

CAMPAÑA COLOMBIANA
CONTRA MINAS
PRIMERO LAS PERSONAS

Beyond Land Liberation:

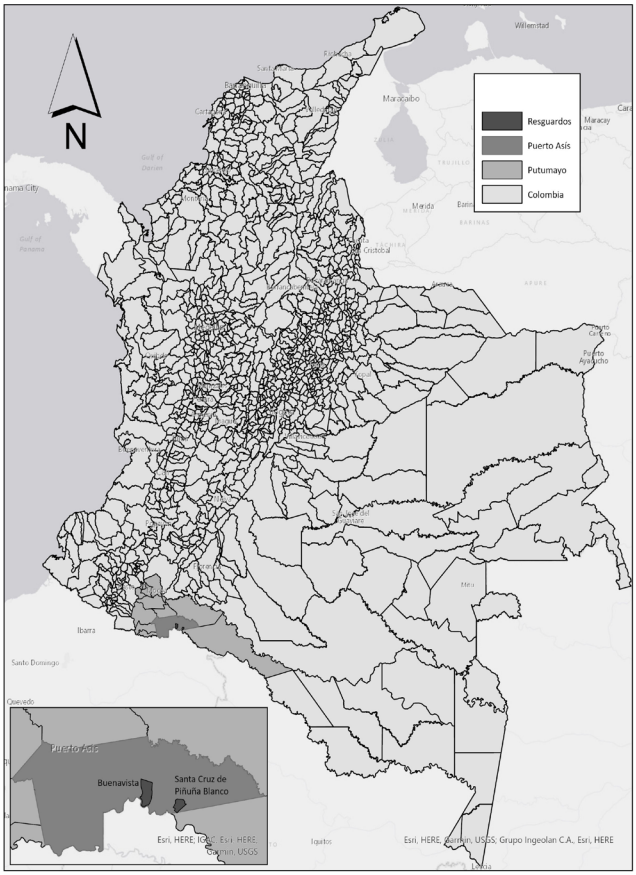
Gender-Transformative Actions within the Framework of Action Against Antipersonnel Mines

Introduction

In Colombia, the presence of antipersonnel mines and other explosive devices has left a deep mark on the territories and the communities that inhabit them. Their impacts are not limited to the physical: these weapons also perpetuate conditions of inequality, exclusion, and violence. In this context, humanitarian demining represents an opportunity not only to free the land, but also to transform social relations, build peace, and foster sustainable and inclusive development.

With this conviction, the Colombian Campaign Against Mines (CCCM), within the framework of the Humanitarian Demining project supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, decided to undertake the implementation of a pilot project for the prevention of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and development with an intersectional gender and ethnic approach in areas cleared of explosive devices.

This report details the development of this pilot project carried out in conjunction with the Siona [1], people in the indigenous reserves of Buenavista and Santa Cruz de Piñuña Blanco, in the municipality of Puerto Asís, Putumayo, areas cleared of explosive devices by the CCCM. The process unfolded in two phases: the first focused on preventing gender-based violence (GBV) in the Buenavista reserve; and the second aimed at replicating the GBV prevention pilot in Piñuña Blanco, along with implementing a productive initiative in Buenavista, where the training and awareness-raising process had already been completed.



1 The Siona people are one of the original peoples of the Amazon region, primarily inhabiting southern Colombia (Putumayo Department) and northeastern Ecuador (Sucumbíos Province), in territories along the Putumayo River and its tributaries. They belong to the Western Tukanoan language family and are characterized by their close spiritual, cultural, and environmental connection to the Amazon rainforest. The Siona maintain a self-governing structure recognized by Colombian law and exercise their autonomy through their traditional authorities, in accordance with Article 330 of the Colombian Constitution and Law 89 of 1890, which regulate the organization and self-government of indigenous peoples.

This document, in addition to presenting the results achieved, explains the project's rationale, how it was developed in dialogue with the community, what lessons were learned, and what paths it opens for the future. Through this text, we invite reflection on the role of Mine Action as a tool for social transformation, and on the ways in which Indigenous peoples, such as the Siona, lead processes of resistance, healing, and reconstruction of their territories and community structures.

Beyond land liberation, this project aimed to transform the imaginaries, relationships, and structures that reproduce violence and exclusion, building from the realities of the communities, recognizing their worldview, their ancestral knowledge, and their history

Where did the initiative come from?

In 2018, the CCCM began to consolidate a gender work area, with the goal of integrating this perspective across all its activities. One of the first strategies was to incorporate gender awareness workshops as part of the training courses for the Non-Technical Survey (NTS) and Clearance teams.
In one of these workshops, conducted with new teams preparing to enter the Putumayo department, at the end of the introductory session on gender, two people from the Siona community of the Buenavista Indigenous Reserve, Dany Piaguaje and Adiela Mera (foto) approached the facilitating team. They expressed their interest in having a similar workshop held in their community, given their concern about the discrimination and gender-based violence they faced.



"These issues are rarely discussed in Indigenous communities, especially those far from urban areas. That's why I wanted to share them, so people can be aware of them and avoid, perhaps, perpetrating gender-based violence out of ignorance."
- Dany y Adiela.

This request marked the beginning of a process. The gender studies team immediately recognized the relevance of the proposal, but also identified a significant limitation: they lacked the necessary experience to address an ethnic approach with the depth and respect it required. Therefore, it was decided to take time to develop the appropriate conceptual and methodological framework.

With the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (COSUDE), two key actions were undertaken to build the foundation of the project. The first was the creation of a team of ethnic Gender Focal Points (GFPs), which included members of the Siona people, among them Dany and Adiela. The goal was to find people who could apply a gender perspective to their local realities, as well as to their ancestral practices and beliefs.

The second action was an immersive research process: a member of the gender team spent time with members of the Siona community, participating in community spaces, internal training sessions, cultural events, traditional medicine ceremonies, and other ancestral spiritual practices. This experience was fundamental to gaining a deeper understanding of their worldview, forms of organization, social roles, and concepts of care, authority, and territory.

As a result of this process of learning, listening, and collective construction, the first pilot proposal with a gender and ethnic focus was formulated and submitted to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The process of developing the proposal:

Following the research and preparation phase, and based on the lessons learned from working with the Siona community leaders, the collective formulation of the project proposal began. This process integrated their knowledge, perspectives, and concerns, as well as the technical expertise of the CCCM's gender team. This co-creation ensured that the project responded not only to institutional guidelines but, more importantly, to the realities, needs, and priorities of the Siona community.

Once the document was finalized, it was formally presented to the political authorities of the Buenavista Indigenous Reserve[2]. Respecting community processes and the organizational structure of the Siona people, the established procedures for any external action within their

2 In Colombia, indigenous peoples have their own authorities and governments, recognized by the 1991 Political Constitution (articles 246 and 330). These structures exercise autonomy in their territories and can organize themselves according to their uses and customs, in accordance with Law 89 of 1890 and the principles of ILO Convention 169.

territory were followed. As a fundamental part of this process,a spiritual ceremony [3], was held, in which the members of the CCCM who would be directly involved in the project's implementation participated.



Through the guidance of the spiritual authority and with the endorsement of the political authority, guidance, protection, and permission were offered so that the project could be carried out within the territory. This act reflected the recognition that humanitarian action cannot be separated from the knowledge and spiritual systems of Indigenous peoples and that acting in their territories requires not only technical approval but also spiritual and cultural legitimacy[4].

Part 1: Prevention of Gender-Based Violence in the Siona Indigenous Reserve of Buenavista

The first part of the project focused on strengthening community capacities for the prevention of gender-based violence in the Siona Indigenous Reserve of Buenavista. This phase was developed through an awareness-raising and training process adapted to the worldview and dynamics of the community, seeking to promote reflection, dialogue, and, above all, transformative action from within the community.

3 The Siona people's spiritual ceremony, known as the yagé ceremony, is an ancestral ritual of healing and spiritual guidance. During this ceremony, led by a wise elder or taita, yagé (ayahuasca), a sacred brew prepared from Amazonian plants, is consumed to strengthen the physical, emotional, and spiritual balance of individuals and the community.

4 In Colombia, entry into indigenous territories requires a prior consultation and authorization process with the political and traditional authorities of each community, in recognition of their autonomy and self-government, established by the 1991 Political Constitution (Articles 7, 246, and 330) and ILO Convention 169. Furthermore, in many cases, it is necessary to participate in the spiritual practices and ceremonies of each community, which help to harmonize the relationship between visitors, the territory, and the spiritual authorities of the indigenous people.

To achieve this, work was carried out with three population groups defined by the political and spiritual authorities of the reserve: the Indigenous Guard, the school community, and Indigenous women. These groups were selected not only for their relevance in the social structure of the reserve but also for their potential to become agents of change in the face of the dynamics of discrimination and violence that the project sought to transform.

Each group received support and leadership from a Community Development Program (CDP) member of the reserve, selected by the authorities. These individuals assumed the role of community guides and bridges between the technical approach and ancestral knowledge. Their role was key in facilitating training processes and ensuring that the project generated lasting capacities within the territory.

The ultimate goal of this stage was for each group, through spaces for reflection and learning, to identify situations of risk or violence in their environment and to propose and implement concrete actions to prevent gender-based violence within the reservation. This practical approach sought to translate knowledge into action, strengthening the community's autonomy to respond collectively and in a culturally appropriate manner to this problem.

In this way, the first phase of the project provided conceptual and practical tools and established a community capacity to continue addressing violence prevention from its own unique, intergenerational, and sustainable perspective.

When was it implemented?: 2021 – 2022

Our team

This project arose after two members of our team from the Siona Buenavista Indigenous Reserve in Puerto Asís, Putumayo, submitted a request to the CCCM's Gender Unit to conduct gender violence (GBV) workshops in their territory.



ALONSO OTAVALO
Governor of the Buenavista Indigenous Reserve of the Siona people and Gender Focal Point.



TANIA ALVARADO
Siona woman from the Buenavista Indigenous Reserve, community leader in efforts to protect the environment, including the territory's ancestral seeds.



DANY PIAGUAJE
Leader of the Non-Technical Study for the Colombian Campaign Against Mines, Gender Focal Point, Indigenous Guard member, and community leader.



BRIGITTE ESCOBAR
Communications volunteer. Secretary of the Reserve's Board of Directors, Indigenous Guard member, and community leader.



YESID PIAGUAJE
Paramedic and Indigenous Guard of the Buenavista Reservation of the Siona people.



ANDERSON ESCOBAR
Gender Focal Point of the Buenavista Reservation of the Siona people.

Note: These were the positions these people held at the time the project was executed.



> “Gender equality has always been central to the Indigenous Reserve; what was lacking were the talks”

said Alonso Otavalo, Governor of the Reserve when the project was implemented.

Part 01

Prevention of Gender-Based Violence in the Siona Buenavista Indigenous Reserve

The first phase of the project was structured in several stages, each built through dialogue and shared responsibility between the CCCM and the community of the Siona Indigenous Reserve of Buenavista. A participatory methodology ensured that each step of the process was aligned with the community's timelines, values, and organizational structures.

1. Knowledge Exchange

Before beginning activities with the population groups, a key stage in the project's implementation took place: the exchange of knowledge between the Siona community and the CCCM team.

The first part of this exchange was led by the Siona people themselves. Individuals designated by the community, including the GFP's members, provided training for the CCCM members who would be participating in the project. In this session, essential aspects of the Siona worldview were shared, including their forms of organization, their relationship with the land, the role of spirituality in daily life, and their ancestral cultural practices. This allowed the CCCM team to better understand the context in which the project would be developed and to act with greater sensitivity, coherence, and respect toward the dynamics of the reservation.

Subsequently, a second training session was held, this time led by the CCCM's gender team. The training provided technical tools on gender, equality approaches, types of gender-based violence, prevention and support pathways, and adapted participatory methodologies. This training was aimed at the community development leaders (GFPs) of the reservation, with the goal of strengthening their capacity to lead processes with the three population groups.

This mutual training process marked a fundamental symbolic and methodological moment: the recognition of Indigenous knowledge as the foundation of the process, and the validation of intercultural dialogue as a guiding principle.





2. Working tables for joint design

To ensure the relevance and community ownership of the process, three working groups were held, one with each population group, as an initial space for collective construction. Through social and community mapping[5] exercises, each group reflected on three key aspects:

- Gender-related practices, roles, or values that are fundamental to their identity and should not be changed.

- The strengths of each group that would serve as a basis for designing the project's activities.

- Gender-related problems and the transformations they wished to achieve.

This analysis made it possible to establish specific objectives for each population group:

- **Indigenous Guard:** Strengthen their capacity to identify and address situations of gender-based violence (GBV) within the reservation, integrating this task into their role as guardians of the territory.

- **School community:** Promote safe and respectful spaces by preventing bullying and transforming gender stereotypes from an early age.

- **Indigenous women:** Strengthen the recognition and reporting of GBV, as well as individual and collective empowerment through sorority and community work.

5 The maps produced consisted of participatory exercises that included a timeline to understand the history and gender practices in the community, and two conceptual trees: the first represented gender problems (with the roots as causes, the trunk as the main problems and the leaves as their consequences); the second reflected the aspirations for change (with the roots as the values and identity elements of the people, the trunk as the desired changes and the leaves as the expected results of the project on gender issues).

This stage also involved developing timelines to identify historical changes in gender roles and traditions within the community.

Mind maps were also created to help translate the previously discussed concepts into specific activities and topics.

These resources served as the basis for designing the workshops to be implemented with each population group.









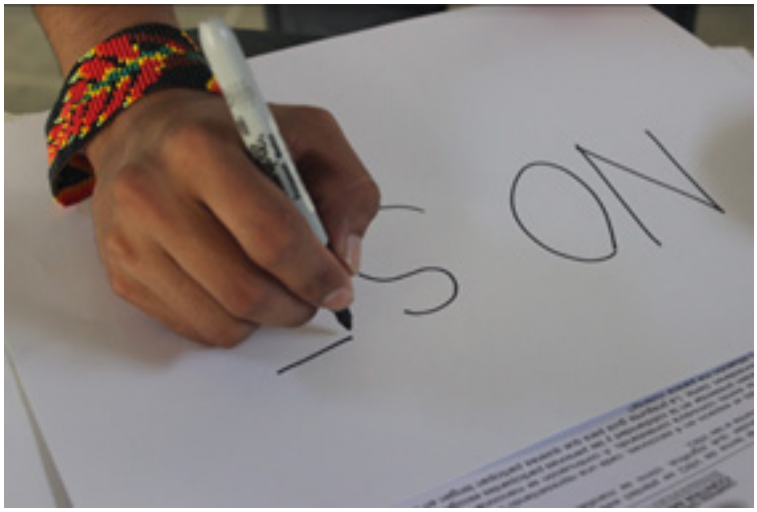


3. Implementation of the Workshops

With the objectives defined, the GFP's of the reservation designed a methodological approach for each group, based on participatory workshops that integrated both technical content and the community's own cultural practices. Throughout the process, a monthly workshop was held with each population group, fostering spaces for trust, critical reflection, and action plans.

These activities were not isolated events, but rather continuous processes of collective learning, where each group was able to advance in recognizing violence, inequalities, and, above all, in developing their own tools to prevent them.

The workshops were led by the GFPs, which allowed for greater ownership of the topic and a closer relationship with the participants. Furthermore, their leadership facilitated the explanation of the content from the perspective of their own reality and cultural context. At this stage, the CCCM team provided only technical support.







4. Community closure and delivery of materials

To conclude this first phase, specific educational materials were designed for each population group. These materials, developed by workshop participants and approved by the authorities, compiled the key lessons and messages learned throughout the process, with the goal of enabling gender-based violence prevention efforts to continue and be strengthened independently within the community.















In addition, a community closing day was held, which included four parts:

- A spiritual ceremony, led by the spiritual authority of the reservation, as a way to give thanks, close the cycle, and invoke protection for future processes.

- A community sporting event, which strengthened bonds and highlighted the message of violence prevention through play and community interaction.

- The collective painting of a mural, as a way to leave a visible mark of the community's commitment to social transformation.

- The official handover of educational materials to the three population groups, as a symbol of the transfer of responsibility within the community and the sustainability of the process.

Results:

Workshops:

1. Indigenous Women

Four workshops were conducted for women in the indigenous reserve, focusing on the following themes: identifying gender-based violence (GBV), positive relationships among women, gender and work, and sorority. The goal was to expand knowledge about different forms of violence and promote the importance of support networks among women.

Through these workshops, 32 women (28 indigenous, 2 mestiza, and 1 Afro-descendant) actively participated in awareness-raising and collective empowerment processes.



> "I really liked it because they gave some great talks. You know, you don't know, but you learn little by little. The talks taught that women shouldn't be discriminated against and that they should be supported. I liked that because it addresses the machismo of men, and women can do it too."
>
> **- Woman beneficiary of the Project**

2. Indigenous Guard

Four workshops were held with the Indigenous Guard, covering the following topics: basic gender concepts, prevention of gender-based violence (GBV), identification of risk situations, and development of community-based pathways for addressing cases.
A total of 52 people participated: 35 Indigenous men and 17 women (14 Indigenous

and 3 mestizo), all active members of the Guard. This process allowed them to integrate knowledge of gender, prevention, and GBV response into their role as guards.

3. School Community

The educational component of the project included both teachers and students from the indigenous reserve's educational institution. Four workshops were held focusing on strategies for identifying and preventing gender-based violence, building respectful relationships, and promoting non-discrimination.
Fourteen teachers participated (eleven men: ten Indigenous and one mestizo; and three Indigenous women), who received pedagogical tools to address these topics both inside and outside the classroom.

At the student level, 57 Indigenous girls and 57 boys participated, reflecting on equality, respect, inclusion, and the importance of rejecting all forms of discrimination through playful and creative activities.

Materials

1. Women

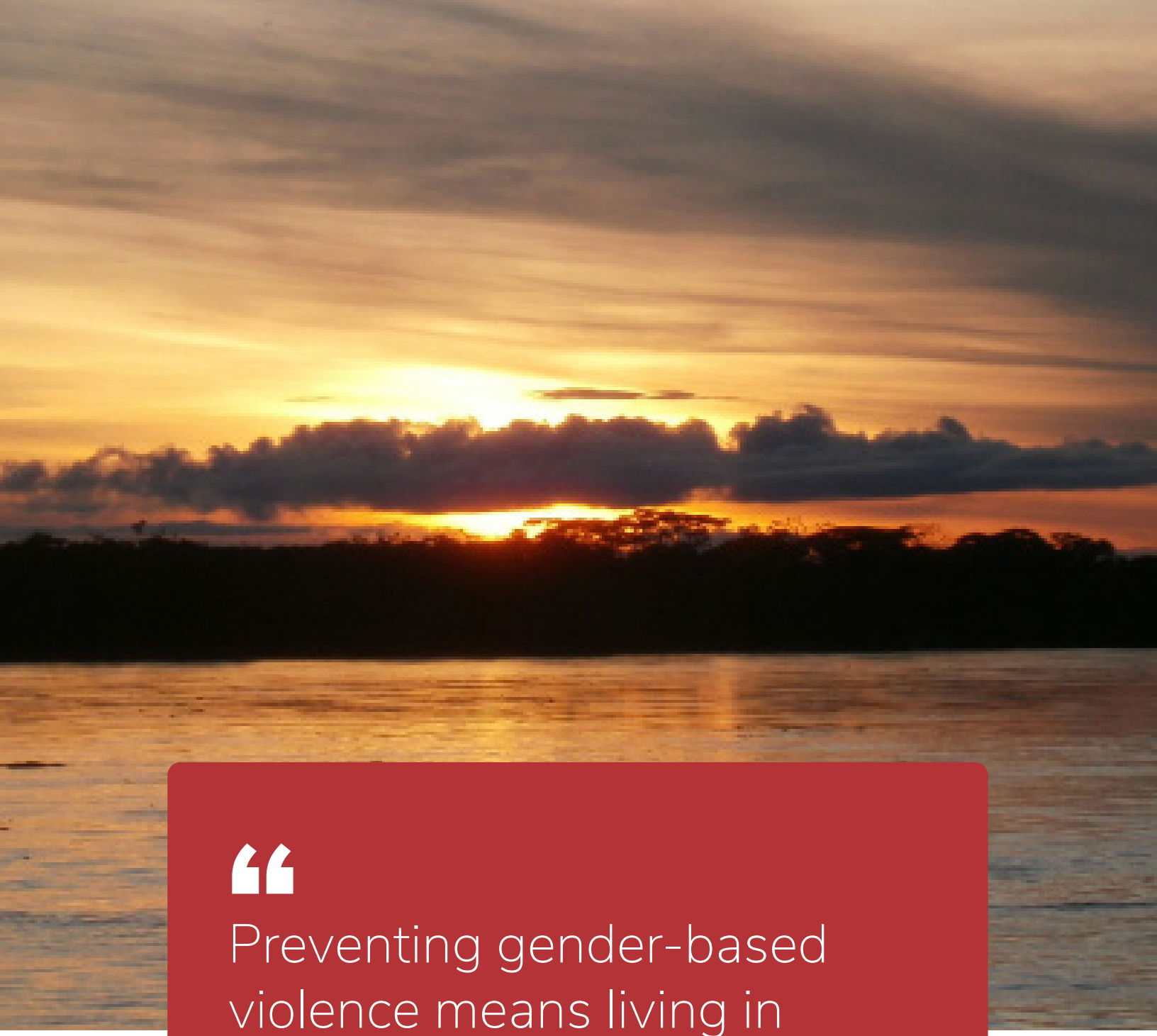
- Calendars with GBV case referral pathways adapted to the lunar cycle
- T-shirts with sorority messages
- Backpacks with GBV prevention messages

2. Guard

- Backpacks with patches promoting gender-based violence prevention
- Banners highlighting the changing gender roles within the guard
- Mural at the governance

3. Comunidad escolar

- Painting and inauguration of the court and dock for inclusion and bullying



> “Preventing gender-based violence means living in harmony”
>
> -Yesid Piaguaje

Lessons learned/Best practices

In this first part, the following were identified:

• Developing the project proposal in conjunction with the Siona GFPs from the Clearance and Territorial Enforcement Teams (ENT) of the CCCM allowed for the design of a project that considered the worldview and political and community structures of the reservation, as well as the organization's structural and resource capacity.

• Framing the initial training as an exchange process, rather than a transfer of knowledge, facilitates the recognition of conceptual and perceptual differences surrounding gender-based violence (GBV), and allows for the construction of shared frameworks adapted to the community's reality, minimizing the risk of harmful actions.

• Participating in spiritual spaces not only allowed for obtaining permission to implement the project, but also fostered a bond of trust and connection between the GFP, the reservation authorities, and the CCCM members who participated in the process but are not Siona. Furthermore, it enabled non-Siona staff to understand the importance of these spaces based on their own experiences.

• The design of activities was carried out through participatory strategies that allowed the people of the Reservation to establish the goals and themes for each population group based on the aspects that identify them as Siona people and on the changes they wanted to achieve.



"The participation of the three attendees from the same reservation fostered an atmosphere of respect and trust. By understanding the realities of our own community, we were able to conduct the workshops with greater ease and empathy. This work had a very positive impact on all three groups involved—guards, school, and women—promoting respect, sorority, empathy, love, and courage."

— Tania Alvarado, GFP of the Siona Reserve

• Having community members as workshop facilitators contributed to greater acceptance and interest in the topics covered. Because they were from the same reservation and familiar with the realities and needs of their community, the participants responded positively and actively to the proposed activities.

Reflections at the end of the first part: opening paths, not just achieving goals

Upon completing the implementation of what would later become the first phase of the project, many questions arose within the team, similar to those we face when working on Humanitarian Demining processes:

What happens after a territory is cleared of mines? Will people's lives truly change? Will the historical dynamics of inequality, poverty, or violence be transformed simply by removing the danger?

The truth is that, as with demining, the impact of GBV prevention actions cannot be measured immediately. We don't yet know if women will experience less violence or if stereotypes will be completely dismantled. But what we did observe at that time was that the issue was already being discussed in the community. Women, men, young people, and authorities are incorporating a gender perspective into their conversations, practices, and reflections. And that, in itself, was a first step

Of course, the project indicators, such as meeting targets and achieving the stated objectives, were successfully met.

But for us, that wasn't enough.Faced with this scenario, and knowing there was still a long way to go, a new question arose: **How could we sustain this progress and translate it into more concrete actions for the transformation of the territory?**

The answer began to take shape in a new proposal: to develop a collective productive initiative that would contribute, on the one hand, to the development of the community in areas already cleared of explosive devices; and on the other, to strengthening women's economic autonomy, as a concrete tool for preventing gender-based violence.

Thus, the second part of the project was born, which is presented below in this document.



“Being a GFP meant being able to train myself on the types of GBV and share that learning with members of my Zio Bain (Siona) community. Therefore, it had a great impact on both a personal and community level.”

- Anderson Escobar Piaguaje



- Dany Piaguaje

Part 02

Prevention of GBV in the Santa Cruz de Piñuña Blanco Indigenous Reserve and Productive Project: Ancestral Hens, Buenavista Indigenous Reserve

The second phase of the project emerged from a conversation that took place after the presentation of the results of the first phase. This forum brought together the CCCM team, the Siona GFPs from the CCCM, the Siona GFPs and other leaders from the territory, including the governor of the Indigenous Reserve.

During this dialogue, in addition to reviewing the progress and lessons learned, new needs were identified, and proposals were put forward to strengthen and continue the processes already underway. Among these, a clear intention emerged: to deepen the project's impact by focusing on women's economic empowerment as a concrete strategy for preventing gender-based violence (GBV), developing the territory, and pursuing peace.





The Siona Indigenous Reserve of Buenavista proposed implementing a women-led productive initiative, aimed not only at generating income but also at strengthening their role within the community. The project, called Ancestral Hens, was designed with two main objectives:

- To contribute to the prevention of gender-based violence by creating opportunities for women's economic empowerment, thereby reducing their exposure to vulnerable situations.

- To recognize and strengthen women's leadership in non-traditional spaces, promoting their active participation in community initiatives, which in turn expands their representation and visibility within the social structure of the indigenous reserve.

This proposal represented a concrete commitment to linking a gender perspective with the sustainable development of the territory and to continuing to build peace through women's everyday actions.

Furthermore, after learning firsthand about the activities and results achieved in Buenavista, the authorities and leaders of the Santa Cruz de Piñuña Blanco Indigenous Reserve expressed their interest in replicating the gender awareness and gender-based violence prevention component in their territory. This request was received by the CCCM and became the second line of action in this new phase of the project.

In this way, the second phase of the project not only expanded its geographic reach but also its scope, integrating dimensions of economic development, women's leadership, and community replication.

The process of building the proposal:

With the support of the Siona's GFPs and following a consultation process with the governors of the Buenavista and Santa Cruz de Piñuña Blanco Indigenous Reserves, the proposal was jointly designed, ensuring its cultural and territorial relevance. Subsequently, the project was presented and shared with the Indigenous authorities of both reserves, who validated the proposed objectives, components, and approaches. As part of the commitment to community participation, the governors themselves were responsible for selecting the individuals who would assume the roles of Coordinator and GFP Member for the implementation of the activities, thus guaranteeing representative execution with an ethnic focus and legitimate leadership. As in the first phase, and in accordance with the Siona people's worldview and as an essential step before initiating any action in the territory, a spiritual ceremony of Yagé[6] (ayahuasca) was held, guided by the spiritual authorities.

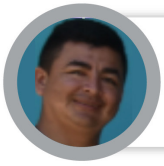
6 Taking yagé, also known as ayahuasca, is a traditional ritual practice of certain indigenous communities in the Amazon, which consists of consuming an infusion with psychoactive properties for healing, spiritual and ceremonial purposes.

When was it implemented?: 2023 – 2024

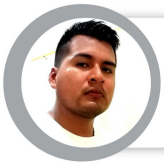
Our team:



ANGÉLICA PARDO
Gender Manager
Colombian Campaign Against Mines



JHON JAIRO CASTRO
Gender Analyst
Colombian Campaign Against Landmines



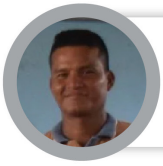
DANY PIAGUAJE
Gender Focal Point
Colombian Campaign Against Mines
Leader of the Siona People
Buenavista Indigenous Reserve



DORIS SAN JUAN
Gender Focal Point
Colombian Campaign Against Mines



BRIGGITE ESCOBAR PIAGUAJE
Project Coordinator
Leader of the Siona People
Buenavista Indigenous Reserve



DANILO PAYOGUAJE
Gender Focal Point
Leader of the Siona People
Piñuña Blanco Indigenous Reserve



YALILE CARLOSAMA
Gender Focal Point
Leader of the Siona People
Piñuña Blanco Indigenous Reserve

In this second phase of the project, a new role was added to the team: Project Coordinator. This decision stemmed from the need to strengthen the management and technical support of the activities, but it was also a conscious commitment to continue promoting the socioeconomic inclusion of women within the process. For this reason, it was decided that the position would be filled by a woman, and Briggite Piaguaje, a young woman from the Siona community, was appointed Coordinator. Her appointment ensured that women-led projects were supported from a perspective consistent with their realities and needs. Furthermore, this choice strengthened women's participation in decision-making spaces.



Coordinating the gender-focused productive project was a great challenge, as it entailed direct responsibility for ensuring that the spaces were managed safely and securely for the participants. It also involved maintaining active communication with them so they were aware of upcoming meetings and planning the methodologies with the team. On a personal level, this allowed me to strengthen my leadership skills and recognize the collective process of self-care, collective care, and territorial care that I have supported in my community.

I believe the project enabled the women of Zio Bain to develop skills, from identifying the types of gender-based violence (GBV) to envisioning a future alternative source of income for themselves and their families, allowing them to achieve independence. What was crucial for the process to remain positive was the active dialogue with community authorities and considering territorial security contexts to ensure the safety of the gender team and the women. I feel that allowing a community member to coordinate this type of project strengthens internal collective processes, building capacity within the community and its direct beneficiaries.

However, it's important to emphasize the need to continue encouraging support for the seed planted by the project. These are long-term processes, and active and motivating follow-up will yield better results.

1. Productive Project: Ancestral Hens

In the Buenavista Indigenous Reserve, where humanitarian demining and the first phase of awareness-raising and training in gender-based violence prevention had already been carried out, a pilot productive project was implemented targeting four groups of women. This component sought to facilitate the return of women to a safe territory declared free of suspected explosive devices, promote the economic independence of the participants as a strategy to escape or prevent situations of violence, and strengthen their leadership and participation in community and decision-making spaces.

Activities

1. Women's Circles:

Two meetings called "Women's Circles" were held, spaces designed to strengthen bonds of sorority, trust, and mutual support among the project participants. These spaces, facilitated through a participatory and safe approach, allowed women to share their experiences, reflect on their role in the community, and build support networks to address situations of inequality or violence.

In addition to the emotional and empowerment component, the circles also focused on socioeconomic inclusion, addressing topics such as access to livelihoods, economic autonomy, shared responsibility for care work, and participation in community-based productive processes.



2. Productive Project Proyecto:

The productive project implemented with the women of the Siona reservation was the result of a community consultation process, where the beneficiaries proposed the initiative and led the selection of the name, the logistical planning, and the project's focus. As an essential part of this process, another Yagé ceremony was held, guided by spiritual leaders, to consult the spiritual world about the project's viability and receive its approval.

Subsequently, theoretical and practical training sessions in poultry farming were developed, led by a SENA[7] professional with experience in agriculture and chicken management. These sessions included content on the care, feeding, and reproduction of the birds, as well as resource planning and economic sustainability analysis. These sessions also promoted sorority and collective work, strengthening support networks among the participating women and reinforcing their role as key actors in community development.

As part of the socioeconomic inclusion component, 45 ancestral hens, food and supplies necessary for the management of the poultry activity were delivered to each of the four previously defined groups of women.







7 SENA (National Learning Service) is a Colombian public institution responsible for providing free training for work, innovation and technological development.

Results:

1. 45 hens, supplies, and feed delivered to the 4 women's groups.
2. 4 Chicken coops built.
3. A technical training course, conducted by a SENA professional, on the care, feeding, health, and reproduction of birds.
4. Two Women's circles held.
5. 68 Beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries of the Project in Buena Vista	
Indigenous Women	46
Mestizo Men	1
Mestizo Women	2
Indigenous girls and boys	19
TOTAL	**68**



2. Prevention of GBV in the Santa Cruz de Piñuña Blanco Indigenous Reserve

Under the actions of this component, the community awareness activities implemented in the first phase of the project with the Buenavista Indigenous Reserve were replicated in the Siona Indigenous Reserve of Piñuña Blanco. However, although the general model was maintained, including the selection and training of GFPs by the Indigenous Government, the entire process was carefully adapted to the specific characteristics of the territory, the forms of gender-based violence (GBV) identified in this community, and the specific needs of its beneficiary population. The content, methodologies, and approaches of the workshops were adapted by the GFPs themselves from the reserve, who played a central role in ensuring that the topics covered responded to the interests, concerns, and social dynamics of the Piñuña Blanco Indigenous Reserve. In this way, more than a simple replication, this stage represented a community reappropriation of the model, in which the fundamental principles of the project were translated to a new context, thus strengthening its relevance and sustainability.



"We learned that women can also hold positions here in the community; that was rarely seen before, it was always the men and there were few women... women can support each other, unite more"

-**Leanis Carlosama**

Activities

1. Siona GFPs training:

Two community GFPs from the Siona Piñuña Blanco Indigenous Reserve, Yalile Carlosama and Danilo Payoguaje, were trained and played a facilitating role in the project activities, specifically as liaisons with traditional authorities. Their role ensured respect for the worldview and the territory's own rhythms, promoting greater legitimacy and ownership of the topics and activities.

2. Workships:

A total of eight workshops were held for members of the Indigenous Reserve. These workshops were designed collaboratively and in a participatory manner between the Reserve's GFPs and the CCCM Gender Team.

The methodologies used were diverse, creative, inclusive, and adapted to the specific characteristics of the participants. Each workshop began with a technical foundation on the topic, integrating the Siona worldview and promoting activities that facilitated the participation of all attendees.

The workshops addressed topics such as Gender-Based Violence (GBV), sorority and support networks among women, new masculinities, children's rights, sexuality and self-care, family and gender, and spirituality and gender.






Materials were also designed in these workshops, replicating what was done in Buenavista.







Results:

1. 2 Selected and trained GFPs

2. 2. 8 Workshops conducted.

3. 3. 4 Materials designed and produced.

4. 4. 92 Beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries of the Project in Piñuña Blanco	
Indigenous Men	45
Indigenous Women	47
TOTAL	**92**



Lessons learned/Best practices

In this second part, the following were identified:

1 Use of a didactic and interactive methodology adapted to the context

The facilitating GFP designed and implemented an accessible methodology contextualized to the rural environment of the reservation. The presentations included periodic pauses to check comprehension, as well as examples relevant to the participants' daily lives. This fostered an atmosphere of trust and active participation, facilitating the understanding of the content by women with limited prior experience in training processes.

2 Integration of sorority as a methodological and practical basis

The concept of sorority was not addressed solely from a theoretical perspective, but rather became the methodological cornerstone of the training process. The activities fostered the creation of support networks and bonds of trust among the participants, strengthening group cohesion and their capacity to carry out a collective project in a spirit of solidarity and shared responsibility.

3 Ethnic GFPs

From the outset of the project, the active participation of the Siona community's GFP and an Indigenous Coordinator facilitated operational implementation and strengthened the community's trust in the process. This cultural affinity and contextual understanding allowed for smoother communication, adherence to schedules, and adaptation of content without compromising territorial autonomy.

4 Constant dialogue with ethnic authorities

Ongoing dialogue and mutual respect with the traditional authorities of the reservation were key to guaranteeing the project's legitimacy and ensuring community participation in all phases. This horizontal relationship respected the Siona people's own timelines, dynamics, and protocols, strengthening the do-no-harm approach.

5 Equitable and strategic distribution of resources

The project's inputs (hens, corn seeds, and materials) were distributed at four strategic points within the reservation (Puerto Silencio, Caminos, Centro Buenavista, and Bajo Buenavista). This decentralization facilitated access for the beneficiaries, respecting their geographic location and strengthening the project's reach and sustainability throughout the territory.

6 Comprehensive and intergenerational approach to content

The workshops addressed topics related to gender-based violence, new masculinities, children's rights, shared responsibility in the home, and self-care. This thematic diversity allowed women, men, boys, girls, and adolescents to participate actively, recognizing themselves as agents of change within their families and communities.

7 Incorporation of men in role transformation processes

The workshops encouraged questioning traditional gender roles, promoting men's participation in caregiving, shared responsibility in the home, and recognition of domestic work. This inclusion is fundamental to moving towards more equitable relationships and reducing community resistance to change.

8 Recognition of family and community dynamics

The training process began with an analysis of local tensions, conflicts, and realities surrounding gender, power, and family relationships. Pedagogical tools adapted to the context were applied to foster dialogue, mutual understanding, and transformation through respect and active listening.



Reflections at the close of the second part:

As with the first phase, concluding this second part of the project left us with many questions, valuable lessons learned, and, above all, renewed motivation to continue. While we knew we had met our objectives, it wasn't yet possible to accurately measure the true impact of the implemented actions, especially regarding the Ancestral Hens production project.

Therefore, a year and a half after the implementation of the activities and the delivery of the project's inputs, the decision was made to conduct an impact assessment in the region. This assessment would allow us to identify the visible results and, at the same time, those changes that take time, that occur in everyday life, and that could shed light on how to further strengthen the processes.

The most important findings and lessons learned from that evaluation are presented below.



Impact

Socioeconomic inclusion of women (Buenavista Reserve)

The economic results were tangible. The productive initiative generated an average profit of 56% on the investment, and the sale of chickens and eggs became a new source of income for the families. For example, one of the participants was able to cover urgent health expenses thanks to the earnings from her hens. In the Bajo Buenavista area, three out of four women kept an average of nine hens each (producing about one egg per bird per day), achieving an estimated weekly income of 49,000 COP per person. They themselves assessed that the project was "75% useful" for their livelihood, especially thanks to the collaborative work in building the chicken coop and the collective care of the animals. An elderly beneficiary highlighted her newfound economic independence, proudly stating: "I am very happy for the help from the hens; I did invest my money in myself and my needs." This testimony exemplifies how seed capital boosted the autonomy of older women, allowing them to make decisions about their own resources.

However, the process faced challenges that provided valuable lessons for sustainability. The hens delivered were adult animals accustomed to roaming freely, so their initial adaptation to confinement was difficult.



Likewise, the communal planting of corn to feed them was complicated by river flooding and wildlife that devoured the crops. Faced with this, the women decided to reorganize: they divided the hens and cared for them individually in their homes, finding unexpected support from their families (husbands and children) for feeding and managing the animals. Thanks to this flexibility and family support, several women were able to maintain and breed their hens, reinvesting the profits in their households. It is worth noting that the involvement of entire family units strengthened the sustainability of the project; in Bajo Buenavista, for example, since all the women are related, they supported each other and are even considering helping other women in the community start similar projects with the knowledge they acquired.

Despite not meeting all the needs of the reservation, the hen project addressed an important demand in the territory. The Indigenous Governor of the reservation commented that previously, to obtain a hen, one had to travel all the way to Puerto Asís; now, upon arriving in the communities, the presence of these animals is immediately apparent, demonstrating the shift in the local economy. Furthermore, this pilot program has opened doors to new sustainable initiatives: recently, six of the 20 most outstanding women were selected by the authorities to receive piglets in the "Weaving Interculturality" project, in partnership with the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare (ICBF), thus continuing the promotion of female entrepreneurship. Today, selling hens and eggs is already part of their growth strategy, and many have expressed interest in continuing to learn and expand their local businesses.

Community Transformation and Gender Inclusion (Piñuña Blanco Indigenous Reserve)





The project's impact transcends the economic: it has fostered a transformation in gender perceptions and roles within the Siona communities. In 2023, at the request of the authorities of the Santa Cruz de Piñuña Blanco Indigenous Reserve, the first phase of the pilot program implemented in Buenavista was replicated there. Eight participatory workshops were conducted with men, women, youth, and children, addressing topics prioritized by the community: gender-based violence, sorority and support networks among women, new masculinities, children's rights, sexuality and self-care, the role of the family in achieving equality, and the relationship between spirituality and gender. It is important to highlight that all educational activities were designed and implemented in collaboration with local leaders, including Gender Focal Points (GFPs) from the Siona people, in their own language and adapted to their worldview, ensuring cultural respect and greater relevance of the content. An initial spiritual ceremony, led by traditional authorities, granted permission and protection to the team to work in the territory, thus integrating ancestral spirituality into the project.

The awareness workshops in Piñuña Blanco successfully broadened community awareness regarding equality. The participating women demonstrated an outstanding grasp of the training content, particularly on sorority, self-care, and recognizing their social role. This translated into successful individual and collective empowerment processes, with positive impacts on their autonomy and the rebuilding of the social fabric. In fact, in the final evaluation, 90% of participants recognized the importance of women's role in the home and community, and 100% indicated an improved understanding of 'Sorority' and collective care practices.

Participants reflected on gender inequalities: 80% identified imposed traditional roles and the resulting gaps. Many women expressed that, for the first time, they understood their true value and their place in the community. A Siona leader stated, “I didn’t used to understand that I had significant value in my home. Now I advocate for recognition of my work at home and for equitable distribution of earnings,” reflecting a shift in her self-esteem and a demand for rights within the family.

In the evaluation, 68% recognized the importance of participating in household chores, indicating that the message resonated with a significant portion of the men. While there is still progress to be made, only 54% demonstrated a full understanding of caregiving from a masculine and cultural perspective, highlighting the need to continue developing new masculinities. However, the groundwork has been laid: the men of Piñuña expressed an openness to change, understanding that teamwork and respect for equality benefit the entire family.

Another significant achievement was in the school setting. Given the concern about bullying and discrimination against Indigenous youth, this topic was incorporated into discussions with children and adolescents. As a result, 75% of the surveyed student community considered the awareness training received on bullying and harassment valuable. There is now greater awareness of respect for difference and the consequences of ridicule, as well as a commitment from trained teachers to continue these discussions in the classroom. In fact, 14 teachers (11 Siona men and 3 women) received pedagogical tools to address gender equality and violence prevention in educational contexts, contributing to the educational sustainability of this cultural shift.

This pilot project demonstrated that humanitarian demining can go beyond mine removal, acting as a catalyst for social change. In Buenavista, after the clearing of more than 17.6 hectares of ancestral land contaminated by mines—areas now cleared of suspected mines—the community used its restored security to promote gender equality and development initiatives. In Piñuña Blanco, recently cleared of suspected mines in 2023, gender awareness became a key component of local peacebuilding. All of this has helped the Siona communities begin to heal the wounds of conflict holistically, not only by reclaiming their land but also by transforming the relationships among their members.

For CCCM and the donors, the findings are encouraging. The women experienced working collectively and learned new ways to participate in community structures. More than half of the beneficiaries in Buenavista see the chicken project as a starting point for organizing themselves and achieving economic growth on their own. And perhaps most significantly, the participants

emphasize that they had never before had a project that allowed them to work together as women. Now that they have achieved this, both they and their leaders want to maintain and expand these spaces.

CCCM's support work, facilitating safe spaces, promoting equity, and addressing collective needs, has been, in the community's words, "an example of another type of contribution" to local development in the context of land liberation. For the Siona women, this project represented a first step; for the entire community, it is a living example of what collaborative work and genuine gender inclusion can achieve. "Preventing gender-based violence is living in harmony," said an indigenous collaborator from Buenavista, and the experience of these two reserves confirms that harmony and progress flourish when the ways of those who have historically been violated in their representation are improved.

To access the full impact assessment document, scan this QR code.

The CCCM will continue to monitor the processes initiated, with the aim of observing their sustainability over time and identifying opportunities for improvement. It will also evaluate the possibility of adapting and replicating this experience in other communities, not exclusively indigenous, taking into account their own realities and needs.

