the objective was more narrowly defined and fell within USAID and implementing partners' manageable interests. By their very nature, election-related activities are short-term initiatives, and in Colombia, they were highly demanded by beneficiaries and partners. Although outcomes were not adequately measured by the Program's implementing partners, many were self-evident. For example, one of the clearest and most successful outcomes was the new ballot-designing initiative, intended to reduce the number of null votes in the 2011 elections. With strong commitment and endorsement of the *Registraduría*, the Program redesigned the ballot used in the 2011 elections for Municipal Councils, Department Assemblies, and neighborhood councils – the *Juntas de Acción Local* (JAL). According to official data, the number of null votes in the 2011 elections decreased by 24% with respect to the total number of votes in 2007. . Although there were still 1,900,063 null votes cast in 2011, the number of null votes decreased by almost 610,000 from one election to the other. Moreover, the percentage of null votes with respect to the total number of votes decreased from 6.28% in 2007 to 4.25% in 2011, an important decrease, considering that the total number of votes cast increased by almost 5,000,000. <sup>9</sup>This was the first time that the growth of null votes was effectively reversed. The new ballot made it easier for voters to cast their votes. Significantly, this initiative demonstrated that electoral institutions can become effective champions of reform. The international reputation and prestige of the IRI was critical in mobilizing institutional support for this initiative.

Another successful activity was the elaboration and publication of electoral risk maps and the publication of the list of candidates with alleged ties to criminal groups before the 2011 elections. The risk maps were used by the Ministry of the Interior to pressure parties to clean up their lists of candidates (to avoid the negative publicity of electing suspect candidates affiliated with their parties) and to step up the police and military presence in high-risk areas during elections. As a result, political parties dropped 1,700 of close to 100,000 candidates from their lists and the *Registraduría* dropped an additional 866 candidates.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> For official information on the effect of the new ballot on electoral results, see the *Registraduría* web page at <http://www.registraduria.gov.co/El-rediseño-de-la-tarjeta.html>

<sup>10</sup> As is further elaborated below, this information was obtain through interviews with representatives from MOE, Coporación Nuevo Arco Iris, NDI, and the *Registraduría*.

The Program supported electoral observers and expanded their geographical coverage, which may help explain citizen's increased confidence in elections and thus, the relatively higher rates of electoral turnout in the 2011 elections. Although official information on turnout rates is incomplete, some newspapers reported that abstention rates decreased from 2007 to 2011 by close to 2%.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, the Program supported the adoption of *Cuentas Claras*, an on-line software application to report and publicly disclose information on campaign finances. NDI played a critical role in persuading the CNE to require political parties to use the software to submit their financial reports. The Program trained political party officials to use this software. According to CNE, 83% of candidates complied with this requirement. Yet, the CNE's lack of capacity to review and analyze this documentation casts a doubt over the long term result of this activity. While *Cuentas Claras* has definitely increased transparency of political party finance, to the extent that the information remains ignored and unexamined by the CNE, *Cuentas Claras* can become a good example of transparency without accountability.

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

With the election of President Santos in 2010, a new generation of political officials has come to the highest levels of government. Many of these officials are champions of electoral and political reforms. They understand the centrality of strengthening political parties and electoral institutions to mitigate the risk of political capture by illegal groups. They also believe in the importance of stronger political institutions for the peaceful resolution of conflicts. While military solutions to armed conflict are necessary, softer solutions are also critical in turning military victories in reclaiming regions from state capture into *terra firma* for the growth and prosperity of democratic practices as clear alternatives to all the corruption and fear-mongering. There can be no prospect of an enduring resolution of conflicts in places where political parties sell their candidacies to the best offer, where elected officials are left to their own devices by the parties that nominated them, and where votes – and electoral referees – are bought and sold with no effective or credible electoral authority to protect and defend those who expect and demand better.

Political will, a concept sometimes difficult to define, is generally recognized by academics (see Grindle 2000, Van Cott 2008) and development practitioners alike as the single most important pre-condition for introducing reforms and promoting change. Typically, political will, especially at the highest levels of government, tends to be short lived, as those who stand to lose from the introduction of reforms – often extremely powerful groups – organize to obstruct and/or slow down reforms. In Colombia, the window of opportunity for advancing important governance reforms is still open. Several interviewees recognized this and acknowledged that “today there is an opening that did not exist in the previous administration of President Uribe.”<sup>12</sup>

The Ministry of the Interior, the Department of National Planning and the Presidential Office for Anti-Corruption are headed by champions of reform who understand that Colombia needs to aggressively consolidate gains already achieved by combatting *guerrillas* and drug traffickers and demobilizing paramilitary groups. Increased state presence has to be coupled with stronger and more accountable democratic institutions, able to guarantee clean and transparent elections, respond to citizens' needs and demands, and provide better and more effective public services. President Santos' backing of the recently passed victims' law is an acknowledgment of the need to move forward and address the needs of those that were displaced by the armed conflict.

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<sup>11</sup> See [http://www.eltiempo.com/elecciones-2011/gobernaciones-2011/restodelpais/ARTICULO-WEB-NEW\\_NOTA\\_INTERIOR-10678349.html](http://www.eltiempo.com/elecciones-2011/gobernaciones-2011/restodelpais/ARTICULO-WEB-NEW_NOTA_INTERIOR-10678349.html). According to this source, the rate of abstention in 2007 was 45% while in 2011, the abstention rate was 43.6%.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Ariel Fernando Ávila, Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris, March 12, 2012.

Given the important accomplishments the EPP program has carved out of delicate post-conflict terrain over the past five years and the commitment of at least some high level government officials to reform, USAID has a genuine window of opportunity to continue supporting this program in the future.

In this context, the general recommendations for the EPP program include the following:

1. USAID should take advantage of this political opening at the national level and continue to support the EPP program. The overall objective of this program, however, should be to mitigate the risk of further state capture. The active network of criminal groups at the local level, which for years have been successful in penetrating and capturing the state, represent Colombia's greatest governance challenge. These groups thrive where government and political institutions are weak and ineffective, as they buy candidates, and intimidate voters.
2. Electoral institutions must be fortified, particularly the anemic CNE and the under-regulated *Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil*, which are responsible for the administration, counting, control, and supervision of elections. These institutions should play a pivotal role in helping Colombia to finally and definitively emerge from decades of spiraling conflict, although presently, they do not have the resources or institutional fortitude to offer anything more than symbolic gestures. Addressing the weaknesses of electoral institutions requires legislative reforms, because many of the weaknesses of these institutions stem from their institutional design and poorly defined legal mandates. The EPP program can support advocates of these reforms, who are increasingly outspoken but still need international allies, as, understandably, the most successful parties and many of their successful candidates oppose changes to the status quo which has benefitted them.
3. Implementing partners should be allowed increased program flexibility by working at the departmental level and including a larger number of municipalities in their scopes of work. The EPP program can have better results working out of the administrative capitals of larger territorial areas, where greater economies of scale exist and where parties and civil society organizations have greater interest and motivation to participate.
4. Implementing partners should also be encouraged to redefine their results and indicators so that outcomes can be more effectively identified and measured. PMPs should be results-oriented, rather than activities-oriented. Indicators should track outcomes and outputs, not just activities.
5. International donors need to coordinate their assistance activities in rational and complementary programming prompted by greater donor cooperation and a willingness also to let local authorities channel assistance in the most cost effective manner. Interviewee after interviewee reported that international donors operate from their own myopic frameworks, rather than in consideration of the overall good of the areas where they work. Such coordination seemed to be most lacking, ironically, in areas where there is the greatest economic need and the highest level of donor support.

## LESSONS LEARNED

After five years of program implementation and the accomplishment of important results, some lessons emerge for programs designed to strengthen political parties and electoral institutions.

### **Balance short-term electoral activities with long term party strengthening goals**

One of the most important lessons is that strengthening political parties and electoral institutions is a long-term process that needs to be supported at the national level. To be effective, programs need to be planned more strategically, above and beyond particular electoral cycles.

### **Require a national and departmental level focus for party strengthening activities**

Similarly, political parties and electoral institutions need to be supported following a top-down approach: working with these institutions at the national level first and then building structures at the departmental and municipal levels. Parties cannot be effectively strengthened from the bottom up, especially when no party structure exists or worse, where local structures are captured by illegal groups. As one NGO leader in

Cartagena recognized, “we would have never gone down to work in the Montes de María region if USAID had not supported us first here in Cartagena.”<sup>13</sup>

### **Electoral observation generates citizens’ confidence in elections**

Another lesson learned is that electoral observation in Colombia serves an important symbolic as well as technical purpose and should be supported nationwide (rather than just in Consolidation Zones) in order to improve the validity of statistical data as well as overall credibility. Several interviewees complained about the limitations imposed upon electoral observation support by MOE, which achieved strong results, possesses a technical capacity meeting international standards, and carries the credibility and familiarity with local terrain which come from being a Colombian organization. While conflict zones may well help define security interests, elections and political processes know no such boundaries and require national coverage and programmatic flexibility.

### **Balance support for civil society with institutional support**

Finally, civil society plays a pivotal role in reducing electoral risks and increasing confidence in elections, but the emphasis on training civil society groups needs to be balanced by an emphasis on developing institutions which will endure and deepen Colombia’s shallow democracy. For example, without autonomy, the CNE cannot perform its function of monitoring the *Registraduría*, and in the absence of a dedicated electoral court or a judicial body charged with initial investigation of complaints, that function remains with the CNE, and with the Judicial State Council assuming the role in appeals. Also, the establishment of an office for a special prosecutor (*fiscal especial*) for electoral crimes was also approved in the 2009 electoral reform, although the office has not been implemented, and in its absence, almost no attention is given to penalizing criminals in this area.<sup>14</sup> These institutions are basic to the conduct of credible institutions, but have not been given needed attention because authorities have taken for granted Colombian democracy.

Colombia’s electoral processes have been heavily tainted by the “*Parapolítica*” scandal which sent 25 congressional members to jail. Without institutional checks, citizen and media watchdogs, and the development over time of higher standards of civic responsibility on the part of parties, voters, and government officials, “hot” conflict may cease, but no real alternative will present. If citizens cannot discern a real alternative to the illicit group “capture” of the public space that they have been subjected to now for decades, there will be no normalization of civic life in Colombia. USAID’s Democracy and Human Rights Office needs to balance civil society strengthening with institutional strengthening, to have a more proscribed, quicker, and enduring impact on Colombia’s democratic development.

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with Carolina Calderón, director of FUNCICAR, March 15, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> According to a MOE study, between 2002 and 2011 there were 9024 investigations opened into electoral crimes, but only 236 taken to judgment. No information was provided on how many of these cases resulted in criminal sentences, but analysts anticipating that number would be extremely low.

# I. INTRODUCTION

The USAID-funded Elections and Political Processes Program (EPP) was designed to address key institutional weaknesses that challenge the stability of democratic consolidation in Colombia: Weak political parties, exclusion of large segments of the population, and an ineffective electoral system which inspires little voter confidence. While during the past decade the Government of Colombia has gained considerable strength in combatting crime, reducing the levels of violence and promoting economic growth, the institutional infrastructure of democratic governance remains fragile; vulnerable to political capture by remaining criminal organizations; and, in the long run, unable to manage conflict, address social needs and ensure political stability.

The EPP Program was implemented from 2007-2012 and it was implemented by the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). With an initial budget of \$2,700,000, the program worked with political parties, legislators, and civil society organizations in Colombia. Activities included training and technical assistance to parties to increase their transparency, internal democracy, and capacity to articulate their ideas and programs. The Institutes also supported civil society organizations and legislators that advocated for important electoral and political reforms in Congress. Finally, both Institutes worked with Afro-Colombians and women's organizations and supported activities to promote a greater political inclusion of these groups.

In 2009, the program was renewed for an additional three years, receiving a total of \$5,650,000. After the presidential elections of 2010, the program received some \$1,700,000 in additional funding (\$900,000 from EPP and \$800,000 from USAID Colombia). These funds were earmarked for electoral programs. Prior to the 2011 elections, and with these additional funds, two local organizations, the *Misión de Observación Electoral* (MOE) and *Revista Semana*, received direct funding from USAID.

Since 2009, the program increased its emphasis on elections and focused most of its subnational activities on two critical regions: The highly impoverished and predominantly Afro-Colombian Department Chocó and the post-conflict region of Montes de María. More specifically, the Program worked specifically in five municipalities in the Chocó region and four municipalities in the Montes de María region. The EPP program overall objectives were stated as:

1. To encourage more effective, programmatic political parties at the national and local levels
2. To promote the inclusion of Afro-Colombians, Internally-Displaced Person (IDPs) and Women in Political Processes
3. To support Transparent and Inclusive Electoral Processes

NDI and IRI have worked in a coordinated fashion, both geographically and thematically, to avoid duplication and ensure an effective division of work. IRI has been working predominantly with Afro-Colombian organizations and NDI has been working predominantly, but not exclusively, with women's groups. NDI focused most of its activities with political parties at the regional level while IRI worked more at the national level.

Both NDI and IRI partnered with reputable Colombian organizations at the national and local levels, such as the *Universidad de los Andes*, *Instituto de Ciencia Política*, *Fundación Cívico Social pro-Cartagena (FUNCICAR)*, *Fundación Red de Desarrollo y Paz Montes de María*, *Transparencia por Colombia*, *Misión de Observación Electoral*, *Corporación Nuevo Arcos Iris*, *Congreso Visible*, and *Foro Nacional por Colombia*.

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the results of this program, identify lessons learned and best practices, and develop recommendations for future support. The evaluation is qualitative in nature, derived

from a thorough review of program documentation as well as in-depth interviews with project implementers, local partners, beneficiaries, and USAID officials, both in Washington, DC and in Colombia. The evaluation assessed the results of program activities, the degree of coordination between the implementing partners, and their ability to react to windows of opportunity and adapt to changes in the environment. Moreover, the evaluation identified best practices and success stories that can inform the design of a new program.

The performance evaluation was conducted by a team of four political scientists – Yemile Mizrahi and Todd Eisenstadt from the United States, and Laura Wills Otero and Felipe Botero from Colombia. The IRG Team conducted field work in Bogotá, Chocó and Montes de Maria during March 7-24. The Team conducted more than 90 interviews of USAID officials, implementing partners, sub-grantees, civil society organizations, and direct beneficiaries of the EPP Program (political party leaders, government officials, Catholic Church leaders, and grassroots organizations). In addition, the Team conducted extensive reviews of IRI and NDI quarterly reports, program documents, academic articles, and other specialized reports. See Annex 1 for a full list of people interviewed and Annex 2 for a bibliography of documents reviewed for this evaluation.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

The evaluation report examines the overall findings and conclusions of the EPP Program and provides general recommendations. The report analyzes each of the three Program Objectives in greater detail, assessing implementing partners' accomplishments and providing specific recommendations for future programming in these areas. The evaluation concludes with lessons learned from implementation of this program in Colombia.

# II. THE EPP PROGRAM: FINDINGS CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## MAIN FINDINGS ON POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTORAL PROCESS IN COLOMBIA

During the past 10 years, Colombia has made considerable progress in reducing the level of conflict in the country, improving internal security, attracting foreign investment, and reactivating the economy. Ravaged for decades by different illicit groups, the left-wing insurgents (the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, and several smaller rebel groups), drug traffickers, and groups of armed paramilitary vigilantes, the nation had fallen victim to criminal organizations, which threatened official government control in some regions of the country, where they “took over” what had been state functions, like the monopolies on the provision of security and commerce.

Without a doubt one of former President Uribe’s most successful accomplishments during his term in office was weakening of the FARC and relegating this group to peripheral rural areas of the country. In 2006, the right wing paramilitary organization, the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, or AUC, was also officially demobilized, although many of its rank and file members have fragmented into smaller criminal bands (*Bandas Criminales Emergentes* or BACRIM), which continue to menace the Colombian countryside with banditry and violence. Important drug lords have either been killed or extradited to the United States, but new ones have entered the business.

Despite ongoing but diminished threats, the state has managed to gain greater political presence throughout its territory, and citizens have gained greater confidence in democratic institutions. As Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) surveys clearly demonstrate, support for democracy and satisfaction with democratic institutions in Colombia has remained moderately high and relatively stable since 2004 (LAPOP, 2011; p.49).<sup>15</sup>

While Colombians are proud of their long democratic tradition and the absence of harsh military dictatorships, the prolonged internal conflict of the last several decades, and its unparalleled levels of violence in the country left a lasting legacy on key democratic institutions. Colombia has one of the strongest and most independent justice systems in Latin America, and in particular, autonomous Supreme and Constitutional Courts. In 2006, the Supreme Court prosecuted members of Congress with alleged ties to illegal criminal organizations, most of them paramilitaries. By 2011, the Supreme Court had sentenced 25 members of Congress (International Crisis Group, 2011, p. 6).<sup>16</sup> Also in 2010, the Constitutional Court ruled against a referendum seeking to amend the Constitution and allow President Uribe to run for a third term in office.

However, and in sharp contrast to these signs of institutional strength (and acts of genuine heroism by some judicial officials), political parties and electoral institutions remain weak, undisciplined, clientelistic, poorly institutionalized, and susceptible to political capture. Parties have high rates of electoral volatility, are unable

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<sup>15</sup> However, as we argue below, confidence in elections and electoral institutions remains a problem in Colombia.

<sup>16</sup> According to data from Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris cited by the International Crisis Group (2011, p. 6), by 2011, at least 103 acting and former local officials elected between 1997 and 2010 had been investigated for alleged ties to paramilitaries.

to maintain their political presence, and often disappear after participating in one election. At the subnational level, political parties barely exist as political organizations. Parties operate as little more than “electoral machines” that lend their letterheads to candidates to compete in elections. Indeed, it is a truism in Colombia, confirmed by several interviewees that “the candidate chooses the party, not the other way around.”

In large part, the weakness of political parties and their vulnerability to capture by criminal organizations increased with the decentralization process during the 1980s. As Sánchez and Chacón lucidly argue, Colombia’s decentralization of power and budgets to the local levels prompted illicit groups to reorient their strategies of state capture from the national level, where the state presence was strong, to the local levels, where the state’s presence was weak, especially in the geographical power bases of these illicit groups. As power decentralized, so too did the strategies of the insurgents, and then, following them, the paramilitaries (Sánchez and Chacón 2006, p. 399). Political parties, weak beyond the national level to begin with, offered little in the way of an institutional shield against state capture by illicit groups with resources, who could corrupt – and often elect – their way to power.

A good indicator of the weakness of parties, especially at the subnational level, is the fact that in the 2011 elections 42% of governorships were won not by stalwart candidates of the traditional Conservative and Liberal parties, but by candidates nominated by civic movements and upstart, non-traditional political parties (see Table 2 below).

The weakness of political parties is mirrored in the country’s electoral system. Colombia has one of the weakest electoral systems of any Latin American country of a similar size. As further elaborated in this report, electoral institutions are highly fragmented, understaffed and grossly underfinanced.<sup>17</sup> They lack the capacity to guarantee the integrity of elections and thus undermine citizen confidence in elections and electoral results. For example, the country lacks an independent and fully funded electoral management body that can effectively regulate and impose sanctions on political parties and ensure the integrity of electoral results; it lacks an independent electoral court that can resolve electoral disputes; and it lacks a system for ensuring that poll workers and vote counters are neutral and independent from the power of special interests groups.

In many regions of the country where criminal bands and residual *guerrilla* groups remain active, the ongoing threat of violence continues to have a “silencing effect” on citizens, forcing them to support criminal actors and/or dissuading them from participating freely in electoral politics (García Sánchez 2010, 194). The threat of violence in some regions along with the lack of credibility of electoral institutions affects citizens’ confidence in elections. It is not surprising that Colombia has one of the lowest rates of electoral turnout in Latin America – ranging between 40% and 45% – or less than half the turnout rates of other Latin American nations<sup>18</sup> – even as some citizens generally have positive attitudes about democratic institutions and are satisfied with the overall level of democracy in their country.

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<sup>17</sup> The level of funding for elections and electoral institutions is extremely low in Colombia. While post-democratizing nations like Angola and Cambodia spent well over US\$20 per eligible voter in the 1990s, Colombia spent only about US\$5 for each of the 30.7 million registered voters in 2011. This estimate was obtained by dividing the electoral registry total into total US\$160 million cost of the 2011 elections, from Martín, Juan. “¿Cuánto cuestan las elecciones?”, in Website: *La Oficina de Prensa del Senado*. Accessed March 30, 2012 at <http://www.senado.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/noticias/item/12686-cuanto-cuestan-las-elecciones?tmpl=component&print=1>; another critical analysis of election finance is “Financiamiento Electoral en Colombia” Misión de Observación Electoral. Accessed March 31, 2012 at [http://www.moe.org.co/home/doc/moe\\_nacional/CARTILLASMOE/Cartilla%20G.pdf](http://www.moe.org.co/home/doc/moe_nacional/CARTILLASMOE/Cartilla%20G.pdf); data on the number of registered voters for the 2011 elections was obtained from the Registraduría General de la Nación.

<sup>18</sup> According to IDEA, turnout in 2010 legislative elections was 43.75%, in contrast to Argentina (72.39% in 2009); Bolivia (94.5% in 2009); Brazil (81.8% in 2010); Ecuador (75.7% in 2009). For comparative data on electoral turnout rates see <http://www.idea.int/vt/>. It should be noted that, contrary to many of its neighbors, voting in Colombia is not compulsory. Furthermore, registration is automatic which makes the electoral census larger than in other countries where it is composed of those individuals who did actually register (Basset 2012, p.7-8).

Perhaps nothing epitomizes the problems with elections and electoral institutions better than the fact that the *Consejo Nacional Electoral* (CNE), the institution responsible for regulating political parties, has not had the capacity to review the campaign financial information submitted by political parties after the 2011 elections. Although the information is now available electronically, parties still have to submit physical reports of complaint allegations. At the time of this report (March 2012), none of the 79 boxes of evidence submitted in connection with the October 2011 local elections had even been opened. They were all sealed and stored in CNE headquarters basement. To date, no one has been assigned by CNE to review and analyze this information. When asked in an interview when the boxes would be opened, the chief magistrate shrugged his shoulders. Similarly, the *Registraduría*, the institution responsible for administering elections and releasing electoral information to the public, has been known to take months to process electoral results and to disclose them to the public. For example, the “preliminary results” from the 2010 congressional races were not posted for nearly six months. Furthermore, official electoral data is incomplete and poorly organized. For example, this Evaluation Team could not obtain official information on the rate of electoral turnout in the 2007 or 2011 local elections from any public official and had to locate it in a limited access document.

Without the ability to monitor, regulate, and effectively sanction electoral crimes, incentives for clientelism and state capture remain high. International election observer groups, such as the usually-diplomatic Organization of American States,<sup>19</sup> have quite directly criticized the failure of Colombian authorities to institutionalize electoral institutions anywhere close to international standards, as will be explored further in this evaluation.

The country presents the paradox of being a longstanding democracy and an economic powerhouse of the Andean region, but with democratic infrastructure (parties and electoral institutions) which have been taken for granted and allowed to stagnate over decades of neglect, as government authorities focused – understandably – on the more urgent battle of ending the violence and restoring order.

To the Colombian government’s credit, that struggle seems to be ending, but this is a critical moment as the pattern in local areas formerly controlled by illicit groups, where citizen actions were motivated by fear and coercion need to be replaced by institutionalized mechanisms where democratic expression and collective aspirations for developing a public space can be created.

On the economic front, the protracted internal conflict also had a devastating impact on economic development, particularly at the sub-regional level. Although Colombia has experienced high rates of growth during the past years<sup>20</sup> – making it a middle income country – as the latest 2010 UNDP study demonstrates, Colombia has one of the highest rates of economic inequality in Latin America, with a Gini Coefficient of 0.578, higher than Honduras and Brazil.<sup>21</sup> Some regions of the country, particularly in the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, remain highly underdeveloped and a large portion of their populations, particularly women, Afro-Colombians, and indigenous people, continue to be politically and economically excluded. Afro-Colombians, estimated at 11% to 25% of the total population (census data are imprecise), are among the poorest and most underrepresented sectors of the Colombian population.

It is no coincidence then that these poor and underdeveloped areas remain most vulnerable to political capture by criminal organizations linked to former paramilitaries, *guerrillas*, and drug traffickers. In regions where people have few economic opportunities, where political parties are virtually inexistent as political organizations and government institutions are weak, criminal organizations find attractive opportunities to penetrate and control political parties and local governments, often even exerting this control from their own jail cells (Ávila Martínez and Velasco 2011, p. 10). According to the International Crisis Group (2011, p.7), by

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<sup>19</sup> See OAS (2011). For the full report which has not been publicly released, please see Annex 6.

<sup>20</sup> According to the World Bank, between 2002 and 2009, the economy grew steadily with an average GDP growth of 4.4%.

<sup>21</sup> See UNDP, *Informe Regional sobre Desarrollo Humano para América Latina y el Caribe 2010*. See also World Bank, World Development Indicators, <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>. Among the countries with high rankings in the UNDP’s Human Development Index (like Colombia), Colombia is the single most unequal country.

2010, “prosecutors had passed to competent authorities evidence that 24 governors, 225 mayors, 11 members of departmental assemblies, and 55 local councilors have links with former paramilitary groups.” Aside from seeking protection against prosecution and investigation, access to government positions provides criminal organizations and their supporters with attractive opportunities to extract profitable rents from government contracts, particularly in the health and education sectors. In these areas, where corruption remains rampant, public services continue to be inefficient and poverty and inequality remain pervasive.

Political and economic exclusion of large sectors of the population, coupled with the weakness of political institutions to respond to their needs and address their demands, increases their vulnerability to criminal networks and, hence, their exposure to violent crime.

Endemic corruption, high levels of violent crime, and conflict will persist as long as these criminal groups, uncoupled from strong leadership hierarchies in the cease fire of 2006 – and via other government hard line policies of breaking up drug cartels – remain unchallenged. President Santos, unlike his predecessor, has overtly recognized the persistence of these criminal groups (the BACRIM) and the risks they pose for the consolidation of democracy and stability in the country.<sup>22</sup> In 2011, the president formally launched a military and police offensive to crack down these groups, the so-called D-6 Strategy (International Conflict Group, p.9).<sup>23</sup> Yet a military strategy, for all it’s worth, can only help loosen the remaining pockets of state capture by illicit organizations and destroy their coercive bases. Such a strategy does little to create new democratic structures on the ruins of the old, authoritarian and clientelistic ones, which had been in place long enough to strangle civil society and democratic citizenship in the zones they controlled.

Indeed, electoral institutions and political parties remain the Achilles’ heel of Colombia’s democratic consolidation. The Colombian government, perhaps adhering to the rhetoric of Colombia’s longstanding and stable democracy<sup>24</sup> and to citizens’ granting of high levels of credibility to some electoral institutions,<sup>25</sup> has failed to address these institutional weaknesses and vulnerabilities, and more specifically, to strengthen political parties and enhance the capacity of electoral institutions to organize fair and transparent elections, guarantee the integrity of electoral results, and effectively prosecute and sanction electoral crimes. This ambivalence of Colombia’s citizens for their electoral democracy is also conveyed by other international governance indicators such as by Freedom House and the World Bank (see Annex 7), which convey sharply changing views over time of the strength and effectiveness of Colombia’s democratic institutions. As long as opportunities exist for criminal groups to penetrate and capture the state – by electing their representatives or

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<sup>22</sup> There is no reliable data on the strength, operations and/or numbers of these criminal groups. While they are commonly referred as “criminal bands,” they encompass far more than street gangs. Many of the members of these groups are former paramilitary combatants who were never demobilized or who were left out of the demobilization process. Many of these criminal bands also have ties to drug traffickers and are believed to be strong particularly in strategic drug trafficking zones. Unlike the *guerrillas*, these criminal organizations have no specific ideology and seek rents from local governments, especially in the areas of public procurement and health services (International Crisis Group, p.4).

<sup>23</sup> The President also supported a Victims and Land Restitution Law recently passed by Congress that seeks to compensate victims of the armed conflict and reconstitute their lands.

<sup>24</sup> While the country has enjoyed mostly democratic elections since the 1970s, portions of this “myth” of Colombian democracy are unfounded. For example, like neighboring Venezuela, where democracy has taken a bad turn over the last decade, Colombia’s democracy was founded on a political pact in the late 1950s between the two largest political factions (the still-existing Liberal and Conservative parties). Colombians sought to end their last cycle of violence, an all-out civil war in the early 1950s, by agreeing to alternate the two main parties in power. That is, the “out” party did not even field candidates during this National Front period, from 1958-1974. While outwardly democratic, these elections failed to meet the basic standard of Dahl’s democratic polyarchy which requires free and fair elections, but also genuine competition.

<sup>25</sup> Indeed, according to the latest LAPOP survey, the *Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil*, the institution responsible for organizing elections in Colombia, was the most highly trusted by Colombian citizens, although beyond being just an electoral institution, it offers civil registry documents and is a major access point by citizens of government documents. The trust in *Registraduría* contrasts markedly however with the low level of trust granted to the CNE See LAPOP, “Cultura Política de la Democracia en Colombia, 2011.” p.83. Available at: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/colombia/2011-Colombia-Cultura-politica-de-la-democracia.pdf>

themselves – the violence and conflict that have characterized much of Colombia’s history will not be fully resolved.

## MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The Elections and Political Processes program has been successful in many respects. Colombian partners and beneficiaries acknowledge the value of working with NDI and IRI and the importance of partnering with them to advance their interests. NDI and IRI were recognized by a vast majority of interviewees as critical players in Colombia, as unlike local organizations, these international Institutes achieved unparalleled convening power, and managed to reach agreements among often seemingly irreconcilable organizations and/or leaders.

Both Institutes demonstrated unparalleled capacities for leveraging domestic stakeholders to support the introduction of important legislation, such as the Political Reform of 2009, the Electoral Law of 2011, the Anti-Discrimination Law, and the Victim’s Law. While neither NDI nor IRI can claim full credit for the passage of these laws, consensus exists among those interviewed for this evaluation that both Institutes played a critical role in garnering support for these laws, among civil society organizations and members of Congress.

Furthermore, the prestige of these Institutes was critical for shielding programs and proposals from manipulation, and protecting local stakeholders who might remain vulnerable without international backing and support. Both Institutes managed to reach post-conflict areas (in Montes de María) and remote municipalities in the highly impoverished and predominantly Afro-Colombian department of Chocó, where few Colombian and international organizations had achieved a presence.

In five years of programming, NDI and IRI have provided valuable technical assistance and training to government officials, party leaders, candidates, legislators, and civil society organizations. Former NDI Leadership Program fellows are now actively engaged in politics and occupy important positions in political party and/or government offices. Acknowledging the relevance of these Institutes, one government official in the Department of National Planning (DNP) said that “if NDI and IRI were to leave the country, many in Colombia would feel orphaned.”<sup>26</sup>

The success of these Institutes derives in large part from their ability to recruit talented, energetic, and highly committed professionals. With relatively small but dynamic staffs, NDI and IRI have accomplished a wide variety of activities to support government officials, party leaders, and civil society organizations. For the most part, implementing partners have completed their activities in an effective and timely fashion, and have often surpassed their established targets.

**However, after five years of implementation, some of the program’s overall results and impacts are difficult to perceive.** Political parties in Colombia today are neither stronger nor more programmatic; Afro-Colombians, women, IDPs, and victims of criminal violence continue to be excluded and politically underrepresented; and electoral institutions continue to face serious weaknesses to guaranteeing the integrity of electoral results and ensuring greater citizen confidence in elections.

In part, the difficulty of identifying clear results of this program is that strengthening political parties; promoting clean, fair and transparent elections; and including vulnerable and marginalized sectors of the population in the political process; are long-term development goals. Such programs take time to yield results, which are often only evident long after the programs are completed. Yet, to some extent, **the difficulty in identifying more concrete outcomes of this program is derived from the way USAID defined the overall objectives of the EPP program** (which may have been overly ambitious with regard to political party strengthening and beyond the scope of USAID implementing partner manageable interests), **and the way implementing partners formulated the results and indicators for their individual projects.**

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Mauricio Solano, Bogotá, March 13, 2012.

Implementing partners did not identify outcomes in their Performance Management Plans (PMPs). Their results were articulated as activities and/or processes, not as outcomes and/or outputs. As a consequence, most of the indicators used to measure results were inadequate for tracking outcomes; they measured activities. Some indicators were even articulated as activities, indistinguishable from the results they were expected to measure. Only a few indicators adequately measured results, but all these results were at the lowest level, outputs not outcomes.

Importantly, both implementing partners failed to identify indicators for their highest level results (which they called “objectives”). Without indicators at this level, it is difficult to systematically measure and assess the extent to which partners actually achieved their objectives. **Indeed, both NDI and IRI managed their programs based on activities, not results.**

Their failure to measure and adequately articulate outcomes does not mean that these projects did not succeed. On the contrary, **the EPP program achieved extremely important results, but these are described in anecdotal fashion** in the implementing partners’ quarterly reports. There is clearly evidence of great successes, but this had to be located via concerted efforts to search beyond the implementing partners’ poorly articulated PMPs. IRI and NDI are recognized by partners and beneficiaries as valuable players in Colombia. They entered Colombia’s difficult circumstances and boldly agreed to work in an environment emerging from conflict. They implemented creative activities and achieved laudable successes, but grossly underrepresented their achievements by misclassifying their outcomes as activities. See Annex 3 and 4 for a thorough analysis of IRI and NDI results and indicators.

**Component 1 of the EPP Program** – “Promoting more effective and programmatic parties at the national and local levels” – was too ambitious and, as mentioned before, the objective fell outside USAID and implementing partners’ manageable interests. Although the Program did support creative and interesting activities, such as assisting parties in formulating and publishing their statutes; training young political leaders; and strengthening the capacity of party officials to recruit members, process information, elaborate political platforms, and conduct electoral campaigns; the outcomes are not obvious or readily apparent. In particular, the assistance provided for the establishment or support of parties’ think tanks did not prove to yield significant results. In large part, the problem was the failure of NDI and IRI to identify appropriate indicators to measure results. But the problem with demonstrating results in this area has to do with the very nature of working with political parties. Strengthening parties is a long-term process; results take years to materialize and are often achieved only after donor programs have been completed.

Furthermore, the Program’s strategic focus on a few municipalities was not the most appropriate for achieving the Program’s overall objective of strengthening political parties in Colombia. As mentioned before, since 2009, the EPP program concentrated most of its activities at the subnational level, especially in several municipalities in the Montes de María regions and in the Department of Chocó. Although from a development point of view there are valid reasons for intervening in these regions, questions exist about whether an Elections and Political Party strengthening program with finite resources can be effective at subnational levels, and particularly, at the municipal level where no party structure exists and political institutions are vulnerable to state capture and corruption.

Finally, the Program was punctuated by electoral cycles, which are disruptive for a program that works on long-term objectives such as strengthening political parties as organizations. Many NDI and IRI activities succumbed to the electoral logic, subordinating long-term party-building programs to short-term and more ephemeral electoral activities.

**Component 2 of the EPP Program** – “Inclusion of Afro-Colombians, Internally Displaced People and women in the political process” – was narrower in its objectives and more clearly defined within USAID and implementing partners’ manageable interests. Yet, many of the Program’s beneficiaries, and especially members of the Afro-Colombian community, were not sufficiently incentivized by Program objectives; they were – understandably – more interested in issues related to immediate poverty and economic development concerns than in elections, parties, and political representation. As discussed in greater detail below, many

Afro-Colombian beneficiaries perceived that NDI and IRI were fulfilling their own agendas, without much regard for the actual needs and demands of the community. Furthermore, other USAID partners are working with the Afro-Colombian community precisely to address these economic development issues that matter most to them, making NDI and IRI's activities less appealing and seemingly less relevant. Finally, while the Program did achieve important results, like the establishment of the Afro-Colombian Caucus in Congress, the effectiveness of the representation of Afro-Colombians by this caucus remain in question. With respect to the introduction of Departmental *Ordenanzas* (affirmative action regulations to improve minority representation in departmental programs) as a means to address Afro-Colombian needs and demands, no evidence was provided to demonstrate that these policies were effectively implemented after they were introduced.

To promote the inclusion of women in the political process, the Program implemented innovative activities and achieved important results, but as with the rest of the Program, the indicators to measure the results of these activities were inadequate, and therefore, only anecdotal evidence can be used to evaluate Program results. Political participation of women in political parties and elections increased considerably; some political parties created gender secretariats within their organizational structures and more women were included in party candidate lists for the 2011 elections. Yet, it is not clear whether this was a result of the Program's activities or rather, the result of implementation of the new electoral law in 2011 mandating that parties allocate 30% of their candidacies to women.

In the Chocó region, the Program partnered with one of the most active and influential women organization, the *Red de Mujeres Chocoanas*. Anecdotal evidence suggests that members of this organization who benefitted from the Program's training and technical assistance activities acquired valuable skills that are helping them to advocate for greater equality and participation of women in Colombia. A good indication of the relevance and importance of this organization is that women's groups in Montes de María explicitly referred to the *Red de Mujeres Chocoanas* as a good example, and expressed interest in replicating their experience in their region.

**Component 3 of the EPP Program** – “Support for inclusive and electoral processes” – was the most successful component of the Program. Like Component 2, the objective was more narrowly defined and fell within USAID and implementing partners' manageable interests. By their very nature, election-related activities are short-term initiatives, and in Colombia, they were highly demanded by beneficiaries and partners. Although outcomes were not adequately measured by the Program's implementing partners, many were self-evident. For example, one of the clearest and most successful outcomes was the new ballot-designing initiative, intended to reduce the number of null votes in the 2011 elections. With strong commitment and endorsement of the *Registraduría*, the Program redesigned the ballot used in the 2011 elections for Municipal Councils, Department Assemblies, and neighborhood councils – the *Juntas de Acción Local* (JAL). According to official data, the number of null votes decreased by 2.03% in the 2011 elections. Although there were still 1,900,063 null votes cast in 2011, the number of null votes decreased by almost 610,000 from the local election of 2007.<sup>27</sup> This was the first time that the growth of null votes was effectively reversed. The new ballot made it easier for voters to cast their votes. Significantly, this initiative demonstrated that electoral institutions can become effective champions of reform. The international reputation and prestige of the IRI was critical in mobilizing institutional support for this initiative.

Another successful activity was the elaboration and publication of electoral risk maps and the publication of the list of candidates with alleged ties to criminal groups before the 2011 elections. The risk maps were used by the Ministry of the Interior to pressure parties to clean up their lists of candidates (to avoid the negative publicity of electing suspect candidates affiliated with their parties) and to step up the police and military

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<sup>27</sup> For official information on the effect of the new ballot on electoral results, see the Registraduría web page at <http://www.registraduria.gov.co/El-redisenio-de-la-tarjeta.html>

presence in high risk areas during elections. As a result, political parties dropped 1,700 candidates from their lists and the *Registraduría* dropped an additional 866 candidates.<sup>28</sup>

The Program supported electoral observers and expanded their geographical coverage, which may help explain the relatively higher rates of electoral turnout in the 2011 elections. Although official information on turnout rates is incomplete, some newspapers reported that abstention rates decreased from 2007 to 2011 by close to 2%.<sup>29</sup>

Finally, the Program supported the adoption of *Cuentas Claras*, an on-line software application to report and publicly disclose information on campaign finances. NDI played a critical role in persuading the CNE to require political parties to use the software to submit their financial reports. The Program trained political party officials to use this software. According to CNE, 83% of candidates complied with this requirement. Yet, the CNE's lack of capacity to review and analyze this documentation casts a doubt over the long-term result of this activity. While *Cuentas Claras* has definitely increased transparency of political party finance, to the extent that the information remains ignored and unexamined by the CNE, *Cuentas Claras* can become a good example of transparency without accountability.

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

With the election of President Santos in 2010, a new generation of political officials has come to the highest levels of government. Many of these officials are champions of electoral and political reforms. They understand the centrality of strengthening political parties and electoral institutions to mitigate the risk of political capture by illegal groups. They also believe in the importance of stronger political institutions for the peaceful resolution of conflicts. While military solutions to armed conflict are necessary, softer solutions are also critical in turning military victories in reclaiming regions from state capture into *terra firma* for the growth and prosperity of democratic practices as clear alternatives to all the corruption and fear-mongering. There can be no prospect of an enduring resolution of conflicts in places where political parties sell their candidacies to the best offer, where elected officials are left to their own devices by the parties that nominated them, and where votes – and electoral referees – are bought and sold with no effective or credible electoral authority to protect and defend those who expect and demand better.

Political will, a concept sometimes difficult to define, is generally recognized by academics (see Grindle 2000, Van Cott 2008) and development practitioners alike as the single most important pre-condition for introducing reforms and promoting change. Typically, political will, especially at the highest levels of government, tends to be short-lived, as those who stand to lose from the introduction of reforms – often extremely powerful groups – organize to obstruct and/or slow down reforms. In Colombia, the window of opportunity for advancing important governance reforms is still open. Several interviewees recognized this and acknowledged that “today there is an opening that did not exist in the previous administration of President Uribe.”<sup>30</sup>

The Ministry of the Interior, the Department of National Planning, and the Presidential Office for Anti-Corruption are headed by champions of reform who understand that Colombia needs to aggressively consolidate gains already achieved by combatting *guerrillas* and drug traffickers and demobilizing paramilitary groups. Increased state presence has to be coupled with stronger and more accountable democratic institutions, able to guarantee clean and transparent elections, respond to citizens' needs and demands, and provide better and more effective public services. President Santos' backing of the recently passed victims'

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<sup>28</sup> As is further elaborated below, this information was obtained through interviews with representatives from MOE, Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris, NDI, and the Registraduría.

<sup>29</sup> See [http://www.eltiempo.com/elecciones-2011/gobernaciones-2011/restodelpais/ARTICULO-WEB-NEW\\_NOTA\\_INTERIOR-10678349.html](http://www.eltiempo.com/elecciones-2011/gobernaciones-2011/restodelpais/ARTICULO-WEB-NEW_NOTA_INTERIOR-10678349.html). According to this source, the rate of abstention in 2007 was 45% while in 2011, the abstention rate was 43.6%.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Ariel Fernando Ávila, Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris, March 12, 2012.

law is an acknowledgment of the need to move forward and address the needs of those that were displaced by the armed conflict.

Given the important accomplishments the EPP program has carved out of delicate post-conflict terrain over the past five years and the commitment of at least some high level government officials to reform, USAID has a genuine window of opportunity to continue supporting this program in the future.

In this context, the general recommendations for the EPP program include the following:

1. USAID should take advantage of this political opening at the national level and continue to support the EPP program. The overall objective of this program, however, should be to mitigate the risk of further state capture. The active network of criminal groups at the local level, which for years have been successful in penetrating and capturing the state, represent Colombia's greatest governance challenge. These groups thrive where government and political institutions are weak and ineffective, as they buy candidates; buy votes and intimidate voters.
2. Electoral institutions must be fortified, particularly the anemic National Electoral Council and the under-regulated *Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil*, which are responsible for the administration, counting, control, and supervision of elections. These institutions should play a pivotal role in helping Colombia to finally and definitively emerge from decades of spiraling conflict, although presently, they do not have the resources or institutional fortitude to offer anything more than symbolic gestures. Addressing the weaknesses of electoral institutions requires legislative reforms, because many of the weaknesses of these institutions stem from their institutional design and poorly defined legal mandates. The EPP program can support advocates of these reforms, who are increasingly outspoken but still need international allies, as, understandably, the most successful parties and many of their successful candidates oppose changes to the status quo which has benefitted them.
3. Implementing partners should be allowed increased program flexibility by working at the departmental level and including a larger number of municipalities in their scopes of work. The EPP program can have better results working out of the administrative capitals of larger territorial areas, where greater economies of scale exist and where parties and civil society organizations have greater interest and motivation to participate.
4. Implementing partners should also be encouraged to redefine their results and indicators so that outcomes can be more effectively identified and measured. PMPs should be results-oriented, rather than activities-oriented. Indicators should track outcomes and outputs, not just activities.
5. International donors need to coordinate their assistance activities in rational and complementary programming prompted by greater donor cooperation and a willingness also to let local authorities channel assistance in the most cost effective manner. Interviewee after interviewee reported that international donors operate from their own myopic frameworks, rather than in consideration of the overall good of the areas where they work. Such coordination seemed to be most lacking, ironically, in areas where there is the greatest economic need and the highest level of donor support.

# III. OBJECTIVE I: TO ENCOURAGE MORE EFFECTIVE, PROGRAMMATIC POLITICAL PARTIES AT THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS.

## A. OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN COLOMBIA

For decades, two political parties dominated political life in Colombia – the Liberal and Conservative parties. Although these two parties virtually controlled the electoral arena, and in fact undercut other parties by literally “splitting” power during the National Front (1958-1974), as political organizations they were extremely weak. They did not establish party structures across the territory and did not promote a professional cadre of party officials; they did not develop clear ideological and/or programmatic positions, they did not effectively control and limit party candidacies to party loyalists, they did not cultivate and maintain stable electoral bases,<sup>31</sup> and they did not have permanent sources of funding in between elections. As Archer argues, “since the 1950s the [political] parties’ capacity to mobilize the electorate steadily deteriorated as partisan mobilization was replaced by patronage-oriented appeals. As the salience of partisan subcultures waned, larger and larger segments of the electorate withdrew from political participation or sought new, nonpartisan, and non-institutional mechanisms to make their demands known to the central government.” (Archer 1995, p. 165).

The Constitution of 1991 explicitly sought to break this increasingly unrepresentative bi-partisan structure by creating new political parties and expanding electoral competition (López Hernández 2010, p. 41). In hindsight, many scholars now believe that the opening was far too broad and that the encouragement of new parties by easing restrictions on party formation led to the atomization of parties, fragmentation of the two oldest parties, and increased proliferation of local “*caudillo*” chieftains. Indeed, dozens of political parties emerged by the turn of the century, although the number has winnowed down to about a dozen over the last several years. Further political and electoral reforms introduced since 2003 have attempted to diminish party fragmentation by: increasing the electoral thresholds needed to establish more new parties, forcing members of Congress to vote with their parties on bills, thereby instilling discipline, requiring parties to submit only one list of candidates for each election, instead of multiple lists as in the past, and taking tentative first steps toward the regulation of campaign finance.

Although the number of political parties since 2003 has drastically been reduced from more than 40 to 12, parties remain weak, undisciplined, and poorly institutionalized, particularly at the subnational level. As Table 1 demonstrates, Colombia no longer stands out as a country with a large number of effective political parties – which is a good indicator of stronger political party system. While it has a higher number of parties than Mexico and Peru, it has a lower number of parties than Chile, Argentina, and Brazil.

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<sup>31</sup> According to the latest LAPOP survey, only one in four Colombians identifies with a political party. See LAPOP, “La Cultura Política de la Democracia en Colombia, 2011.” p. 136.

**Table 1. Effective Number of Parties in Selected Latin American Countries**

Country	ENPV	ENPS	Seats	Year
Argentina	8.94	6.49	127	2005
Brazil	11.21	10.36	513	2010
Chile	7.32	5.64	120	2009
Colombia*	5.97	4.95	164	2010
México	3.77	2.75	500	2009
Perú	5.71	3.97	130	2011
ENPV	Effective Number of Parties (calculated with votes)			
ENPS	Effective Number of Parties (calculated with seats)			

Sources:	Michael Gallagher <a href="http://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/staff/michael_gallagher/EISystems/index.php">http://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/staff/michael_gallagher/EISystems/index.php</a>
	* Adam Carr's <a href="http://psephos.adam-carr.net/">http://psephos.adam-carr.net/</a>

However, most Colombian political parties function as “electoral machines” led by candidates, not party structures. Parties do not have permanent offices or permanent staffs at the subnational level; they are unable to control and vet their candidacies effectively; they depend highly on volunteers, become active mostly during electoral periods, and through highly clientelistic mechanisms, rather than through campaigns based on platforms or ideas.<sup>32</sup> Political party funding regulations further promote and bolster candidate-centered parties, for it is the candidate – not the party – who is mostly responsible for funding his or her campaign (and often contracts personal debt in the process). Although public funds are assigned for electoral campaigns, they are distributed to the parties after the elections, so that parties can reimburse their candidates. This system of political party funding virtually makes parties an accounting “pass through” for candidate reimbursement and expenditures.

In between elections, most political parties tend to vanish as political organizations. Significantly, many candidates continue to be elected by citizens’ movements and non-traditional parties, many of which only have a regional presence. The most emblematic example is captured in the results of the 2011 elections, where 42% of governors and 31% of capital city mayors were elected by civic movements and non-traditional political parties. As Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate, in the local elections of 2001 and 2011, non-traditional political parties – besides the Traditional Liberals and Conservatives – and new political party coalitions won the majority of gubernatorial and capital city mayoral races.

The problem with these candidacies is not only that they further weaken and fragment the party system, but that these non-conventional parties and coalitions are often vulnerable to penetration by illegal criminal groups. According to a study by the Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris, during the last decade, such new political parties have been the most vulnerable to political party capture, especially by former paramilitary groups (Ávila Martínez and Velasco 2011, p. 13; López Hernández 2010, p. 51). As Ávila and Velasco eloquently state, while political affiliation did not play a significant role in enhancing the possibility of candidates with alleged ties to criminal organizations to win elections at the local and regional levels, the **“weakness and decomposition of parties as organizations did play a significant role.”** (Ávila and Velasco, 2011, p.7). As this study further argues, it is precisely in areas where contraband and drug trafficking proliferate, “that political parties have systematically lost control over the nomination of their candidates” (Ávila and Velasco, 2011, p.36).

<sup>32</sup> Interestingly, the biggest electoral threat identified by citizens in the 2011 elections was clientelism, surpassing the threat of guerrillas, paramilitaries and drug traffickers. See LAPOP, op.cit.159.

**Table 2: Number of Governorships Won by Party, 2007 and 2011**

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>(%)</b>
<b>CAMBIO RADICAL</b>	3	9.4	1	3.1
<i>Movimiento Independiente para la Renovación Absoluta (MIRA)</i>	0		1	3.1
<b>CONSERVADOR</b>	5	15.6	1	3.1
<b>VERDE</b>	2	6.3	2	6.3
<b>PSUN</b>	7	21.9	4	12.5
<b>LIBERAL</b>	6	19	6	19.0
<b>OTHER PARTIES</b>	1	3.1	3	9.4
<b>CIVIC MOVEMENTS/OTHERS</b>	8	25.0	14	42.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	32		32	

Source: Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, 2007 and 2011

**Table 3: Number of Municipal Elections Won by Party (Departments' Capitals and Bogotá)**

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>CAMBIO RADICAL</b>	4	12.5	6	18.7
<b>CONSERVADOR</b>	5	15.7	3	9.4
<b>PSUN</b>	3	9.4	6	18.7
<b>POLO DEMOCRATICO</b>	1	3.1	0	0
<b>LIBERAL</b>	7	21.9	7	12.5
<b>OTHER PARTIES</b>	12	37.5	10	31.2

Source: Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, 2007 and 2011

As different LAPOP surveys reveal, political parties across the Latin America are, together with Congress, one of the least trusted political institutions in the region. Colombia is no exception. According to the latest LAPOP survey, only 35% of Colombian citizens reported having confidence in political parties. Yet, levels of political party identification are lower in Colombia, where only 25% of citizens reported having an “affinity” with a political party (as compared to 34% in Latin America) (LAPOP, 2011, p.135).<sup>33</sup>

Weak party identification and weak party structures accounts for the relatively high propensity of candidates to switch parties in different electoral cycles. Indeed, candidates who fail to be nominated by one political party often seek the nomination through other parties. Similarly, it is not atypical for elected officials, to abandon their parties and seek other parties’ nominations for candidacies in further electoral cycles, regardless of the particular party ideology or platform. Furthermore, political parties offer candidates and elected officials few incentives to remain loyal to the party that nominated them. They do not offer training or technical assistance nor do they provide long term political opportunities to protect their future political careers.

<sup>33</sup> For the Latin American average, please see Margarita Corral, “Mistrust in Political Parties in Latin America.” Americas Barometer Insights: 2008 (No.2), p.4. <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/i0802en.pdf>

The tendency to switch parties further increases the risk of political penetration by criminal groups. For example, as Ávila and Velasco demonstrate, several of the candidates for mayors with alleged links to criminal groups and who won the 2011 elections, switched political parties twice from 2007 to 2011. As they argue, “if Political Parties’ National Directories do not develop a strategy to filter and sanitize the process of candidate selection; if they do not find a strategy to stabilize their political offering in the regions; . . . and if they avoid using their veto power to select candidates with a more solid electoral record, it will be almost impossible to avoid the penetration of criminal mafias in the institutional mechanisms of political representation, that is, political parties(Ávila and Velasco, p.39).”

## B. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

To address many of these problems, NDI signed memoranda of understanding with eight different political parties and IRI with five. At the national level, NDI and IRI also worked with key national government officials such as the Ministry of the Interior, *Consejo Nacional Electoral*, the *Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil*, the *Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE)*, the National Planning Department, the Attorney General (*Fiscalía*), and two Congressional committees: the Afro-Colombian Caucus and the Womens’ Legislative Committee. At the subnational level, NDI and IRI supported government officials, department assembly members, local city council representatives, local party officials and civil society organizations.

Activities supported under this objective included training and technical assistance to political party officials and candidates on the development of party statutes, platforms and programs; support and technical assistance for party think tanks; dissemination of party programmatic materials; policy forums; workshops with citizens and candidates to discuss and prioritize citizen’s needs and concerns; training for young party leaders; technical assistance for the elaboration of an accountability manual for elected officials; and support for the establishment of political debate commissions and the conduct of candidate debates before the elections. For a full list of results and activities under this objective, see Annex 5.

NDI defined the highest level result as: **Political parties are more responsive, transparent and effective.** IRI defined its highest level result as: **Political parties at the national level develop and communicate strong, issue-based party platforms that respond to pressing citizen concerns.** Neither NDI nor IRI identified an indicator to measure results at this level. Aside from not identifying an adequate indicator to measure outcomes at the highest level, the problem with the articulation of these results is that they are overly ambitious and **fall outside the implementing partners’ manageable interests.** In any country, but particularly in Colombia, where political parties suffer historically from such structural institutional weaknesses, generating more responsive, transparent, effective, and programmatic parties was extremely unlikely to be achieved by a donor-funded program, particularly over a limited timeframe and in limited locations.

**After five years of program implementation, political parties in Colombia are not more effective or programmatic,** at the national or local levels. **Yet, the program did achieve important outcomes, even if they are not adequately reported in NDI and IRI PMPs.** These outcomes were reported in anecdotal fashion in the partners’ Quarterly Reports and identified in interviews with partners and beneficiaries of these projects. Annex 2 and 3 analyze the results and indicators of NDI and IRI projects.

### Technical Assistance and Training to Political Parties

Consensus exists among different beneficiaries interviewed for this evaluation that the technical quality of the workshops, technical assistance, and training they received from NDI and IRI was excellent. Yet the failure of NDI and IRI to identify appropriate indicators to measure results makes it difficult to assess the overall result of these activities. NDI and IRI indicators mostly measured inputs (number of people trained, number of workshops, etc.), rather than outputs and/or outcomes. Moreover, evidence collected through interviews and document reviews suggest that most trainings and technical assistance activities were not related to a long-

term objective, but were rather one-time events, disjointed from one another and with little to virtually no follow-up.

For example, the President of Alianza Social Independiente (ASI), a political party established in 1992, said,

“NDI has been providing training and technical assistance in best democratic practices and political marketing; it has helped us with improving our party’s website and publishing our statutes; it has trained party poll-watchers during elections....NDI has brought international speakers and has exposed us to best international practices....we have learned a lot from these conferences. NDI has always been ready to assist us, but they are limited to certain regions and topics (Afros and women)....we have been requesting from them that they expand their coverage....IRI gave us valuable assistance in establishing the party’s think tank. Without IRI’s support, this center would not have been established. IRI has brought party representatives from different countries, like Mexico, Chile, and Brazil to share their experiences with us... these events were excellent... NDI and IRI offer very good assistance, but they have limited resources and they have their mandates. We have to accommodate to the things they can offer, which is little vis-à-vis the needs of the party.”<sup>34</sup>

In consultations with party think tanks it was acknowledged that “IRI has been providing critical support in developing the party’s political platform and disseminating it throughout the country... IRI has brought us excellent international speakers and has exposed us to international best practices... yet, all technical assistance and capacity building activities has been supported by NDI through the party’s capacity institute. There seems to be little coordination between NDI and IRI... in fact, at times they seem to compete against each other.”<sup>35</sup>

Without a doubt, exposing political parties to best practices and bringing in good international speakers is valuable. Yet, without appropriate indicators to measure results, it is impossible to assess whether these activities had any positive result beyond the exchange itself. How can one assess whether skills acquired through trainings and technical assistance activities had a positive impact on the beneficiaries’ political careers? How does one know if assistance provided to political parties had any effect on their capacity to control their candidates and/or to increase their political presence in different regions? For example, political parties in Colombia now publish their party statutes and hold national conventions. But it is impossible to assess whether these results respond to new legal requirements – introduced in the last electoral reform – or to the EPP Program. Finally, how can one assess if assistance responded fully to political parties’ actual needs, rather than to US Government mandates and guidelines?

Many of the EPP training activities were directed to young people, and particularly, to young leaders. The lack of trust and political parties’ bad reputation does not motivate young and potentially good social leaders to support and engage in political party activities. Yet, no data exists to evaluate whether young leaders trained by the program had any influence on their political party structures. In Sucre, for example, the dearth of new leadership was particularly notorious during the last elections of 2011, when a coalition of parties and civil society organizations united in opposition to a candidate controlled by criminal bands had no other option but to support a 78-year-old politician, who in the words of the Bishop of the Dioceses of Sucre, “was not ideal, but was the best we could get.”<sup>36</sup>

In relationship to the program’s efforts to support the development of think tanks to increase political party programmatic positions and to foster greater party identity among Colombian citizens, no evidence can be found that these think tanks actually contributed to this objective. Parties continue to be candidate-centered and clientelistic with little programmatic or ideological substance distinguishing one party from the other. At

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<sup>34</sup> Interview with Alonso Tobón, President of ASI, Bogotá, March 13, 2012.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Fundación Carlos Heras and Capacity Institute. Bogotá, March 22, 2012.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Monseñor Nel Beltrán, Sincelejo, March 16, 2012.

the subnational level, some party leaders interviewed did not even know of the existence of their party think tank, which had received substantial support from the program.<sup>37</sup>

Another activity supported by the Program under this component was to assist the National Planning Department to develop a planning manual for mayors and governors, which included provisions for democratic accountability. Given the weakness of political parties to effectively train and prepare their candidates for elected office, many mayors and governors assume office without knowing or understanding how to perform their new responsibilities. NDI and IRI have offered trainings to candidates and elected officials to enhance their capacity to formulate and develop their government plans, or “*planes de gobierno*.” While this is an excellent initiative, no information exists to assess the results of these trainings. In fact, in Montes de María, some people interviewed for this evaluation said that “NDI is interested in supporting development plans, but they do not support the required civil society infrastructure that is necessary to support these plans. Without the support of civil society, plans remain useless documents.”<sup>38</sup>

### **New Policy Guidelines: Working at the Subnational Level**

IRI and NDI demonstrated flexibility in adapting program activities to the subnational level, following the US Embassy CSDI Strategy and a mandate to work in the department of Chocó, where the highest percentage of Afro-Colombians – who remain marginalized and largely underrepresented – live. Yet, the regional focus affected NDI more than IRI because the latter’s work with political parties was mostly oriented to supporting political parties’ think tanks, which operate at the national level.

In some cases, extraordinary efforts had to be made to physically reach several targeted locations (via combinations of air, water, and land transport), as these are in remote places which were extremely expensive to reach. The successful implementation of program activities in remote places like *Rio Sucio* in the Chocó region is commendable. Yet, it is difficult if not impossible to assess the value and overall longer term results of these programs. In fact, it can be argued that deploying valuable resources and talent to these municipalities may have actually been counterproductive, limiting the overall effectiveness of the program by concentrating expenditures in areas of minimal overall impact.

As we mentioned before, parties at the subnational level – and especially at the municipal level – are virtually inexistent. Attempting to build party structures and promote more programmatic party platforms where no party structure exists at all is a colossal enterprise. Moreover, party leaders see little incentive to build party structures in remote and/or scarcely populated areas where the risks of further violence and state capture may well be high (justifying great EPP interest), but few votes can be won for their parties. For example, the director of Cambio Radical’s training institute acknowledged that they conducted training activities in Rio Sucio (Chocó) “only because this is where NDI works.”<sup>39</sup> Similarly, civil society organizations have little incentive to engage with political parties at the municipal level, especially where poverty and absence of public services necessarily dominate their hierarchy of needs.

In the Montes de María region, representatives from different civil society organizations were quite explicit when they said “to come here to talk about political parties is a waste of time; political parties do not exist here; people elect candidates who have money to buy votes... in this region, with rich lands but poor people, what we need is to help people overcome poverty, we need more productive projects... NDI and IRI support political parties, but it seems they are not interested in anything else... the international donor community comes with their own vision and agenda, which is not always related and in sync with the needs of people on the ground.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Interview with Ramiro Martínez, President of Partido Conservador Directorate in Sucre. Sincelejo, March, 16, 2012.

<sup>38</sup> Interview with Wilder Rojas, representative from the Mesa Afro-Colombiana, Sincelejo, March 16, 2012.

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Viviana Ortíz, Bogotá, March 22, 2012.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Wilder Rojas, Reinaldo Rafael Manjarrez, Edgardo Menco González and Padre Agustín Villar, all members of the Fundación Montes de María, Sincelejo, March 16, 2012.

The President of the Universidad Tecnológica de Chocó expressed a similar concern when he said: “[T]he problem here is poverty. You see children who have not had breakfast and are in deplorable condition . . . Palliatives are applied, but nothing more. In Chocó, people think only of public sector employment . . . International agencies work to get their results and to get along with those in power, and everyone wants to give ‘cover’ to the problem, which is fine, but we really need to get a serious plan. . . We have to think in the longer term.”<sup>41</sup>

During the field work for this evaluation it also became evident that many political party officials interviewed resented the EPP program’s territorial restrictions. Although they collaborated with the NDI and IRI and benefitted from partner projects, they regarded the projects’ regional emphasis as severely constraining. For example, leaders of MIRA, a small political party with the strongest internal organization of any Colombian political party, expressed frustration with the Program’s inability to support their activities in the district of Caquetá, where they won a governorship in the 2011 elections, because this was not a priority area for USAID partners.<sup>42</sup>

In sum, focusing on party strengthening at the local level can potentially alienate two of the most indispensable partners of an EPP program: political party leaders and civil society organizations.

Acknowledging these constraints, NDI and IRI were authorized by USAID to conduct some activities – such as election observer trainings – in departmental capitals of Sucre, Bolívar, and Chocó. But the bulk of activities at the subnational level were still targeted at the municipal level following US Embassy CSDI strategic and social inclusion considerations rather than directing activities to areas with the greatest risk of electoral violence or of state capture (as calculated by USAID’s extremely valuable local partners, the Electoral Observation Mission or MOE and Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris).

### **Short-Term and Long-Term Activities: Going beyond Electoral Cycles**

Electoral programs and party strengthening programs have different dynamics and respond to different timeframes. The first are cyclical and short term; the latter are long term development programs. Activities designed to promote transparent elections and to encourage greater citizen participation, while invaluable, do not bring about improved conditions for stronger political parties. Balancing short-term activities driven by electoral cycles with long term citizenship- and party-building programs objectives is indeed one of the most difficult challenges of EPP programs.

Many of the EPP Program activities were punctuated by electoral cycles. Like in many other countries, in Colombia political parties’ leaders and candidates are driven by electoral cycles, especially in rural areas where little political party structure exists. However, a program seeking to strengthen political parties as organizations is less effective if it becomes absorbed in short-term electoral cycles. Many NDI and IRI activities succumbed to the electoral logic, subordinating long-term party-building programs to short-term and more ephemeral electoral activities. As the Bishop of the Sucre Dioceses, a key civil society activist mobilizing a broad social coalition against powerful individuals with ties to criminal bands in the Sucre Department, acknowledged, “NDI was a life-saver in Sucre; they brought the support of the international community here, something we lacked in the past. But most of the activities were concentrated on the electoral process – and in several municipalities, at that. The problem is that most training and capacity-

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<sup>41</sup> Interview with Eduardo García Vega, President of the Universidad Tecnológica de Chocó, Quibdó, March 16, 2012.

<sup>42</sup> MIRA is a small Christian based political party. Unlike any other political party in the country, they do not endorse candidates who have not worked for the party at least four years. Being a “confessional party” they are more ideologically oriented and invest significantly in providing training and political education to their members. Interview with Gabriel Eduardo Archila, Plinio Alarcón and Senator Carlos Baena, MIRA party leaders, Bogotá, March 20, 2012.

building in electoral periods is wasted; nothing lasts. We need more long-term support; we need to prepare leaders for governing democratically; not just for winning elections.”<sup>43</sup>

A similar concern was expressed in Chocó, where the President of the Universidad Tecnológica del Chocó said, “the work of NDI and IRI should not be limited to the preparation of elections, but to something more long-term, more permanent. . . . It would be good to ensure greater donor coordination and find a way to move beyond mostly short term projects.”<sup>44</sup>

Strengthening the organizational capacity of political parties comprises many different activities, such as assisting in the development of new leaders; increasing party membership; regulating and organizing membership lists; promoting internal democratic practices; increasing the technical capacity of internal party *veedores* to vet candidates; and assisting parties in defining and disseminating their programmatic strategies. These activities require commitment and engagement of the party’s top leadership, above and beyond specific elections. Furthermore, to be effective, party strengthening activities also require strong civil society support. In competitive electoral systems, political parties respond to incentives. As experience from other Latin American countries demonstrates, where civil society demands stronger and more accountable political parties, parties face greater incentives to reform their internal structures and respond to their constituent’s demands or run the risk of losing elections.<sup>45</sup>

A good example is the publication of the list of candidates with alleged ties to criminal organizations prior to the 2011 elections. *Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris*, one of NDI’s sub-grantees, conducted a study in 29 departments and 83 municipalities to identify candidates running for the October 2011 elections with alleged ties to criminal organizations. After the publication of the list of these candidates – the publication was encouraged and endorsed by the Ministry of the Interior – political parties dropped 1,700 candidates from their lists. The *Registraduría* managed to get an additional 866 candidates dropped on technicalities.<sup>46</sup> Yet, according to Ariel Ávila, from *Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris*, most of these candidates dropped from party lists by the *Registraduría* were those who were accused of relatively minor problems – such as failure to pay food pensions or “*pensiones alimentarias*” – and not for their alleged links to criminal or illegal groups. However, it is clear that the publication of the list generated greater pressure for parties to vet their lists of candidates.

Yet, most of the candidates identified by *Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris* as having alleged ties to criminal organizations stayed on as candidates in the 2011 elections. But out of the 106 candidates in the list of *Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris*, only 36 won the elections. That is, 66% of candidates identified for their questionable links to criminal groups were voted down by the electorate, after the list was widely publicized in national and local media outlets. Still, 36 individuals identified for their links to criminal organizations are now in public office; 21 as mayors and 15 as governors.<sup>47</sup>

## C. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Given the weaknesses of parties and their lack of local presence, attempting to build party structures from the municipal level up is not an effective or advisable strategy. Open the possibility EPP partners to

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with Monseñor Nel Beltrán , March 16, 2012. In Sucre, a coalition of citizens and leaders of different political parties mobilized against “*La Gata*,” [Enilse López, AKA “the catwoman”], an infamous character linked to paramilitary groups and businesses who had exerted control over Sucre and Bolívar governorships. The previous three governors of Sucre were convicted for links to paramilitary groups. The candidate supported by *La Gata* lost the elections in 2011.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Eduardo García Vega, President of the Universidad Tecnológica de Chocó, Quibdó, March 16, 2012.

<sup>45</sup> See Peter Siavelis and Scott Morgenstern, Eds. *Pathways to Power. Political Recruitment and Candidate Selection in Latin America*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008; Yemile Mizrahi and Fabrice Lehoucq, “Latin American and the Caribbean Political Party Reform: A Desk Assessment.” December 17, 2004, USAID/LAC/DCHA.

<sup>46</sup> This information was obtained in interviews with NDI officials, both in Washington DC and in Colombia and confirmed in an interview with officials from the *Registraduría* and later, an interview with Ariel Ávila from the *Coporación Nuevo Arco Iris*.

<sup>47</sup> See Ariel Fernando Ávila and Juan David Velasco, “Triunfos y derrotas de las mafias en las locales” pp.39-40.

work at the departmental level and in greater number of departments. Regional level activities, however, should not substitute for activities engaging top party leaders at the national level.

2. Support further initiatives to investigate links between candidates and illicit groups and take advantage of existing political will at Ministry of the Interior and the Anti-Corruption Office to press parties into introducing information systems to improve their capacity to vet their candidates. Explore opportunities to extend the *Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris* analysis of illicit group links to candidates to other regions of the country beyond the 83 original municipalities (which comprise fewer than 10% of Colombia's municipalities).
3. In areas where candidates with suspected ties to illicit organizations won the 2011 department gubernatorial elections (nine out of 32 departments according to *Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris*), monitor their administrative performance in office and link this performance, both praise and blame, to the parties that nominated them.
4. Design long-term projects (lasting beyond electoral cycles), that can engage parties and civil society organizations on a more permanent basis, rather than funding ephemeral efforts to train local parties during elections. Support parties at the national and departmental levels and promote greater linkages between the national and subnational offices. Yet, consider reducing the number of political parties that benefit from the EPP Program, confining support to parties that are effective political players in the country. Colombia has between five and six effective political parties (five when calculated by the number of seats they control, and six when calculated by the percentage of votes they obtain in elections). There are twice as many parties, but only half of these have a sufficiently broad scope to merit program support.
5. Support DNP's good governance program to hold public officials accountable to civil society and to the parties that nominated them. This is an innovative program that DNP wants to promote with elected officials, party representatives, and leaders of civil society organizations. As argued elsewhere in this document, once elected, public officials have few incentives to maintain their loyalty to the party that nominated them, because parties do not offer anything seemingly valuable to them or to their future political careers. To the extent parties acquire greater presence and become better organized, supporting their elected officials and ensuring that they reflect the party's principles can become mutually beneficial for both the official and the party.
6. While think tanks may improve party issue-orientation, no evidence was found that party think tank documents added value at the national or local levels. Rethink support for this initiative.

# IV. OBJECTIVE 2: TO PROMOTE THE INCLUSION OF AFRO-COLOMBIANS, INTERNALLY-DISPLACED PERSONS, AND WOMEN IN POLITICAL PROCESSES

## A. OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN COLOMBIA

According to the 2005 census, Afro-Colombians represent 10.6% of the total population, while Indigenous people represent 3.4%. The actual numbers, however, are disputed, as no census questions formally measure this ethnic category, and many people believe Afro-Colombians actually account for a much larger percentage of the total population. According to Oscar Gamboa, Director of the newly created Presidential Program for Afro-Colombian Affairs (*Programa Presidencial de Asuntos Afrocolombianos*), “Afro-Colombians account for 25% of the total population; there are more than 10 million people of Afro-Colombian descent. The problem is that many Afro descendants do not recognize themselves as Afro-Colombians in the census.”<sup>48</sup>

The Constitution of 1991 recognized Colombia as a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic nation. The Constitution included provisions that addressed ethnic and race-based interests, such as communal land rights and political participation (Agrawal et. al. 2012, p.4). The indigenous rights movement, although smaller as an overall population, was better organized than the Afro-Colombian movement when the Constitution was drafted. As a result, the Constitution reserved two seats in the Senate for indigenous representatives elected from nationwide districts, while Article 176 created the possibility of up to five reserved seats for “other ethnic groups” in the Chamber of Deputies (Agrawal et. al. 2012, p.4). In 1993, Law 70 created two new reserved seats for Afro-Colombians in the Chamber and recognized their territorial land rights. No seats were created in the Senate for this group.

These institutional mechanisms of political representation gave greater political visibility to Indigenous and Afro-Colombian minorities. But they did not resolve the problem of representation or the socio-economic exclusion of these groups. Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities continue to be the poorest and most vulnerable segments of the population in Colombia. According to the National Statistics Office (DANE), in Chocó and La Guajira, the two departments with the largest Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations, over 60% of these populations live in poverty (80.4% of the population in Chocó and 65.2% in La Guajira have “unsatisfied basic needs”).<sup>49</sup> According to the former governor of Chocó, Luis Gilberto Murillo, Afro-Colombian illiteracy rate is 32%, compared to 15% among non-Blacks. Only 38% of Afro-Colombian teenagers go to high school, and only 2% to the university.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Interview with Oscar Gamboa, March 8, 2012.

<sup>49</sup> Cited in Escandón, (2011, p. 18).

<sup>50</sup> Luis Gilberto Murillo, speech delivered at the The Colombia Media Project and The Caribbean Cultural Center, Museum of Natural History, New York, 2001. <http://isla.jgc.org/SpecialRpts/SR2murillo.html>

Moreover, the seats set aside in Congress for ethnic minorities did not increase the representation of these communities, for most of these seats are elected by non-ethnic majorities. As the excellent study of Marcela Escandón shows, Afro-Colombian legislators, in particular, do not necessarily identify and vote in favor of issues affecting their communities. To the contrary, Afro-Colombian set-aside seats in Congress seemed to have engendered “a dangerous level of electoral competition among Afro-related movements and parties resulting in political fragmentation and inability to establish a common political agenda.” (Escandón 2011, p. 19). One example of the “dangerous” (i.e. unregulated) level of competition is the number of candidate lists presented for these two special seats. In 2010, 65 lists of candidates were presented for the election of the two special seats for Afro-Colombians in Congress. According to IRI, the two winning candidates were elected by 2,500 votes, an insufficient number to claim political representation. More importantly, Afro-Colombian legislators are not effective representatives of the Afro-Colombian people, as they are not very productive in their legislative activity and sometimes even block bills that benefit their communities.

From 2002 to 2010, eight Afro-Colombian representatives served in Congress (four in each congressional term – two elected to open seats and two occupying seats reserved for Afro-Colombians). In 2006, one Afro-Colombian was elected to the Senate. Although Afro-Colombians have established an Afro-Colombian Caucus in Congress (with support from IRI), most important initiatives affecting the lives of Afro-Colombians have not been introduced by these legislators. In fact, perhaps the most significant legislation, the Anti-Discrimination Law passed in 2011, was introduced by legislators from the conservative Christian MIRA party who had no relation to the Caucus whatsoever. According to Senator Baena, the main sponsor of this law, members of the Afro-Colombian Caucus initially opposed the Anti-Discrimination Law, even though it addressed a very basic problem affecting the Afro-Colombian community.<sup>51</sup>

Women have experienced a growing participation in Colombia’s political life. As Table 4 demonstrates, while they are still highly underrepresented, especially compared to Argentina, Mexico, Chile, and Peru, women have become more active in advocating for their political rights. Unlike the Afro-Colombian Caucus, which is still informally and not legally recognized, the Womens’ Rights Committee (*Comisión Legal para la Equidad de la Mujer*) was successfully inaugurated as a formal legal Congressional Committee in April 2011.

In 2011, the electoral reform introduced a provision establishing a quota that 30% of each party’s candidates be women. Although not all parties complied with the law, as is evident in Table 5, the new provision had an immediate effect on the percentage of women candidates nominated by political parties for different electoral positions, and a slight increase in the percentage of women elected to office.

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<sup>51</sup> Personal Interview with Senator Carlos Alberto Baena, March 21, 2012. According to the Senator, Afro-Colombian legislators did not initially endorse the bill “because it was proposed by non-Afro Colombian legislators.” Indeed, according to this Senator, “Afro-Colombian legislators are still closed minded and unwilling to welcome him and other ethnically minded legislators to their Caucus.”

**Table 4: Percentage of women in national parliaments and gender quotas in effect at the time of the most recent election**

Country	Year	% Women in Lower House (or unicameral parliament)	% Women in the Senate	Quotas for women on electoral lists	Sanctions for non-compliance	Year law was passed
Argentina	2005	34	33	30%	x	1991
Argentina	2009	38.5	36.1	30%	x	1991
Brazil	c.a 2002	9	12	30%		1997
Brazil	2009	8.8	12.3	30%		1997
Chile	2005	13	4	NO		-
Chile	2009	14.2	13.2	NO		-
<b>Colombia</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>NO</b>		-
<b>Colombia*</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>NO</b>		-
México	c.a 2003	23	16	NO		-
México	2009	26.2	19.5	40%	x	2009
Peru	c.a 2001	18	N.A	30%		1997
Peru	2006	27.5	N.A	30%		1997

\*Quotas for women were introduced in 2011

**Sources:** IDEA. 2005. Htun, Mala "Women, Political Parties and Electoral Systems in Latin America." Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers, IDEA (2005) & IDEA. 2011. *Gender mainstreaming in Latin American Parliaments: A work in progress*, IDEA

**Table 5: Percentage of women in Colombian regional elections, 2003-2014**

<b>Governorships</b>	<b>2003-2007</b>	<b>2007-2011</b>	<b>2011-2014</b>
Women Candidates	6.1	7.9	11.5
Women Elected	3.1	3.1	9.4
<b>Mayors</b>			
Women Candidates	9.7	11.9	13.1
Women Elected	8.4	9	9.9
<b>Regional Assemblies</b>			
Women Candidates	17.9	14.6	36
Women Elected	16.8	17.2	18
<b>Local Councils</b>			
Women Candidates	17	18	16.1
Women Elected	13.3	14.5	16.1

**Source:** "Mujeres en cargos de elección popular para el período 2011-2015." In *Mesa de Género de la Cooperación Internacional en Colombia*. 2012

## B. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

To promote a greater inclusion of women and Afro-Colombians in the political process, NDI and IRI partnered with civil society organizations and public officials. IRI worked more at the national level and concentrated mostly on Afro-Colombians; NDI concentrated more on the inclusion of women and worked more at the subnational level.

NDI defined its highest level result as **Afro-Colombians, IDPs, and women are more involved in political processes**, while IRI defined its highest level result as **political parties and politicians design and implement strategies to promote the inclusion and participation of Afro-Colombians and IDPs**. NDI identified appropriate indicators to measure results at this level: number of women and Afro-Colombians elected to public office and number of measures adopted by political parties, civil society organizations, and the Colombian government to integrate vulnerable populations. IRI did not identify any indicators at this level. **No evidence was presented that any specific activities were designed and/or implemented for Internally Displaced People**. For a full analysis of IRI and NDI's results and indicators see Annex 3 and 4.

**After five years of program implementation, the EPP Program achieved important outcomes**, particularly with regards to the establishment of new institutional mechanisms to represent the interests of excluded groups and the number of women and Afro-Colombians elected to office.

Although data on women and Afro-Colombian voters is difficult to obtain at the national level, in 20 municipalities where IRI and NDI worked, voter turnout for Afro-Colombians in 2011 increased from that of 2007 elections. For city council elections, voter turnout increased by 4.17%. For mayoral elections, it increased by 3.8%. While we would hesitate to attribute these gains entirely to IRI and NDI participation, the Institutes did have a strong presence and organized effective programming.<sup>52</sup>

In terms of the inclusion of women, the number of women candidates on party lists for the 2011 elections increased by 190% compared to 2007. Yet it is not clear what the attribution of NDI and IRI is in the achievement of this result, for in 2011 parties had to comply with a new requirement to include 30% of women in their lists of candidates. Only anecdotal information was provided suggesting that a larger number of women and Afro-Colombians candidates were elected to public office at the subnational level. For a full list of activities implemented under this component please see Annex 5.

### **Inclusion through greater advocacy capacity**

NDI and IRI provided training and technical assistance to different groups of Afro-Colombian and women organizations. Although beneficiaries of these activities that were interviewed for this evaluation expressed satisfaction with the technical quality of the assistance they received, it is difficult to assess the overall results of these activities, given that neither NDI nor IRI identified adequate indicators to measure and assess results of activities, nor did they keep a track record of their beneficiaries to analyze whether the training was useful in the advancement of their political and professional careers.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that training and technical assistance to increase advocacy capacity was more successful with women groups than with the Afro-Colombian community. The reasons may be that women groups are better organized, both at the national and subnational levels, and have a greater tradition of advocacy work. Moreover, most of the successful interventions identified by the Team were confined to the Chocó Department.

One of the most noteworthy examples of success in capacity building and advocacy training was the workshop with the *Red de Mujeres Chocoanas*, a network of local women organizations in the Department of Chocó. In 2008, NDI invited members of the network to participate in their workshops with political parties. This organization had been advocating for greater representation of women since the 1990s.

According to the director of the *Red de Mujeres Chocoanas*, NDI has been a vital partner in the success of their organization and in improving the women's political education. "NDI supported the Red in creating a political education school, "*Mujeres Chocoanas al Poder*." The school has benefitted 40 women and 25 men... Out of the 48 women elected to office in the Department of Chocó in the 2011 elections, 17 received training at the school... in 1990, only 2 or 3% of winners of local elections were women, whereas in recent elections

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<sup>52</sup> This data was obtained from IRI and NDI quarterly reports.

(2003, 2007, 2011) that percentage had risen to 13-16%. The Red has been extremely successful. Now we get invitations to exchange our experience in other departments and also in other countries. We have won awards.”<sup>53</sup>

The high rates of poverty and the predominantly Afro-Colombian origin of Chocó’s population –estimated at 95% – have attracted the international donor community to this region. Yet, as Boris Zapata, the Director for Black Communities Affairs in the Ministry of the Interior said, “everybody is in Chocó. The donor community in Chocó is enormous, and yet, there are very few results. There is a lot of waste, as the donor community does not coordinate well. Each donor works with their organizations, sometimes duplicating efforts and funding the wrong people.... actually the donor community has led to the de-institutionalization of government in Chocó, as people turn to donors before they go to the Municipality to address their issues.”<sup>54</sup> While not referring particularly to USAID, the lack of coordination among the donor community was apparent to the Team.

One good example of a successful project funded by the Spanish Government that had enormous potential was the School of Political Training (*Escuela de Formación Política*) at the Universidad Tecnológica de Chocó. After the Spanish economic crisis, Spain reduced its investments in Colombia and stopped funding this project in 2011, which lasted five years. According to the director of the Universidad Tecnológica de Chocó, the school had between 150 to 300 students, who were 18 to 22 years old. They offered seminars every two weeks (on weekends) covering philosophy, political participation, human rights, how to provide neighborhood leadership, etc. University professors and other organizers went to neighborhoods to see who communities felt had the capacity for leadership and recruited them; the Government of Spain paid students so they could afford participating in the seminars and offered them lunch. The model was “to accompany people and not just pay leaders. People will work hard; and they will work for the community.”<sup>55</sup>

In the Montes de María region, the Team was not able to identify important results of efforts to increase the advocacy capacity of women and Afro-Colombian organizations. In large part, this may have been due to the difficulty of organizing in this region, which only recently emerged from decades of violent conflict and control by paramilitary groups. But in part the problem was also that many of the beneficiaries interviewed believed that advocacy for greater inclusion was not their priority. As discussed earlier in this report, both women and Afro-Colombian leaders in Montes de María believed their most important priority was to engage in anti-poverty activities; parties and electoral politics was regarded as secondary.<sup>56</sup>

### **Inclusion through greater political representation**

Without a doubt, one of the most successful achievements of the Program was the establishment of the Afro-Colombian Caucus, an organization that many people interviewed for this project recognized, would not have been established without the persistent efforts of IRI.<sup>57</sup> Yet, as discussed above, the effectiveness of this Caucus to represent the needs of Afro-Colombians and advocate for their needs is questionable. Lamenting the lack of legislative unity or cohesion among the Afro-Colombian Caucus, the former mayor of Quibdó and a member of this Caucus eloquently stated “Afro-Colombians unite in *fiestas* and in pain. But in the administrative area, it is everyone for themselves.”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Interview with Nydia Vargas, director of Red de Mujeres Chocoanas, Quibdó, March 16, 2012.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Boris Zapata, Bogotá, March 9, 2012.

<sup>55</sup> Interview with Eduardo García Vega, President of the Universidad Tecnológica de Chocó, Quibdó, March 16, 2012.

<sup>56</sup> See footnote 27 of this report.

<sup>57</sup> The Caucus is seeking to become institutionalized as a legislative Committee. Unlike the Women Committee, the Afro-Colombian Caucus is only recognized as an “accidental committee.”

<sup>58</sup> Interview with Carlos Escobar, Bogotá, March 14, 2012.

Despite the increased representation of Afro-Colombians in Congress, they continue to be highly unrepresented at the national and subnational levels. At the national level, they represent an estimated 25% of the total population, and yet in the national Congress (265 members) they represent less than 2% of the total number of seats. Similarly, in Chocó, only 57% of candidates for the 2011 elections were Afro-Colombians, a region where 95% of the population is Afro-Colombians.<sup>59</sup>

According to IRI, the Afro-Colombian Caucus presented four legislative projects, but none of them were approved. Interestingly, the Anti-Discrimination law, which clearly affects the Afro-Colombian population, was not initially endorsed by this Committee. This law, which was passed by Congress in 2011, brought the issue of racial discrimination to the national debate. The next step would be to use the law to challenge discrimination practices, and if needed, to bring discrimination cases before the courts.

The Program also worked with political parties to establish offices for Afro-Colombian and women inside their organization. As a result of international pressure – mostly from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and EPP program activities – some political parties like the *Partido Cambio Radical* and the *Partido Conservador* created gender secretariats and changed their party statutes to formally include women in their organizations. In both cases, NDI played a significant role in the establishment of these offices. Some parties have also established offices for ethnic affairs, but the Team found no evidence that these offices were supported by the EPP Program.

Although the Government of Colombia has established national-level offices to address Afro-Colombian and Women affairs, the EPP Program did not engage with them. In particular, President Santos established a new Presidential Program for Afro-Colombian Affairs (*Programa Presidencial de Asuntos Afrocolombianos*). The Government also works with Afro-Colombian communities through the Office of Afro-Colombian Affairs in the Ministry of the Interior. This office is responsible for negotiating with the “*Espacio Nacional de Comunidades Negras*” previously known as the “*Consultiva*,” an organization that assembles representatives of Afro-Colombian communities. According to several people interviewed for this evaluation, members of this organization lack advocacy and negotiation skills. As a result, many people in their own communities do not regard them as effective representatives.<sup>60</sup>

At the subnational level, several *Ordenanzas* (“state legislature” decrees) were introduced addressing Afro-Colombian issues at the departmental level. However, no conclusive evidence exists on the outcomes of these initiatives. Some people interviewed for this evaluation suggested that the departmental *Ordenanzas*, such as several declaring affirmative rights of Afro-Colombians in receipt of departmental services, have remained largely ineffective because they have not been implemented by the departmental governments.

Official data on the Afro-Colombian population is inconsistent, incomplete, and unreliable. One of the main problems is that the census does not include adequate questions on ethnic identity. The Program is supporting DANE, the Government of Colombia’s Census Office, to improve the questions on ethnicity for the next census.

Finally, the Program supported several campaigns to motivate women and Afro-Colombians to participate and vote in the elections. While IRI and NDI records indicate that voter turnout of these groups increased, no official data exists to verify this information.<sup>61</sup> More importantly, it is difficult to assess whether or not increased turnout rates were due to the Program’s campaigns or to other factors, such as greater coverage of electoral observers.

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<sup>59</sup> This information was obtained through IRI and NDI Quarterly Reports.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Boris Zapata, Bogotá, March 9, 2012.

<sup>61</sup> IRI reports that voter turnout of Afro-Colombians in 2011 elections in twenty municipalities increased from 2007. For city council elections, voter turnout increased by 4.17% and in mayoral elections it increased by 3.8%.

Agreement exists among people interviewed for this evaluation that the legal and institutional framework for the inclusion of women and Afro-Colombians has improved considerably. What is pending is the more difficult task of addressing discrimination, social exclusion and inequality affecting these groups in their everyday lives, through the implementation of sound and effective public policies, the creation of norms of tolerance and inclusion, and importantly, defending the rights of the excluded in the courts.

The lack of judicial advocacy for excluded groups before the courts is somewhat surprising, given the strength of Colombia's judicial branch and the sensitivity of the courts to the rights of excluded groups. Conferences of scholars have agreed that the Colombian Constitutional Court has compiled perhaps the most extensive corpus of rulings and doctrinal consistency in the hemisphere (Sonnleitner and Eisenstadt 2013 forthcoming). Straddling the line between individual and communitarian rights, this court "has developed a jurisprudence that seeks to maximize the autonomy of indigenous communities and to respect their ways of doing justice without embracing an unconditional cultural relativism" (Assies n.d., 11). Yet, few organizations have used the courts to defend the rights of excluded groups such as Afro-Colombians and women.

## C. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Offer technical assistance to members of the "*Espacio Nacional de Comunidades Negras*" (AKA *Consultiva*) in negotiation skills, representation of constituency needs; advocacy and lobbying skills. Members of this group of representatives selected by Afro-Colombian communities to advise the national executive branch on Afro-Colombian issues are closer to their communities and can potentially represent them more effectively than the small and distant Afro-Colombian congressional caucus. Moreover, greater interaction and communication between the Afro-Colombian Caucus and the *Espacio Nacional de Comunidades Negras* should be promoted.
2. Develop leadership programs for youth in Afro-Colombian majority areas, such as a discontinued program at the *Universidad Tecnológica de Chocó* to promote leadership and civic engagement through several years of weekend training. Leverage international support for university scholarships for Afro-Colombians to study business administration, public administration, management, and other fields related to citizenship and governance (and also offer them in agronomy, the sciences, engineering, and the health professions).
3. As the new Victims and Land Restitution Law passed in 2011 is implemented, victims of the armed conflict who were displaced from their lands will become eligible for compensation, including land restitution. Yet, many lands to be reclaimed by displaced victims are in high risk areas, where criminal bands continue to operate, and in many cases, control political and economic life. Returning victims to these lands could be dangerous. USAID partners could extend their exploratory work to elaborate Political Risk Maps, which yield vital information on the balance of power in specific areas, assessing the feasibility of reinstating land to displaced people. In cases of high risk, state authorities should be alerted so that they can effectively ameliorate risk and protect victims to prevent further dislocations or evictions by mobilizing government authorities.
4. Continue to support efforts to improve the quality of data on Afro-Colombians and other ethnic minorities, who presently are not sufficiently recognized in the census.
5. Scale up efforts to disseminate information about anti-discrimination and affirmative action laws to the district and local levels. Support the Ministry of the Interior and the recently created Presidential Program for Afro-Colombian Affairs' initiatives to implement an "Observation of Discrimination" to inform the design of public policy addressing specific discrimination issues.
6. Continue to provide technical assistance to women leaders, replicating the successful experience with the *Red de Mujeres Chocoanas*.
7. In striving to enforce the rights of excluded groups, such as indigenous people, the Colombian Constitutional Court has exceeded judicial action by other Latin American nations with large

indigenous populations, like Bolivia, Ecuador, and Mexico. Departmental *Ordenanzas* could acquire more authority if legal rights advocates push departmental governments to enforce them through legal channels. The rights of women, Afro-Colombians, indigenous peoples, and IDPs could all benefit from focused legal advocacy campaigns, and USAID funding of one of several reputable domestic and/or international partner NGOs in this kind of work may exploit Colombia's strong judicial traditions and also the "cutting edge" work these legal NGOs have achieved by applying international legal norms in domestic contexts.

# V. OBJECTIVE 3: TO SUPPORT INCLUSIVE AND TRANSPARENT ELECTORAL PROCESSES

## A. OVERVIEW OF ELECTORAL PROCESSES IN COLOMBIA

Electoral institutions in Colombia continue to be weak, fragmented, underfunded, and highly ineffective at regulating and supervising elections, counting and tabulating electoral results, and at adjudicating electoral disputes. In fact, compared to other offices in Colombia's Executive branch, electoral institutions are strikingly underdeveloped.

Indeed, several interviewees conveyed that election management is an Achilles heel of Colombian democracy. In the absence of electoral democracy at the local level, the state may be able to reclaim nominal geographical control over areas previously controlled by illicit groups, but civil society remains weak as those who speak out against criminality and corruption often face dire consequences at the hands of vigilantes.<sup>62</sup>

As NDI's director, Francisco Herrero, poignantly asked, "Should I do it or not do it?" is the fearful question on many honest citizens' minds as they consider whether to involve themselves in denunciations of criminal activity by "captured" officials with ties to the state.<sup>63</sup> As other Latin American nations' political development has clearly demonstrated, until elections acquire a modicum of credibility, the other foundations of democratic development remain in jeopardy. Why would citizens denounce vigilante justice and state corruption if no fruitful alternative exists for political expression?

While elections are indeed taken for granted in many established democracies (including Colombia, where scholars argue – albeit erroneously<sup>64</sup> – that democratic elections have been held at the national level for half a century), credible, free, and fair elections remain a cornerstone, if not the cornerstone, of democratic consolidation. As confirmed by most scholarly work, Colombia has been considered at least somewhat democratic, at the national level, since the 1970s. However, new literature on subnational authoritarianism (see for example Eisenstadt and Rios 2012, Gibson 2005, Giraudy 2010) has pointed out such patterns throughout the Latin American region. Furthermore, considering credibility of institutions, as reported in LAPOP surveys, Colombia's institutions do not fare well (see Table 3.).

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<sup>62</sup> According to the International Crisis Group, over 40 mayoral candidates were killed last year in the run-up to the 2011 local elections. Between 1988 and 2001, 70 mayoral candidates were murdered, and over 90 candidates for local councils and 14 for other local elected offices were killed – in 1988 alone the murders of local officials and political leaders went from "almost non-existent" to around 180. International Crisis Group, op.cit. p.3. USAID contractors from the Corporacion Nuevo Arco iris received death threats, leading one to leave the country and another to receive US Embassy protection.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Francisco Herrero, March 8, 2012. Laura Carlsen, writing of the 2010 congressional elections for <http://www.ciponline.org/research/entry/colombias-elections-under-the-gun>, was more direct: "Our pre-electoral mission consistently found that Colombian citizens do not file formal reports against electoral practices, especially in cases involving neo-paramilitary-linked candidates. The reason is fear. Citizens fear reprisals if they file formal reports, especially when filing against candidates suspected of having paramilitary links. Their fear is justified by past experience. Moreover, unlike the direct attacks on polls or populations characteristic of the left-wing *guerrilla*, the voter intimidation tactics of the neo-paramilitary groups tend to be suffered in silence. The inability to fully document the pervasiveness and impact of these tactics does not by any means indicate they do not exist."

<sup>64</sup> During the National Front period (1958-1974), The Liberal and Conservative parties alternated in power. While the elections were ostensibly "free and fair," only one of Colombia's two major parties ran candidates, and scholars (including pioneers like Dahl 1972, O'Donnell 1994, and Sartori 1987) argue that elections must be competitive and "free and fair."

**Table 3: 2010 Comparative Institutional Approval Ratings<sup>65\*</sup>**

Institution	Colombia (2011)	Colombia (2010)	Argentina (2010)	Chile (2010)	Mexico (2010)	Peru (2010)
Catholic Church	67.2	67.1	43.3	58.7	70.4	62.3
Political Parties	35.1	36.5	42.0	37.6	35.4	30
The Police	55.9	56.0	30.6	70.6	36.4	41.3
The Military	64.5	64.5	38.3	71.9	72.2	53.5
Congress	49.4	49.4	38.2	52.0	54.0	31.9
EMB / Electoral Institutions**	47.5	47.3	38.0	62.4	57.4	46.3
Elections	46.8	46.9	38.0	68.6	50.7	49.6
Procuraduría	59.52	59.5	ND	ND	ND	ND

\* These values are the percent of the population that has “trust” or “confidence” in the institution.

\*\* The Electoral Management Body (EMB) for each country is as follows: Colombia (*Consejo Nacional Electoral*), Argentina (Cámara Nacional Electoral), Chile (Tribunal Supremo Electoral), Mexico (Tribunal Supremo Electoral), Peru (Jurado Nacional de Elecciones).

Moreover, Colombia’s electoral institutions, as shown in Annex 10, are the least developed among the half dozen Latin American democratic nations with populations approaching Colombia’s or greater. Among the critical attributes lacking from Colombia’s array of electoral institutions but present in most other Latin American democracies’ institutions are the following: 1) an independent election management body; 2) an autonomous electoral court (or at least some sort of specialized body which can adjudicate disputes related to elections); 3) mandatory campaign finance laws and mandatory party and candidate disclosures (with real penalties for non-compliance); and 4) a system of vetting poll workers and vote counters which ensures that these vital election-day authorities are neutral rather than vulnerable to capture by special interests.

The CNE, equivalent to an electoral oversight body/electoral court, is run by nine magistrates, a similar number of professional staff, and some clerical assistants. It is responsible for monitoring the National Registry, the government institution charged with actually running elections, which in 2011 contracted to 23 private companies<sup>66</sup> for a total cost of some US\$110 million (OAS “Informe Verbal”), or some two-thirds of the total estimated US\$165 million cost of the elections.

<sup>65</sup> Sources: Carrión, Julio; Zárate, Patricia and Seligson, Mitchell. 2011. “Cultural política de la democracia en Mexico, 2010.” Latin American Public Opinion Project: University of Delaware, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos and Vanderbilt University. Accessed March 3, 2012 at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/peru/2010-culturapolitica.pdf>; Lodola, Germán and Seligson, Mitchell. 2011. “Cultural política de la democracia en Argentina, 2010.” Latin American Public Opinion Project: Universidad Torcuato di Tella and Vanderbilt University. Accessed March 3, 2012 at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/argentina/2010-culturapolitica.pdf>; Pablo Luna, Juan; Zechmeister, Elizabeth and Seligson, Mitchell. 2011. “Cultural política de la democracia en Chile, 2010.” Latin American Public Opinion Project: Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and Vanderbilt University. Accessed March 3, 2012 at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/chile/2010-culturapolitica.pdf>; Páras García, Pablo; López Olmedo, Carlos; Vargas López, Dinorah and Seligson, Mitchell. 2011. “Cultural política de la democracia en Mexico, 2010.” Latin American Public Opinion Project: DATA Opinión Pública y Mercados and Vanderbilt University. Accessed March 3, 2012 at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/mexico/2010-culturapolitica.pdf>; Rodríguez Raga, Juan Carlos and Seligson, Mitchell. 2010. “Cultural política de la democracia en Colombia, 2010.” Latin American Public Opinion Project: Universidad de los Andes and Vanderbilt University. Accessed March 3, 2012 at [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/colombia/Cultura\\_politica\\_de\\_la\\_democracia\\_en\\_Colombia\\_2010.pdf](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/colombia/Cultura_politica_de_la_democracia_en_Colombia_2010.pdf).

<sup>66</sup> The *Registraduría* does not have the technical capacity or personnel to administer elections. They sub-contract many of the activities to private companies.

CNE magistrates lack independence because they are selected by incoming legislators with a strong emphasis on partisanship (rather than expertise, a central criterion for over 90% of the EMB executives, but not for those of Colombia, as per Annex 10). They may be re-elected (prompting them to continue to behave in a partisan manner to please their congressional member nominators), and they are selected entirely by their party's representation in the incoming Congress (rather than being appointed in any staggered manner, which would guarantee greater autonomy on their part). As conveyed also by Jaramillo and Revelo Robolledo (2010), "the magistrates of the CNE continue to be representatives of their parties and of their [parties'] interests, which does not assure that they will act in an impartial manner that will offer any guarantees to all parties and citizens (10-11)."

The weakness of the electoral institutions to effectively regulate and monitor elections was noted by the OAS observers, who in 2011 declared to Colombia's foreign minister that, "the Electoral Observer Mission considers that the dispersion of organizations, commissions, and coordinating mechanisms lends little efficiency to resources dedicated to the electoral process, a lack of clarity regarding the electoral hierarchy structure, and a possible duplication of efforts in conveying the complexities of the electoral process (OAS "Informe Verbal")." <sup>67</sup> See Annex 6 for the critical OAS Report, not publicly available.

One way of assessing a country's level of commitment to reforming electoral institutions and increasing citizens' confidence in elections is the amount of public resources allocated to elections and electoral institutions. Post-conflict democratizing nations like Angola and Cambodia spent well over US\$20 per eligible voter in the 1990s, and the cost of building a technically skilled and independent electoral authority in Mexico (the Federal Electoral Institute) surpassed US\$1 billion per year over nearly a decade (Eisenstadt 2004, 7-8, fn 5), which, during key electoral process years, entailed a larger budgetary commitment than to the federal judicial and legislative branches combined.

In Colombia, there has been no such commitment, spending about US\$5 for each of the 30.7 million registered voters in 2011,<sup>68</sup> despite the country's recent economic bonanza and "middle income country" classification and level of available resources. Expenditures on the lackluster National Electoral Council in 2011 cannot even be independently measured as Colombia's EMB possesses no budgetary authority and must instead spend a sub-budget allocated by the National Registry.

Without budgetary autonomy, the CNE cannot perform its function of monitoring the Registry, and in the absence of a dedicated electoral court or a judicial body charged with initial investigation of complaints, that function remains with the CNE, but with the Judicial State Council assuming the role in appeals. Also, the establishment of an office for a special prosecutor (*fiscal especial*) for electoral crimes was also approved in the 2009 electoral reform, although the office has not been implemented, and in its absence, almost no attention is given to penalizing criminals in this area.<sup>69</sup>

With regard to campaign finance, EPPs program *Cuentas Claras*, a software application which collects political party financial disclosures and posts these online was implemented in 2010 as a means of forcing some

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<sup>67</sup> For example, the CNE has no budgetary independence and is formally a part of the Registry even though the institution's job is to conduct oversight of the Registry, adjudicate complaints about Registry performance, and otherwise "watchdog" the institution to which it must submit each and every budget request.

<sup>68</sup> The data was obtained from Martin, Juan. "¿Cuánto cuestan las elecciones?", in Website: La Oficina de Prensa del Senado. Accessed March 30, 2012 at <http://www.senado.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/noticias/item/12686-cuanto-cuestan-las-elecciones?tmpl=component&print=1>; and from MOE, "Financiamiento Electoral en Colombia" Misión de Observación Electoral. Accessed March 31, 2012 at [http://www.moe.org.co/home/doc/moe\\_nacional/CARTILLASMOE/Cartilla%20G.pdf](http://www.moe.org.co/home/doc/moe_nacional/CARTILLASMOE/Cartilla%20G.pdf). Data on number of valid votes was obtained by the Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil. 2012. Balance de las elecciones de autoridades locales, octubre 30 de 2011. Bogotá: Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil.

<sup>69</sup> According to a MOE study, between 2002 and 2011 there were 9024 investigations opened into electoral crimes, but only 236 taken to judgment. No information was provided on how many of these cases resulted in criminal sentences, but analysts anticipating that number would be extremely low.

accountability by parties for the public funds they received (and as a way of forcing parties to also disclose expenditures of private funds). However, public funds to be dispensed by the CNE before the elections were not granted to parties in a timely fashion. Only 87% of the parties complied with *Cuentas Claras*, and as of our interviews with electoral officials, no meaningful penalties had been imposed by state agencies on the parties and/or candidates not in compliance with the reporting requirement (including several winning candidates, according to the OAS “Informe Verbal”).

## B. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Objective 3 Component represented the largest share of the Program’s activities. IRI and NDI partnered with a number of highly reputable domestic organizations to implement many of the Program activities. In the spring of 2011, after the Colombian mission received additional funds targeted for electoral activities, USAID decided to utilize them to fund directly two domestic organizations: The *Misión de Observación Electoral* received a grant to expand electoral observation, and *Semana*, a prominent weekly magazine, was awarded a contract to organize subnational debates surrounding the departmental elections. For a description of the full list of activities, see Annex 5.

As mentioned earlier in this report, some of the Program’s most impressive outcomes are related to this component. A combination of well-designed and innovative interventions, capable partners, and the collaboration of government authorities explain in large part the successful results. However, as was true with the rest of the Program’s objectives, NDI and IRI failed to identify appropriate indicators to measure and evaluate results. Outcomes were all reported in an anecdotal manner.

NDI defined the highest level result for this objective as “**Electoral processes are more transparent,**” while IRI defined it as “**Civic and political actors engage in effective advocacy for enhanced representation, accountability and transparency in Colombia’s political system.**” Neither NDI nor IRI identified an indicator to measure results at this level. For a full analysis of IRI’s and NDI’s results and indicators, please see Annex 3 and 4.

### Increasing Electoral Observation

The EPP Program trained electoral observers and party poll watchers to observe elections. While citizen observers have no official mandate and have no formal oversight responsibilities, the presence of electoral observers generates pressures on electoral officials to refrain from manipulating the results. In most Latin American democratization processes, electoral observers have played a critical role in ensuring the integrity of elections and increasing confidence in elections and electoral results.

In the 2011 elections, electoral observation became more comprehensive, covering many more regions than in previous elections. According to MOE and NDI, electoral observers were present in 397 municipalities and in 29 departments, which account for 78% of the national voter list. Although coverage increased, there is no data on the quality and/or quantity of reports filed by these observers.

In some regions of the country and especially in areas of low state presence and high levels of marginalization, electoral fraud continues to be a problem. Although the coverage of electoral observers increased considerably in 2011, many of these areas electoral were not sufficiently covered by electoral observers. For example, in Montes de María, a region covered by the EPP Program, “MOE was extremely weak in this area. In San Onofre, a municipality considered to be of high risk of electoral fraud, MOE only sent two electoral observers.”<sup>70</sup>

Similarly, in Chocó, former Governor Malcolm Cordoba, said, “They say that you have to win the elections in the ballot boxes and also in the *Registraduría*. . . . Parties lack infrastructure; they do not have transparent candidate selection mechanisms, and they do not require sufficient militancy before allowing people to be

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<sup>70</sup> Interview with Clara Romero, CHF Program Manager, Sincelejo, March 16, 2012.

candidates as they “jump” from party to party to get on ballots. Party officials at polling stations are frequently paid by candidates or assigned by party lotteries (*rifas*); ...there is no pragmatic [reasoned] vote, only pure clientelism.”<sup>71</sup>

Chocó Registry Supervisor Elier Mena Mena went even further when he reported nonchalantly that electoral fraud occurred in some 30% of local elections, yielding electoral irregularities which were often decisive in the department’s local elections. “It always happens,” Mena Mena said, quoting the common refrain that “s/he who counts at the polling booth elects (*quien escruta en la mesa elige*).”<sup>72</sup> Elections are particularly important, he added, in poor departments where the state provides the main source of employment. Unlike other nations which randomly select poll workers from a citizen list and then extensively train those selected, the Colombian Registry selects electoral poll workers from lists submitted by employers (public and private) and political parties. Electoral law experts like Navarette Montoya of MOE argue that party representatives are disproportionately selected to work at the polls, where they will easily be able to alter vote tallies.

Despite these persistent problems, electoral turnout in the 2011 elections increased, which may be a sign of greater confidence in elections. While no data exists to definitively substantiate the claim, it is possible that the deployment of more electoral observers had a positive impact on electoral turnout.

To the surprise of the Evaluation Team, official historical data on electoral turnout rates is not available at the *Registraduría* website. However, in one poorly circulated publication, the *Registraduría* does report that electoral turnout in the local 2011 elections was “the highest rate registered in history, reaching a total 17,386,263 votes, which represents 56.7% of participation. Compared with the 2007 elections, abstention rates decreased by 1.8%.”<sup>73</sup>

Having reliable, complete, and well organized electoral information is vital not only for citizens who demand greater electoral transparency, but also for political parties themselves. Without reliable information, it is difficult to plan and make strategic decisions. If the *Registraduría* demonstrated political will to reform the ballot (see below), there is no reason to suggest that they would not have the will to consolidate and improve their information data bases.

### **Direct Grant to MOE: Scaling up the Electoral Observation**

As a direct grantee, MOE was able to “scale up” its territorial presence, coordinate electoral risk maps (see below), train party and citizen electoral observers, and undertake the most widespread online reporting project for allegations of irregularities. In 2011, MOE deployed 230 observers to 41 municipalities in 11 departments to monitor the voter registration drive conducted by the electoral authorities in the spring of 2011, and then sent 4,466 observers to 397 municipalities in 29 departments (covering 78% of the national electoral list). According to NDI and MOE reports, this represents a 40% increase in the number of municipalities covered in 2011 over the 2007 local elections, and an additional 20% of the electoral list, which was 58% covered in 2007. While NDI was central to helping MOE acquire the technical and budgetary capacity needed to receive direct grants, MOE was by 2011 able to manage a direct grant. The results were strong, as, consistent with the model in many Eastern European and Latin American democratization processes over the last two decades, MOE was able to “bear witness” with hundreds of citizen observers (and hundreds more party polling station representatives, who had an official role in polling station activities) to elections, thereby bringing civil society pressures to bear on election day. The best evidence of MOE’s success may be found in the 2% increase in voter turnout nationwide in 2011, and in the comprehensive website established to field complaints (*pilasconelvoto.com*) collecting 3,918 complaints (more than the *fiscalía*

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<sup>71</sup> Interview with Malcom Córdoba, former governor of Chocó, Bogotá, March 14, 2012.

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Elier Mena, Chocó Registrar Office, Quibdó, March 16, 2012.

<sup>73</sup> Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil. 2012. Balance de las elecciones de autoridades locales, octubre 30 de 2011. Bogotá: Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil. P.8

had received over several prior consecutive electoral cycles), which generated follow-up by government authorities.

### **Assessments of Electoral Risks**

NDI awarded sub-grants to MOE and *Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris* to elaborate and publish electoral risk maps (identification of areas where the risk of electoral fraud was high) and to conduct a study on the linkages between candidates and criminal groups in targeted municipalities before the 2011 elections. The risk maps were used by the Ministry of the Interior to step up the police and military presence in high risk areas during elections. MOE also used the risk maps to mobilize its electoral observers.

*Corporación Nuevo Arco-Iris* conducted a study in 83 municipalities and 29 departments to identify candidates running for the October 2011 elections with alleged ties to criminal organizations. One hundred and six candidates were found to have alleged ties to criminal organizations. The Ministry of the Interior released the list to the public as a way to pressure political parties to clean up their list before the elections. As a result, political parties dropped 1,700 candidates from their lists. The *Registraduría* dropped an additional 866 candidates. Yet, as mentioned before, most of the candidates dropped by the parties stood accused of relatively minor offenses, rather than strong links to criminal organizations. In part, the problem is that such criminal links could not be proven in a court of law anyway; they were based on hearsay and other indirect evidence collected on the ground, mostly through extensive interviews. While most of this information is “public knowledge” in the region, it is hard to prove to the satisfaction of the courts. Yet, the publication and dissemination of the information had a positive effect on voters. Of the 106 candidates identified on *Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris* list, only 36 won the elections. That is, 66% of candidates with alleged links to criminal groups were voted down by the electorate. Still, 36 individuals identified for their links to criminal organizations are now in public office; 21 as mayors and 15 as governors. See Annex 8 and 9 for a copy of the risk maps and a map of governorships with alleged links to paramilitaries.

The information collected through the risk maps and the *Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris* study led the Ministry of the Interior to create a temporary special Reaction Unit for Electoral Transparency, the “*Unidad de Reacción Inmediata para la Transparencia Electoral*” (URIEL) to coordinate between different control institutions before the elections. This Unit includes the *Fiscalía*, the *Procuraduría*, the *Contraloría*, and the *Unidad de Información y Análisis Financiero* (UIAF), a small office linked to the Finance Ministry that had worked on identifying campaign contributions from illegal actors in 2010.<sup>74</sup>

### **Organization of Political Debates**

The EPP Program established several political debate commissions before the 2011 elections. This was an innovative and unprecedented activity in Colombia. While the main purpose of these debate commissions was to encourage candidates to present platforms and proposals in public, according to NDI, these political debate commissions have been institutionalized beyond the electoral period. They are active in bringing in speakers to and public officials to discuss issues of relevance to the community.

The debates held before the 2011 elections were highly successful, according to NDI officials and local partners interviewed, such as *Fundación Cívico Social pro-Cartagena*, FUNCICAR in Cartagena. The debates drew public attention; many people attended and they were broadcast by radio and television stations. Candidates were not used to programs which followed standard debate methodologies. Candidates had to present their party platforms and proposals in a limited time period; questions and answers were monitored by a professional moderator.

According to Carolina Calderón, director of FUNCICAR, “Our organization was responsible for organizing the debate in Carmen de Bolívar, in the Montes de María region. We had to visit all the candidates while NDI lobbied parties in Bogotá to ensure that they all sent representatives to the debate. Some of the party leaders

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<sup>74</sup> See the International Crisis Group Report, p.24

are in jail, so parties sent their legislators as party representatives. It was a total success and quite a challenge to organize a debate in this place, for it was a place that many people deemed as risky. Yet, everyone showed up.”<sup>75</sup>

A less triumphant perspective was offered by a member of the *Fundación Red de Desarrollo y Paz de Montes de María*, a regional NGO, which participated in the debates. According to him, “the candidates who attended the debates were only those that were losing in the opinion polls. Those who were ahead had no incentive to debate anything.”<sup>76</sup>

No data exists to assess the impact of these debates on people’s actual voting behavior. But the debates did teach several candidates to formulate and present their ideas to the public.

To assist in the organization of more political debates, in 2011 USAID awarded a contract to Colombia’s largest newsweekly *Semana* to work with local partners in hosting eight debates in eight provinces. These debates, perhaps the first such regional debates, seem to have helped differentiate and develop party and candidate platforms, although they were not overly well attended (with an average audience size of only 426 according to *Semana* reports). Local co-sponsors complained that *Semana*, a prosperous magazine in the portfolio of well-off investors, did not really need funds to conduct debates which many media sponsor – in other countries – without outside funding. Interviewees also argued that the magazine overshadowed local sponsors, like the Technological University in Chocó.

Representatives of local groups argued that *Semana* “went over the heads” of the other sponsors, taking the credit and doing little to help develop the kind of lasting local networks that the creation of departmental debate commissions (without *Semana*’s participation), hoped to achieve. Indeed, *Semana* convoked the Chocó debate in September 2011, but the local television station aired the debate, and several local groups co-sponsored it, making it a community event.

### **Redesign of the Electoral Ballot**

With strong commitment and endorsement of the *Registraduría*, the Program redesigned the ballot used in the 2011 elections for Municipal Councils, Department Assemblies, and neighborhood councils – the *Juntas de Acción Local*. The main objective of this initiative was to make the ballot “less confusing” for citizens and to reduce the growing tendency of null votes in these elections. The initiative was highly successful, not only in convincing the *Registraduría* of the need for a new ballot and winning their support, but also in the reduction in the number of null votes. According to official data, null votes decreased by 2.03% in the 2011 elections. Although there were still 1,900,063 null votes cast in 2011, the number of null votes decreased by almost 610,000 from the local election of 2007.<sup>77</sup>

### **Promoting Greater Legislative Transparency: Congreso Visible**

Another activity included in this objective, although not related to the EPP objective of supporting transparent and inclusive electoral processes but rather to transparency of the legislative process, was providing support to *Congreso Visible*, an outstanding project run out of Universidad Los Andes which tracks legislative activity, including member “roll call” voting records, and posts the information on its website to allow public access to vital data which is, surprisingly, not otherwise publicly available (even from the

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<sup>75</sup> Interview with Carolina Calderón, Cartagena, March 15, 2012.

<sup>76</sup> Interview with Reinaldo Rafel Manjarrez Munoz, Sincelajo, March 16, 2012.

<sup>77</sup> In the elections for the Department Assemblies, the percentage of null votes decreased from 5.49% in 2011 to 2.24% in 2011. In the elections for Municipal Councils, the percentage of null votes decreased from 7.63% to 4.67% and in elections for neighborhood councils the percentage of null votes decreased from 5.3% to 3.8%. Data obtained from the *Registraduría*, <http://www.registraduria.gov.co/El-rediseño-de-la-tarjeta.html>

Congress itself).<sup>78</sup> The funding has enabled *Congreso Visible* to consolidate, although program outcomes are difficult to assess, especially in relation to the overall objective of the EPP Program.

### **Promoting Greater Transparency in Political Party Finance: *Cuentas Claras***

The program also achieved important outcomes with regard to promoting greater transparency of campaign finance. Working closely with the CNE and Transparency International, the EPP adopted *Cuentas Claras*, financial disclosure software developed by Transparency International to report campaign finances in the 2010 and 2011 elections.<sup>79</sup> CNE compelled political parties to use *Cuentas Claras* software to report their campaign finances. Although as mentioned above, the CNE has limited enforcement capacity, *Cuentas Claras* made great strides by inducing parties to report their financial information on-line to the public. According to NDI and *Registraduría* officials, 83% of candidates complied with this requirement. Yet, the CNE has not had the capacity to review and analyze the filings, and those candidates who failed to comply with the new campaign finance regulation have faced no consequences. Without the enforcement of sanctions, transparency measures will not be sufficient to bring about greater electoral accountability.

## **C. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Provide support to CNE to enhance the agency's capacity to monitor and regulate elections, assist in the agency's efforts to coordinate investigations with the *Registraduría* of alleged electoral irregularities, and help create a documentation center and archive which will allow the CNE to start creating an institutional memory, validate legal precedents, and propagate legal norms and standards. The political will for reform seems to exist at the Ministry of the Interior, and that political will should be leveraged now, as substantial changes are needed.
2. Support the construction of a joint *Registraduría*-CNE information system to allow for much closer coordination between these vital agencies in organizing and conducting elections, and to investigate irregularities. EPP partners could also sign an agreement with the CNE to assist in the creation and implementation of a public library (perhaps in partnership with Colombian law schools and/or international organizations like the Inter-American Human Rights Institute's Center for Electoral Promotion and Assistance – CAPEL – the International Foundation for Electoral Systems – IFES – or the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance – IDEA). Officials at both the *Registraduría* and CNE expressed an interest in such collaboration, and this would be an opportune moment to exploit existing political will.
3. EPP partners should continue to press for the creation of a special electoral crimes unit in the *Fiscalía*. The creation of this unit was recently approved by Congress, but has not been implemented. Best practices dictate that penalizing electoral crimes is an effective deterrent against electoral crimes. In Colombia, the *fiscal* investigators not attending to homicides, rapes, and other urgent crimes involving hostages dedicate their 500-case load energies to a range of tasks, including intellectual property rights, organized crime, and electoral offenses. Opening the office of election-related crimes would provide time for investigations and incentivize would-be criminals to comply with the law. A Memorandum of Understanding with EPP partners to offer technical advice and support for establishing such offices might provide the impetus needed to get them running.

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<sup>78</sup> Mónica Pachón, director of *Congreso Visible* at the Universidad de los Andes, acknowledged that her project is different from the rest of IRI's activities and has indeed little relationship to the overall EPP Objectives. *Congreso Visible* is supported by IRI through renewable short-term contracts. In contrast to NDI, IRI did not have in its cooperative agreement the capacity to issue long-term grants to local organizations and/or institutions. This contracting arrangement limits the capacity of *Congreso Visible* to plan strategically and increase its enormous potential as a depository of critical information on Legislative activities in Colombia. Interview with Mónica Pachón, March 21, 2012.

<sup>79</sup> The program was streamlined to offer public "real time" transparency of party and candidate expenditure filings, and reporting deadlines were tightened to require candidates and parties to file immediately (rather than months after the election).

4. USAID partners should promote the continuation, deepening, and extension of programs to monitor candidate incomes and expenditures, such as *Cuentas Claras*. Through the continued technical support and sponsorship of an EPP program, USAID should consider extending *Cuentas Claras* to cover pre-candidate incomes and expenditures, hold parties accountable for expenses incurred between electoral processes (presently not addressed), and allow parties to readily update their filings as needed (currently not part of the process).
5. Apart from the EPP program, USAID should consider the possibility of negotiating a direct grant to Universidad los Andes to continue to manage and expand *Congreso Visible*. While bearing little relation to EPP objectives as these are presently written, this is a valuable project to increase transparency and accountability of the Colombian Congress. The project is currently limited from reaching its full potential by short-term funding constraints.
6. USAID may wish to rethink offering financial support to *Semana* and other national media outlets in the future, and instead consider offering them “in kind” contributions (such as the free advertising which comes from the privilege of sponsoring debates or of moderating them).
7. EPP implementing partners could encourage Colombian electoral reformers to analyze the efficacy of other monitoring mechanisms, such as closer scrutiny of media expenditures, by far the largest campaign expenditures. In Mexico, the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) directly monitors party media spot “buys,” receiving receipts for these directly from parties and even helping to negotiate costs directly with the media conglomerates. The IFE monitors all major television and radio stations during campaigns, and thus receives independent information (in addition to party disclosures) about party expenditures. Such a system merits consideration in Colombia, where the risk of illicit group funding of electoral campaigns is similarly large.
8. Criminal organizations continue to intimidate voters and electoral observers play a key role in building credibility in elections. Thus it is imperative to continue supporting party poll watchers and electoral observers, particularly in high risk areas which are more vulnerable to capture by criminal groups, as electoral observer and citizen complaints have provided the best (and perhaps only) “leads” regarding irregularities. Efforts should also increase to strengthen the capacity of civil organizations to monitor candidates and examine their potential linkages to criminal organizations. To maximize impact, these activities should be conducted at the departmental level, rather than just in few municipalities. Democratic consolidation in Eastern Europe and other Latin American cases occurred by fortifying institutions, but after the empowerment of civil society provided some initial checks on these institutions. More than any other Latin American nation of similar size, Colombia needs checks on its electoral institutions.
9. Similarly, the program should increase efforts to strengthen political parties’ internal mechanisms to monitor and vet their candidates. These efforts should be directed at the departmental level, where national parties can have a larger impact and become more directly involved with regional and local politics. Some initiatives may include the inclusion of incentives (such as state funds for parties) if parties successfully vet candidates with ties to illicit groups, and disincentives (in the form of fines and punishments, as written into current law), if they do not. USAID may also consider extending the Government of Colombia’s *Unidad de Reacción Inmediata para la Transparencia Electoral* (URIEL) – a Unit created by the Ministry of the Interior to coordinate control agencies<sup>80</sup> – beyond electoral periods. Again, extant political will should be exploited to extend this inter-agency task force’s scope, which is only during electoral campaigns.

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<sup>80</sup> This Unit includes the *Fiscalía*, the *Procuraduría*, the *Contraloría*, and the *Unidad de Información y Análisis Financiero* (UIAF), a small office linked to the Finance Ministry that identified campaign contributions from illegal actors in 2010. See International Crisis Group Report, p.24.

10. USAID should consider allowing implementing partners to observe elections in more departments and municipalities. Comprehensive national electoral observation, particularly in nations like Colombia where blatant electoral fraud is still a common occurrence, allows for the compilation of baseline data on how elections transpired, region by region.
11. Continue to support local organizations that advocate in favor of national electoral reforms to increase party discipline in electoral processes through the following:
  - a) Allow closed electoral lists to give parties more control over who runs and who wins elections and allow them to better control candidates;
  - b) Encourage electoral financing administered by parties directly rather than “passing through” to their candidates. This would also give parties more control over their candidates and thus allow them to more readily vet candidates;
  - c) Increase the threshold of votes needs for parties to survive, thereby reducing the number of parties and increasing the accountability of each remaining party to voters and constituents;
  - d) Consider legalizing reelection for mayors and governors, who currently cannot be immediately reelected. This would increase their accountability to citizens and civil society.
  - e) Train national and local media outlets on electoral processes and on how to report electoral irregularities. Given the government’s minimal capacity to investigate electoral irregularities, the media could increase societal pressure, especially if journalists are properly trained. Furthermore, the media should monitor parties and clarify candidate platforms;
  - f) Plan to include business, a potential partner for party transparency and accountability;
  - g) Establish budgetary support for the CNE (apart from the Registry) to increase CNE’s autonomy and;
  - h) Reform the method of selecting magistrates to the CNE.

## VI. LESSONS LEARNED

After five years of program implementation and the accomplishment of important results, some lessons emerge for programs designed to strengthen political parties and electoral institutions.

### **Balance short-term electoral activities with long-term citizen and party strengthening goals**

One of the most important lessons is that strengthening political parties and electoral institutions is a long-term process that needs to be supported at the national level. To be effective, programs need to be planned more strategically, above and beyond particular electoral cycles.

### **Require a national and departmental level focus for party strengthening activities**

Similarly, political parties and electoral institutions need to be supported following a top-down approach: working with these institutions at the national level first and then building structures at the departmental and municipal levels. Parties cannot be effectively strengthened from the bottom up, especially when no party structure exists or worse, where local structures are captured by illegal groups. As one NGO leader in Cartagena recognized, “we would have never gone down to work in the Montes de María region if USAID had not supported us first here in Cartagena.”<sup>81</sup>

### **Generate citizen confidence in elections through electoral observation**

Another lesson learned is that electoral observation in Colombia serves an important symbolic as well as technical purpose and should be supported nationwide (rather than just in Consolidation Zones) in order to improve the validity of statistical data as well as overall credibility. Several interviewees complained about resource-driven limitations and, on occasion, geographical constraints imposed upon electoral observation support by MOE, which achieved strong results, possesses a technical capacity meeting international standards, and carries the credibility and familiarity with local terrain which come from being a Colombian organization. While conflict zones may well help define security interests, elections and political processes know no such boundaries and require national coverage and programmatic flexibility.

### **Balance support for civil society with support for the construction of stronger electoral institutions**

Finally, civil society plays a pivotal role in reducing electoral risks and increasing confidence in elections, but the emphasis on training civil society groups needs to be balanced by an emphasis on developing institutions which will endure and deepen Colombia’s shallow democracy. For example, without autonomy, the CNE cannot perform its function of monitoring the *Registraduría*, and in the absence of a dedicated electoral court or a judicial body charged with initial investigation of complaints, that function remains with the CNE, and with the Judicial State Council (in legal appeals). Also, the establishment of an office for a special prosecutor (*fiscal especial*) for electoral crimes was also approved in the 2009 electoral reform, although the office has not been launched, and in its absence, almost no attention is given to penalizing criminals in this area. These institutions are basic to the conduct of credible institutions, but have not been given needed attention because authorities have taken for granted Colombian democracy.

Colombia’s electoral processes have been heavily tainted by the “*Parapolítica*” scandal which sent 25 congressional members to jail. Without institutional checks, citizen and media watchdogs, and the development over time of higher standards of civic responsibility on the part of parties, voters, and government officials, “hot” conflict may cease, but no real alternative will present. If citizens cannot discern a real alternative to the illicit group “capture” of the public space that they have been subjected to now for decades, there will be no normalization of civic life in Colombia. USAID’s Democracy and Human Rights Office needs to balance civil society strengthening with institutional strengthening, to have a more proscribed, quicker, and enduring impact on Colombia’s democratic development.

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<sup>81</sup> Interview with Carolina Calderón, director of FUNCICAR, March 15, 2012.

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3. Ampudia, Alberto Guillermo; Technological University of Chocó; Vice President of Extended Education; 3/15/2012; Quibdó
4. Archila, Gabriel Eduardo. MIRA. Electoral Strategy Office. 3/22/2012; Bogotá
5. Asprilla, Erika; Independent Movement of Absolute Renovation(MIRA); Chocó Political Director; 3/15/2012; Quibdó
6. Ávila Martínez, Ariel Fernando; Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris; Coordinator of the Armed Conflict Observation; 3/12/2012; Bogotá
7. Baena, Carlos; MIRA; Senator, Independent Movement of Absolute Renovation (MIRA); National Director; 3/20/2012; Bogotá
8. Barrios, Alejandra; Misión de Observación Electoral (MOE); Director; 3/9/2012 and 3/21/2012; Bogotá
9. Beltrán, (Bishop) Nel; Diocese of Sucre; Bishop; 3/16/2012; Sincelejo
10. Bolaños, Rafael; Liberal Party (PL); Former Quibdó City Councilor; 3/16/2012; Quibdó
11. Calderón, Carolina; Fundación Cívico Social Pro-Cartagena (FUNCICAR), Director; 3/15/2012; Cartagena
12. Chadid, Ramiro; Sucre's Governor Office; Advisor to the Health Secretary; 3/16/2012; Sincelejo
13. Chisholm, Don; United States Agency for International Development (USAID); Office of Democracy and Human Rights Deputy Director; 3/8/2012 and 3/21/2012; Bogotá
14. Córdoba, Malcom Alí; former governor of Chocó; 3/14/2012; Bogotá
15. Correa, Lina María; Fundación Montes de María; Volunteer; 3/16/2012; Sincelejo
16. Díaz Hinestroza, César; Social Unity Party (PSUN), Chocó Secretariat; President; 3/16/2012; Quibdó
17. Díaz Lorduy, Mario; Quibdó's Mayoral Office; General Aide and Coordinator of International Assistance; 3/15/2012; Quibdó
18. Elliot, Patrick; National Democratic Institute (NDI); program officer; Latin America and the Caribbean; 3/1/2012; Washington, DC
19. Escandón, Marcela; Political Science Institute; Director of Research; 3/14/2012; Bogotá
20. Escobar, Carlos; House of Representatives; Afrocolombian Caucus and former mayor of Quibdó; 3/14/2012; Bogotá
21. Fernández, Katiuska; Sucre's Governor Office; Government's Secretary; 3/16/2012; Sincelejo

22. Galeano, Juan Carlos; National Attorney General's (*fiscal*) Office; Chocó Office Director; 3/16/2012; Quibdó
23. Galvis, Miguel Antonio; ASI. Legislative and Political Advisor to Senator Marco Avirama. 3/13/2012; Bogotá
24. Galvis Cobo, Soraya; Conservative Party; Secretary of Women's Issues; 3/20/2012; Bogotá
25. Gamboa, Óscar; Presidential Program for Afro-Colombians; Director; 3/9/2012; Bogotá
26. García Vega, Eduardo; Technological University of Chocó; President; 3/15/2012; Quibdó
27. García, (Father) Napoleón; Diocese of Chocó; Priest; 3/16/2012; Quibdó
28. García-Sánchez, Miguel; University of the Andes; researcher-professor on elections and conflict; 3/14/2012
29. Gómez, Jenny Carolina. MIRA. Advisor to Senator Baena. 3/22/2012; Bogotá
30. González, Ivonne; Liberal Party (PL); National Women's Director; 3/21/2012; Bogotá
31. Herrero, Francisco; National Democratic Institute (NDI); Director NDI Colombia; 3/8/2012 and 3/10/2012; Bogotá
32. León, Pablo; National Democratic Institute (NDI); Program Coordinator; 3/8/2012; Bogotá
33. Lopera Plata, Andrea del Pilar; Misión de Observación Electoral (MOE); National Administrative Coordinator; 3/9/2012; Bogotá
34. Lozano, Angélica; Bogotá City Council; Bogotá City Counselor; 3/9/2012; Bogotá
35. Malo, Lucy; United States Agency for International Development (USAID); Office of Democracy and Human Rights Development Specialist; 3/8/2012 and 3/21/2012; Bogotá
36. Manjarrez Muñoz, Reinaldo Rafael; Fundación Red de Desarrollo y Paz Montes de María. Construcción de lo Público. 3/16/2012; Sincelejo.
37. Martínez, Sandra; Transparency for Colombia; 3/22/2012; Bogotá
38. Martínez, Ramiro; Director of Directorio Partido Conservador in Sucre. 3/16/2012; Sincelejo.
39. Menco González, Edgardo; Fundación Red de Desarrollo y Paz Montes de María. Reconstrucción del Tejido Social. 3/16/2012; Sincelejo
40. Mena, Elier; Chocó Registrar Office; General Registrar; 3/16/2012; Quibdó
41. Méndez, Doris; National Electoral Council; Director of Communications and International Relations; 3/13/2012; Bogotá
42. Mitre, Mario; National Democratic Institute (NDI); program manager; Latin America and the Caribbean; 3/1/2012; Washington
43. Montero, Rosa; Liberal Party (PL); National Youth Director; 3/15/2012; Cartagena
44. Moreno López, Nervita; Chocoan Women Network; founder and affiliate; 3/16/2012; Quibdó
45. Moya Mena, Albeiro; Alternative Democratic Pole (POLO); Vice President for Chocó; 3/15/2102; Quibdó

46. Mudge, Kathryn; National Democratic Institute (NDI); senior program manager; Latin America and the Caribbean; 3/1/2012; Washington
47. Muñoz, Carlos; International Republican Institute (IRI); Resident Program Officer; 8/3/2012; Bogotá
48. Murgueitio Millán, Fernando Mauricio; Conservative Party; National Communications Director; 3/20/2012; Bogotá
49. Navarrete, Juan Gabriel; Misión de Observación Electoral (MOE); National Judicial Coordinator; 3/9/2012 and 3/21/2012; Bogotá
50. Núñez, Paola; Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris; Researcher; 12/3/2012; Bogotá
51. Olarve, Luis Ernesto; Independent Movement of Absolute Renovation (MIRA); 3/14/2012; Bogotá
52. Ortiz, Alcides; National Registrar's Office; Electoral Census Director; 3/12/2012; Bogotá
53. Ortiz, Viviana; Cambio Radical (CR); Director of Training; 3/22/2012; Bogotá
54. Pachón, Mónica; Congreso Visible; Director; 3/14/2012 and 3/21/2012; Bogotá
55. Palaigua, Pablo. Corporación Afro-Colombiana/Mesa Afro-Colombiana. 3/16/2012; Sincelejo.
56. Palma Palma, Maribel; National Democratic Institute (NDI); Program Coordinator; 3/8/2012; Bogotá
57. Peña, Edilberto; National Registrar Office; Electoral Logistics Director; 3/12/2012; Bogotá
58. Peñuela, Mónica; USAID; 3/21/2012; Bogotá
59. Pinzón, Nicolás; National Registrar Office; Advisor to Electoral Logistics Director; 3/12/2012; Bogotá
60. Plata, José Joaquín Albarracín; National Electoral Council; Magistrate representing minority parties; 3/13/2012; Bogotá
61. Posada, León Dario; Independent Social Alliance (ASI); Antioquia director; 3/13/2012; Bogotá
62. Quiroga, Daniel; Ministry of the Interior; Sub-Director for Democracy, Citizen Participation, and Communal Action; 3/20/2012; Bogotá
63. Rimkunas, Katya; International Republican Institute (IRI); program officer; Latin American & Caribbean; 3/05/2012; Washington
64. Rincón, María Amparo; Diocese of Sucre; Assistant to Monseñor Beltrán; 3/16/2012; Sincelejo
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72. Ruiz, Mario; International Republican Institute (IRI); Program Officer; 3/8/2012; Bogotá
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83. Swigert, Jim; National Democratic Institute (NDI); senior associate and regional director; Latin America and the Caribbean; 3/1/2012; Washington
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# ANNEX 3. NDI RESULTS FRAMEWORK, INDICATORS AND COMMENTS

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
Result 1	Political parties are more responsive, transparent and effective	N/A	<p>Result if too lofty; it is beyond NDI's manageable interests. Should be narrowed down to identify more realistic (achievable) results.</p> <p>No indicator is identified at this high level.</p> <p>Difficult to measure outcomes without an indicator at this level.</p> <p>Results and indicators do not reflect level of party strength measured as: degree of articulation between national and regional/local structures; presence at the subnational level; ideological and programmatic coherence; or control over candidate selection.</p>	<p><b>Result:</b> Political parties in Colombia are more effective in controlling the candidates they endorse to run for office</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of candidates with alleged ties to illicit groups are vetoed from party's lists (disaggregated by party--requires a study of candidate profiles).</p> <p>b)Percentage of candidates with alleged ties to illicit groups elected to office (disaggregated by party).</p> <p>c) Electoral volatility (share of political parties' votes as measured in consecutive elections)—this is a proxy indicator of greater abilities by parties to control candidates. Lower volatility would indicate stronger political presence. In theory, parties should be more effective in controlling candidates than independent social movements. Non-traditional political movements and citizen groups would seemingly be more vulnerable to capture</p>	<p>NDI played a significant role in the passage of important electoral and political reforms that significantly increase the transparency, accountability and representativeness of political parties in Colombia (the Political Reform of 2009 and the Electoral Law 1475 of 2011)</p> <p>Parties faced greater pressure to vet their candidates in the 2011 elections. Arco Iris' risk maps and candidate lists effectively helped to increase public pressure on parties and to increase the demand for greater integrity of their candidates.</p> <p>Parties dropped 1700 candidates from their lists after the Arco-Iris list was published. The Registraduría dropped an additional 866 candidates (2% of total number of candidates) on technicalities. These candidates were excluded because of the relatively minor issues that could be readily proven, not because of their alleged links to illegal groups (more difficult to show, and requiring legal judgement). According to Arco Iris, many candidates with alleged links to illegal groups in the 83 municipalities included in their study, stayed in the parties' list. But 66% of these candidates were voted down by the electorate.</p> <p>Still, 33% of candidates identified by Arco Iris</p>

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
				by criminal groups.	as questionable for their alleged links to criminal groups won elections at the local level.  Some parties' share of national vote increased—but non-traditional political movements and citizen groups picked up some half of Colombian governorships.
<b>Sub-Result 1.1</b>	<b>Parties and candidates use more systematic campaign methodologies</b>	1.1.1. Number of individuals who receive USG-assisted political party training	<p>Result and objective are not measurable. What are “systematic campaign methodologies”?</p> <p>Result articulated as activity; not as a result.</p> <p>Indicator is an F indicator.</p> <p>Not clear how this result and indicator relate to Result 1.</p>	<p><b>Sub-Result:</b> Political parties have a stronger party identity.</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of voters who identify with a political party (requires a survey—such as LAPOP or others). b) Number of voters who can identify parties' platform positions (requires a survey).</p> <p><b>Lower level result (output):</b> Parties and candidates have acquired skills to articulate party platforms to voters.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Number of targeted parties and candidates who are able to articulate their party platforms to the public (requires development of a measurement tool to identify acquired skills).</p>	<p>Political Debates Commissions were established at the subnational level. According to NDI these commissions have now been institutionalized and survive beyond the electoral period.</p> <p>Debates held before the 2011 local elections were unprecedented in Colombia's history: Candidates were not used to debating following standard debate methodologies and with professional moderator. Candidates had to present their party platforms and proposals in a limited period of time; questions and answers were monitored by a professional moderator; and debates were broadcast by radio and television stations. Yet anecdotal evidence collected in interviews suggests that candidates ahead in the pre-electoral polls did not attend the debates.</p> <p>No information is provided to analyze the outcomes of these debates on voters' behavior.</p> <p>Candidates and party leaders have acquired skills to articulate party platforms in a debate format.</p>

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
		1.2.2 Number of political parties or political groupings receiving USG assistance to articulate platform and policy agenda effectively	F indicator.  This indicator does not measure outcomes; it measures inputs—training received.	See above.	See above.
<b>Sub-Result 1.2</b>	<b>Parties regularly use tools for internal and external transparency</b>	1.2.1 Caucuses adopt tools to improve oversight and accountability	Sub-Result is stated as an activity. It is not clear what internal and external transparency mean.  Indicator is an activity; not an indicator. It is also not clear how it relates to the Sub-Result. .	<b>Sub-Result:</b> Parties report financial information (campaign financial information and information about operating costs) in <i>Cuentas Claras</i> .  <b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of parties that report financial information in Cuentas Claras  b) Number of parties that publicize financial information in their web pages	<i>Cuentas Claras</i> software has been adopted by the CNE to report campaign finances. For the first time in Colombia 100,000 candidates were required to submit reports to the CNE using <i>Cuentas Claras</i> . 83% of total number of candidates complied with this requirement.  NDI lobbied effectively to convince CNE to adopt the software and make its usage mandatory.
		1.2.2. Parties adopt tools to increase transparency	Indicator reads the same as the Sub-Result. Indicator is articulated as an activity.		See above.
<b>Sub-Result 1.3</b>	<b>Parties use more responsive strategies for policy development</b>	1.3.1 Parties receiving USG assistance clearly incorporate proposals from think tanks or civil society organizations	Sub-Result is articulated as an activity. Not clear what the expected result is.  Indicator is not related to the result. What is “more responsive”? To whom? To constituencies? Civil society organizations? Think tanks? Funders?	<b>Sub-Result:</b> Political parties are more receptive to citizens’ inputs.  <b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of party platforms that incorporate proposals generated in consultations with citizens.  b) Number of parties that change their platforms as a result of consultations.	<i>Café Compromiso</i> meetings were held. These meetings allowed citizens to express their demands to candidates. For the first time, something like this was done in Colombia. Yet, we do not know how many parties incorporated citizen’s concerns in their platforms or whether these meetings had any impact on voters’ behavior.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
				<p>c) Number of party platforms that incorporate proposals generated by think tanks.</p> <p>d) Number of parties that discuss issues raised in local consultations at the national level.</p>	
<b>Sub-Result 1.4</b>	<b>Parties implement procedures to increase internal democracy</b>	1.4.1. NDI workshop participants adopt proposed campaign techniques	<p>Sub-Result articulated as an activity. Furthermore, it is unclear what internal democracy means.</p> <p>Indicator is an activity; not an indicator. Not clear how indicator relates to sub-result.</p>	<p><b>Sub-Result:</b> Internal democratic procedures established in targeted political parties</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of parties that hold conventions to vote on important party decisions (party platforms; candidate selection; policy positions)</p> <p>b) Number of parties that have established internal institutional mechanisms for representing minorities.</p> <p>c) Number of parties that have institutionalized procedures for communicating and coordinating between the national and subnational levels.</p> <p>d) Number of senators that visit department level party office “<i>directorios</i>.”</p>	Parties are updating and publishing their statutes and holding internal national conventions in accordance with new party regulations. NDI has assisted parties in formulating and publishing their statutes. Yet, it is less clear if parties are holding conventions as a result of NDI’s support or as a response to new legal requirements.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
<b>Result 2</b>	<b>Afro-Colombians, IDPs and women are more involved in political processes</b>	2.1 Increased number of women and Afro-Colombians elected to Congress or subnational posts through national congressional elections and subnational elections, for target municipalities	Good result and good indicator  (Although indicator should be stated in neutral form, rather than as increase or decrease-i.e. number of women and Afro-Colombians elected....).	Clarify the role of NDI in the achievement of this result.	<p>Number of women candidates on party lists increased—190% increase in number of women candidates for local office compared to 2007-- but not sure this is an NDI result of the result of the law being implemented for the first time.</p> <p>Number of elected women to city councils, mayoral seats and subnational legislatures increased—evidence suggest they were more successful in councils and mayors and less in departmental assemblies.</p> <p>Women elected officials have been receiving training. No outcome of this training has been identified.</p> <p>No information was provided to assess whether or not the number of Afro-Colombians elected to office increased. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some parties increased the number of Afro-Colombian candidates in their lists. In large part, the problem of assessing the number of Afro-Colombians candidates and/or voters is that there is no reliable data on ethnicity in Colombia.</p> <p>Afro-Colombians continue to be underrepresented at the national level and subnational level—Afro-Colombians represent an estimated 25% of the population and in the national congress (265 members) they are less than 2% of the national congress.</p> <p>In Choco, 57% of candidates were Afro-Colombian, a region that has 95% Afro-Colombian population. In Bolivar, 4% of the candidates were Afro-Colombian. In Sucre, 3% of candidates were Afro-Colombian.</p>

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
					<p>No credible statistics exist at this point, in part because there does not yet exist effective Afro-Colombian identification in the Colombian census.</p> <p>Afro Colombian women (in Choco) who participated in workshops increased their chances of being elected—but no data is provided.</p> <p>566 women participated as candidates in Choco and in Montes de Maria 143. Not sure if this is attributable to NDI or to the implementation of the law (quotas).</p>
		2.2 Number of measures adopted by USG supported political parties, civil society organizations and GOC institutions to increase inclusion of vulnerable populations	<p>Good indicator, but this is lower level (output); not sure that by adopting measures, parties are in fact being more inclusive. Measures can be used to pay lip service to the cause.</p> <p>Nothing has been reported on IDPs.</p>	Number of laws addressing women and Afro-Colombians issues passed by Congress.	<p>Conservative Party created a secretariat for women's issues; Cambio Radical also created a gender secretariat.</p> <p>Other parties have created structures to deal with Afro-Colombians and women's issues.</p> <p>NDI had a positive role in the passage of Law 1475, which established quotas for women candidates.</p>
<b>Sub-Result 2.1</b>	<b>Parties are more inclusive of Afro-</b>	2.1.1. Number of women and Afro-Colombians	Good result and indicator, but repetitive of Result 2 and indicator 2.1 and 2.2	Number of women and Afro Colombians on party lists in focus departments and municipalities.	See above.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
	<b>Colombians, IDP and women</b>	participating in national congressional elections and subnational elections for targeted municipalities			
		2.1.2. Number of parties that generate substantive proposals at the departmental or municipal level on issues affecting Afro-Colombians, women, and IDPs	Not a clear indicator. What is "substantial proposal"? How do we measure that?	Number of parties that develop policy proposals to address issues related to women and Afro-Colombians.	No outcomes identified.
		2.1.3. Number of USG assisted political parties implementing programs to increase number of candidates and members who are women, youth and marginalized	F Indicator.		
		2.1.4. Representatives of political parties have increased knowledge of tools to collect citizen input and develop public policies	Reads like a result; not an indicator.	Number of party representatives that demonstrate increased knowledge of tools to collect citizen input (output indicator)—requires development of a measurement tool to assess acquired knowledge.	Anecdotal evidence suggests that women who participated in NDI trainings believed they acquired valuable skills that will help them in the future. Yet no systematic indicators exist to demonstrate acquired skills.
<b>Sub-Result 2.2.</b>	<b>Afro-Colombians, IDPs and women can more effectively advocate for their interests</b>	2.2.1. CSO participants in NDI workshops have increased knowledge of advocacy tools	Good result. The indicator measures outputs: increased knowledge of advocacy tools. Indicator does not measure outcomes: whether the tools were used for advocacy activities.	<b>Sub-Result:</b> Afro-Colombians, IDPs and women organizations have greater capacity to advocate for their interests.  <b>Indicator:</b> Number of CSOs who engage in advocacy activities using acquired advocacy tools.	No outcomes identified.
		2.2.2. Citizens participate in initiatives to identify priority issues	This is an activity, not an indicator. Not clear how this indicator is related to the Sub-Result 2.2.	See above.	No outcomes identified.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
		for their communities			
		2.2.3 Number of Afro-Colombians, IDPs and women who become more informed of tools to engage in political processes through program activities	<p>Listed as cross-cutting indicator.</p> <p>Measuring low level output—skills acquired, not clear how data will be collected—participation in workshops not an indicator for skills acquired.</p>	<b>Indicator:</b> Number of grassroots organizations using acquired advocacy tools to advance the interests of their communities.	No outcomes identified. No evidence that women and/or Afro-Colombian organizations are using advocacy tools acquired through NDI training. Furthermore, no evidence exists that these grassroots organizations are better related to advocacy organizations at the regional and/or national level.
<b>Result 3</b>	<b>Electoral processes are more transparent</b>	N/A	<p>The Result is difficult to measure—definition of “more transparent” is needed.</p> <p>Difficult to measure outcomes without an indicator at this high level result.</p>	<p><b>Result:</b> Voters have greater confidence in elections.</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> a) Voter turnout (proxy for greater confidence; high voter turnout would indicate greater confidence).</p> <p>b) Number of citizen reports on electoral irregularities (proxy indicator; greater number of citizen reports indicates citizens have greater trust that these reports will be heard and addressed).</p> <p>c) Percentage of candidates with alleged links to criminal organizations that are defeated at the polls (disaggregated by party and region)—requires a study like the one conducted by Arco Iris prior to the elections.</p>	<p>NDI played a significant role in supporting Colombian groups advocating for an electoral reform that increased penalties for parties supporting candidates with links to criminal organizations. The law also makes parties more transparent in reporting candidates’ incomes and campaign expenditures.</p> <p>Electoral observation increased; anecdotal evidence suggests electoral observation increased voter confidence in elections.</p> <p>Reports on electoral irregularities increased—MOE created <i>pilasconelvoto.com</i> website for ordinary citizens to report electoral irregularities. Roughly 80% of the reports the government received were submitted by ordinary citizens using MOE’s website.</p> <p>MOE collected 3,918 reports of irregularities in just 2011, proportionally more than all the reports received by the <i>Fiscalía</i> over several consecutive electoral cycles in the past.</p> <p>Arco-Iris’ list of candidates with alleged ties to criminal organizations was published with the support of the Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p>This publication of lists of candidates with alleged illicit ties increased pressure on parties and exposed candidates to voters.</p>

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
					<p>Risk maps by Arco Iris and MOE were used by Ministry of the Interior to pressure parties to clean up their lists and also to step up police and military presence in high risk areas during elections.</p> <p>66% of candidates with alleged ties to illicit groups lost the elections.</p> <p><i>Cuentas Claras</i> was adopted by to report campaign finances.</p> <p>Electoral turnout increased in key regions—although no statistical information is available to confirm this result.</p>
<b>Sub-Result 3.1</b>	<b>Political parties oversee elections</b>	3.1.1. Increased number of trained party poll watchers present on the day of the election, for parties receiving USG assistance in target municipalities	Good Sub-Result and indicator. Yet, not clear how this Sub-Result relates to the overall Result 3. Presence in elections does not necessarily mean greater capacity to oversee elections.	<p><b>Sub-Result:</b> Political parties have greater capacity to oversee elections.</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of trained party poll watchers present the day of the election.</p> <p>b) Number of reports of fraud and/or electoral irregularities submitted by party poll watchers.</p>	Number of party poll watchers monitoring elections in 2011 increased.
		3.1.2. Number of party poll watchers and ToT trainers who received technical assistance on NDI methodologies	This indicator measures inputs, not results.	<b>Indicator:</b> Number of party poll watchers and ToT trainers that can demonstrate knowledge on electoral monitoring—requires development of some measurement tool to assess acquired knowledge.	See above.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
		3.1.3. Number of party strategies to recruit, train and deploy poll watchers	This indicator could be improved to measure an outcome (buy in and interest of parties in watching elections); not just an output.	<b>Indicator:</b> Number of additional poll watchers trained by parties replicating NDI workshops.	No outcomes identified.
<b>Sub-Result 3.2</b>	<b>Domestic groups implement systematic observation strategies</b>	3.2.1. Number of trained domestic observers present on election day with NDI support	<p>The Sub-Result is articulated as an activity; not a result.</p> <p>The indicator is well formulated, but does not measure the result—no evidence that domestic observers trained by NDI have increased knowledge on electoral observation.</p>	<p><b>Sub-Result:</b> Citizens have greater capacity to monitor elections.</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of trained observers filing satisfactory electorate reports.</p> <p>b) Number of poll watchers observing elections in conflict risk zones.</p>	<p>Citizen poll watchers trained by MOE and NDI actually mobilized and monitored elections on election day. In 2011 electoral observation became more comprehensive, covering many more regions. Presence in 397 municipalities and in 29 departments, which account for 78% of the national voter list.</p> <p>No information exists on the quality and quantity of reports filed by these observers.</p> <p>MOE identified areas of high electoral risk and mobilized observers accordingly. These maps also allowed the police and representatives of "control" institutions (<i>fiscalía, procuraduría, contraloría</i> and UAIF) to monitor those areas more carefully.</p>
		3.2.2. Number of domestic election observers trained with USG assistance	F Indicator		
<b>Sub-Result 3.3</b>	<b>Governmental and political institutions take steps to mitigate electoral risks.</b>	3.3.1. Number of measures adopted by electoral institutions and civil society organizations to increase transparency in electoral processes	Sub-Result is articulated as an activity; Indicator is virtually identical to Sub-Result. Indicator is vague; not easy to measure.	<p><b>Sub-Result:</b> Electoral risk decreased.</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of police officers assigned to high risk areas before and after the elections.</p> <p>b) Number of electoral observers assigned to high risk areas.</p>	<p>Arco Iris lists were published. MOI pushed for the publication of this list and increased the pressure on control agencies to investigate these allegations.</p> <p>Citizens did not vote for the majority candidates listed in Arco-Iris list. 66% of candidates with alleged ties to illicit groups lost the elections (only 83 municipalities surveyed).</p> <p>Electoral violence decreased from previous</p>

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
				<p>c) Number of reports on electoral irregularities submitted by observers stationed in high risk areas.</p> <p>d) Number of reports issued by URIEL on mitigation of electoral risk.</p>	<p>years—but 41 candidates were assassinated before the elections.</p> <p>Ministry of the Interior created a special unit “Unidad de Reacción Inmediata para la Transparencia Electoral” (URIEL) to coordinate and cross information between different “control” institutions before the elections. No information exists on URIEL’s effectiveness or its impact in mitigating electoral risks.</p>
		3.3.2. Increased use of clear accounts software by political parties receiving USG assistance in 2011 and 2014 elections	This is a result. Not an indicator.	<b>Indicator:</b> Number of parties complying with campaign finance reporting requirements.	<p><i>Cuentas Claras</i> was used to report campaign finance information. 83% of candidates complied with the requirement.</p> <p>No information exists on what happened to those candidates who did not comply with this requirement. NDI states that in order to receive refunds based on votes, all candidates on a particular list need to submit reports (or the party would not receive that money). However, no evidence exists that this information was accurate. The CNE has not reviewed this information. Although the information is now available electronically, parties still had to submit physical reports. These reports are stored in 79 boxes in CNE’s basement. No one has been assigned to investigate these reports. CNE has limited staff to investigate reports submitted by political parties</p>
		3.3.3. Number of individuals who receive USG assisted assistance on <i>Cuentas Claras</i> usage	This indicator tracks inputs, not results.	<b>Indicator:</b> Number of individuals receiving assistance on how to use <i>Cuentas Claras</i> who demonstrate acquired knowledge (some measurement tool needs to be developed).	See above.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
<b>Sub-Result 3.4</b>	<b>Voters access accurate information to enable them to cast an informed vote</b>	3.4.1. Number of citizens who have access to information to enable them to make an informed voting decision	Sub-Result is articulated as an activity. Sub-Result and Indicator are indistinguishable.	<p><b>Sub-Result:</b> Voters cast a more informed vote.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Number of citizens who said they voted in favor of the candidate who represents their interests (this requires a survey).</p>	<p>Candidate debates were unprecedented. Yet no evidence exists to measure whether these debates influenced voters' behavior.</p> <p>Meetings between candidates and citizens were held; candidates had an opportunity to hear citizens' concerns. Yet, no evidence exists that these meetings influenced voters' behavior. Moreover, according to interviews, candidates that were ahead on pre-electoral polls did not attend these meetings and/or debates.</p> <p><i>Votebien.com</i> allows citizens to obtain information about their candidates. 245,000 Colombians visited the site. Yet no evidence exists that access to this information influenced voters' behavior.</p>
		3.4.2. Number of individuals receiving voter and civic education through USG assisted programs	Indicator does not measure the result.	<b>Indicator:</b> Number of people who received voter and civic education who reported they were satisfied with the education they received and said that would influence their vote.	See above.

# ANNEX 4. IRI RESULTS FRAMEWORK, INDICATORS AND COMMENTS

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
<b>Result 1</b>	<b>Political parties at the national level develop and communicate strong, issue- based party platforms that respond to pressing citizen concerns</b>	N/A	<p>Not clear what the result— i.e. expected outcome-- is.</p> <p>Parties are not regarded as more programmatic or more issue based.</p> <p>Candidates still pick the party, not the other way around.</p>	<p><b>Result:</b> Parties capacity to respond to pressing citizen concerns increased.</p> <p>(Important to define what “pressing citizen concerns” are).</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b></p> <p>a) Number of legislative initiatives introduced by parties addressing pressing citizen concerns (disaggregated by party and/or legislative committees).</p> <p>b) Electoral results (proxy to measure responsiveness to citizens’ concerns) disaggregated by region, ethnicity, gender—if parties increase their electoral support, it can be presumed that citizens are satisfied with the party’s performance.</p>	<p>Electoral reform passed by Congress (Law 1475—important reforms that increase the accountability and responsibility of parties in Colombia).</p> <p>Anti-discrimination law passed by Congress. IRI played an important role generating support in Congress for this reform.</p>
<b>Sub-Result 1.1</b>	<b>National level political parties establish or strengthen think tanks that generate policy research</b>	1.1.1 Established think tanks develop policy papers and proposals.	<p>Results and indicators are stated as activities—no results identified.</p> <p>Indicator does not measure any results. IRI supported party think tanks but no evidence exists that these think tanks had a significant role in making parties more programmatic or helping</p>	<p><b>Sub-Result:</b> Legislative initiatives informed by solid policy analysis developed by party think tanks.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> a) Number of legislative initiatives that effectively include policy recommendations developed by think tanks.</p>	No outcomes identified.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
			<p>parties increase electoral performance.</p> <p>Elections are still driven by candidates.</p> <p>Issue based and programmatic documents did not seem to have enduring value or to inform parties, especially at the local level.</p> <p>Think tanks do not seem to inform legislators—ICP was more instrumental in producing an influential policy paper on discrimination than the parties' think tanks.</p>	<p>b): Number of local development plans (four-year planning documents) that contain ideas and programs mentioned by party think tanks.</p>	
		1.1.2. New parties establish and strengthen think tank structures.	<p>This is an activity; not an indicator. Few results identified .</p>		<p>IRI helped ASI establish its Think Tank.</p> <p>No further outcomes of the establishment and/or support of party Think Tanks can be identified, although IRI reports that it helped to re-establish the <i>Instituto de Pensamiento Liberal</i> (IPL) of the Liberal Party, and the Carlos Lleras Restrepo Foundation of the Radical Change Party and helped update the Conservative Party's <i>Corporacion Pensamiento Siglo XXI</i> .</p>
<b>Sub-Result 1.2</b>	<b>Political parties at national level use policy research proposals produced by think tanks, civil society and others to develop issue based platforms</b>	1.2.1. Parties develop issue-based platforms based on polling data research.	<p>Sub result s1.1 and 2.2 are indistinguishable. Not clear what the result is.</p> <p>Sub result 1.2 and Indicator 1.2.1 are articulated as activities.</p>	<p>Sub-Result and indicators recommended for sub-result 1.1 can be used.</p> <p>This sub-result can be eliminated, as it replicates sub-result 1.1.</p>	<p>Anti-discrimination law was informed by a policy paper developed by ICP—an independent think tank not linked to any political party.</p>
		1.2.2. Parties develop issue-based platforms	<p>This is indicator is an activity.</p>	<p>See above—no need for so many indicators, especially if they are not</p>	<p>No outcomes identified.</p>

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
		based on policy research.		measuring results.	
		1.2.3. Internal structures established by partnering political parties.	Good indicator but not for this result. Important—necessary to define what internal structures are.  Not clear what this indicator measures.	<b>Sub-result:</b> Internal party structures developed to allow parties to respond to constituents demands.  <b>Indicator:</b> a) Number of party structures developed by partnering political parties to address constituents' demands.  b) Electoral results (proxy to measure responsiveness to citizens' concerns) disaggregated by region, ethnicity, gender—if parties increase their electoral support, it can be presumed that citizens are satisfied with the party's platforms.	Some political parties established gender and ethnic secretariats.
		1.2.4. Partnering political parties adopt issue based platforms	This indicator reads more as a sub-result. Yet, not clear what the overall result is.		No outcomes identified.
<b>Sub-Result 1.3</b>	<b>Political parties at national level develop and implement media and outreach strategies to communicate platform positions to party leaders and the public at large</b>	1.3.1. Parties adopt media strategies to communicate platforms.	Sub-Result 1.3 is an activity. Indicator 1.3.1 is an activity.  No result identified.	<b>Sub-Result:</b> Parties' electoral performance improved as a result of effective communication of party platforms.  <b>Indicators:</b> a) Electoral results disaggregated by party;  b) Percentage of citizens who can accurately identify party's platforms and who admit these platforms influenced their voting preference (requires a national survey)	No outcomes identified.
<b>Sub result 1.4</b>	<b>Candidates develop</b>	1.4.1. Candidates adopt	This sub result is an activity, and it is	<b>Sub-Result:</b> Increased coherence between	Cambio Radical's presidential candidate,

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
	<b>political campaigns and communication strategies using party platform positions</b>	issue-based campaign strategies.	similar to sub-result 1.3. The indicator 1.4.1 is also an activity.	party line and candidate discourse.  <b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of candidate speeches that reflect party's ideological and programmatic position.  b) Number of candidate's platforms that are included in government's plans after the elections.	German Vargas Lleras, used party platform during his campaign.  Now that he assumed the Ministry of the Interior position, he incorporated the platform positions in the development of the Ministry's governance plan ( <i>plan de gobierno</i> ).
Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
<b>Result 2</b>	<b>Political Parties and politicians design and implement strategies to promote the inclusion and participation of Afro-Colombians and IDPs</b>	N/A	This is not a result; it is an activity.  Afro-Colombian vote was higher in regions where IRI worked, but not clear if the vote increased in the country at large. How do we know that turnout increased due to IRI efforts? Was increased electoral turnout due to improved contextual factors—improved security?	<b>Sub-Result:</b> Greater inclusion of Afro-Colombians and IDPs in political processes.  <b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of legislative initiatives addressing Afro-Colombians or IDPs introduced  b) voter turnout (disaggregated by region, Afro-Colombians, gender)  c) Number of Afro-Colombians who report feeling included in the political process (requires a survey, such as LAPOP)	Afro-Colombian caucus established with IRI support. Consensus exists that this caucus would not have been established without IRI's persistent efforts. Yet the effectiveness of the representation of Afro-Colombian citizens by this caucus remains in question. This Caucus is seeking to become institutionalized as a legislative Committee. Currently, the Afro-Colombian Caucus is only recognized as an "accidental Committee."  Several parties (Conservative Party, Liberal Party, MIRA) create offices of ethnic and/or Afro-Colombian affairs.  Anti-discrimination law passed by Congress.  With the exception of the Victims and Land Restitution Law passed by Congress, no other outcomes identified for IDPs.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
					<p>In twenty municipalities, voter turnout of Afro-Colombians in 2011 elections increased from that of the 2007 elections. For city council elections, voter turnout increased by 4.17%. For mayoral elections, it increased 3.8%.</p> <p>Developing new questions to help identify Afro-Colombians in the national census (support to DANE).</p>
<b>Sub-Result 2.1</b>	<b>Post-election statistics from priority departments with highly concentrated Afro-Colombian and IDP population reveal higher levels of voter turnout in 2010 and 2011 elections</b>	2.1.1. Afro-Colombians and IDP civil society organizations develop voter participation campaigns.	<p>The result is very close to the second indicator (2.1.2). In fact, it reads more like an indicator than as a result.</p> <p>The indicator for this sub-result is an activity. Not clear how this "indicator" is linked to the result.</p>	<p><b>Sub-Result:</b> Greater confidence in elections among Afro-Colombians and IDPs.</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> a) Voter turnout (disaggregated by region, Afro-Colombians, gender)</p> <p>b) Number of Afro-Colombians who report feeling included in the political process (requires a survey, such as LAPOP)</p>	Turnout of Afro-Colombians increased in some municipalities .
		2.1.2. Increased voter participation among Afro-Colombians and IDPs in 2010 and 2011 elections.	Good indicator, but the result is not clear. Indicator should be articulated in neutral form. See suggested indicators above.	See above.	See above.
		2.1.3. Number of people trained by USG-assisted voter education.	F indicator	F indicators are required, so they should be collected. They collect data at the output level. No outcomes to report.	No outcomes identified.
<b>Sub-Result 2.2</b>	<b>Political Parties, Think tanks, and internal policy teams develop research and platform</b>	2.2.1. Political parties adopt public opinion research related to Afro-Colombian and	The sub-result and indicator are activities.	<b>Sub-Result :</b> Political parties address the needs of Afro-Colombians and IDPs.	Think tanks developed policy papers addressing the needs of Afro-Colombians and IDPs. But these are all outputs. No outcomes

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
	<i>proposals that address the needs of Afro-Colombians and IDPs</i>	IDPs into issue development process.		<b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of parties that established structures to represent the interests of Afro-Colombians and IDPs  b) Number of Afro-Colombians who report being represented by their parties – requires a survey, such as LAPOP	identified.
		2.2.2. Political parties, think tanks, and internal policy teams develop research and platform proposals that address the needs of Afro-Colombians and IDPs.	Same as sub-result. Not an indicator; this is an activity.		See above.
	<b>THIS INDICATOR WAS ELIMINATED</b>	2.2.3. Political parties' statements, actions and records reveal issue-based platforms with specific emphasis on the needs of Afro-Colombians and IDPs.	This is an activity. Not objective. How is one to judge whether parties' platforms address the needs of Afro-Colombians and IDP?		See above.
<b>Result 3</b>	<b>Civic and Political Actors engage in effective advocacy for enhanced representation, accountability and transparency in Colombia's political system</b>  (note. The Result changed in the last QR to: Support Transparent and Inclusive electoral	N/A	The result is articulated as an activity; not as a result. Moreover, this is overly broad; not clear what the expected result is.  No indicators identified, difficult to track and measure results. Not clear how this result is related to the EPP Objective 3: More transparent and Inclusive electoral processes	<b>Result:</b> Civic and political actors advocate effectively for enhanced transparency and inclusiveness of Colombian political system.  <b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of CSOs using project-generated information to advocate for greater inclusiveness of Colombia's political system  b) Number of CSOs supported by the USG effectively advocating for an electoral reform that makes political parties more	No clear outcomes identified at this high level.  <i>Congreso Visible</i> —which is included in this component of IRI's program—is undoubtedly a start of a great success story, but the project has no linkage to IRI results or more broadly, to the EPP Program. Moreover, as a project, <i>Congreso Visible</i> does not have a clear definition of its expected outcomes. Information on the Quarterly Reports describes only outputs (for example, number of Google hits received).

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
	processes)			<p>accountable for their decisions and actions</p> <p>c) Number of political parties supported by the USG that vote in favor of an electoral reform</p>	<p><i>Congreso Visible</i> is providing critical information to the public on Congressional activities and decision making, which any Congress in a democratic country should be providing on its own. Yet, it is not clear how this information is being used and/or if it is relevant for organizations advocating for greater inclusion, transparency and accountability of political parties in Colombia.</p> <p><i>Vigias de la Democracia</i>—is another activity reported under this component. While these activities are interesting exercises, because no outcomes and indicators were identified, it is impossible to assess the outcomes of these activities.</p> <p>Before the 2011 local elections, IRI sponsored several meetings between candidates and citizens at the subnational level. Candidates were exposed to citizen demands in a systematic and organized fashion, which was innovative in Colombia. Yet, these activities, for all their worth, are not linked to further campaigns to hold officials accountable. More importantly, it is not clear what the outcomes of these meetings had on electoral results. In Cartagena, for example, the candidate ranked worst in terms of incorporating citizens input into its platform, won the elections.</p>
<b>Sub-Result 3.1</b>	<b>Members of Afro-Colombian Congressional Caucus collectively</b>	3.1.1. Caucus members develop a legislative agenda.	Good result. Indicator reads as an activity.	<b>Sub-Result:</b> Legislation presented by the Afro-Colombian Caucus	Anti-discrimination bill passed by Congress  (But the caveat is that the bill was initially not endorsed by the Afro-Colombian Caucus; in

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
	<i>introduce legislation on issues in their legislative agenda</i>		Not clear how this sub-result related to the overall Result 3.	<b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of bills presented to Congress; b) Number of bills passed by Congress.	fact it was initially opposed by the group)  According to IRI the Afro-Colombian Caucus presented 4 legislative projects: labor reform; racial discrimination law; equal opportunities law and the Afro “predial”. Although none of these legislative initiatives was approved by Congress, they helped the Afro-Colombian Caucus become visible.
		3.1.2. Issues on the agenda of the caucus are elevated to public debate.		See above—no need for an additional indicator.	See above.
<b>Sub-Result 3.2</b>	<b>Members of Afro-Colombian congressional caucus gain support for their issues and initiatives from legislation outside congress</b>	3.2.1. Caucus members gain support for their issues from legislators outside their caucus.	Indicator is too similar to the Sub-result.  Sub-result is not a result, is an activity.	See above. No need for an additional sub-result of indicator. Seems repetitive.	See above.
<b>Sub-Result 3.3</b>	<b>Afro-Colombian civil society leaders and other stakeholders design and implement strategies to push for approval of ordenanzas in priority departments</b>	3.3.1 CSOs draft and build consensus around Ordenanzas proposals for Afro-Colombians.	Sub-result and indicator are articulated as activities.	<b>Sub-Result:</b> Afro-Colombian leaders effectively advocate for special legislation.  <b>Indicator:</b> Number of special Ordenanzas passed in priority departments.  <b>Sub-Result:</b> Ordenanzas effectively implemented in targeted departments.  <b>Indicator:</b> number of special offices, staff, etc. to implement Ordenanzas.	IRI reports that four Ordenanzas were approved.
		3.3.2. CSOs	This is an activity not an indicator.	See above.	No outcomes identified.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
		disseminate <i>Ordenanzas</i> proposals to promote public support for legislation			
<b>THIS INDICATOR WAS ELIMINATED</b>		3.3.3. CSOs design and implement strategies to push for approval of <i>Ordenanzas</i> in priority departments.	This is an activity; not a result.		No outcomes identified.
<b>THIS INDICATOR WAS ELIMINATED</b>		3.3.4. SOs engage in constructive oversight and advocacy to ensure effective implementation of <i>ordenanzas</i> .	This is an activity. This is also similar to Sub-Result 3.4.		No outcomes identified.
<b>Sub-Result 3.4</b>	<b><i>Afro Colombian civil society leaders and other stakeholders engage in constructive oversight and advocacy to ensure effective implementation of approved ordenanzas</i></b>	3.4.1. Departmental <i>Ordenanzas</i> for Afro-Colombian communities are introduced and adopted as legislation in priority departments	Sub-Result and indicator articulated as activities.	<b>Sub-Result:</b> <i>Ordenanzas</i> effectively implemented in targeted departments  <b>Indicator:</b> Number of special offices, staff, etc. to implement <i>ordenanzas</i>  Repetitive. See Sub-Result 3.3	IRI reports that four <i>Ordenanzas</i> were approved.
<b>THIS INDICATOR WAS ELIMINATED</b>		3.4.2. Government development plans provide for enhanced inclusion and investment for Afro-Colombian communities	This is a result. Not an indicator. It also does not relate to the stated Sub-Result 3.4.		No outcomes identified.
<b>Sub-Result 3.5</b>	<b><i>Department government officials effectively implement the approved ordenanzas</i></b>	3.5.1. Departmental government officials effectively implement the approved <i>Ordenanzas</i> , establishing offices and civic awareness	Good result, but this is repetitive. Indicator replicates the result. It is articulated as an activity.	Repetitive—See Sub-Result 3.3.	No outcomes identified.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
		strategies that address Afro-Colombian issues.			
<b>Sub-Result 3.6</b>	<b>Legislative watchdog organizations compile voting records and make them public in a manner that is accurate</b>	3.6.1. A legislative watchdog organization compiles voting records and makes them public in a manner that is accurate, timely and accessible.	Result and indicators are articulated as activities.  The result and the indicator are the same.	<b>Sub-Result:</b> Information generated by Legislative watchdog organization is effectively used by advocacy organizations to demand greater transparency and accountability of political parties.  <b>Indicators:</b> a) Number of hits received by CV (output level)  b) Number of advocacy organizations using CV information to lobby for electoral reforms  c) Number of political parties using CV information to inform their policy positions	<i>Congreso Visible</i> was expanded and became more institutionalized—number of hits increased. Yet it is not clear how this is related to the overall result 3.  <i>Congreso Visible</i> sponsors students to conduct their MA studies and write theses related to congressional issues. For example, Marcela Escandon's (a CV fellow) MA Thesis—published later as a book—reveals that Afro legislators do not necessarily represent the interests of the Afro-Colombian population.
<b>Sub-Result 3.7</b>	<b>CSOs use voting records to influence public policy development with national congress</b>	3.7.1. Civil society organizations use voting records to influence public policy development within the National Congress.	This is an activity; not result.  Indicator and result are the same.	See above.	No outcomes identified.
<b>Sub-Result 3.8</b> <b>ELIMINATED</b>	<b>Political parties incorporate voting records into campaign strategies</b>	3.8.1. Political parties incorporate voting records into campaign strategies in electoral processes.	This is an activity; not result.  Indicator and result are the same.		No outcomes identified.
Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
<b>Result 4</b>	<b>Electoral Agencies Increase voter understanding of electoral process</b>	N/A	Result is articulated as an activity.  No indicator is identified at this high level.	<b>Sub-Result:</b> Voters' confidence in electoral processes increased.  <b>Indicator:</b> a) Electoral turnout (disaggregated by gender, region,	The ballot for the 2011 elections was redesigned and this was greatly due to IRI and <i>Congreso Visible</i> 's efforts—IRI convinced the <i>Registraduría</i> of the need and importance of redesigning the ballot and funded the initiative. The new ballot significantly reduced

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
				<p>ethnicity)</p> <p>b) Number of null votes (a reduction in the number of null votes implies voters have greater confidence and understanding of electoral process)</p> <p>c) Voters report greater confidence in elections (requires a survey, such as LAPOP)</p>	<p>the number of null votes.</p> <p>According to official data, the number of null votes decreased by 2.03% in the 2011 elections. In the elections for the Department Assemblies, the percentage of null votes decreased from 5.49% in 2011 to 2.24% in 2011. In the elections for Municipal Councils, the percentage of null votes decreased from 7.63% to 4.67% and in elections for neighborhood councils the percentage of null votes decreased from 5.3% to 3.8%.</p>
<b>Sub-Result 4.1</b>	<b>National Registrar office adopts new ballot format</b>	4.1.1. The number of votes declared null in pilot program proportionally decreases in comparison to previous elections.	<p>The sub-result is an activity.</p> <p>Sub-result: null votes decrease.</p>	See above.	See above.
		4.1.2. Results of the pilot program are presented to political party representatives and electoral authorities.	This is an activity.	See above.	See above.
		4.1.3. The redesigned ballot is presented and accepted by political party representatives and electoral authorities.	This is an activity.	See above.	See above.
<b>Sub-Result 4.2</b>	<b>Citizen voter turnout increases in 2011 regional and local elections in targeted municipalities</b>	4.2.1. Voter turnout increases in comparison to previous elections in target municipalities.	<p>Good indicator, but wrong result.</p> <p>Indicator and result are the same. What is the result? Voter confidence?</p>	<p><b>Sub-Result:</b> Voters' confidence in electoral processes increased.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> a) Electoral turnout (disaggregated by gender, region,</p>	Voter turnout increased—especially in the municipalities where IRI worked.

Type of Result		Indicator	Comments	Suggestion	Outcomes identified in the QR and/or during the interview process
				<p>ethnicity);</p> <p>b) Voters report to have greater confidence in elections (requires a survey, such as LAPOP)</p> <p>This is repetitive. See Result 4 above.</p> <p>No need to have Sub-Results if the Result captures the outcome. In fact, sub-results are all articulated as activities.</p>	

# ANNEX 5. LIST OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS' RESULTS AND ACTIVITIES BY OBJECTIVE

## Objective 1:

More transparent, effective and programmatic political parties

### Results

NDI		IRI	
Result 1	Political parties are more responsive, transparent and effective	Result 1	Political parties at the national level develop and communicate strong, issue- based party platforms that respond to pressing citizen concerns
<i>Sub-Result 1.1</i>	Parties and candidates use more systematic campaign methodologies	<i>Sub-Result 1.1</i>	National level political parties establish or strengthen think tanks that generate policy research
<i>Sub-Result 1.2</i>	Parties regularly use tools for internal and external transparency	<i>Sub-Result 1.2</i>	Political parties at national level use policy research proposals produced by think tanks, civil society and others to develop issue based platforms
<i>Sub-Result 1.3</i>	Parties use more responsive strategies for policy development	<i>Sub-Result 1.3</i>	Political parties at national level develop and implement media and outreach strategies to communicate platform positions to party leaders and the public at large
<i>Sub-Result 1.4</i>	Parties implement procedures to increase internal democracy	<i>Sub result 1.4</i>	Candidates develop political campaigns and communication strategies using party platform positions

## Activities

IRI	NDI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical assistance to strengthen the investigative capacity and influence of existing party think tanks, while also bolstering the capacity of policy teams within parties that lack the external support of such an entity.</li> <li>• Technical assistance in the development of fact-based policy proposals.</li> <li>• Technical support for political parties to develop platforms reflective of the needs of marginalized groups.</li> <li>• Hosting a series of policy development forums with the <i>Instituto de Ciencia Política</i> and with candidates, party leadership and policy staff.</li> <li>• Assistance to parties in the articulation and dissemination of adopted policy positions to regional party offices, regional media, candidate campaigns and communication strategies.</li> <li>• Support to Colombian organizations advocating for the passage of electoral and political reforms—Anti-Discrimination Law; Victims’ Law; electoral reform (Law 1475).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical assistance to parties at the national and local levels on strategies to develop more inclusive and responsive policy platforms and party structures.</li> <li>• Workshops at the departmental level on strategies and methodologies for incorporating departmental issues and interests in national party platforms, including presentations by and exchanges with local experts on key issues including health, education, security, and minority populations.</li> <li>• Support for the establishment of political debate commissions in focus municipalities</li> <li>• Sponsoring debates in focus departments among candidates to inform citizens of their parties’ platforms and proposals.</li> <li>• Technical assistance to party’s <i>veedurías</i> to strengthen party transparency through increased skills and exposure to international best practices and tools, such as developing internal oversight bodies.</li> <li>• Building the capacity of political parties to comply with campaign finance reporting regulations by using the <i>Cuentas Claras</i> software.</li> <li>• Support to Colombian organizations advocating for the passage of electoral and political reforms—Anti-discrimination Law; Victims’ Law; electoral reform (Law 1475).</li> </ul>

## Objective 2:

### To promote the inclusion of Afro-Colombians, Internally-Displaced Person (IDPs) and Women in Political Processes

#### Results

NDI		IRI	
Result 2	Afro-Colombians, IDPs and women are more involved in political processes	Result 2	Political Parties and politicians design and implement strategies to promote the inclusion and participation of Afro-Colombians and IDPs
Sub-Result 2.1	Parties are more inclusive of Afro-Colombians, IDP and women	Sub-Result 2.1	Post-election statistics from priority departments with highly concentrated Afro-Colombian and IDP population reveal higher levels of voter turnout in 2010 and 2011 elections
Sub-Result 2.2.	Afro-Colombians, IDPs and women can more effectively advocate for their interests	Sub-Result 2.2	Political Parties, Think tanks, and internal policy teams develop research and platform proposals that address the needs of Afro-Colombians and IDPs

## Activities

IRI	NDI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public awareness campaign that educates Afro-Colombians on their rights and responsibilities as citizens</li> <li>• Support to Colombia’s parties and affiliated think tanks through research and policy analysis on issues affecting Afro-Colombian and IDP populations</li> <li>• Design and implementation of Departmental <i>Ordenanzas</i>, addressing issues affecting Afro-Colombians</li> <li>• Support for the Afro-Colombian Congressional Caucus: technical assistance to improve the Caucus knowledge about key policy issues and government plans; strengthen the communication and negotiation skills of Caucus members; and strengthen the capacity of Caucus members to develop and promote laws that ultimately serve to better the lives of the general Afro-Colombian population.<sup>82</sup></li> <li>• Dissemination of information on the importance of the Anti-Discrimination law to the general public</li> <li>• Targeted assistance to Colombia’s major political parties to promote the inclusion of the needs of Afro-Colombians and IDPs in national-level programmatic platforms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional training programs (in Chocó and one in Montes de María), for emerging political leaders from underrepresented sectors</li> <li>• Intra-party workshops on the inclusion of representatives of women and Afro-Colombians on party lists</li> <li>• Multi-party workshops for women candidates on campaign management</li> <li>• Technical assistance to Afro-Colombian women candidates to improve their leadership, planning and budgeting skills and assist them with the development of campaign platforms addressing the needs of both Afro-Colombians and women.</li> <li>• Support the creation of party structures such as secretariats dedicated to gender issues and gender equality</li> <li>• Forums with the women legislative committee to discuss the approved law on violence against women.</li> </ul>

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<sup>82</sup> These two activities were included in Objective 3, but we mention them here as well because they relate more closely Objective 2.

### Objective 3: Transparent and Inclusive Electoral Processes

#### Results

NDI		IRI	
Result 3	Electoral processes are more transparent	Result 3	Civic and political actors engage in effective advocacy for enhanced representation, accountability and transparency in Colombia's political system
<i>Sub-Result 3.1</i>	Political parties oversee elections	<i>Sub-Result 3.1</i>	Members of Afro-Colombian Congressional Caucus collectively introduce legislation on issues in their legislative agenda
<i>Sub-Result 3.2</i>	Domestic groups implement systematic observation strategies	<i>Sub-Result 3.2</i>	Members of Afro-Colombian congressional caucus gain support for their issues and initiatives from legislation outside congress
<i>Sub-Result 3.3</i>	Governmental and political institutions take steps to mitigate electoral risks.	<i>Sub-Result 3.3</i>	Afro-Colombian civil society leaders and other stakeholders design and implement strategies to push for approval of <i>Ordenanzas</i> in priority departments
<i>Sub-Result 3.4</i>	Voters access accurate information to enable them to cast an informed vote	<i>Sub-Result 3.4</i>	Afro Colombian civil society leaders and other stakeholders engage in constructive oversight and advocacy to ensure effective implementation of approved <i>Ordenanzas</i>
		<i>Sub-Result 3.5</i>	Department government officials effectively implement the approved <i>Ordenanzas</i>
		<i>Sub-Result 3.6</i>	Legislative watchdog organizations compile voting records and make them public in a manner that is accurate
		<i>Sub-Result 3.7</i>	CSOs use voting records to influence public policy development with national congress
		Result 4	Electoral Agencies Increase voter understanding of electoral process
		<i>Sub-Result 4.1</i>	National Registrar office adopts new ballot format
		<i>Sub-Result 4.2</i>	Citizen voter turnout increases in 2011 regional and local elections in targeted municipalities

## Activities

IRI	NDI	MOE	SEMANA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and implementation of Departmental <i>Ordenanzas</i>, addressing issues affecting Afro-Colombians</li> <li>• Technical assistance to the Afro-Colombian Caucus to increase their capacity to draft legislation and improve their negotiation and communication skills</li> <li>• Supporting efforts leading to Colombia’s National Congress implementing the “vote disclosure” initiative included in the Political Reform Law;</li> <li>• Training civil society organizations on how to exert pressure on legislative bodies to implement the “vote disclosure” initiative;</li> <li>• Supporting <i>Congreso Visible</i>, a legislative watchdog organization that tracks and monitors congressional voting and makes sure the information is available to the public;</li> <li>• Supporting civil society watchdog organizations to develop a public awareness campaign on how congressional voting records, truth-in-voting and greater transparency in government can be used to exert pressure on elected officials to effectuate policy;</li> <li>• Support local organizations for the replication of <i>Congreso Visible</i> at the municipal and departmental levels-- city councils and assembly watchdogs</li> <li>• Promotion of transparency pacts signed between candidates and citizens prior to the 2011 elections</li> <li>• Training workshops with candidates to increase the understanding of their roles and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of software for parties to prepare and file their financial disclosure forms for elections, <i>Cuentas Claras</i>;</li> <li>• Technical assistance for political parties on the use of financial disclosure software to facilitate compliance with legal financial disclosure obligations;</li> <li>• Political participation campaigns to promote a more informed vote and more participation from Afro-Colombians in the electoral process</li> <li>• Training citizens on how to cast their vote using the new ballot in the 2011 elections;</li> <li>• Training party poll watchers before the 2010 and 2011 elections</li> <li>• Training-of-trainer (ToT) workshops with party leaders and activists to train other party members to serve as party poll watchers in the 2010 and 2011 national elections.</li> <li>• Training electoral observers in target municipalities</li> <li>• Sub-grants to local organizations to conduct studies identifying linkages between candidates and illegal groups in target municipalities and departments</li> <li>• Sub-grants to local organizations to conduct studies to assess and design electoral risk maps before the 2011 elections</li> <li>• Organization of professionally moderated candidate debates before the 2011 elections in targeted cities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training electoral observers in target municipalities and departments before the 2011 elections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-sponsoring and moderation of debates among candidates in targeted municipalities</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>responsibilities if they are elected to office</li> <li>• Civic education workshops to enhance citizen engagement in electoral processes</li> <li>• In partnership with <i>Congreso Visible</i>, providing technical assistance to Colombia's National Registrar's Office in the redesign of the voting ballot for the 2011 local elections;</li> <li>• Training of local registrars in target departments and municipalities on roles and responsibilities prior to, during and following election day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of political debates commissions in targeted cities</li> <li>• Promotion of civic education campaigns</li> <li>• Training prosecutors at the Fiscalía (<i>fiscales</i>) on electoral crimes</li> </ul>		
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# ANNEX 6. OAS 2011 REPORT (INFORME VERBAL)



Organización de los  
Estados Americanos

**INFORME VERBAL**  
**Misión de Veeduría Electoral – Colombia**  
**Elecciones de Gobernadores, Alcaldes,**  
**Asambleas Departamentales, Concejos Municipales y**  
**Miembros de Juntas Administradoras Locales**  
**del 30 de octubre de 2011**

## **I. Antecedentes**

El 30 de octubre de 2011, los colombianos acudieron a las urnas para elegir Gobernadores, Alcaldes, Asambleas Departamentales, Concejos Municipales y Miembros de Juntas Administradoras Locales. Un record de más de 100,000 candidatos se registraron para ser elegidos.

Por invitación del Gobierno y las autoridades electorales, la OEA instaló una Misión de Veeduría el 9 de octubre que estuvo conformada por 59 veedores internacionales provenientes de 17 Estados miembros de la OEA y de 3 países observadores. Se establecieron 16 oficinas departamentales, y para el día de la elección, los veedores cubrieron en total 23 de los 32 departamentos del país, más el Distrito Capital.

## **II. Resultados**

Más de 17,400,000 colombianos votaron en estos comicios, con un nivel de participación del 57% de los habilitados para votar. Se evidenció la creciente relevancia de la provisión de la legislación colombiana para candidatos que no son postulados por partidos políticos, ya que a nivel nacional estos candidatos obtuvieron para la elección de alcaldes casi el doble de votación que los candidatos del partido político con mayor votación.

## **III. Observaciones Generales**

Bajo la legislación colombiana, el Código Electoral da al Consejo Nacional Electoral la función de “organizar y vigilar el proceso electoral” y la Constitución Política de Colombia le otorga como atribución especial el ejercer la “suprema” inspección, vigilancia y control de la organización electoral. La Constitución también estipula que los delegados del Registrador Nacional del Estado Civil tienen funciones de organización y vigilancia de resolver consultas en materia electoral.

Podemos sin embargo encontrar tanto en el marco legal como en la práctica una proliferación de órganos y entidades con fines, funciones y atribuciones de índole electoral que se presta para la dispersión de los recursos y responsabilidades de control y fiscalización del proceso electoral. En adición a los órganos electorales, de parte del estado existe una Comisión de Seguimiento Electoral de cada rama del gobierno, involucramiento de la procuraduría, fiscalía, contraloría, la Unidad de Información y análisis Financiero del Ministerio de Hacienda, y las fuerzas públicas.

En este sentido, la Misión de Veeduría Electoral considera que la dispersión de órganos, Comisiones, y mecanismos de coordinación se presta para poca eficiencia de los recursos dedicados al proceso electoral, falta de claridad en cuanto a la estructura jerárquica electoral, y una posible duplicación de esfuerzos en la fiscalización de las complejidades del proceso electoral.

Por otro lado, el sector privado colombiano juega un papel clave en la administración de este proceso por medio de contratos emitidos por la Registraduría. Entre julio y noviembre del 2011, la Registraduría realizó un total de 23 contratos a empresas por un monto mayor a cien millones de pesos (aproximadamente \$52,000 dólares), llegando a un total superior a \$110 millones de dólares. Las actividades realizadas por el sector privado incluyeron: el suministro y distribución de los elementos del Kit electoral; el servicio de consolidación y divulgación de resultados; el suministro de medios de comunicación; la validación biométrica; servicios de asesoría y soporte técnico al CNE; servicios de información a votantes y pedagogía electoral; y la capacitación de los jurados de votación; entre otros. Esta tercerización del proceso puede disminuir el papel de los órganos electorales para llevar a cabo la administración y control del proceso electoral.

#### *Implementación de la Reforma Política*

Esta elección estuvo caracterizada por ser la primera en llevarse a cabo bajo la implementación de la denominada Reforma Política de Julio de 2011. En esta ley, se adoptaron reglas de organización y funcionamiento de los partidos y movimientos políticos, se reguló la financiación política y se establecieron normas que regulan las campañas electorales. Además, modificó el calendario electoral, y estableció una cuota de 30% de uno de los géneros en las listas de candidatos donde se elijan cinco o más curules.

#### *Financiamiento de las campañas electorales*

En cuanto a la financiación de las campañas electorales, la Reforma Política también estableció el financiamiento estatal mediante la reposición de gastos por votos válidos y reguló la posibilidad de solicitar anticipos, delegando la autorización de los anticipos al CNE. Por su parte, el CNE estipuló que los partidos deben presentar una garantía al anticipo solicitado. En la práctica, los candidatos pedían a los partidos que solicitaran los anticipos, pero éstos requerían a aquéllos la garantía. Como resultado, únicamente 7 partidos políticos y 5 grupos significativos de ciudadanos solicitaron anticipos. Por otro lado, hasta cuatro días antes de la elección ninguno de los giros había sido realizado, debido a la dificultad para cumplir con los requisitos exigidos. La consecuente falta de financiamiento público directo previo para las campañas obligó a los partidos a recurrir a las fuentes privadas en un porcentaje importante. Se considera que esta situación vulnera la equidad en la competencia electoral, sobre todo para los partidos con menos acceso a recursos privados.

Respecto la rendición de cuentas por parte de los partidos, el CNE estableció que todos los candidatos a gobernaciones y alcaldías de capitales de departamento deberían obligatoriamente presentar informes semanales de ingreso y gastos de las campañas mediante un aplicativo denominado "Cuentas Claras". Hasta la fecha de las elecciones, el 87% de los candidatos a alcalde y 91% a gobernador habían utilizado el aplicativo. No obstante, es probable que algunos candidatos hayan presentado un informe una única vez y no semanalmente. En cualquier caso, se constató que cinco de los candidatos que resultaron electos no presentaron ningún informe.

En resumen, a pesar de las fortalezas de las nuevas normas sobre rendición y control del financiamiento de las campañas, las prácticas de este estreno evidenciaron debilidades institucionales que redundaron en la implementación incompleta e insuficiente del sistema.

#### *Violencia durante las campañas electorales*

Los meses previos a las elecciones estuvieron marcados por las distintas informaciones sobre actos de violencia que acaecían en distintos lugares del país. Fruto de ello, el Departamento para la Cooperación

y Observación Electoral recibió, previo a los comicios, varias peticiones de candidatos y autoridades para hacer presencia en determinados municipios o departamentos.

Durante la campaña electoral, el Centro Integrado de Inteligencia Electoral, compuesto por 13 instituciones del Estado y en cabeza del Ministerio de Defensa e Interior, reportó que en 10 municipios de 5 departamentos se concentró la mayor amenaza en términos de afectación de los comicios del 30 de octubre, catalogándolos como de riesgo extraordinario. Se destaca el positivo rol cumplido por el Centro Integrado de Inteligencia Electoral en sus esfuerzos para proveer seguridad a lo largo del proceso electoral.

Además, diversas instituciones y organizaciones presentaron informes y elaboraron mapas de riesgo electoral, con enfoque en aspectos de orden público, delitos electorales, presencia de grupos armados, vínculos entre grupos ilegales y candidatos, entre otros.

#### **IV. Observaciones del día de la elección**

Durante los comicios, los 59 veedores de la OEA se desplegaron en 307 puestos de votación a lo largo del país. La MVE/OEA desea resaltar que las mesas observadas se constituyeron a tiempo, y con todos los materiales necesarios.

Durante la jornada electoral, se destacó además los esfuerzos de organismos de la sociedad civil para observar las elecciones. La Misión considera que esta participación de parte de los ciudadanos acrecienta la transparencia y favorece el desarrollo democrático. Preocupa, sin embargo, la baja presencia de testigos de los partidos y movimientos políticos en la jornada electoral como garantes de la transparencia y confiabilidad del sistema.

La Misión considera, que al haber eliminado la firma del elector y la huella en el formulario E-11 de registro del votante en la mesa de votación, se redujeron los mecanismos de certidumbre para prevenir la trashumancia y la suplantación del sufragante. No obstante, se considera un acierto la prueba piloto del uso de la huella biométrica que podría mitigar estos delitos electorales en futuras elecciones, siempre y cuando su aplicación cuente con la suficiente tecnología y despliegue para garantizar su efectividad. En este sentido, y dando cumplimiento a la Reforma Política, la Registraduría implementó un piloto de la verificación biométrica. Se observaron que en varios locales que contaron con la tecnología se apreciaron intensos retrasos. Esto se debía principalmente por la insuficiencia de máquinas para la cantidad de votantes, la falta de un procedimiento determinado para atender al ciudadano, y en algunos casos fallas en la lectura de la huella digital. A pesar de esto, se pudo observar que una vez que el ciudadano entregaba su documento de identidad y realizaba el proceso de autenticación biométrica, el control y reconocimiento era rápido.

La reforma política también estableció que una copia del acta de escrutinio sería entregada a los testigos de los partidos y movimientos electorales, elemento que había sido recomendado por las MVE desplegadas durante los procesos electorales del año pasado. La MVE/OEA valora esa nueva disposición, pero marca la necesidad de implementarla, para sumar elementos de certidumbre al proceso. El no contar con esta copia física limita la posibilidad de que los actores políticos cuenten con las suficientes garantías para ejercer plenamente sus reclamaciones.

En cuanto al conteo de los votos, se subraya la eficacia de los miembros de mesa, lo cual permitió a los ciudadanos conocer de manera oportuna los resultados de la elección brindando confianza y

certidumbre al proceso. Se puede destacar como logro que la transmisión fue mucho más rápido que lo anticipado, y para las 11PM se había procesado casi el 95% de las actas.

El día de los comicios, según el reporte del Centro Integrado de Inteligencia Electoral, en el 99% del territorio no se presentaron incidentes. No obstante, los observadores nacionales reportaron varias situaciones después del cierre de las urnas, particularmente asonadas y disturbios. Los veedores de la Misión de la OEA presenciaron situaciones de alteración del orden público en Hato Nuevo (La Guajira), Pereira (Risaralda), y Montería (Córdoba) el día de los comicios.

## V. Recomendaciones:

### 1. Delimitación de las responsabilidades institucionales y robustecimiento del marco legal.

La Misión resalta la importancia de que se realice una revisión a fondo a la estructura de la institucionalidad electoral y las atribuciones de los órganos responsables por la implementación y vigilancia del proceso electoral. Es indispensable además reducir las oportunidades para confusión de las competencias y papeles de los varios órganos que juegan un rol en el proceso electoral, tanto como asegurar procedimientos completos y con una entidad claramente responsable para cada aspecto clave del proceso. En este sentido, se recomienda también que la legislación precise términos definitivos para el proceso electoral, en cuanto a fechas y límites para interponer recursos, procesar resultados, y que encuentre mecanismos de asegurar el financiamiento de sus disposiciones, eliminando la posibilidad de utilizar la falta de recursos como justificación para no cumplir con sus requerimientos.

**2. Congruencia en las responsabilidades de actores públicos y privados en la organización de los procesos electorales.** Es recomendable realizar un diagnóstico de la tercerización de varias fases del proceso de organización electoral para analizar su pertinencia y transparencia. La cantidad de compañías involucrada en un complejo y delicado proceso electoral, incluyendo la proliferación en la parte del conteo y divulgación de datos, plantea un escenario que requiere una gran coordinación, y clara definición de las responsabilidades. En este sentido, la Misión recomienda una revisión de la proliferación de contratación de manera que se optimice el control sobre el proceso electoral de parte del ente responsable.

**3. Adecuación del sistema de financiamiento de las campañas.** Para promover la equidad en la competencia, se recomienda revisar el sistema de reposición de gasto y anticipos de las campañas, incluyendo la posible entrega anterior a las elecciones de financiamiento público, sin requerir la presentación y aprobación de una garantía. En adición, la misión considera que fortalecer la rendición de cuentas de los partidos y los candidatos, así como la capacidad de control de las entidades estatales responsables, resulta esencial para garantizar el funcionamiento efectivo, eficaz y transparente del sistema de financiamiento. Particularmente, debe fortalecerse la capacidad del CNE de coordinar y dirigir las acciones de otros órganos estatales en la materia, así como garantizar la presencia de los Tribunales de Garantías y Vigilancia Electoral en todos los departamentos tanto como su adecuado funcionamiento.

**4. Establecimiento de normatividad sobre las encuestas electorales.** En cuanto a las encuestas electorales, se sugiere valorar la conveniencia de precisar fechas límites para su difusión, y solicitar la divulgación de su marco metodológico.

**5. Mejorar la implementación del registro biométrico.** Se recomienda establecer procedimientos claros y uniformes en los puestos de identificación. En este sentido, se recomienda disminuir la relación de 1200 electores por sistema de identificación, tanto como establecer una adecuada señalización y planificación para el acceso, circulación y salida de los sufragantes de los centros de votación.

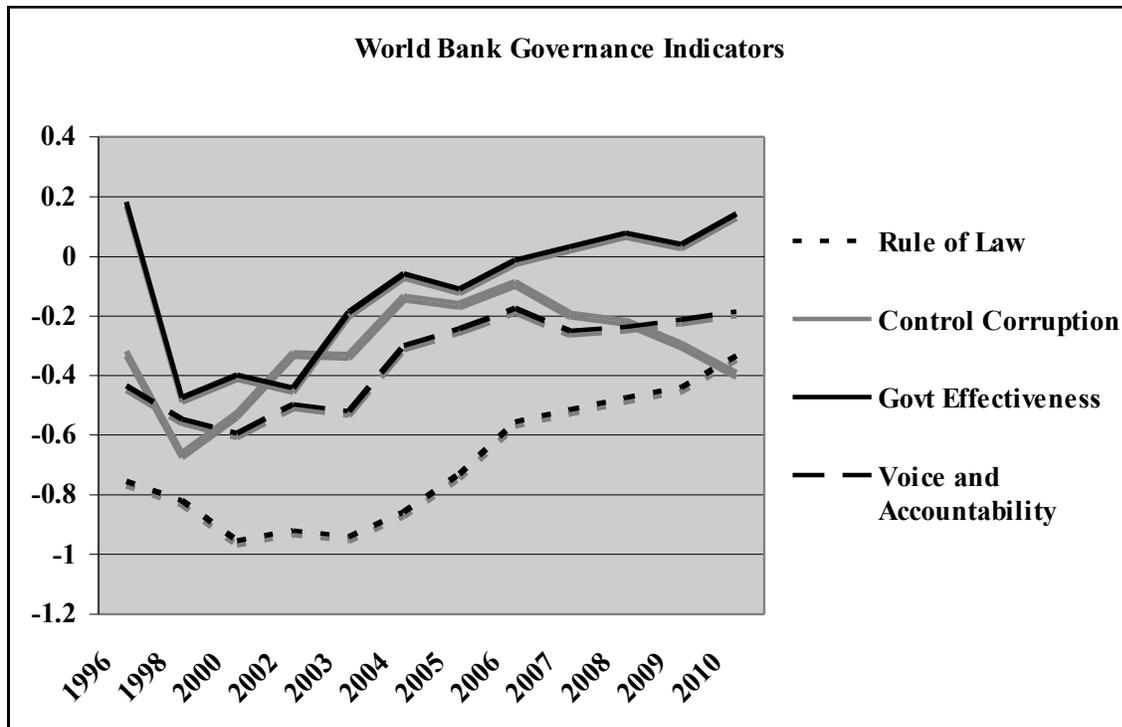
**6. Establecer un Sistema de Gestión de Seguridad de la Información.** La misión considera que la Registraduría debe cumplir un rol activo en la gestión de seguridad electoral de una forma metódica documentada y basada en objetivos claros de seguridad. En este contexto, se considerará aplicar normas ISO / IEC 27000 que se centran en los aspectos críticos necesarios para el éxito del diseño e implementación de un Sistema de Gestión de Seguridad de la Información. Se recomienda también revisar la metodología de transmisión del pre-conteo por voz, ya que se considera que no entrega las seguridades que requiere un procedimiento de esta naturaleza, al no contar con un sistema eficaz de autenticación, verificación y auditoría.

#### **VII. Agradecimientos**

La MVE desea agradecer la disposición y apoyo de las autoridades gubernamentales, electorales, y de Colombia, para que la Misión de Veeduría Electoral pudiera desarrollar su trabajo en forma eficiente y apropiada. Además, brinda un agradecimiento especial a la policía nacional por su colaboración constante y el esfuerzo en proporcionar condiciones de seguridad cuando miembros de la MVE lo requirieron, tanto como a la Misión de Observación Electoral de Colombia por su colaboración con información sobre la observación nacional. Para finalizar, la MVE agradece el aporte económico de Suecia, Holanda, Italia, Suiza, Noruega, y los Estados Unidos, gracias a cuyas contribuciones fue posible llevar a cabo la Misión de Veeduría Electoral en Colombia.

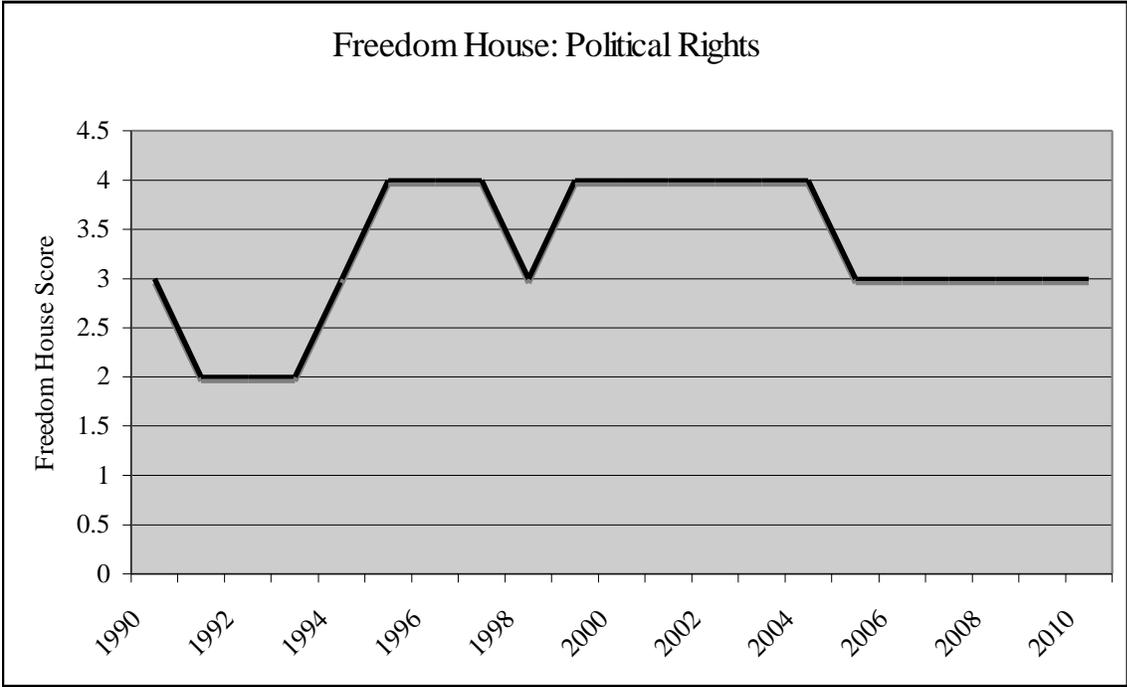
# ANNEX 7. FREEDOM HOUSE AND WORLD BANK GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

## Democratization in Colombia Overtime – World Bank Governance Indicators



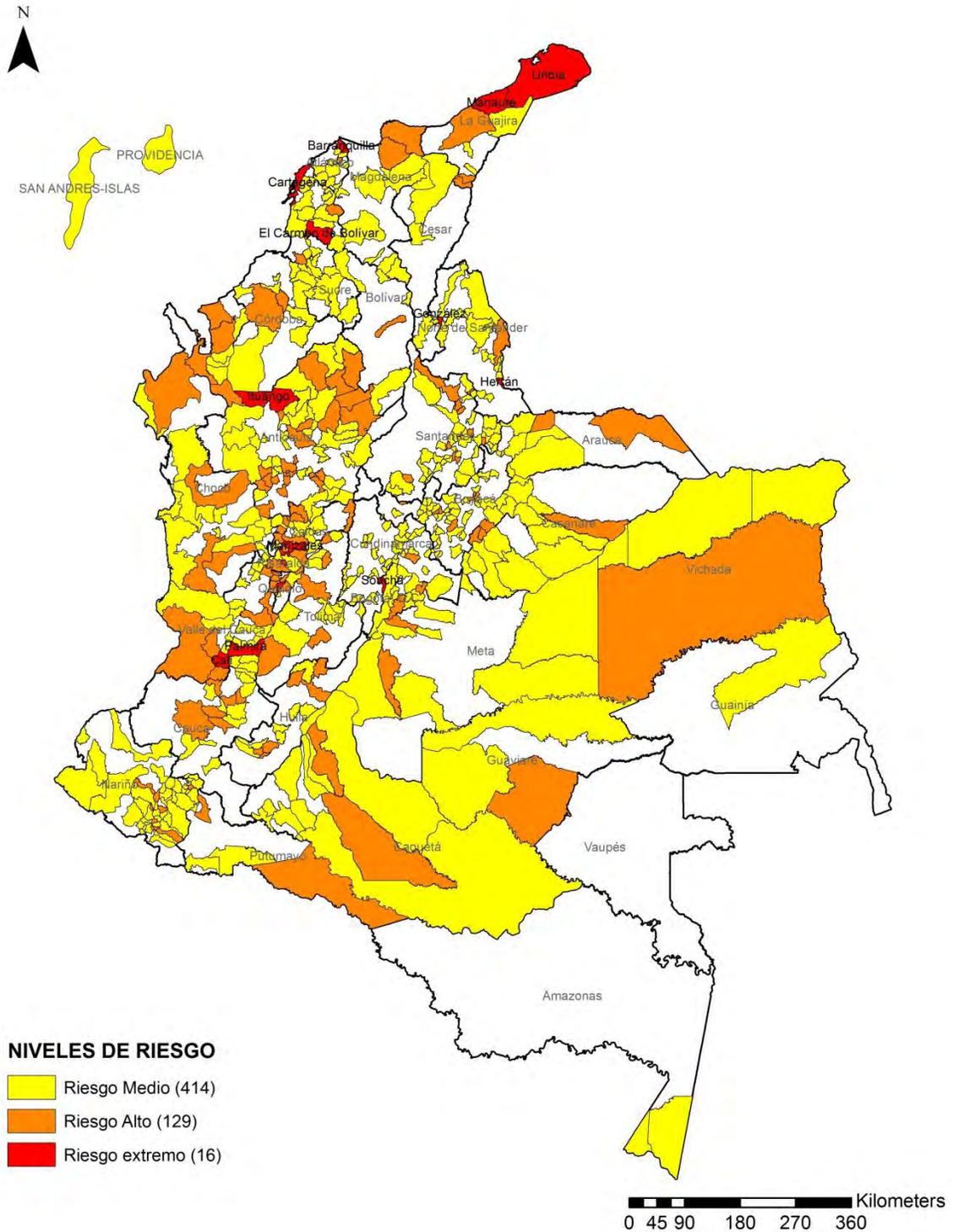
Source: Kaufmann, Daniel, Aart Kraay and Massimo Mastruzzi. 1996-2010. "World Bank Governance Indicators." *The World Bank Group*. Accessed September 22, 2011 at <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>.

**Democratization in Colombia Overtime – Freedom House**



Source: "Freedom in the World." 1972 - 2010. *Freedom House Foundation*. [www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org), accessed September 22, 2011.

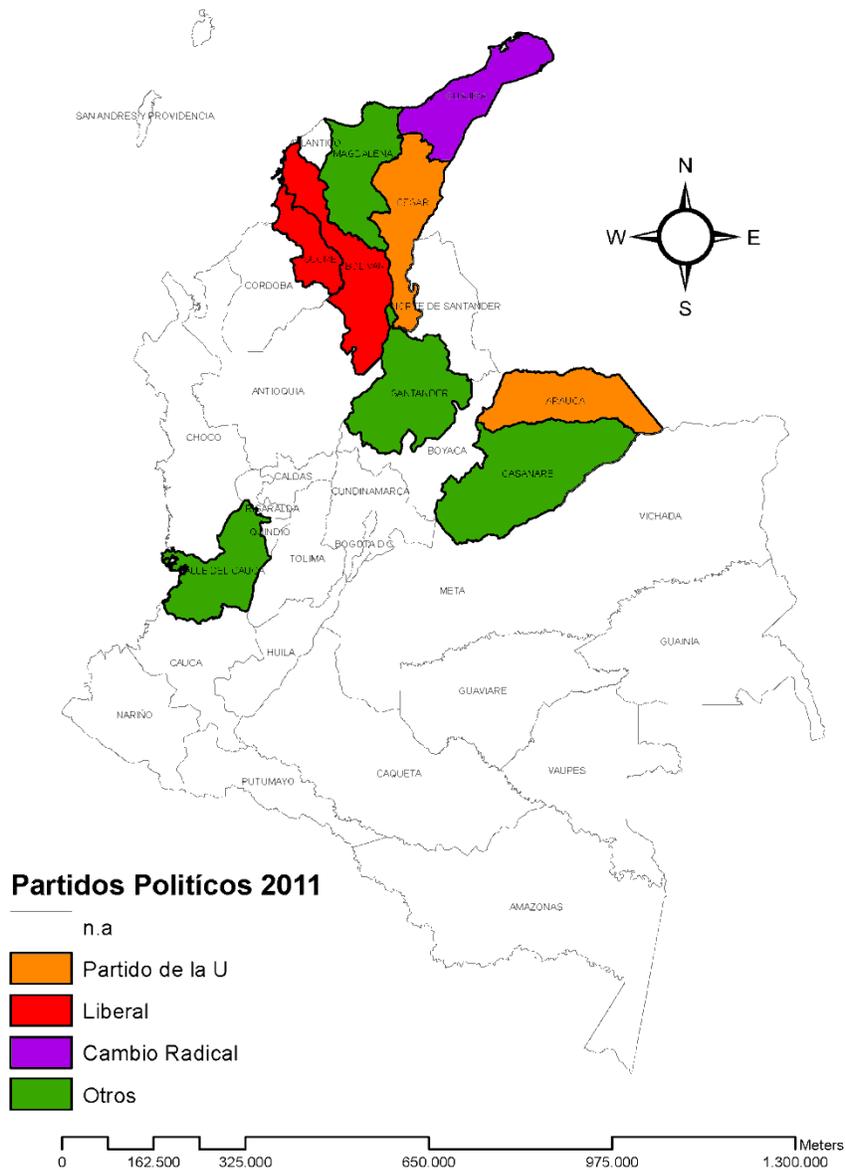
# ANNEX 8. ELECTORAL RISK MAP



# ANNEX 9. MAP OF GOVERNORSHIPS WITH ALLEGED LINKS TO PARAMILITARIES

## Gobernaciones Involucradas en Parapolítica

Fuente: Corporación Nuevo Arcoiris



# ANNEX 10. QUALITIES OF LARGE LATIN AMERICAN NATION ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES (EMBS)

Quality	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Colombia	Mexico	Peru
<b>Institution that Determines Budget</b>	President	Parliament	President and Legislature	<b>Legislature</b>	Executive, Congress and IFE	Legislature
<b>Institution that Controls Expenditures</b>	Legislature	Congress and Account Court	Contraloría General	Contraloría General	Other	Economic and Finances Ministry
<b>Term of Members</b>	Permanent	2 years	Unspecified	4 years <sup>83</sup>	9 years	4 years
<b>Qualities by which Members are Selected</b>	n/a	Expertise	n/a	<b>Partisanship</b>	Expertise	Expertise
<b>Institution that Selects Members</b>	Judiciary	Judiciary and Head of State	Executive and Legislature	Legislature	Legislature	Judiciary (see Note)
<b>Type of Management Model</b>	Mixed	Independent	Mixed	Independent	Independent	Independent

Note: Judiciary holds an open contest to select members of the EMB. Source: Electoral Knowledge Network: Comparative Data. Accessed March 31, 2012 at <http://aceproject.org>.

<sup>83</sup> This term coincides identically with the presidential term, which is problematic, especially since members are selected based on partisanship rather than expertise. Of the 146 nations in the Electoral Knowledge Network Project –see note in Table above-- which provided information on whether electoral management body ombudsmen were selected based on partisanship or expertise, some 9% selected these important officials based solely on partisanship, while some 60% selected on expertise only, and 31% selected on a combination of these traits.

# ANNEX II. SCOPE OF WORK

## I. Assignment Overview

The purpose of this assignment is to conduct a Performance Evaluation of USAID's efforts to strengthen Elections and Political Processes. This review is intended to evaluate the results of these programs, identify lessons learned and best practices, and develop recommendations for future support. The primary audience for this evaluation is USAID/Colombia's Democracy and Human Rights (DHR) Office and USAID/Colombia's Mission Director. This report will also become a public document that can be used to respond to requests for information from key U.S. and Colombian stakeholders, including the U.S. Congress, Department of State, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), should such requests be made.

## II. USAID Elections and Political Processes (EPP) Programs

Colombia has had democratically-elected governments for the better part of the last 50 years. Nevertheless, the country suffers from violence associated with guerrilla and paramilitary conflicts, organized crime and drug-trafficking. During the past few years, Colombia's government has worked hard to combat the influence of illegal groups, leading to a historic decline in the number of kidnappings, homicides, and other violent activities. While the struggle continues, the government has been successful in promoting a higher sense of security among citizens.

Despite the progress made in terms of national security, Colombia's political parties have struggled to engage citizens in both post-conflict zones and regions where ongoing armed conflict has discouraged many from participating in the political process. Afro-Colombians, indigenous populations, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and women have faced particular challenges to their effective engagement in political processes. Colombian parties have also struggled to develop policy platforms that distinguish them in the eyes of voters and reflect public needs and citizen input at the national and local levels.

In previous elections, nonpartisan domestic observation efforts have contributed to minimizing fraud and curbing violence in areas where risk is high but security conditions and local capacity still permit observation. In the lead-up to the 2011 regional elections, the number of incidences of violence against candidates rose, though number of violent incidents taking place during election day were significantly lower. Principle threats in past elections have included a high prevalence of violence directed at candidates, the threat of state capture at the local level by candidates with links to illegal groups, and the ongoing and growing influence of criminal gangs (BACRIM) and other illegal groups on the electoral process.

USAID/Colombia's primary mechanism for seeking to improve elections and political processes is the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) Leader with Associates Award. Through the CEPPS LWA, since July 2007 USAID has supported the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI). These partners have worked significantly through Colombian NGOs, including the Misión de Observación Electoral (MOE), Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris (CNAI), and numerous others at the local level, in order to implement their programs. In addition, particularly during the 2011 elections, other USAID implementing partners have supported key elections-related activities in municipalities considered to be of highest strategic importance. These partners include CHF International, Management Sciences for Development (MSD), and TetraTech ARD (formerly known as ARD, Inc.). USAID also directly supported MOE to do observations in key areas during the 2011 regional elections.

The following challenges have been identified as areas of key concern for elections and political processes in Colombia, and USAID-funded programs have sought to address them.

### Political Parties

Parties have struggled to establish a presence and engage citizens in regions where protracted violence has discouraged many from participating in the political process.

Many parties have struggled to develop an ideology or set of core policies that differentiates them from other parties, resulting in ambiguous identities that fail to provide voters with clear options.

Various scandals within political parties have damaged citizen trust in the ability of parties and the democratic system to represent their interests.

A lack of communication between party headquarters and their operating units at the departmental and municipal levels has impaired party representation of and responsiveness toward citizen demands.

At the regional level, parties are still working to adapt their procedures to the requirements of the 2005 “Law of Party Benches,” a law which obligates party members to caucus and vote with their party.

#### Afro-Colombians, Internally-Displaced Person (IDPs) and Women in Political Processes

Afro-Colombians are mainly concentrated in coastal departments outside of Bogotá and are disproportionately affected by prolonged government neglect in providing basic services.

IDPs, which include many Afro-Colombians, often remain vulnerable in their new surroundings, away from their traditional communities and bases of support.

Women are more likely than men to have never participated in a meeting of a political party or movement and are underrepresented in publically-elected bodies and high government posts.

A new law requires (effective first during the 2011 regional elections) that women comprise of a minimum of 30% of candidates on party lists, leading to an increase in women candidates compared to past elections. While this presents more opportunities for women to participate in political parties, many parties have struggled to meet the requirements of this quota.

#### Electoral Processes

Illegal groups – including guerrillas, paramilitaries, narco-traffickers, and BACRIM – have engaged in political intimidation and violence during elections.

Many Colombians perceive that both illegal and legal groups are likely to influence candidates and parties as they have in past elections.

Afro-Colombian and IDP populations are often more vulnerable to intimidation, fraud and violence.

With this context and these challenges in mind, USAID/Colombia’s efforts in the area of elections and political processes have sought to achieve the following objectives:

1) *To encourage more effective, programmatic political parties at the national and local levels.*

In order to achieve this, activities have focused on helping political parties at the national level to develop strong, issue-based party platforms that respond to citizen concerns. In so doing, activities have sought to help political parties to become more responsive to citizens, and to help parties to become more transparent and internally democratic. These activities have included:

- Establishing think tanks or similar internal policy teams dedicated to providing a permanent source of policy research and proposals to political parties and politicians;
- Working with political parties at the national level to adopt clear, programmatic platforms on core political and socioeconomic issues of concern to citizens;

- Working with political parties at the national level to effectively communicate platform positions to party leaders and the public at large;
- Initiatives to seek public or civil society input on policy issues;
- Incorporating or adapting tools to increase transparency and internal democracy (i.e. veedurias, use of campaign finance software and more inclusive candidate selection processes);
- Initiatives or tools to increase engagement between party structures and their caucuses at the departmental or municipal level; and
- Promoting tools that enhance party oversight and accountability functions.

2) *To promote the inclusion of Afro-Colombians, Internally-Displaced Person (IDPs) and Women in Political Processes.*

This objective was promoted through activities seeking to help political parties and politicians design and implement strategies to promote the inclusion and participation of Afro-Colombians and IDPs in political and electoral processes. The desired result was for parties to become more inclusive of these groups as a result of activities implemented. Such activities have included:

- Training Afro-Colombians and IDPs on the importance of active participation in Colombia's political and electoral processes, and how to effectively do so;
- Helping to developing political party platforms at the national level which reflect the needs of Afro-Colombians and IDPs; and
- Initiatives to strengthen strategies targeting women, youth and marginalized groups.

3) *To Support Transparent and Inclusive Electoral Processes.*

To promote this objective, activities have sought to help civic and political actors engage in effective advocacy for enhanced representation, accountability and transparency in Colombia's political system. Activities have included:

- Helping the Afro-Colombian Congressional Caucus to develop its technical and legislative capabilities;
- Building the capacity of Afro-Colombian civil society actors to effectively apply pressure on government and politicians to enact policies that engage Afro-Colombians in local decision-making processes;
- Promoting departmental legislation which benefits Afro-Colombians and encourages enhanced inclusion of these communities in government plans and investments;
- Training civil society organizations on how to exert pressure on legislative bodies to implement the "vote disclosure" initiative;
- Supporting efforts leading to Colombia's National Congress implementing the "vote disclosure" initiative included in the Political Reform Law;
- Efforts to ensure that voting records are available to the public at large;
- Efforts to ensure that voting records are used to exert political pressure on elected officials;
- Training party poll watchers;

- Efforts to increase the presence of party poll watchers in voting centers;
- Technical assistance for political parties on the use of financial disclosure software to facilitate compliance with legal financial disclosure obligations;
- Technical assistance to Colombia’s National Registrar’s Office in the redesign of the voting ballot for the 2011 local elections;
- Training of local registrars in target departments and municipalities on roles and responsibilities prior to, during and following election day;
- Support to MOE to promote a consistent approach to pre-election and election-day observation;
- Workshops with journalists on strategies and tools for covering the elections and campaign finance issues;
- Technical assistance to MOE for a complementary pre-election study of violence-related risks to the electoral process;
- Development of software for parties to prepare and file their financial disclosure forms for elections; and
- Political participation campaigns to promote a more informed vote and more participation from Afro-Colombians in the electoral process.

### III. Scope of Work

The evaluation’s objectives are as follows:

1. **Review and document USAID/Colombia’s past and ongoing efforts to strengthen EPP in Colombia.** In doing so, the team shall identify lessons learned and best practices from previous and current EPP programs that can be applied in future programs to maximize their impact and effectiveness. These lessons and best practices shall be used to inform the “recommendations” section set out below.
2. **Provide programmatic directions and prioritized recommendations for future USAID work with elections and political processes.** The Evaluation Team shall identify and prioritize future USAID EPP programming needs and provide recommendations and next steps for how these needs may be addressed in the context of USAID’s 2010-2015 country strategy. These recommendations should be informed by the evaluation team’s analysis of Colombian elections and political processes and lessons gleaned from the team’s review of previous, ongoing, and planned Mission EPP activities.

The Evaluation Team will meet with USAID/Colombia to determine the specific issues and areas of inquiry to be developed through the evaluation. The Evaluation Team will spend time in Bogotá and travel to two outlying areas (Chocó and Montes de María). The Evaluation Team will conduct this evaluation in the following three phases:

#### Phase 1: Desktop Review of Key Documents, Initial Analysis, Initial U.S. Interviews, and Development of Work Plan (One Week)

The Evaluation Team will review relevant U.S. government, GOC, NGO, and other EPP-related documents. USAID/Colombia and its implementing partners will provide key documents for review, but their list will not be exhaustive, and the Evaluation Team will be responsible for identifying and reviewing additional materials

relevant to the evaluation. USAID/Colombia and implementing partners will provide documents for review which may include, but will not be limited to, the following:

USAID/Colombia 2010-2015 Strategy

USAID/Colombia Operational Plan and Performance Plan Report

Colombia Strategic Development Initiative (CSDI) Fact Sheet

Work plans and reports on EPP activities from the USAID CEPPS Elections and Political Processes Program (implemented by IRI and NDI)

Relevant portions of reports from MOE, MSD, CHF International, and TetraTech regarding their elections-related activities in designated consolidation zones.

Documents from other USG-funded EPP activities (i.e., Department of State Political Section)

AmericasBarometer public opinion surveys, EPP-related sections from 2010 and 2011

NGO and private sector reports on EPP issues in Colombia (miscellaneous)

GOC reports and statistics on EPP issues

Note that some of these documents may not be publically available or may be in draft form. After reviewing the key documents, the Evaluation Team will develop a work plan, develop a preliminary list of key interviews and proposed field visits, conduct interviews in Washington, and hold a team planning meeting. If necessary, the Colombia-based team members may participate in the team-planning meeting via teleconference.

USAID/Colombia will assist the Evaluation Team with the identification of appropriate field visits and clear on all organizations and individuals to interview in Washington and Colombia. At or shortly after the team planning meeting, the team will confer with USAID/Colombia Mission personnel to discuss evaluation planning prior to arrival in the field, and will present its proposed methodology to USAID/Colombia.

#### Phase 2: Interviews and Field Research (Approximately Two Weeks)

In Colombia, the Evaluation Team will conduct key interviews with USAID/Colombia and other Embassy staff, contractor personnel, sub-contractors and sub-grantees, consultants, members of political parties, representatives of the GOC and NGOs, and any others that the team considers relevant. The team should also gather quantitative data and existing empirical analyses relevant to the evaluation.

In addition, the team will undertake field visits to the Chocó and the Montes de María regions to analyze political parties, conditions surrounding the electoral system, and to collect information on services and technical interventions provided to USAID beneficiaries, and/or meet with relevant stakeholders (e.g., party leaders, poll workers, NGOs, GOC entities). These field visits may be made simultaneously with a portion of the evaluation visiting each site. Six-day work weeks are authorized in the field.

USAID/Colombia suggests a mixed research approach<sup>84</sup>, including the following evaluation methods, along with others that the Evaluation Team and Mission deem appropriate:

1. Key informant interviews;
2. Focus groups;

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<sup>84</sup> See USAID TIPS Conducting Mixed-Method Evaluations, 2010

<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/evalweb/documents/TIPS-ConductingMixedMethodEvaluations.pdf>

3. Mini-surveys;
4. Personal narratives;
5. Secondary Data Collection (document and data review); and
6. Observation through field visits in the two locations outside the capital.

Note: Interviews should be triangulated<sup>85</sup> to ensure that all sides and perspectives of an issue are considered and, where possible, quantitative data should be collected to validate more subjective sources.

During the interviews and field research, the following questions will guide the evaluation:

1. Did implementing partners achieve the outcomes as stated in their respective program descriptions and work plans? Include both positive and negative results. What were the major factors which contributed to the achievement of (or failure to achieve) these results?
2. Are the programs sustainable? Use Development Assistance Committee criteria for evaluating assistance.
3. What changes have occurred in result of the project's activities?

*Phase 3: Development of Evaluation Report (Approximately six weeks, including four weeks to write draft report, one week for USAID to provide comments, and one week to submit the final report)*

The Evaluation Team will analyze and compare the data collected through document review, interviews, focus groups and field visits, and then prepare an evaluation report that includes findings, conclusions, and recommendations for USAID/Colombia. The report should synthesize the perspectives and positions of the various EPP stakeholders, present an expert analysis of the data collected, and provide clear strategic and programmatic recommendations for USAID. The report should also identify and describe other international actors supporting EPP activities or efforts in Colombia.

#### IV. Deliverables

**Deliverables under this SOW are internal to USAID/Colombia and shall not be distributed or otherwise made public by the Evaluation Team or the contractor unless specifically authorized by USAID.** They will include the following:

1. **Evaluation Work Plan.** The Evaluation Team shall submit an evaluation work plan, along with a preliminary list of key interviews and proposed field visits, to the USAID/Colombia DHR Office within five working days of the team planning meeting.
2. **Entrance Briefing.** The Evaluation Team shall provide an oral entrance briefing to the USAID/Colombia Front Office, DHR Office, and other interested Mission staff at the beginning of the evaluation trip to present the Evaluation Team's objectives and methodology for the evaluation period to the Mission.
3. **Exit Briefing.** The Evaluation Team shall provide an oral exit briefing of its preliminary findings and recommendations to the USAID/Colombia Front Office, the DHR Office and interested State Department Officers at the conclusion of the evaluation trip.
4. **Draft Evaluation Report.** The Evaluation Team shall submit an electronic Microsoft Word version, in Times New Roman 12-pt font, of a written draft report (in English) of findings and

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<sup>85</sup> Bamberger, M., Rugh, J., and Mabry, L., *RealWorld Evaluation: Working under Budget, Time, Data and Political Constraints*, Sage Publications, California, 2006; and USAID TIPS 5: Rapid Appraisal, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNABY209.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNABY209.pdf)

recommendations to the USAID Democracy Officer - OVP Joy Searcie at [jsearcie@usaid.gov](mailto:jsearcie@usaid.gov), within four weeks after conclusion of the field work. **The report will be limited to no more than 40 pages.** USAID/Colombia estimates that it will review and provide comments within five working days of receipt.

5. **Final Evaluation Report.** Within five working days after receiving comments from USAID, the Evaluation Team shall incorporate or address comments and submit an electronic PDF and Microsoft Word version, in Times New Roman 12-pt font, to the USAID Democracy Officer - OVP Joy Searcie at [jsearcie@usaid.gov](mailto:jsearcie@usaid.gov)

## V. Evaluation Team Composition

The Evaluation Team will be composed of five individuals, including a team leader, an international consultant, an international technical advisor (who does not travel to the field), and two Colombian experts/consultants. In addition to the five-person evaluation team, a support staff of two logistics/administrative support staff member (one at headquarters and another in Colombia) will also support the team. The Colombian experts should include at least one elections expert and one political processes expert. At least one of the evaluation team members (Colombian or international) should have knowledge of gender-related issues in EPP, and should be able to analyze different EPP issues relating to men and women. All team members must be fluent in Spanish to independently handle interviews without translation and to read extensive Spanish language documents. Additional qualifications and requirements for four of these team members can be found in Section VIII below.

## VI. Logistical Support

USAID will provide country clearances and minimal logistical support to the Evaluation Team. The Evaluation Team shall be responsible for arranging its own air travel, accommodation, local ground transportation, as well as its own computers, printers, Internet and cell phone services and other administrative services. The Evaluation Team is responsible for making its own appointments, except for those with the GOC. USAID/Colombia will provide a letter of introduction and a list of contacts to the Evaluation Team for meetings with implementing partners, program beneficiaries, and other key stakeholders and contacts. The Mission and/or implementing partners will make available relevant documents, as identified above. USAID will make appointments with the GOC and accompany the team in these appointments.

## VII. Estimated Level of Effort (LOE)

Level of Effort	Preparation Days (including team planning meeting)	International Travel Days	Work Days (6 day work weeks)	Report Days	Total Days
<b>Evaluation Team</b>					
Team Leader	6	2	14	10	<b>32</b>
Senior International Consultant	4	2	14	6	<b>26</b>
Senior Technical Advisor	2	0	0	2	<b>4</b>
Colombian Consultant I (Elections)	2	0	14	1	<b>17</b>
Colombian Consultant II (Political Processes)	2	0	14	1	<b>17</b>
<b>Support Staff</b>					
Administrative Asst.	2	0	2	1	<b>5</b>
Colombian Administrative Asst.	2	0	14	0	<b>16</b>

## VIII. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The proposal for this evaluation should be five pages or fewer (not including resumes) and should include proposed personnel, a proposed timeline, and the Contractor's cost proposal. Resumes should be included as an annex. The proposal will be evaluated initially on proposed personnel and then cost.

Personnel 100%: The Contractor's proposed personnel will be given the weights shown below. A brief resumé and references are required for the Team Leader, Elections Expert, and Political Processes expert proposed for this evaluation. USAID reserves the right to verify references provided by the Contractor.

- a) **Team Leader, 35%:** The proposed Team Leader will be evaluated based on her/his experience leading teams and conducting evaluations of complex issues and programs. The Team Leader should be a senior professional with extensive rapid appraisal field experience and proven writing, teamwork, communication, and analytical skills. S/he should also possess a solid understanding of electoral and political issues in Colombia and/or other Latin American countries. The Team Leader must be fluent in Spanish to independently handle interviews without translation and to read extensive Spanish language documents.
- b) **Senior International Consultant, 25%:** The senior international consultant will be evaluated on his/her knowledge of and/or experience with the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of EPP programs in Colombia. He/she must be fluent in Spanish to independently handle interviews without translation and to read extensive Spanish language documents.
- c) **Elections Expert, 20%:** The Elections Expert should have international and/or Colombian elections experience and be able to provide insight into the effectiveness of Colombian electoral laws, policies, and regulations; Colombian electoral systems; and electoral oversight systems and institutions.

- d) Political Processes Expert, 20%:** The Political Processes Expert should have prior experience working on Colombian political issues and should be able to analyze and describe Colombia's political history and provide an in-depth analysis of the Colombian current political system. He/she should be particularly aware of the Colombian political parties and their structure.

As indicated above, at least one of the evaluation team members should have knowledge of gender-related EPP issues and should be able to analyze and discuss the different EPP issues relating to men and women. Note that gender issues should be addressed within the report.

#### **IX. Period of Performance**

The Mission estimates that this evaluation will require eleven weeks of work total. Ideally, the fieldwork is to be completed by February 2012. The Draft Report will be submitted to USAID no later than three weeks after the field work is completed. USAID estimates that it will review and comment on the Draft Report within five business days after receipt. The Final Report will be due five business days after the contractor receives USAID's comments.

# ANNEX 12. EVALUATION WORK PLAN

## Performance Evaluation of USAID's efforts to strengthen Elections and Political Processes Preliminary Work Plan

Main purpose of the evaluation:

Evaluate results of the USAID Elections and Political Processes Programs in Colombia (CEEPS and EPP)

Identify lessons learned and best practices

Develop recommendations for future

The Elections and Political Processes Programs addressed problems in three major areas:

1. Political parties: strengthening, representation, political presence in certain areas, inclusion of marginalized populations, political party funding.
2. Afro Colombians, Internally displaced people and Women in political processes
3. Electoral Processes

THE ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL PROCESSES PROGRAM'S MAIN OBJECTIVES:

1. To encourage more effective, programmatic political parties at the national and local levels
2. To promote the inclusion of Afro-Colombians, Internally-Displaced Person (IDPs) and Women in Political Processes
3. To Support Transparent and Inclusive Electoral Processes.

Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Data Source	Methods for Data Analysis
1. Were the Elections and Political Processes Programs successful in achieving the main objectives identified above?	1. Were the objectives/results of the EPP Programs well articulated and realistic?	Interviews with Key Stakeholders	Analysis of interview material
	2. Were adequate indicators identified to measure these results?		Triangulation of information
	3. Was the data adequate to measure the indicators?		Verification of information
2. Were the different implementing partners able to reach the expected results and sub-results of their individual projects?	1. Were implementing partners objectives and expected results well-articulated? Were they realistic?	Interview with implementing partners and sub-grantees	Analysis of interview material
	2. Did they respond to USAID's main concerns and objectives?		Triangulation of information
	3. Were they able to identify adequate and reliable indicators?		Verification of information
	4. Did they provide reliable data to measure their indicators?		
	5. Did implementing partners conduct all the activities they planned to conduct? Did they do it in a timely fashion?		
	6. Did their results and/or indicators change over time? If so, why?		
	7. What was the most important challenge in the implementation of the program? How did they overcome the challenge?		
	8. What would they do differently if they had a chance to do this again?		

<p>3. What are the most important best practices, success stories and lessons learned that can inform the design of a future program?</p>	<p>1. What are the most important outcomes of these programs? What factors explain their success?  2. Were there any set-backs? If so, what factors explain these set-backs?  3. What worked and what did not work?  4. After five years, what are the most important results of each program? Are these mainly outputs or outcomes?  4. Is there any higher level result at the impact level?  5. How do different stakeholders perceive the work of NDI, IRI and other implementing partners?  6. In the end, did implementing partners able to make a difference?</p>	<p>Interviews with relevant stakeholders</p>	<p>Analysis of interview material  Triangulation of information  Verification of information</p>
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**Preparatory Work: February 27-March 6**

The US based team has been conducting a desk review of relevant program documents and background material. The team has also conducted interviews with staff from IRI; NDI and USAID in Washington DC.

In Colombia, the team has been making logistical arrangements and consolidating the list of persons the team will interview during field work.

**Field Work –March 7-March 24**

The team will conduct interviews with all implementing partners (NDI, IRI, MOE and Semana), sub-grantees and direct beneficiaries of their programs (political party leaders; congressional caucus; representatives of women’s groups; Afro-Colombians and IDP; NGOs; journalists; and government officials).

In addition, the team will also conduct selected interviews with academics, journalists and any additional stakeholder the team deems relevant for this evaluation.

Interviews will be conducted mainly in Bogotá but the team will also conduct a two day field visit to Choco and Montes de Maria. The four people team will split in two teams; one will visit Choco and the other Montes de Maria. In these places interviews will be arranged with representatives of NDI and IRI Projects and the organizations and/or stakeholders they work with. Given time constraints, if feasible, a focus group methodology will be considered for these field visits.

**Methodology**

This will be a qualitative evaluation based mostly on information gathered from key stakeholder informants on the ground. Documents will be reviewed and any information relevant to the evaluation will be included.

The evaluation team will not generate primary data, but rather will work with any available data generated and developed by IRI, NDI, MOE and Semana. To the extent that the available data is disaggregated by gender, ethnicity and/or region, it will be incorporated in the analysis.

Interviews will be conducted ideally by the entire team of four evaluators. If necessary, the team will split in teams of two. The main idea is to have at least two persons present in each interview to ensure that information is captured and triangulation of information can be conducted reliably.

A thorough review will be conducted on each project's PMPs to analyze whether targets were met and results achieved.

**Main Sources of information:**

1. Key informant interviews;
2. Focus groups (if appropriate and feasible);
4. Personal narratives;
5. Secondary Data Collection (document and data review); and
6. Observation through field visits in the two locations outside the capital.

**Evaluation Report**

Following USAID guidelines, the evaluation report will be organized around findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Findings: empirical facts collected during the evaluation

Conclusions: Interpretations and judgments based on findings

Recommendations: proposed actions for management

The team proposes to evaluate each project (IRI and NDI) separately, emphasizing findings, conclusions and recommendations, and, if pertinent, draw further general recommendations for USAID.





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