

Executive Summary

Summary of Key Achievements

Throughout FY2022, the Peacebuilding Project worked to build capacity of key actors to peacefully transform conflict at departmental, municipal, and community levels, prioritizing participation among historically excluded groups including women, youth, and indigenous people. From governmental entities to local indigenous mayoralties, civil society organizations to *comadronas* (midwives), the project strengthened coordination, communication, and the ability of individual leaders, commissions, and organizations to mitigate conflict and build peace in the Western Highlands. The project worked with 9,110 total individuals in FY2022, within five departments, 14 municipalities, and 117 communities.

Accompanying municipalities and communities in the process to identify, address, and mitigate triggers for conflict: During this fiscal year, a project team of 14 community facilitators, who speak the local language and are knowledgeable about the social context and culture, worked alongside 2,533 local leaders, indigenous authorities, women, elders, and youth to conduct community entry activities, rapid stakeholder assessments, and conflict and resiliency analyses. The inputs from these inclusive and participatory activities led to the creation of 54 new community visions (CV) this year, bringing the total number of CVs to 80 at the end of FY2022.

Facilitating responses to CVs by connecting communities and municipalities with departmental and national government entities:

The project conducted 31 activities or processes in FY2022 across 26 communities. To maximize impact, the project strengthened strategic partnerships with numerous institutions (governmental, civil society organizations, public and private sectors) and connected them with local efforts; 100 percent of CVs received external support. This is critical for sustainability and for local ownership.



One example of community implementation is a nine-session training process conducted with 31 midwives in response to the CV developed in Nimapá, Totonicapán. The training sessions, which were implemented in conjunction with the Office for the Protection of Indigenous Women (*Defensoría de la Mujer Indígena*, DEMI), Cooperation for the Rural Development of the Western Highlands (*Cooperación para el Desarrollo Rural de Occidente*, CDRO), and the Ministry of Health, aimed to raise awareness among midwives about their rights, prevent intrafamilial and gender-based violence (GBV), and strengthen midwives' knowledge base in addressing conflict. (See Activity 2.1.1 and Success Story: A *Comadrona*'s Gift and Struggle in Guatemala's Western Highlands for more details on this training.)

Strengthening the Conflict Mediator Network to mitigate conflict in communities: During the fiscal year, the project continued supporting mediation to find viable win-win solutions to community conflicts through the Conflict Mediator Network, which had 62 active mediators (34 women and 28 men). A conflict mediator recently put his training into action and successfully mitigated a land conflict in the community of Las Guayabitas, Chiantla. The conflict related to a stone crusher company that was extracting material from a property within the community, whose large trucks posed a risk to school-aged children walking to school, caused traffic during peak hours, and had the potential to damage the road. The mediator facilitated dialogue between the community and property owner to reach a mutually beneficial agreement that restricted times the trucks could circulate and required both parties (property owner and community) to commit to ensuring that the road's infrastructure was not damaged. With the mediator's support, the agreement positively impacted 50 families. The project has continued to identify ways to strengthen the network, most recently connecting mediators to the Municipal Violence Prevention Commission (*Comisión Municipal de Prevención de la Violencia, COMUPRES*) and Municipal Commissions for Peace and Human Rights as a way to leverage impact.



Continued commitment to social and gender inclusion: The participation of youth, women, and indigenous people in addressing and mitigating conflict is key to building safe, peaceful communities where families can thrive. The Peacebuilding Project continued prioritizing the participation of historically marginalized groups in spaces of dialogue, training, and decision-making through numerous actions in FY2022. The Youth Voices for Peace Network (*Red de Voceros y Voceras*

Juveniles para la Paz) engaged 160 youth from ten municipalities in FY2022 to build confidence, develop leadership skills, connect on issues that matter, and empower them to get involved in their communities in substantive ways. For many *Voceros Juveniles*, these safe spaces of dialogue and connection have given them purpose and rooted them in their communities. That was the case with Marta, a member of *Voceros Juveniles* network whose participation in project activities changed her outlook on her community and her plans to irregularly migrate to the United States. She is currently studying in university and setting an example for the other youth in her community. (See Success Story: Live Your Dreams for Marta's story.) There were 33 youth-led initiatives to prevent or reduce violence and conflict or to promote social development this fiscal year, one of which was the in-person Peace Fair held in Huehuetenango in May. (See Success Story: Creating collective spaces of empowerment and amplifying youth voices for peace to read about the peace fair and *Voceros Juveniles*.)

Likewise, the project facilitated women’s participation in all project activities, achieving that nearly 50 percent of activity participants were women. Six hundred and eighty local women participated in a substantive role or position in a peacebuilding process. One example of many is Margarita Tomás, a single mother of three who is a member of the project’s Indigenous Advisory Group and who was elected President of the Municipal Human Rights Commission of Comitancillo and is working to expand her municipal work by providing solutions to violence at a regional level. (See Success Story: Weavers of Peace for more about Margarita Tomás and three other inspirational women who are working to drive change in their community).

Additionally, the project ensured inclusion of indigenous people in activities, with 64 percent of all Peacebuilding Project participants identifying as indigenous. Not only that, but the project also coordinated efforts with indigenous entities to integrate their perspectives and priorities into programs and facilitated exchanges between indigenous authorities and municipal leaders and state systems. In the case of Poxlajuj, a community of Tonicapán that identified solid waste management as



a trigger for conflict, the project brought together community and municipal leaders for roundtable discussions about the conflict and then facilitated an exchange with municipal authorities of San Pedro la Laguna, Sololá, a municipality with a proven track-record of managing waste. As a result of this exchange, Poxlajuj’s authorities prioritized raising awareness and education to address this potential trigger for conflict; the municipal environmental educator of Tonicapán has since begun a campaign to raise awareness about solid waste management among elementary and junior high school students in the community.

Working to prevent gender-based violence (GBV) and provide culturally relevant care to survivors of GBV: Combatting sexual, gender-based, and domestic violence is an important strategy to prevent irregular migration, which is why the Peacebuilding Project works with diverse actors and entities to raise awareness around violence prevention, educate on reporting routes, and provide care to victims and survivors of violence. For survivors of GBV, the project provided culturally relevant care and healing sessions, including psychosocial and legal services and ancestral Mayan healing techniques. These support services reached 103 women through a small grant to Association Miriam and 99 women in partnership with the DEMI. (See Activity 2.1.1 and Success Story: Juana Tax, the inspiring woman who is working to prevent gender-based violence and help survivors heal through culturally relevant support to learn more.)

While the Peacebuilding Project is working at different levels to prevent GBV, one important example of this work comes from the municipality of Comitancillo where intrafamilial violence was identified as a trigger for conflict by communities. In response, in FY22Q3, the project began

a process to build capacity among institutions to report abuse and violence against children and adolescents through the development of a community reporting route that could act as a guide for the care and referral of children and adolescents suffering physical, psychological, sexual, and economic violence, at both the family and community level. Institutions that make up the Municipal Network for the Protection of Children, Adolescents, and Youth (*Red Municipal de Organizaciones para la Protección de la Niñez, Adolescencia y Juventud*) met to collectively develop the community reporting route to link key



points from specific routes used by the Attorney General (*Ministerio Público, MP*), National Civil Police (*Policía Nacional Civil, PNC*), Secretariat against Sexual Violence, Exploitation and Human Trafficking (*Secretaria Contra la Violencia Sexual, Explotacion y Trata de Personas, SVET*) and the Local Public Health Post (*Centro de Atención Permanente, CAP*). Once the community reporting route was created, it was then presented and validated among the Municipal Development Council (*Consejo Municipal de Desarrollo, COMUDE*) and community mayors. The strategy to socialize the reporting route included printing copies of the reporting route for distribution among local authorities, developing a script for educating about the route (including a training session during an “Educate for Peace” course with educators), and developing a 1.5-hour radio spot to discuss the reporting route. The Attorney General of Comitancillo held a training on what a reporting route is, types of violence, ways to address cases of violence, institutions that respond to reports of violence, and emergency phone numbers. The 77 community authorities (nine women and 68 men) that participated in the training not only acquired the skills and tools to recognize and report different types of violence in a timely way, but they also received a printed copy of the community reporting route. This demonstrates how the project links municipal and community governments for improved coordination and impact.



Creating safe spaces to discuss Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex (LGBTQI+) human rights, learning from partners, and providing attention to survivors of bias-based violence: Violence, discrimination, and stigma negatively impacts the lives of LGBTQI+ individuals in Guatemala. For this reason, it’s been a priority for the project to create safe spaces of exchange and inclusion as well as capacity building for LGBTQI+ organizations, while ensuring cultural relevance and

adherence to Do No Harm practices. This fiscal year, the project began implementing activities to address violence suffered by LGBTQI+ individuals in targeted areas in the Western Highlands. In

June, in commemoration of LGBTQI+ Pride month, the Peacebuilding Project staff participated in a training on basic concepts of sexual diversity and gender identity to deepen their knowledge and understanding of sexual diversity and gender identity. The project also hosted an exchange between LGBTQI+ organizations in the Western Highlands. Representatives from *Trabajando Unidos*, Association *Vidas Paralelas*, and the *Voceros Juveniles* participated in the exchange of experiences, perspectives, and opinions regarding the adverse situations that LGBTQI+ individuals confront in their communities. Some LGBTQI+ individuals are gaining acceptance into leadership positions in their communities. One member of *Voceros Juveniles* who is part of the LGBTQI+ community is an active member of the Community Development Council (*Consejo Comunitario de Desarrollo*, COCODE) in a community in Huehuetenango and is utilizing their acquired leadership skills to make their voice heard for the benefit of the community. The project is committed to LGBTQI+ inclusion and learning.



Supporting the development of a strong, capable, and accountable Government of Guatemala:

The Peacebuilding Project recognizes that to effectively and sustainably improve social cohesion and reduce social conflict in Guatemala, it must partner with the Government of Guatemala (GoG), engage with them at the community and municipal levels and strengthen their capacity at the national and departmental levels to participate in the management, response, and resolution of local conflicts. This fiscal year, one key

strategy for doing this has been to train delegates of the Presidential Commission for Peace and Human Rights (*Comisión de Paz y Derechos Humanos*, COPADEH) in conflict mitigation and link them to the Departmental Commissions on Security and Conflict Management (*Comisión Departamental de Seguridad y Atención de Conflictos*, CODESACs) who are responsible for identifying and addressing conflict in their territories. In May, 66 participants (27 women and 39 men) finalized the six-module, 12-session course. Recently, the project held an event with COPADEH training graduates, who participated in an assessment process to identify factors that both support and obstruct the prevention, mitigation, and resolution of conflicts as well as the coordination between local, municipal, and departmental authorities. They also discussed how the training process contributed to their capacity. Among the factors that facilitate conflict management, participants highlighted the importance of having a strong institution, having access to information about existing conflicts, including the actors involved and the socio-cultural context, and coordination among key actors. Participants highlighted that the project strengthened their capacities to address conflict with training, stakeholder identification, and dialogue. Among the mechanisms that facilitate coordination between authorities at different levels to respond to conflicts, participants highlighted the importance of communication channels that allow for relationships between institutions and the need to have tools to strategically manage conflicts, such as Departmental Strategies for Conflict Management (*Estrategias Departamentales de Atención al Conflicto*, EDAC). Participants highlighted that the project strengthened their ability to address

mechanisms related to coordination between authorities at different levels including effective communication between key actors, development of EDACs, and periodic conflict analysis. Not only are COPADEH delegates better equipped to mitigate conflict, but they also took those learnings to the CODESACs and utilized them in the construction of the EDACs, which serve as a documented conflict mitigation route to guide departmental and municipal governments in a timely and peaceful response to conflict. All EDACs from the five intervention departments have been revised and/or updated, giving sustainability to the work the Peacebuilding Project has completed during the last few years. (See Success Story: Transforming Guatemala, one conflict at a time, for more information on the training.)

Indicator Data

Key indicator data results during FY2022 include:

- 2,974 people participated in project activities that addressed the peaceful management and resolution of conflicts.
- 908 events, trainings, and activities to build support for peace and/or reconciliation were implemented by the project.
- 5 high-impact conflict mitigation processes were supported by the project.
- 13 documents that contribute to peaceful conflict management were created, revised, and/or adopted with support from the project.
- 205 authorities and non-governmental actors demonstrated an increased capacity to respond to and resolve conflicts at the local, municipal, and/or national levels.
- 1 civil society organization engaged in an advocacy intervention with project support.
- 33 youth-led initiatives to prevent or reduce violence and conflict or promote social development were implemented with support from the Peacebuilding Project.
- 10 activities designed to promote or strengthen women's civic participation were implemented by the project.
- 680 women participated in a substantive role or position in peacebuilding processes.
- 67 percent of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that received grant funding from the Peacebuilding Project included activities or services designed to reduce specific risks or harm to vulnerable populations.
- 2,533 people engaged in cooperative community dialogue.
- 54 CVs from the second entry group were developed in an inclusive and participatory manner to address identified sources of conflict, bringing the life of project total to 80 CVs.
- 26 community strategies (known as CVs) from the first entry group were implemented to address identified sources of conflict; 31 activities within those CVs were implemented.
- 100 percent of the community strategies were implemented with external support.
- 202 women received GBV attention services through the Peacebuilding Project.
- 1 conflict early warning system was supported through the Peacebuilding Project