

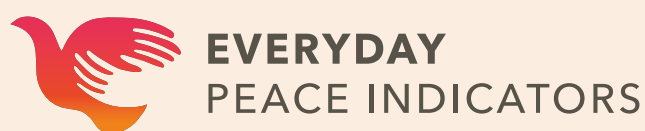


EVERYDAY
PEACE INDICATORS

DOGS BARK AT NIGHT

EVERYDAY PEACE INDICATORS
IN COLOMBIA





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THIS REPORT WAS DEVELOPED BY:

Daniel Ortega, Oscar Vargas, Eduardo González,
Fiorella Vera-Adrianzen, Enrique López Rodríguez, Laura Blanco,
Federico Duarte, Rosario Arias, and Luisa Moreno.

THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE COLLECTED THE BASE
INFORMATION FOR THIS REPORT:

National facilitators:

Rosario Arias, Oscar Vargas, Daniel Ortega, Manuela Muñoz,
Saraya Bonilla, Luz Mery López, Sol Rivera, Mariángela Villamil,
Luisa Moreno, Edwin Cubillos, and María Fernanda Cabezas.

Local facilitators:

Juan Sebastián Yepes, Arlet Causil, Irina Martínez, Gabriela Corzo,
Vanessa Guisao, Nathalia Jossa, Fermín Betancurth, Yuleidy Lasso,
Estefanía Sánchez, Lady Tatiana Ramos, Sandra Ortegón,
Ivonne Esneidy Calderón, Esmeralda Zabala, and Rocio Dorado

EPI Global:

Pamina Firchow, Peter Dixon and Tiffany Fairey.

THE COVER AND GRAPHIC DESIGN FOR THIS REPORT WAS CREATED BY
Diana Castro - DianiBanani

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Acronyms

AETCR: Former Territorial Space for Training and Reincorporation

AGC: Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia

ANT: National Land Agency

ANUC: Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos

AUC: United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia

CAB: Community action boards

CEV: Commission for the Clarification of Truth,
Coexistence, and Non-Repetition

DANE: National Administrative Department of Statistics

ELN: National Liberation Army

EPI: Everyday Peace Indicators

EPL: Popular Liberation Army

ETCR: Territorial Space for Training and Reincorporation

FARC-EP: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army

IAF: Inter-American Foundation

IHL: International Humanitarian Law

JEP: Special Jurisdiction for Peace

M-19: April 19 Movement

NARP: Black, Afro-descendant, Raizal, and Palenquero

PCN: Proceso de Comunidades Negras

PDET: Development Programs with a Territorial Focus

PNIS: National Comprehensive Program for
the Substitution of Illicit Crops

TWAR: Tasks, works, and activities with restorative content

UARIV: Unit for Attention and Comprehensive Reparation of Victims

UBPD: Search Unit for Missing Persons

URT: Land Restitution Unit

ZRC: Rural Reserve Zone

1. Introduction



As dusk begins to fall in a rural town somewhere in Colombia, the chickens start their journeys toward the trees to hang, the frogs begin to croak calling the rain, and, once again, you can hear the sound of the nearby gorge... Rest begins to take the place of the day's work. And, after dinner, the lights, candles, or electricity are turned off, and families make their way to rest.

All of a sudden, when many eyes have already been closed, a sound interrupts the night: the house dog warning that something is happening. A few years back, this could have meant that a neighbor walked by or that a wild animal was lurking around, or something far worse: a convoy of armed combatants. However, recently, the meaning has changed. When we asked the residents of San José de Urama (a township of the municipality of Dabeiba in Antioquia) what peace means, they answered: **We are no longer fearful when the dogs bark at night.** Close by, in the municipality of Urrao (also in Antioquia), people responded: **When a dog barks, we don't fear that someone will be taken out of their house.** The recent history of this region allows us to understand the meaning of the former fear: their territory saw the presence of the FARC-EP, the AUC, the Armed Forces, and now the AGC, affecting the life of these rural communities. It was a night like many others in the past decades, where a barking dog announced the presence of armed actors.

More than 300 miles south, in the municipality of La Sierra, Cauca, when we asked the residents of the settlement of Campobello, they responded: **The dogs don't bark at the armed actors at night.** The residents of both of these distant places recognize that dogs barking at night is related to war, with the presence of troops and strangers, and, eventually, with the warning that a violation of human rights may

take place. Hearing the dogs bark without feeling fear would, therefore, be evidence of a profound change in the perception of safety in the surroundings and in the everyday experience of night.

Rural dogs—a humble indicator of peace—make their appearance once again in the municipality of Argelia in the department of Cauca. Residents there told us that peace occurs when **owners make sure the dogs don't eat the neighbor's chickens** or that **dogs are able to rest peacefully**. Likewise, in the department of Sucre, we heard various alternatives. In the municipality of Ovejas, residents mentioned that peace for a community occurred when **dog owners didn't leave excrement on the streets**. In Sincelejo, it took place if, **when the dogs ate the neighbor's food, they resolved it by talking** or that **neighbors didn't allow the dogs to relieve themselves in neighbors' houses**. In these cases, experiences of peace are associated with preventing or resolving everyday conflicts, and it has less to do with a warning regarding the armed conflict.

These are examples of indicators that our organization, Everyday Peace Indicators (EPI), identified in the communities of different regions of the country since 2019¹. The document you have in your hands describes what different communities in Colombia understand as peace. We will first explain who we are, where we have worked, and how we conduct our work. If you already know about our work, you can jump straight to Chapter Two where we describe the regions in which we have been, to Chapter Three where we describe the perceptions of peace we found in Colombia, or Chapter Four where we show you measures of peace experiences. We then end with conclusions and recommendations of what we think can be done with this information.



1.1 About us

EPI is an organization that works creating indicators with communities around the world regarding complex concepts, such as peace, justice, coexistence, and reconciliation, among others. The proposal emerged out of the need to connect these concepts—usually used by policymakers—with the perceptions of the communities who have experienced the conflicts; they are the ones affected by these policies. Everyday indicators contribute to the academic analysis, to national and local government action, and to non-governmental and cooperation organizations, by enabling more accurate ways to evaluate their projects. In Colombia, specifically, everyday indicators are a useful tool to facilitate participation in the development and evaluation of transitional justice.

The EPI methodology is based on creating participatory indicators, and their validation and prioritization in the communities. After conducting an analysis and categorization, we develop the surveys based on the project needs. Finally, we carry out communication processes and make use of the indicators (including Photovoice, a visual participation methodology), and we deliver the results through educational materials.

For the project design, we define the concepts and territories in which we intend to work. In Colombia, we have researched the concepts of peace, reconciliation, justice, and coexistence. The selected communities are established in territorial terms: these are settlements or townships, and local organizations and their supporters.

1.2 How do we do it?

1.2.1 Creating everyday indicators

The indicators are collectively created through focus groups that consist of people representing various sectors of the community; these are separated by adult women, adult men, and young people. Based on the conversations that take place in these groups, we create a list of indicators: situations, actions, and processes that participants freely propose as associated with the concepts in question. The group then verifies the list and votes in order to prioritize the indicators. Each group (women, young people, and men) votes with a different color to obtain aggregated results and results per group. The indicators resulting from this exercise give an account of how the community lives the reality we wish to research (peace, coexistence, justice, reconciliation, etc.).

The indicators are then classified by the EPI team and analyzed to establish the most frequent categories, define trends, and analyze the issues in greater depth. To this end, we inductively create a code book rooted in the indicators of the different projects. It consists of—from greater to lesser complexity—the dimensions, categories, and sub-categories that analytically organize the social dynamics reflected in the indicators.

1.2.2 Measurement

The objective of the EPI measuring process is to collect data that allows us to understand how the communities perceive the situation of peace, coexistence, or justice in their everyday lives. Once the indicators have been developed, the surveys measure the frequency, quantity, or intensity of the different issues using a five-level scale of answers. This methodology encompasses a series of steps that include establishing and training the local teams, designing the instruments, planning the sampling, implementing plans through social mapping exercises, collecting data, quality control, and analyzing the results.

The procedure to collect the surveys on the everyday peace indicators requires the collaboration of local strategic actors, and it has a participatory approach that guarantees its relevance and quality. It can be adapted to the various community, cultural, organizational, or socio-political characteristics as it seeks to coordinate the technical knowledge of statistics with the local needs, local knowledge, and the analytical objectives of each project. Processing the collected data

enables the creation of documents that combine graphics, and qualitative and quantitative analyses. What's more, these can be shared through thematic and infographic reports and academic articles.

1.2.3 Delivery to the creator communities and other ways to display the indicators

After the process to create and analyze the indicators, these are presented to the communities who created them in the form of a list. We use an educational methodology, with cards containing the indicators with the most votes categorized into the five dimensions we worked and will analyze later on. We then propose a fun activity to create a “recipe” of justice, peace, and coexistence collectively: each community receives card games that render an account of the indicators they developed. The idea is that they keep them and use them in various activities such as board meetings, meetings with local organizations, school spaces, youth groups, social leaders, etc.

Photovoice has been another strategy to display indicators; this process entailed providing training on photography and creative writing to various groups of residents from certain communities where the indicators had previously been created. Each community prioritized among the indicators with the most votes to conduct research and produce a visual creation. Finally, grounded in the photographs and stories developed, we organize a photography exhibit that displays the results and that, at the same time, generates additional conversations on the everyday peace indicators.

Each selected territory has a photography exhibit installed in public spaces. Together, they produced 120 photos and narratives created by the participants and that represent a visual snapshot of everyday peace in Colombia. Likewise, we conducted various community advocacy actions inspired by the indicators. For instance, community work sessions, training local communication groups and social leaders, and strengthening museums of memory, among others. The final products constitute a communication strategy to publicly highlight the results and to ensure social understanding of the concept of an everyday peace indicator in wider audiences.

1.3 EPI in Colombia

EPI has been working in Colombia since 2016, when it conducted a process to create peace and reconciliation indicators in Don Gabriel (Sucre) and El Salado (Bolívar), including surveys and a Photovoice pilot. Subsequently, in 2019 it began the project “Evaluating Restorative Justice” and, in 2020, it conducted an evaluation for the Inter-American Foundation (IAF). These projects have been accompanied by the Photovoice participatory photography processes, and we developed a methodology to present the indicators to the communities who created them. At the same time, EPI Colombia is part of the GAM initiative where we have worked with Colombian organizations at the national level (Asociación Minga) and at the regional level (COSURCA-Cauca) in the use and adaptation of our methodology.

1.3.1 Everyday Justice: Evaluating Restorative Justice” project

In the “Everyday Justice” project, EPI implemented its work in three regions of Colombia to analyze the impact of transitional justice institutions on the everyday life of the communities affected by the armed conflict. In these regions, we worked in communities with a presence of institutions created in the framework of the Final Peace Agreement between the FARC-EP and the Colombian State: the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), the Truth Commission (CEV), the

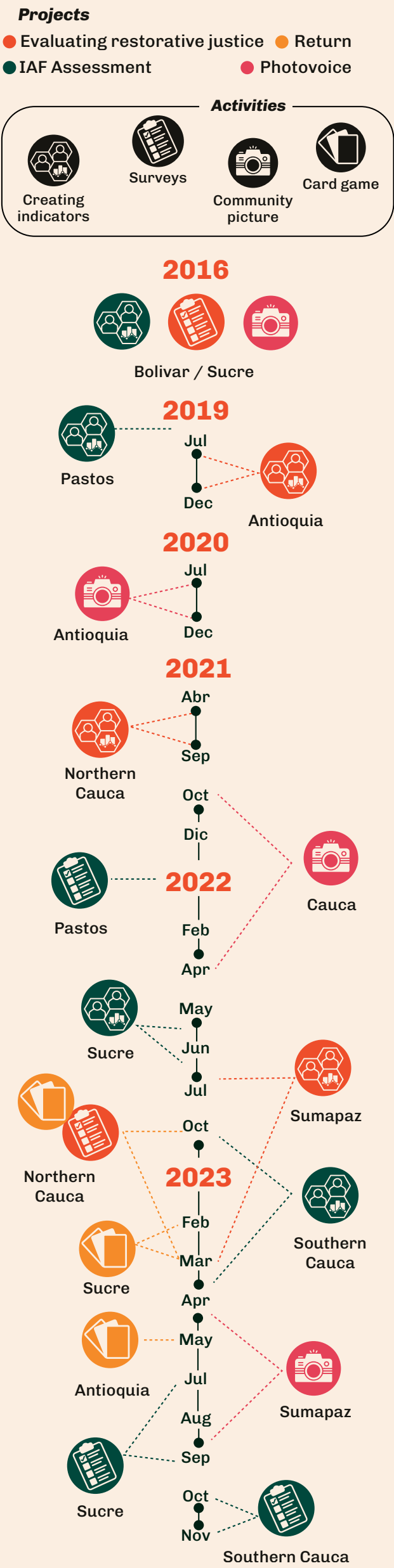


Chart 1. Timeline of EPI in Colombia

Search Unit for Missing Persons (UPBD), the Development Programs with a Territorial Focus (PDET), and the Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation (ETCR), among others, in addition to institutions previously created in the framework of Law 1448, such as the Victims' Unit (UARIV). We also compared these cases with communities equally affected by the conflict but with a limited or non-existent presence of these peace institutions.

In this project, we work on two concepts, coexistence and justice, which are used as a means or “proxy” to measure the perception of peace. The three regions covered by this project were Antioquia, Norte del Cauca, and Sumapaz, specifically 24 communities. In this project, we completed the collection of indicators in all regions, conducted the measurement phase in two regions, conducted the Photovoice process in six communities, and presented the indicators in two communities.

Antioquia:

The project to create the everyday justice and coexistence indicators in Antioquia took place during the second semester of 2019 in the municipalities of Dabeiba and Urrao. Both of these municipalities have been hit by war, but have received different levels of attention from the peace institutions. Dabeiba is a municipality where the PDET is implemented; it has a community recognized as a subject of collective reparation before the UARIV (La Balsita); there is a former ETCR (Jacobo Arango, settlement of Llano grande); and the JEP is conducting exhumations there since December of 2019, finding multiple mass graves containing the remains of victims of extrajudicial executions. In contrast, although Urrao has also been significantly affected by the war, it has received less attention from peace institutions and it is not part of a PDET region.

We organized focus groups to create indicators, followed by the verification and voting processes in the communities of Tascón, Camparrusia, Cruces, ETCR Llanogrande, Urama, and La Balsita (Dabeiba), and in La Encarnación and Pavón (Urrao). Due to the long break resulting from the pandemic in 2020 and 2022, we repeated the exercise in the communities of Llanogrande, Urama, and La Encarnación in 2022. In 2023, we presented the indicators to the communities.

Northern Cauca:

The second region of the justice and coexistence project was Northern Cauca. In this subregion, EPI conducted its work between 2021 and 2023 in the municipalities of Buenos Aires and Guachené, in partnership with the Proceso de Comunidades Negras (PCN). Northern Cauca has

severely suffered from the armed conflict for decades. Unfortunately, the 2016 Peace Agreement did not avert war, rather, it seems to have transformed and intensified. The population in both of these municipalities is mainly Afro-descendant.

Buenos Aires is a PDET municipality and it is included in the JEP Macro case 5: “Territorial situation in Northern Cauca and Southern Valle del Cauca”. The Former ETCR Carlos Patiño is located in the settlement of La Elvira, and many signatories have been forced to leave due to security issues. In this municipality, we worked in the communities of San Miguel (which is a subject of collective reparation before the UARIV), San Francisco, and Palo Blanco. Guachené is a recently established municipality, created in 2006. Before this, it was normally considered a township within the municipality of Caloto. Compared to Buenos Aires, it is not a PDET territory, nor is it included in a territorial case before the JEP. The communities where we conducted the work were Pílamo, San José, Veredas del Sur, and Veredas Unidas. In these municipalities, as we will see, coexistence and justice as concepts to measure peace have a significant ethnic component, and improving the living conditions in the midst of the war is prevalent.

In March 2023, we collected the surveys on everyday peace indicators in Guachené, Norte del Cauca. We collected 1,412 surveys reaching the younger (18–40) and older (41 and older) population—both women and men—in the communities of Pílamo, Veredas Unidas, Veredas del Sur, and San José. We implemented a unique questionnaire in each community, consisting of the 40 indicators with the most votes and representing different conceptual dimensions of peace. This process was done in coordination with the Proceso de Comunidades Negras (PCN) and it was conducted by members of these communities.

Sumapaz:

Sumapaz is the third region where EPI Colombia implemented its methodology since 2022. This territory, marked by armed conflicts since the 1930s, has various important specificities. Physically, it is the largest moorland in the world, an ecosystem of over 300 thousand hectares encompassing 25 municipalities. Socially, it has a long history of rural organization and resistance that has ensured the demand that part of the moorland be declared as a Rural Reserve Zone. The AETCR (Antonio Nariño) is located in this territory, although it has not been declared a PDET region. In addition, in Tolima, we conducted the tasks, works, and activities with restorative content (TWAR) in advance. In other words, they are not linked to a JEP ruling, but provided as part of the reconciliation process.

The work in Sumapaz is conducted in partnership with Coordinadora Campesina de Sumapaz y Cruz Verde, in the departments of Cundinamarca and Tolima, specifically nine communities: Cabrera, Pandi, Arbeláez, Venecia, Betania (locality 20 in Bogotá) and Nazareth (locality 20 in Bogotá); in Icononzo in the AETCR Antonio Nariño; in Yopal; and in San José de Guatimbol. Likewise, we have worked in a coordinated manner with different peace institutions in the territory to understand the importance of perceptions on the types of reparation for victims and how the concept of justice is tied to the historic absences of the State.

Between February and April 2024, we collected surveys in six of the nine communities where everyday indicators were created: Cabrera, Pandi, Venecia, AETRC Antonio Nariño, Yopal, and San José de Guatimbol, included further in this report. We collected 1,064 surveys reaching the younger (18–40) and older (41 and older) population, both women and men. Like the process in Northern Cauca, each community had their own questionnaire that included the 40 indicators with the most votes in the general assembly, reflecting the different dimensions of peace. In these territories, the surveys were collected in coordination with the community action boards of the different settlements of the six communities and with the participation of local teams of survey takers comprising men and women from the communities.

Photovoice in the Justice project

To support the Colombian Truth Commission, EPI included Photovoice in its Everyday Justice project in Colombia in 2020. The objectives were to leverage the transformative potential of the methodology to support and expand the process of the everyday peace indicators; shed light on the stories behind the indicators; and catalyze dialogue in the communities and with the political and public audiences.



Photo 1: Photovoice in Cruces, Dabeiba, Antioquia, 2020.

1.3.2 Project evaluation for the Inter-American Foundation

The IAF entered into an agreement with EPI to develop a new internal Monitoring and Evaluation tool to collect part of the perceptions of the communities with everyday peace indicators. In that journey, EPI developed a first phase with funded projects in the department of Sucre and another in the department of Cauca. In Sucre, IAF funded strategies to strengthen women's participation in the public sphere. Consequently, we selected three communities in Sincelejo, one in San Antonio de Palmito, two in San Onofre, and one in Ovejas that participated in said funding. In these communities, and in one in Sincelejo without IAF funding to compare, we conducted focus groups to generate everyday peace and coexistence indicators, from which we conducted surveys to measure the level of compliance.

Between July and August of 2023, we collected the surveys on everyday peace indicators in the department of Sucre. We collected 1,117



surveys reaching the younger (18–40) and older (41 and older) population—both women and men—in seven communities in the municipalities of Sincelejo (San Jacinto, San Martín, Sabanas del Potrero), Ovejas, San Antonio de Palmito, and San Onofre (the urban area of San Onofre and Libertad). This was done in collaboration with the Unión Temporal Construyendo Esperanza, and it was conducted by men and women from each community.

In Cauca, in the municipalities of Argelia and La Sierra, we generated 689 peace indicators between October 2022 and April 2023. We selected two local organizations, affiliates of COSURCA, that carry out activities related to peacebuilding and work on collective memory: Asociación de Productores de La Sierra ASPROSI located in La Sierra and Asociación de Productores de Argelia ASOPROA located in Argelia. These organizations were the beneficiaries of a process to construct two rural house museums. The museums of each municipality are located in the urban part of the city, with a branch in a rural area (or settlement) within the limits of the municipality. We selected a rural settlement in each municipality as the control cases due to their proximity; they had similar populations to the communities where COSURCA works, but without their presence. In La Sierra, we selected Campo Bello and, in Argelia, the settlement of La Primavera.

At the end of the process, we presented a measurement of the impact of the funding on projects, but through an everyday perspective. At the same time, we are working with IAF officials to develop their own measurement tool to implement in the medium and long-term throughout Latin America.

1.3.3 Everyday Peace Indicators in the town of Los Pastos

This project was created in collaboration with the Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas de Colombia (CONAMIC) to create a peace barometer for the Pastos peoples of Nariño and Putumayo that gives an account of the collective nature and complements other peace barometers.

The process began by collecting data in the reservations of the Pastos peoples located in the departments of Nariño and Putumayo. In 2019, we conducted community meetings in the reservations of Tescual, Panam, Putumayo, Pastos, and Mallama, which led to the creation of 918 local peace indicators. These five indigenous reservations were selected since they represent the diversity of demographic and socio-economic characteristics, and socio-political context of the 40 reservations located in these departments. In 2020, we conducted an extensive process to code the different topics covered in the indicators

using deductive and inductive analytical frameworks. In other words, to create these categories, we began with the general notions in peace and war studies, however, at the same time, we used the local perspective of the indigenous communities. This process allowed us to select the 42 indicators most representative of the five reservations. We then developed a survey that would allow us to evaluate if these could be applied at a larger scale throughout the Pastos peoples. This reduced number of indicators is in line with the total proportions, just as they are distributed among five large thematic dimensions.

In 2022, we collected 1,621 surveys with questions related to the selected indicators, reaching the younger (18–40) and older (41 and older) population—both women and men—in a total of 21 indigenous reservations of Los Pastos in the department of Nariño. The survey allowed each reservation to simultaneously evaluate the current state of local peace and the relevance of the indicators to periodically measure peace in their territory. This process was conducted together with the Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas de Colombia and it was conducted by women representatives of the participating reservations. Based on the results of these surveys and the qualitative analysis of the indicators created in the five reservations, we are currently developing a regional peace barometer that can be implemented by CONAMIC and Pueblos Pastos to periodically evaluate the state of peace in every reservation.

1.4 Why is the everyday perspective important in understanding and building peace?

Colombia has large-scale peace institutions (JEP, UARIV, UBPD, URT, etc.), and an extensive presence of international cooperation supporting the implementation of the peace process. It also has a civil society that is crucial and proactive, grouped around NGOs, victims' organizations, and social organizations. These stakeholders have acquired significant experience in peacebuilding in the midst of a complex context where armed violence remains and political polarization persists.

Despite the progress obtained for decades regarding the solution to the armed conflict and building peace in the territories, there is a notable distance between what the communities understand and aspire to in terms of peace, and the reality they live. This is true not only because the armed conflict and related violence continue. Rather, it is also due to the absences in other dimensions equally important in the eyes of the communities: living conditions, guarantees in practicing and reproducing their cultural traditions, or community integration.

The peacebuilding policies have not centered exclusively on the end of the armed conflict and, with time, they have been understood in a comprehensive manner, promoting the concept of territorial peace, among others. However, part of the challenges they face are rooted in the lack of local participation to guide the contents and measurements of peace. Without this substantial participation—both in conducting activities and in conceptualizing the programs—it is difficult to guarantee the sustainability and legitimacy of the peace policies. Further, there is a risk of a permanent gap between the understandings and perceptions of peace of the communities and the State.

The complex challenges and debates that the country is facing around peace underscores that it is at a crossroads: reparation for victims is moving forward slowly²; transitional justice headed by the JEP has received multiple criticisms due to the delay in issuing rulings and given the lack of participation of victims in certain pilot restorative projects; the PDET—the central policy to decrease the social gaps in the regions most affected by the armed conflict—has faced various difficulties in its implementation; and the peace negotiations with the ELN guerilla, the dissidents of the FARC, and the paramilitary successor organizations have not been successful. This reality, which may be understood as a crisis in building peace in the country, must lead to rethinking the approaches to understand, investigate, and measure these processes.

This is where the everyday peace approach gains importance since it considers people's perceptions and expectations in their local contexts, and it allows us to tie complex concepts to the daily interactions and routines of the communities. The participatory and bottom-up methodology of the Everyday Peace Indicators expands the spectrum of what is understood as peace, exploring how people feel and experience it. In a country like Colombia—where social imaginaries and experiences are marked by the armed conflict—this approach provides clues to develop peace. These clues, according to the data we collected, not only revolve around the absence of the armed conflict, but also from other multiple and equally important manifestations, such as accessing basic services, resolving local disputes, and recognizing their rights.

Recognizing and respecting local dynamics ensures that the processes include the roots of the conflict and the specificities of each community, bringing Colombia closer to an inclusive peace that represents all of its realities.

The Everyday Peace Indicators can guide the work to build peace from different scales: for communities as an agenda in their collective processes and engagement with local authorities; for territorial entities in their government plans; for peace institutions in their objective of bringing their work closer to the demands of the affected communities and victims; for the academic world including new approaches in the development of knowledge; and for international cooperation as a way to guide their advocacy.

1.5 When dogs bark at night... and people still feel fear

Just as with dogs barking, peace and war are expressed in different ways in the everyday life of communities. Between 2019 and 2024, EPI collected 7,721 indicators in 21 municipalities that express the content of peace for communities: some express new perceptions, others are expressions of what is desired, but all of them are essential to understand peace grounded in everyday life. The indicators also reflect contradictions and other forms of conflict, including prejudice and oppressive behaviors. Sometimes, peace is associated with prejudice against another group, or to a community order where tradition incorporates certain marginalizations: sexism, physical punishment, etc. As a result, we do not seek indicators with moral correctness, but to honestly reflect the concepts they develop and the language in which they were developed.

In this report, we talk about everyday peace in Colombia based on the data analyzed in the different projects and regions. In these projects, we researched three concepts: coexistence, justice, and peace. These were directly related to the conceptual design of the 2016 Peace Agreement. Coexistence was one of the central concepts for the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition. Justice, which favors the transitional and restorative approach, is at the core of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. For this report, we will use the indicators developed in the three concepts as peace indicators, in such a way that the findings enable a dialogue between the understandings of the victims and affected communities with peace institutions and other actors from the peacebuilding sector.



As we will see in this report, the following sections provide the necessary details:

- ◆ We grouped over 7,000 indicators (conveyed by the communities) into five large dimensions that reflect the components of the concept of peace. One is rather evident: the presence of armed actors and the safety situation. Surprisingly, however, this is not the most mentioned dimension. Another dimension is closely tied to the political agreements to build peace: the treatment of the past. This, remarkably, is not one of the most mentioned dimensions either. The dimensions that were most present in the grouping indicate a more substantive and demanding notion of peace: the socio-economic living conditions, civic engagement, and social cohesion in the community. The dimensions related to minimal peace, based on the absence of armed violence or its legal and political resolution, are present in the imaginary. However, they appear as enabling factors and needs, more than contents of the context that is understood as peace.
- ◆ Armed actors are present in multiple territories, regulating the lives of the communities and violating their rights. Peace certainly implies the absence of these actors, but because of a desirable outcome: that residents regulate their own lives without external actors doing so arbitrarily and violently. Security is, therefore, a precondition, but not a defining element of peace.
- ◆ Communities associate peace with ways of living their everyday life: having autonomy to reproduce their material and cultural life; practicing economic activities that allow them to live with dignity; maintaining and developing cultural practices that are essential for the community; and having a vibrant, committed, and active communal life where each person has a role and is able to participate.
- ◆ It is important to settle the historic debt regarding economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights of the territories where the war has been the cause and consequence of a precarious territorial development. Peace is associated with the factors of production and improvement of socio-economic conditions: means of communication and to launch products into the market, good use of land, access to higher education, efficient health provision, which does not entail having to leave the territories.
- ◆ Justice related to the harms caused by war goes beyond the courts and formal judicial mechanisms, including the sentence. However, although punishment may be viewed in relative terms, there is a demand to see “sacrifice”, “sweat”, and “effort” from the people who caused harm. Communities express themselves in specific ways

regarding a restorative process: they want to see the perpetrators working for the common good in their territories to redress the harm caused. This process, however, is not without tensions. There is a perceived tension between the benefits that perpetrators receive and those that victims receive within what is perceived as a massive peace apparatus. Peace needs to address the past, though this must occur in ways in which the communities feel they are active participants.

- ◆ Peace is also perceived as autonomy and the active exercise of rights. Each community and sector value the role of their forms of association: indigenous reservations, community councils, community action boards, social organizations, and social leaders, among others. They do demand the presence of the national state, although they recognize that the local state is a necessary step to move forward in this journey.

The following sections delve further into the substantive content of our work:

- ◆ Section 2 describes the contexts of the communities that co-created the indicators; it is organized based on the scale of municipalities and departments/regions.
- ◆ Section 3 includes the findings on the content of the concepts of peace for the communities, considering the territorial and population differences.
- ◆ Section 4 covers the results of the measurement of everyday peace and it accounts for the state of peace grounded in the content of the communities.
- ◆ Section 5 summarizes the conclusions regarding everyday peace in Colombia, and provides recommendations aimed at the various actors in the peace field, with potential interest in the use of the EPI methodology and its findings.

Dogs barking at night and the feelings this produces in the communities are specific expression of war and peace; it summarizes the past traumatic experiences and desire for a sense of calm. Knowing the necessary expressions to attain peace allows us to work on transforming the contexts that can make them a reality in such a way that, as the old saying goes, the barking should be, not a sign of concern and fear, but a sign that we are making progress.

INTRODUCTION
NOTES

- 1 To provide some background to this Everyday Peace Indicators publication, we have the book Reclaiming Everyday Peace: Local Voices in Measurement and Evaluation after War by Pamina Firchow (2018). Firchow, Pamina. (2018). Reclaiming Everyday Peace: Local Voices in Measurement and Evaluation After War, Cambridge University Press. Cambridge University Press. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/reclaiming-everyday-peace/BEB6532292D692933AABC68EFFF9ACB3>
- 2 9,681,288 people have been recognized as victims by the Single Registry of Victims (May 2, 2024 cut off); of this total number of victims, 1,460,771 have received compensation. UARIV. 2024. Gobierno del Cambio ha hecho avances históricos en indemnización administrativa para las víctimas. <https://www.unidadvictimas.gov.co/gobierno-del-cambio-ha-hecho-avances-historicos-en-indemnizacion-administrativa-para-las-victimas/>

Voting on indicators in San Miguel, Buenos Aires, Cauca.

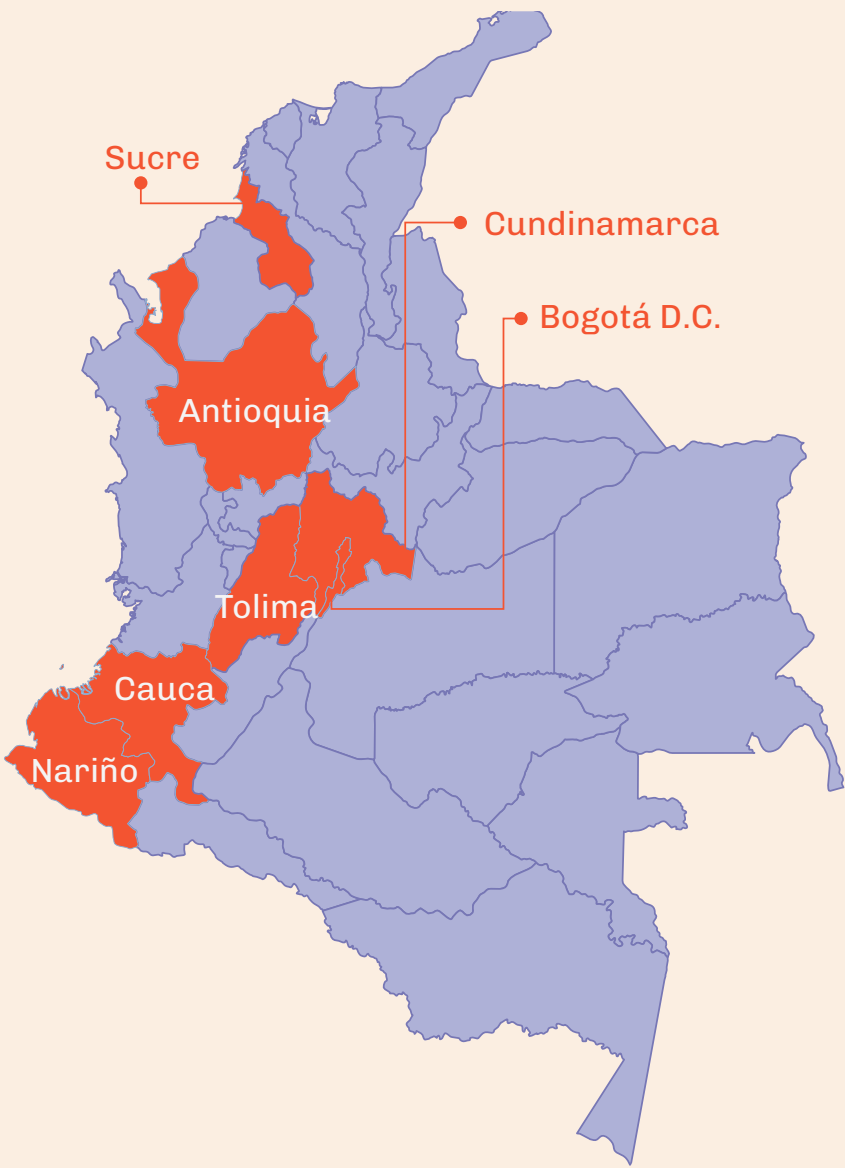


2. The territories of the communities that co-created the everyday peace indicators

Between 2019 and 2024, we worked with 44 communities from 21 municipalities, which we grouped into five larger territories: Antioquia, Cauca, Sucre, Sumapaz, and Pastos. Communities are the main work scale of EPI; these are understood as a social collective that recognizes itself as such and is constantly interacting in a defined territory. Some of these correspond to the political division of townships in the municipalities; others are groups of settlements connected by social, cultural, and geographic aspects; and others correspond to ethnic territories such as indigenous reservations or the community councils of black communities.

These communities have different characteristics given their history, geography, culture, and other factors that provide richness to the specific content of the indicators. For analytical purposes, we have classified the communities as rural, Afro-descendant, indigenous, and peace signatories. Likewise, in this report, we centered mainly on the scale of departments/regions and municipalities. Based on this diverse sample of communities and territories, we talk about everyday peace in Colombia.

In the table below, we link the communities within the municipalities and departments/regions where the research took place. This section includes a summarized context of the territories related to their population characteristics and the dynamics of war and peace.



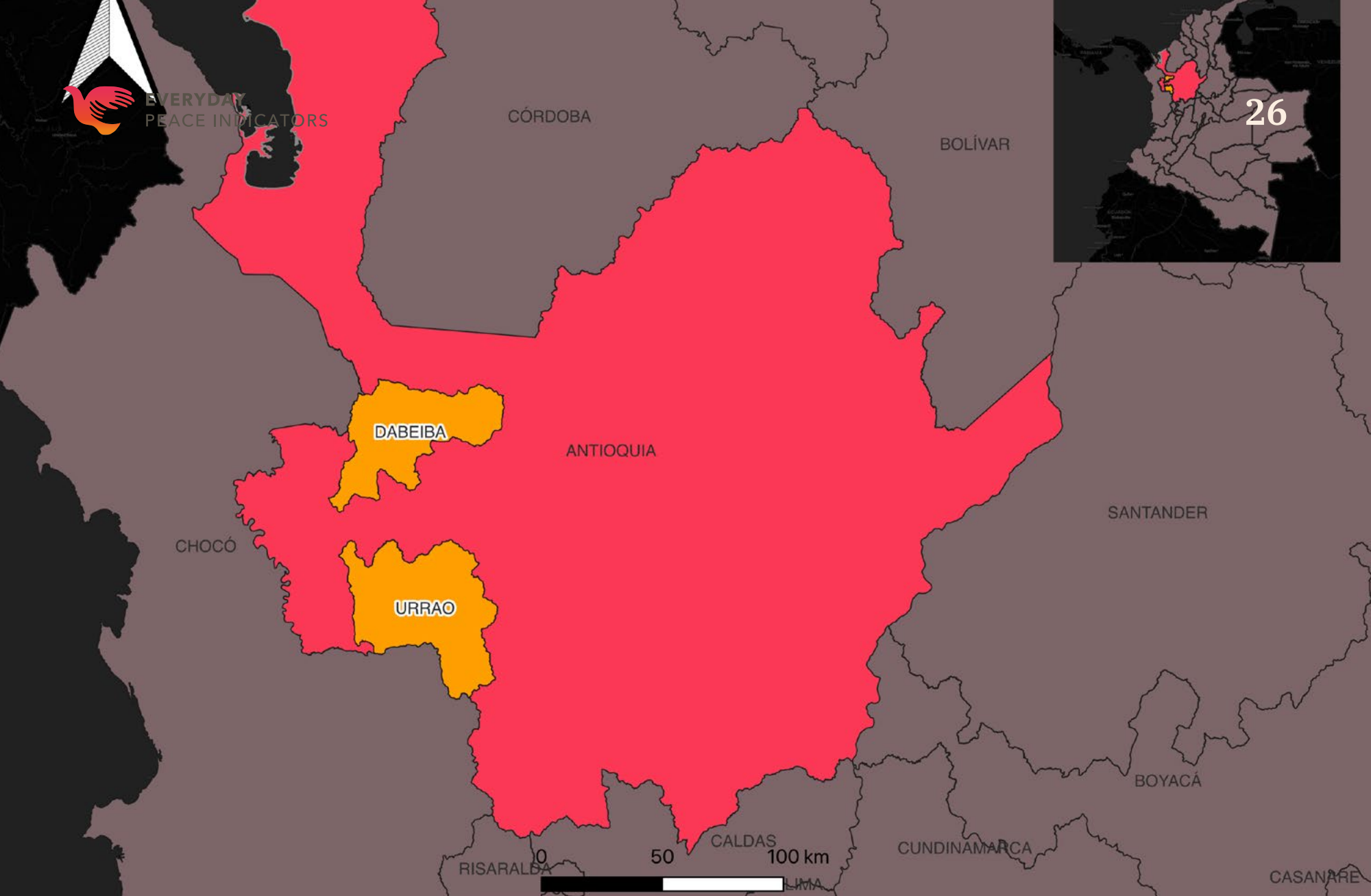
Map 1: Departments with EPI processes 2019–2024

Table 1: Communities that co-created everyday peace indicators 2019–2024

Department/ Region	Municipality	Community
Antioquia	Dabeiba	AETCR Jacobo Arango- Llanogrande
		Camparrusia
		Cañón de la Llorona
		La Balsita
		Las Cruces
		Urama
	Urrao	La Encarnación
		Pavón
Cauca	Argelia	Argelia Casco Urbano
		El Porvenir Argelia
		La Primavera Argelia
	La Sierra	Campo Bello La Sierra
		La Sierra Casco Urbano
		La Sierra Palo Grande
	Buenos Aires	Palo Blanco
		San Francisco
		San Miguel
	Guachené	Pílamó
		San José
		Veredas del Sur
		Veredas Unidas
Sucre	Ovejas	Ovejas
	San Onofre	Libertad
		San Onofre
	Sincelejo	Las Huertas
		Sabanas
		San Antonio
		San Jacinto
		San Martín
	San Antonio de Palmito	San Miguel
Sumapaz	Arbeláez	Centro oriente de Arbeláez
	Bogotá-Locality 20	Betania
		Nazareth
	Cabrera	Upper area of Cabrera
	Icononzo	AETCR Antonio Nariño - La Fila
		San José de Guatimbol
		Yopal
	Pandi	Middle and lower areas of Pandi
Pastos	Venecia	Upper area of Venecia
	Puerres, Nariño	Gran Tescual
	Cumbal, Nariño	Gran Cumbal - Panam
	Orito, Putumayo	Orito Liberia- Alto Orito
	Aldana, Nariño	Pastas- Aldana
	Mallama, Nariño	Mallama



2.1 ANTIOQUIA



Map 2: Municipalities in Antioquia where EPI conducted research

Antioquia is a department located in the northeastern part of the country, with an area of 39,526 miles. This represents 5.44% of the national territory, making it the sixth department with the greatest area in the country. It is predominantly rural in terms of its economy, and it is associated with activities such as agriculture, cattle raising, and mining. It is also biodiverse in terms of forest, mountainous, and coastal ecosystems. The majority of the population lives in the subregion of the Valle de Aburrá, which is small in terms of area, but significantly populated and urban. That said, 61% of the 6,903,721 residing in the department (according to DANE projections for 2024) live in this subregion, which consists of 10 of the 125 municipalities of the department.¹ Another important aspect worth highlighting: of the total population living in the department, 5.2% (312,112 people) identified as Black, Afro-descendant, Raizal, and Palenquero (NARP) in the 2018 census. In addition, 37,628 identified as indigenous, representing only 0.6% of the population of the department.²

2.1.1 Dabeiba

Dabeiba is a municipality in the northwestern part of Antioquia, 107 miles from Medellín. It has a population of 24,242, of which approximately 7,000 are Emberá indigenous people.³ The municipality has 11 indigenous reservations and townships.⁴ The municipality has an area of 1,184 mi², where only 1.4 mi² are part of the urban area, the rest is rural.⁵ Dabeiba is a rural municipality, with a population that consists mainly of rural communities. Its economy is based on agriculture and cattle raising.⁶ This municipality is a necessary step on the way toward the Urabá area of Antioquia. It also connects with the departments of Chocó through the natural corridor of the Cañón de la Llorona, and to Córdoba through the Paramillo Massif. Given its strategic position, this has been a disputed municipality between the different armed actors.⁷

The FARC-EP has been present in the municipality since the 1970s;⁸ paramilitary groups then gained territorial control of the municipality in 1997. The municipality has, therefore, experienced occupations, ambushes of law enforcement units, kidnappings, attacks on the infrastructure, selective murders, massacres, road controls, and forced displacement, among other actions that have persisted over the years. All of these actions have left a total of 46,853 victims who have been recognized as such in the framework of Law 1448 from 2011 to 2024.⁹

The 2016 Peace Agreement reduced the intensity of the conflict and it improved public order in the municipality. Territories formerly occupied by armed groups became Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation (ETCR), such as the ETCR Jacobo Arango in Llano Grande, where former FARC-EP combatants are moving forward in their reintegration¹⁰. In addition, as part of Case 03¹¹ of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, 54 bodies were recovered from Las Mercedes cemetery¹² in addition to establishing the responsibility of 10 senior Army officials due to extrajudicial executions. In Case 01,¹³ responsibility was attributed to officials of the Northwestern Block of the FARC-EP present in Dabeiba for torture and inhuman treatment¹⁴.

Despite this previous context, the armed conflict persists in the territory. The AGC currently has hegemonic control over Urabá. This led the Office of the Ombudsperson to identify it as a high-risk municipality in 2023, before the regional elections. This meant that political participation and popular elections would be affected by actions of control exercised by the armed group against civilians, community action boards, and social leaders.

2.1.2 Urrao

Known as “the Hidden Paradise”, Urrao is the second largest municipality in Antioquia. It is located between the slopes of the central and western mountain range, on the borders of the departments of Chocó, Caldas, and Risaralda. It is one of the four areas comprising the southeastern subregion, characterized by the passage of the Sinifaná gorge. Based on the projections of the 2018 National Census, the municipality comprises 255,811.8 hectares, with a population of 30,876. The majority—16,917 people, or 54.79% of the population—live in the urban area, while 13,959 (45.20%) live in populated centers and dispersed rural areas. It contains three Emberá indigenous reservations comprising 2,620 people¹⁵.

It is a coffee and carbon producing municipality that the Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos (ANUC) made its home. It also witnessed the expansion of the FARC for 80 years, especially of Front 34. In May 2003, it was responsible—following the orders of Jesús Agudelo (alias “El Paisa”)—for the murder of the then Governor of Antioquia, Guillermo Gaviria; his Peace Advisor, Gilberto Echeverri; and eight military members. This occurred in the township of Mandé, a forested area of Urrao on the border with Chocó.¹⁶

However, the municipality also experienced what the Corporación Jurídica Libertad called “pain and terror from the paramilitaries between 1985 and 2007” in one of the five reports presented to the Truth Commission¹⁷. At the end of the 1990s, the Southeastern Front of the AUC made its way to this municipality with the intention of protecting a meeting center established in the neighboring Angelópolis by the paramilitary leader Vicente Castaño. This was revealed by a 2017 ruling issued by a Court in Medellín. There, they expanded their model of stigmatization and “social cleansing” that, between 1984 and 2006, led to the selective murder of 3,503 people in Urrao. This is, by far, the highest figure (followed by Andes, with 2,141 victims) within the 23 municipalities of the Southeastern region of Antioquia based on the data collected by the research unit Hacemos Memoria from the 2018 UARIV report.

The JEP summoned 11 former FARC leaders for the 2003 massacre to “address the issues and behaviors in the regional dimension of the Block of Fronts, by identifying the most responsible of the lower levels of armed organization, and to meet the demands for truth and recognition presented by the victims”.¹⁸

Precisely in Mandé, after the signing of the Peace Agreement, a group of 55 residents of the area—including 30 reincorporated members

of the FARC—were certified in February 2023 by the national training service (SENA) as operators in livestock production and baking processes¹⁹.

On the other hand, since 2022 the municipality has presented six reports before the JEP on the damages of the conflict: two ethnic ones, an indigenous one, an Afro one, one with a gender approach, and another with a territorial approach. On September 12 of last year, the township of La Encarnación was recognized as a victim as a non-ethnic collective subject, and as special participants in Case 08 on crimes committed by law enforcement, “or in association with paramilitary groups, or civil third parties, because of, in connection to, or in direct or indirect relation to the armed conflict”.²⁰ La Encarnación is also—together with La Clara and El Maravillo—a subject of collective reparation of the UARIV. The implementation of the Collective Comprehensive Reparation Plan was already completed there. In 1998, the AUC paramilitary members murdered 22 members of the community.²¹

About youth.— Wilson Guisao, Antioquia.



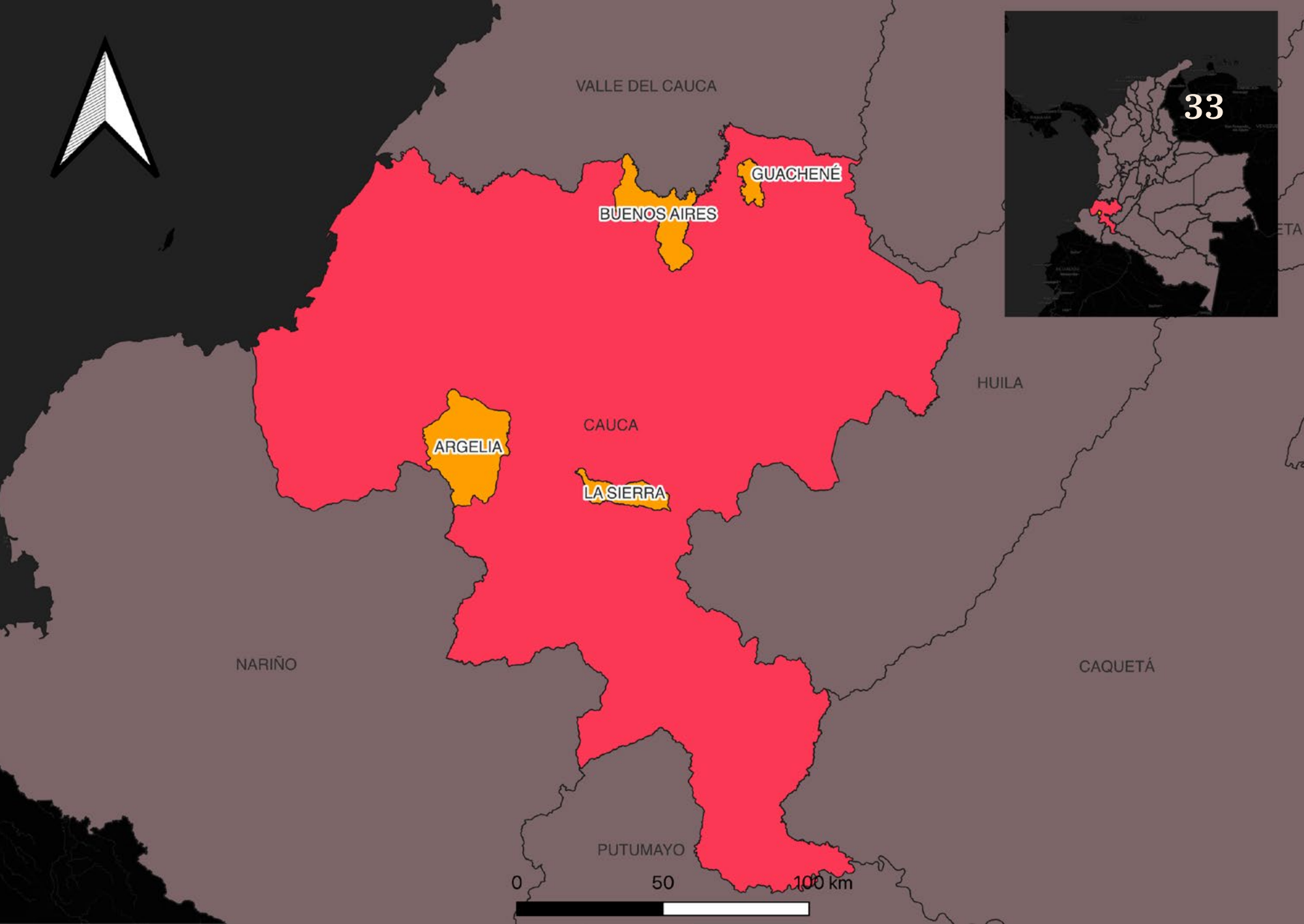
ANTIOQUIA

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2.2 CAUCA



Map 3: Municipalities in Cauca where EPI conducted research

The department of Cauca is located on the southeastern part of the country, with an area of 18,211 mi², representing 2.56% of the national territory. It is a highly geographically and sociocultural diverse department. In relation to its geography, the department has diverse ecosystems that are different given its location between the Pacific and Andean regions. As a result, Cauca has forested areas, ecosystems that are characteristic of this altitude such as moorlands, and coastal ecosystems. Likewise, its economic activities vary, with agriculture, cattle raising, and mining as the most significant.¹ Ultimately, this diversity is reflected in its population. According to the 2018 Census, of the total 1,468,488 population,² 308,455 identified as indigenous and 312,411 identified as NARP.³ In addition to its mestizo population, the department is home to different indigenous communities, including the Nasa, the Misak, the Yanaconas, the Coconucos, and the Totoroes. There is also a strong presence of community councils located mostly in the northern part of the department, including Santander de Quilichao, Buenos Aires, Puerto Tejada, and Caloto, among others.⁴

2.2.1 Buenos Aires

This municipality is located in the northern part of the department of Cauca, 71 miles from Popayán which is the capital of the department. It has a population of 31,436⁵ inhabitants, the majority of whom identify as Afro-Colombian, black, or mulatto, totaling 16,558 people. In addition, 6,248 people belong to the Nasa indigenous community.⁶ The municipality has five community councils, three indigenous reservations, and three municipal councils.⁷ The residents of Buenos Aires live mostly in rural areas, and only 1,218 people (4.53% of the population) live in the municipal seat.⁸

The northern part of the department of Cauca has been overwhelmingly dominated by armed groups given its nature as an area of interest for drug trafficking, especially for the cultivation and processing of coca.⁹ In addition, this is an area of strategic mobility for armed groups. For instance, the corridor of the municipality of Buenos Aires with the Naya River—connecting Buenaventura in the pacific area with Chocó through the San Juan and Atrato rivers—enables the illegal trafficking of drugs and arms.¹⁰ As a result, since 1980, armed groups (such as the M-19, the ELN, the FARC-EP, and the AUC) have been present in the municipality.¹¹ This presence of different armed groups has forced the population to live under illegally exerted social control, making them victims of crimes such as selective murders, disappearances, illegal checkpoints, and forced displacements.¹²

The ETCR was established in the municipality with the 2016 Peace Agreements, called El Ceral-Carlos Patiño in the settlement of La Elvira. Additionally, institutional presence increased seeking peacebuilding projects, and state and international organizations arrived in the territory as well¹³. As a result, in 2018, the Regional Government Office of Cauca and the Mayor's Office of the municipality recognized the damage suffered by residents of the municipality of Buenos Aires due to the armed conflict¹⁴. On the other hand, the incidents of the armed conflict that affected northern Cauca were prioritized as part of Macro Case 05 of the JEP. In this case, in 2023 the SRVR summoned 10 former FARC-EP combatants to recognize their responsibility in serious crimes against civilians.¹⁵

Despite the previously mentioned context, the municipality is currently facing armed confrontations once again between dissident groups of the FARC-EP, and armed confrontations between these groups and the Army. These include armed disputes close to civilians with improvised explosive artefacts and antipersonnel mines that affect civilians. This led the Office of the Ombudsperson to include this population within its early warnings in different reports, including the 2023 report,

considering the population is at imminent risk of violations to their rights to life and freedom and violations to international humanitarian law.¹⁶

2.2.2 Guachené

Guachené is considered the youngest municipality in the department of Cauca, and one of the most recently established in the country, which occurred as a result of a 2006 popular consultation that allowed for the transformation of what was, at that point, the settlement of Caloto. With an approximate area of 9,884 hectares, it is located in the northern region, approximately 55 miles from Popayán and 19 miles from Cali. It borders Padilla and Puerto Tejada on the north, Toribío and Corinto on the east, Santander de Quilichao on the west, and Caloto on the south¹⁷.

According to the latest DANE projection, the municipality has a population of approximately 19,815 people, 99% of which are Afro.¹⁸ Píamo has a model of community work in the Hacienda Píamo, to ensure the conservation of ancestral rights. The municipality has 907 hectares of water reservoirs; forest; cassava, plantain, and fruit harvests; and cattle. However, its economy is based mostly on sugarcane harvesting, together with the mining of gold and sand and gravel, which family agriculture attempts to confront. Although it does not contain illicit crops, it has served as a strategic corridor for trafficking given its connection to the center of the country in the south and access to the Pacific Ocean.¹⁹

Both the Front 6 of the FARC and paramilitary organizations capitalized on this context. According to a resident of the municipality interviewed by *El Espectador* in 2021, this led to the murder of thousands of young people between 2000 and 2006 under paramilitary control. After the signing of the 2016 Peace Agreement, the ELN took advantage of the FARC's exit to enter the area, where the affliction of forced recruitment remains.²⁰

Criminal groups have also made a presence, as well as gangs that operate in the urban areas. Because of these groups, there have been not only murders and uprising attempts against law enforcement, but also confinements due to threats against the population. The current National Government made its way to the municipality in September 2022 to evaluate a couple of months of dialogue with the communities, especially regarding conflicts due to the invasion of lands, and the proposal of non-aggression pacts. However, in December 2023, nine days before completing his tenure in office, the Mayor, Elmer Abonía, was murdered along with one of his bodyguards.²¹

In March 2023, the JEP Chamber for the Recognition of Truth accused ten former members of FARC military convoys, Jacobo Arenas and Gabriel Galvis, for attacks on civilians “that generated a systematic impact on the right to the cultural identity of the indigenous and Afro-Colombian ancestral peoples and rural communities” based in 17 municipalities prioritized in Case 05. This included the municipality of Guachené (then part of Caloto), after investigating the territorial situation of Northern Cauca and Southern Valle del Cauca. There, the JEP identified ten criminal patterns corresponding to one of the guerrillas’ common objectives: territorial and social control, which is now in dispute with different illegal armed groups.²²

2.2.3 La Sierra

La Sierra is located 35 miles from Popayán, in the center of the department. It has a population of 9,935 and an area of 84 mi², distributed in 49 settlements. 83% of the municipality consists of rural areas and 10 neighborhoods in the municipal seat, with 17% of the municipality considered urban.²³ La Sierra is mainly agriculturally based, with very fertile volcanic soils.

This municipality has been significantly affected by the armed conflict because of different groups with a presence in the territory, including the AUC with the Calima Block, the FARC-EP until 2016, the ELN, and the EPL.²⁴ In 2019, the Victims’ Unit reported a total of 705 men and 748 women victims of the armed conflict. Of these, 187 people identified as indigenous and 67 as Afro-Colombian. In addition, according to Indepaz, the victimizing act with the greatest victims in the municipality in 2018 was forced displacement, followed by murders and threats.²⁵

La Sierra differs to the municipality of Buenos Aires, which is now one the municipalities selected for the Development Plan with a Territorial Focus (PDET) after the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016. In Buenos Aires, it is also possible to find more information on the presence of institutions after the signing. In contrast, finding information in this regarding about La Sierra is impossible. There are evidently commitments between the Department Government and the Mayor’s Office of the municipality seeking structural transformations to build peace in the territory. However, in open sources it is impossible to obtain information regarding the specific support to these projects from the central government or international cooperation.²⁶

Currently, different illegal armed groups are still present in La Sierra, and civilians continue to endure their presence. This is what the Office of the Ombudsperson indicated in its early warning on August 14,

2023. It stated that the Carlos Patiño Front of the Central General Staff and the Manuel Vásquez Castaño Front of the ELN were present in the municipality, exercising control over illegal routes and corridors for trafficking, as well as social control over the community. This limits their individual freedoms and collective rights.²⁷ It also reported that the area where the municipality of La Sierra and other municipalities of Cauca are located are of interest for regional and transnational organized crime. This puts civilians at risk of new forced displacements, confinements, and forced recruitments, among others, underscoring the latent presence of the armed conflict in the area.²⁸

2.2.4 Argelia

The municipality of Argelia is located in the southwestern part of the department of Cauca, 96 miles from Popayán. It has an area of 623 mi², and a population of approximately 38,000 people, of which 86% live in rural areas. Its economy is based mainly on agriculture, where the harvest of coffee, plantain, and corn stand out. Nevertheless, in recent years this has been replaced by illicit crops, such as coca.

Historically, Argelia has been a strategic territory for illegal armed actors. Since the 1980s, it was a stronghold for the FARC-EP, especially Front 60, generating a constant dispute with the AUC in the 1990s and 2000s. This dispute led to forced displacements, selective homicides, and the indiscriminate laying of antipersonnel mines. According to the UARIV, there are 32,000 registered victims in Argelia, representing close to 84% of their current population.²⁹

The National Comprehensive Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops (PNIS) was implemented in the municipality after the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016. Nevertheless, the outcomes have been limited given the presence of dissidents of the FARC, including the Carlos Patiño Front, and drug trafficking groups that control illicit economies in the region.³⁰ In 2023, the Office of the Ombudsperson issued an early warning, notifying the persistence of the forced recruitment, displacements, and confinements of the rural population.³¹

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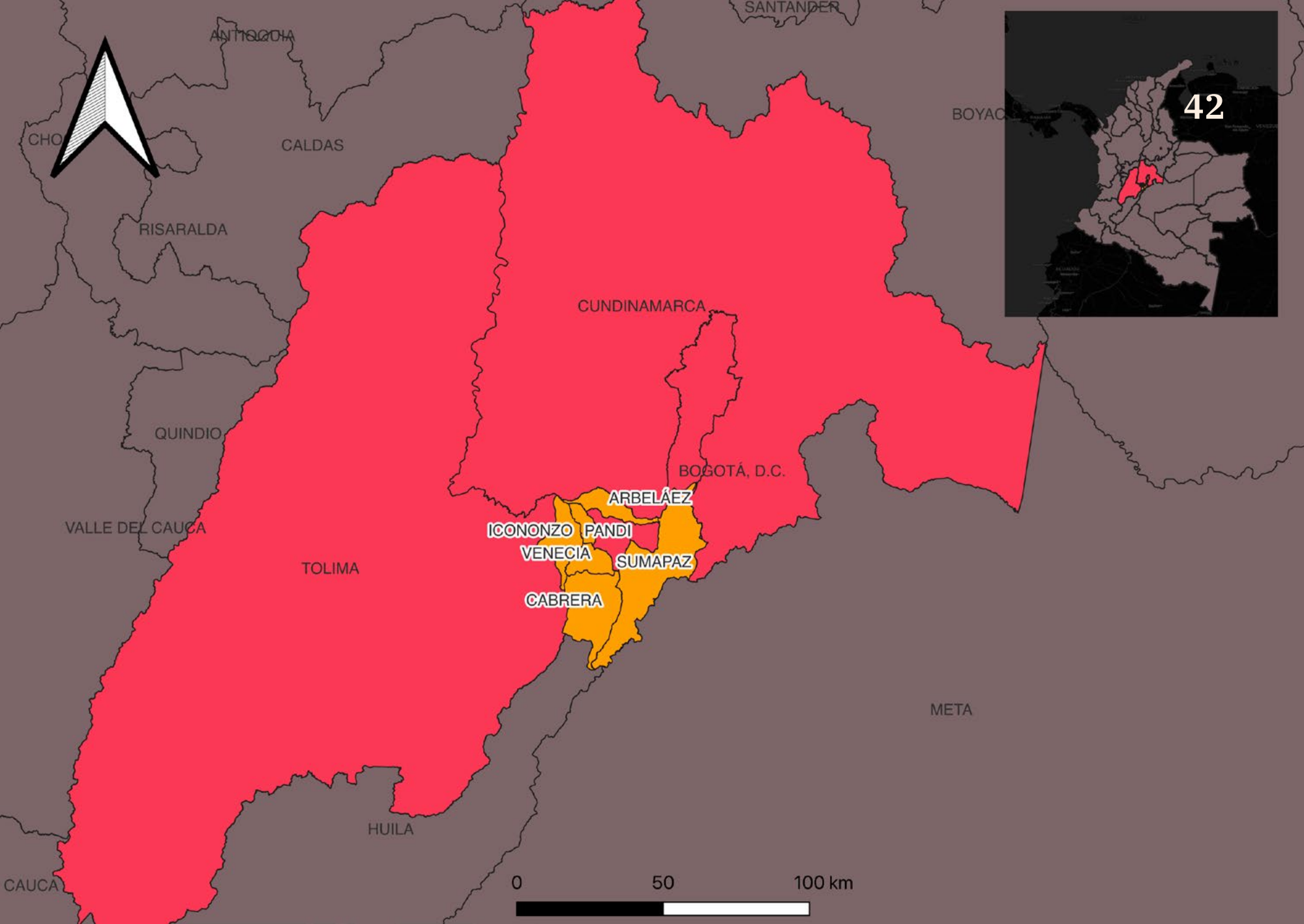
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2.3 SUMAPAZ



Map 4: Municipalities in Sumapaz where EPI conducted research

The region of Sumapaz, located south of Bogotá, includes Locality 20 of Sumapaz and municipalities of the departments of Cundinamarca, Tolima, and Meta, such as Cabrera, Venecia, Arbeláez, Pandi, and Icononzo, among others. This territorial delimitation responds to geographic criteria, to its relationship with the Moorland of Sumapaz, and to historical processes that have established its rural identity. With 333,000 hectares, the Moorland of Sumapaz is the largest moorland ecosystem in the world and a vital source of potable water for Bogotá and the Andean region.¹

This region witnessed the consolidation of armed actors during the 1980s, followed by their expansion in the 1990s, generating a prolonged dispute for territorial control and its natural resources. This situation intensified the impacts of the armed conflict on rural communities, particularly through forced displacement, violations of human rights, and the militarization of the area.²

The territorial delimitation of Sumapaz also connects to the historical rural corridors that join the communities of Cundinamarca (such as Cabrera) with territories of Tolima and Meta, reflecting its rural economy and the organizational processes to defend the land.³

The region of Sumapaz was a strategic stronghold of the FARC-EP in the 1970s, with the National Army responding with a strong militarization. These dynamics led to the stigmatization of the communities and to a series of human rights violations that included extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions, and forced displacements.⁴

With the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016, the region experienced a decrease in violence and an increase in peace institutions: there is an AETCR in Icononzo, the Mayor's Office of Bogotá launched the creation of a PDET in Locality 20, and it is the scenario of JEP punishments, in particular the restorative project "Sowing Life".

In March 2024, the Victims' Unit recognized the rural community of Sumapaz as a subject of collective reparation, including it in the Single Registry of Victims. This official recognition acknowledges the harms suffered by the community as a result of the armed conflict, including forced displacement, arbitrary detentions, and stigmatization⁵.

However, in 2023, the Office of the Ombudsperson warned of the reactivation of dissidents in Sumapaz, including the Front 53 of the Segunda Marquetalia who seek to take back territorial and economic control.⁶

2.3.1 Cabrera

Cabrera is located in the department of Cundinamarca in the region of Sumapaz, 88 miles from Bogotá. This municipality is an important source of water resources, as 41.26% of its territory corresponds to moorland and wetland areas.⁷ Cabrera has 5,062 residents;⁸ of this figure, 76.53% live in rural areas and 23.47% in the urban area. The economy of the municipality is agriculturally-based, and specifically cattle raising (mostly bovine)⁹.

The residents of the municipality have been victims at different moments of the armed conflict, not only due to conflicts around land, but also because of geo-strategic interests considering that the municipality is a corridor that connects the population of Tolima and Cundinamarca.¹⁰ As evidence, the FARC-EP made a presence in the municipality since their foundation in 1964, and, in general, it is in Sumapaz where they became stronger under the idea of defending the needs of rural communities and seeking their protection. This had negative impacts on civilians, leaving close to 586 victims of the armed conflict, recognized by the Victims' Unit in 2020. The majority of them were victims of forced displacement.¹¹

Fortunately, civilian mobilizations led to transformations in the territory with the goal of building peace. For instance, the recognition of the Rural Reserve Zone (ZRC) in the municipality,¹² comprising approximately 18 settlements. The goal with this is to materialize the protection of the defense of the territory, the socio-environmental defense, and the production of food in the municipality.¹³ In addition, after the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016, armed violence in the municipality decreased substantially,¹⁴ and different peacebuilding projects have been implemented. For example, a productive project encompassing 35 families around the harvest of tamarillo,¹⁵ and the intervention in 2024 of the Search Unit for Missing Persons in the cemetery of the municipality to search for the bodies of missing persons in the framework of the armed conflict.¹⁶

Currently, there are no illegal armed groups in the municipality of Cabrera. However, there are rumors and threats of the FARC dissidents entering the municipality, as indicated in the early warning of the Office of the Ombudsperson.¹⁷ This is coupled with the fact that leaders from the municipality have reported feeling stigmatized due to their participation in environmental issues and because of their opposition to megaprojects such as the El Paso hydroelectric plant.¹⁸

2.3.2 Venecia

Venecia is located to the south of the department of Cundinamarca, within the region of Sumapaz. This municipality is located 75 miles from Bogotá and, in 2019, it had a population of approximately 4,239 people, living mostly in the rural area of the municipality.¹⁹ As a result, its economy is based mainly on agriculture. Further, in 2023, 70% of its territory was delimited as ZRC.²⁰

As part of the region of Sumapaz, this municipality experienced the presence of the FARC-EP since 1994, which was the result of a decision of the guerrilla to strengthen its operations in this key region to encircle the capital.²¹ This led to the intensification of violent acts within the municipality, including extortions, selective murders, kidnappings, or ambushes.²² These armed violence acts against the community were on the rise during the first decade of 2000, when paramilitary groups—including the AUC and the Rural Self-Defense Forces of Casanare (ACC)—made an incursion into the territory. Further, with the justification of ending the guerilla groups in the territory, they committed crimes against the population, such as selective murders and persecutions.²³

Under this scenario, as of August 31, 2024, a total of 1,395 victims had been recognized as part of Law 1448 of 2011, representing approximately 32% of the current population of the municipality. Of these victims, the majority were related to forced displacement, followed by victims recognized for homicides and threats.²⁴

These dynamics of violence decreased after the signing of the 2016 Peace Agreement because, after the disarmament of the FARC-EP, its members (peace signatories) gradually became part of the municipality through the peaceful exercise of their citizenship. An example is the implementation of productive projects and the development of TWAR²⁵ in the municipality and the election as council member in 2023 of Marisol Agatón Morera, former FARC-EP member and a peace signatory.²⁶ There are also evident efforts by the institutions to provide reparations to the victims of the municipality. For instance, the establishment of the victims' participation roundtable, where the Mayor's Office, the municipal legal representative, and victims' representatives are holding meetings to materialize public policies that enable access to reparation in line with national legislation.²⁷

2.3.3 Locality 20 of Bogotá-Sumapaz

The Locality 20 of Sumapaz is south of Bogotá, where approximately 7,838 people lived in 2020. This locality is the only one in the district of Bogotá that is completely rural, with an area of 485 mi². As a result, its main economic activity is agriculture, with cattle raising as well, and it is an important source of water resources. The National Natural Park of Sumapaz is located in this locality, one of the national parks with the greatest diversity of flora.²⁸

The FARC-EP has had a strong presence in this municipality since the 1960s, resulting in the stigmatization and persecution of its residents. Both the Army and the FARC-EP accused residents of working with the adversary, immersing the municipality in persecutions, arbitrary detentions, selective murders, extrajudicial executions, and crossfires of armed groups.²⁹ The impact of the conflict was so significant that the Victims' Registry identified that, between 1986 and 2021, 154 armed actions took place. This led to the recognition in 2024 of this territory as a subject of collective reparation.³⁰

It was only after the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016 that the community truly emerged from the armed conflict.³¹ Processes to

provide reparations and recognition to victims began, with positive results, including the first recognition within the Victims' Registry of a subject of collective reparation.³² In addition, the community has been able to rebuild its history and the impacts of the armed conflict³³. The municipality was also included in the PDET of the Development Plan of the Mayor's Office, with initiatives to promote agriculture and the regular use of the land. The pilot restorative justice project, "Sowing Life", was also launched in this territory. In it, parties appearing before the JEP have planted 3,000 trees and restored 15 hectares³⁴ to recover the environmental corridor in the south of Bogotá.³⁵

The community has been able to gradually reestablish their social fabric and live without armed conflict. However, the fear of a resurgence of violence persists, especially after the murder of a social leader in 2023, the appearance of fliers on the reestablishment of Front 53 of the dissidents of the Segunda Marquetalia, and reports of the presence of uniformed members of this group.³⁶

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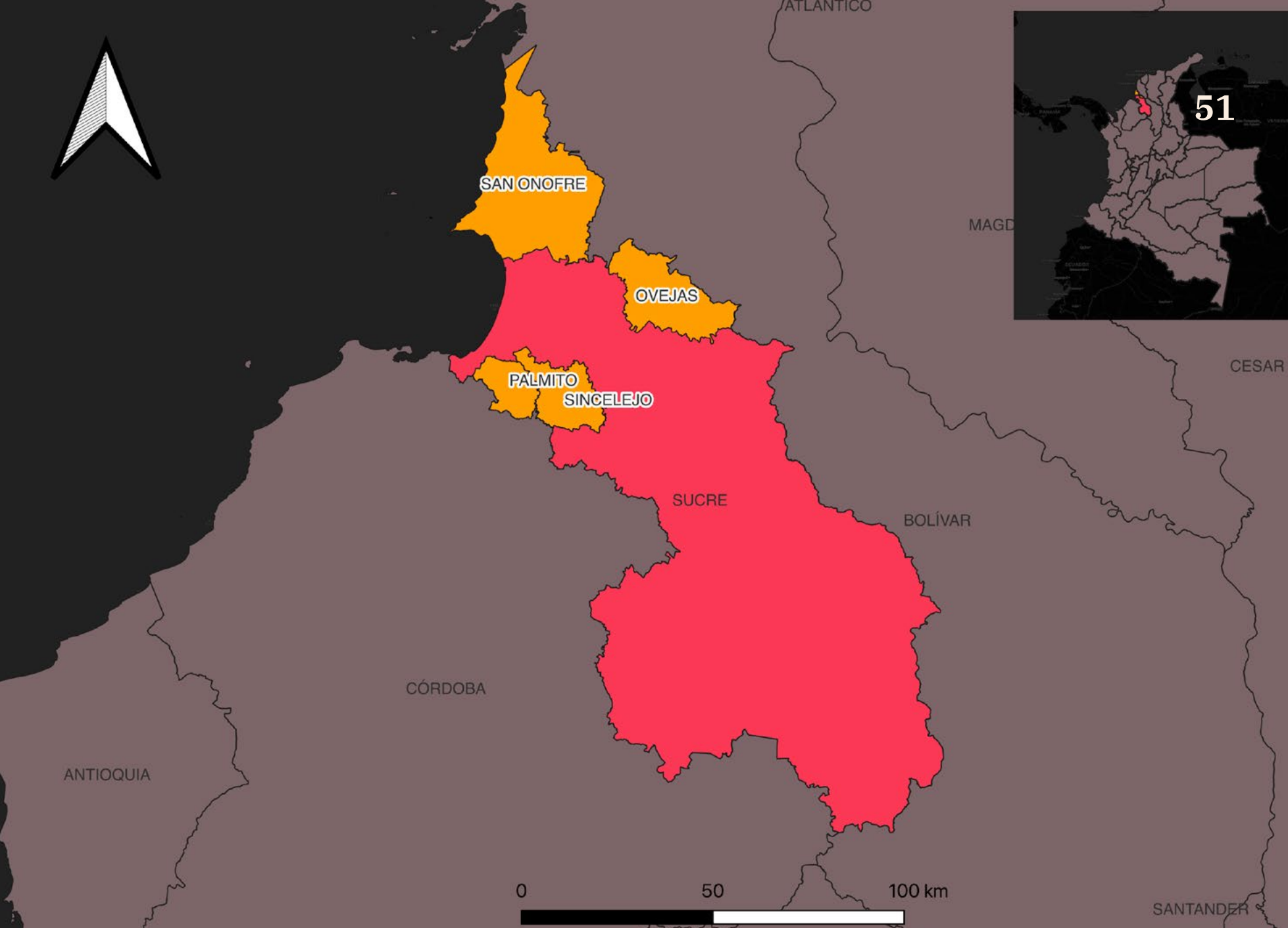
SUMAPAZ
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2.4 SUCRE



Map 5: Municipalities in Sucre where EPI conducted research

The department of Sucre is located in the northern part of Colombia in the Caribbean region. This department has an area of 6,783 mi², which represents 1% of the national territory, where approximately 1,006,044 people live.¹ Of the total population, 25% identifies as belonging to an ethnic group. On the one hand, 13% of the population identifies as indigenous, with a total of 122 indigenous councils in the department, mainly from the Zenú community. On the other hand, 12% identify as members of the NARP population.² The department's economy is mainly based on cattle raising. Agriculture was previously a significant source of income for the residents of the department; however, it has decreased due to factors such as the dependence on internal demand, the concentration of land, or the internal armed conflict. Further, the department has a lack of infrastructure to develop an agricultural economy since Sucre is a department divided between a coastal system, which is dry, and a humid system of swamps. Therefore, although 81% of the land is apt for agricultural production, there are constant risks of flooding in the humid areas or a scarcity of water for irrigation. This underscores the need for better infrastructure, which represents a risk.³

2.4.1 Sincelejo

The municipality of Sincelejo is the capital of the department of Sucre, with an area of 17,653 mi², and an approximate population of 290,677 residents. Of that total, only 10% live in rural areas, which occupies 92% of the total area.⁴ The main economic activities of this municipality are cattle raising, followed by agriculture.⁵

Sincelejo and the department of Sucre were affected by the armed conflict, especially due to land control and drug trafficking routes toward the Gulf of Morrosquillo. In the 1960s and 1970s, the system based on the ownership of large estates intensified the conflict, and guerilla groups (such as the FARC-EP and the ELN) appeared in the 1980s. In the 1990s, the paramilitaries of the AUC arrived in the department, seeking synergies with political elites and landowners to fight the guerrillas.⁶ The armed confrontations between paramilitary groups and the guerillas entailed consequences such as massacres and intimidations that led to the dispossession of land and, consequently, to the forced displacement of different people. The majority of them left to Sincelejo. As a result, in the 1980s, the municipality became a refuge for illegal armed groups tied to drug trafficking, which solidified their control of the land through dispossession. At the same time, it received a significant number of victims of the armed conflict, representing 46.19% of the total in 2012, with 4,493 victims registered in its urban area.⁷

After the signing of the Peace Agreements in 2016, institutions have begun implementing new efforts to provide reparation for victims and build the social fabric. An example of this is the creation of the Territorial Council for Peace, Reconciliation, and Coexistence by the Mayor's Office, which seeks to conduct actions to build peace and coexistence.⁸ In addition, in 2023, the National System for Agricultural Reform was introduced in the municipality. Its goal is to facilitate the access to and use of land through strategies, such as the National Plans for Comprehensive Reform, the Multi-Purpose Land Registry, and the ZRC.⁹

Despite this context, the municipality still experiences conflicts related to the access to and use of land, which are exacerbated by institutional decisions that create social tensions. An example is the allocation of the Finca La Victoria to the Indigenous Council of El Jordán, an act of reparation to this indigenous community affected by the armed conflict. This reparation, paradoxically, led to the dispossession of rural families who had farmed in these lands for over 30 years. This caused protests and led the Office of the Ombudsperson to request explanations from the ANT regarding how to balance reparation without affecting other communities.¹⁰

2.4.2 Ovejas

Ovejas is located in the department of Sucre, 25 miles from Sincelejo,¹¹ within the subregion of Montes de María.¹² It has a population of approximately 23,435 people; 51% of them live in the urban area of the municipality, while 49% live in the rural area¹³. The economy of the municipality is based on cattle raising and agriculture. The land of the municipality and in general of Montes de María is so fertile that it has been called the “pantry of the Colombian Caribbean”.¹⁴

It is a pioneer in creating social organizations to protect agricultural work and the land, as the first to create an agricultural trade union in Colombia in 1913. However, the leadership of these organizations in the municipality faced repression and stigmatization in the 20th century from the State, armed groups, and businesspeople. This situation drew the presence of the guerrillas—such as the FARC-EP, ELN, and EPL—in 1960; these groups sought to influence civilians and control the territory in exchange for a supposed protection. The situation escalated with the arrival of the self-defense forces, such as the AUC, in 1990, and due to disputes to control a territory that represents an important geographic corridor. This context led to violent acts, including seven massacres from 1997 to 2005, most of these attributed to the paramilitaries.¹⁵ The violence in Ovejas has been so significant that the Victims’ Unit reported 52,487 victims of the armed conflict within the municipality (as of August 2024). Of these, 50,929 were recognized as victims of forced displacement.¹⁶

After the signing of the Peace Agreements in 2016, Ovejas was recognized as one of the PDET municipalities.¹⁷ This led to the establishment of projects related to the formalization, restitution, and management of rural land, in addition to the improvement of public infrastructure.¹⁸ In addition, the expectation is that, through the JEP, people can access justice due to the different crimes committed against civilians in the municipalities considering that, within Case 08¹⁹, different collectives and organizations of Montes de María presented reports on the massacres that occurred in the subregion.²⁰ Despite these efforts, the municipality of Ovejas is still immersed in violence, now under the control of the AGC, an armed group that controls the illegal economies and affects the lives of the residents.²¹ This situation limits political participation and community organization, hindering the strengthening of the social fabric.²²

2.4.3 San Onofre

San Onofre is located in the department of Sucre, within the subregion of Montes de María. It has a population of approximately 53,235 people, with 63% of them living in rural areas, consisting of settlements and townships such as Libertad, Berrugas, and Rincón del Mar. The economy of the municipality is based on agriculture, artisanal fishing, and tourism, especially in the coastal areas of Berrugas and Rincón del Mar.²³

During the 1990s and 2000s, San Onofre was significantly affected by paramilitary violence, especially by the Block of Montes de María of the AUC. This group imposed territorial control through massacres, forced disappearances, and mass displacements. For example, in the township of Libertad, on June 1, 2000, paramilitaries murdered five rural community members; this incident is known as the Massacre of Libertad 2000.²⁴ There have also been documented systematic practices of sexual violence as a mechanism of social control exercised by paramilitary members.²⁵

After the demobilization of the AUC in 2005, San Onofre continued facing challenges due to the presence of residual armed groups and criminal groups. The signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016 enabled the implementation of PDET programs, which aim to strengthen infrastructure, security, and the socio-economic conditions of the population. However, in 2023, the Office of the Ombudsperson issued an early warning regarding the risk for communities due to the territorial expansion of the AGC. This reality underscores the continued presence of armed actors.²⁶

2.4.4 San Antonio de Palmito

San Antonio de Palmito is located in the department of Sucre, in the subregion of La Sabana. According to 2019 projections, it has a population of approximately 14,635 people, with 65.7% of them living in rural areas.²⁷ The majority of the population belongs to the Zenú ethnic group, recognized for their ancestral traditions, including weaving with Gynerium, where the emblematic *sombrero vueltiao* stands out. The main activities of the municipality center on the services sector (57.23%), followed by the commodities sector (31.61%), which includes agriculture and cattle raising.²⁸

This territory has historically been affected by the armed conflict. During the 1980s and the 1990s, guerrilla groups (such as the FARC-EP), made a presence in the municipality, causing forced displacements and an increase in militarization. Since 1995, the arrival of the AUC led to acts of extreme violence, including massacres and land

dispossession. In 1999, the massacre of San Antonio underscored the territorial dispute between illegal armed groups.²⁹

After the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016, San Antonio de Palmito has worked on projects to promote their economic and cultural development. In 2021, they implemented the Ethno-touristic Route to save the ancestral Zenú culture. It includes tours that allow people to learn about and enjoy the ethnic, cultural, gastronomic, and natural richness of the municipality³⁰.

The municipality currently faces challenges related to the access to land, the lack of basic infrastructure, and the persistence of threats against social leaders. Entities such as the UARIV³¹ have made a presence in the territory, and the municipality is a PDET territory.



Process of constructing indicators in Sucre.



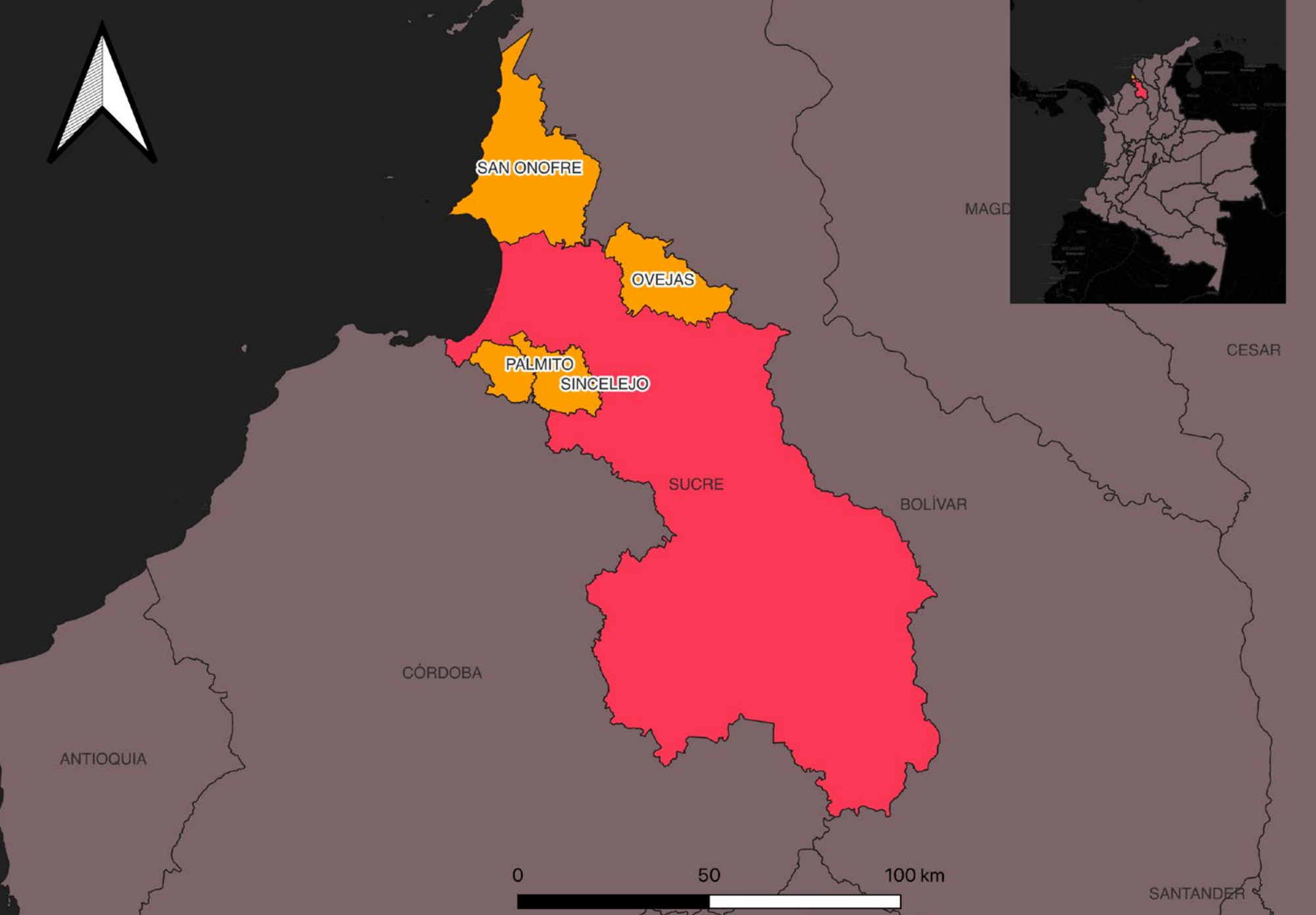
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2.5 PASTOS



Map 6: Municipalities in the reservations where EPI conducted research

Pastos is an indigenous community located in the Andean region in the southern part of Colombia, mainly in the department of Nariño and, to a lesser extent, the northern part of Ecuador. In Colombia, their presence extends to indigenous reservations such as Mayasquer, Panan, Chiles, Cumbal, Cuaspud, Aldana, and Ipiales, among others.¹

According to the 2005 DANE Census, the population who identifies as part of the Pasto peoples is 129,801, representing 9.3% of the indigenous population in the country. Of this total, 95.1% live in Nariño and 3.8% in Putumayo.²

Historically, the Pastos peoples are known for their resistance to the expansion of the Inca Empire in the 15th century. Although their ancestral language is considered extinct, a few studies suggest that they had chibca roots. The Pasto culture is characterized by a deep respect for nature and the practice of traditional medicine. They also practice forms of ancestral agriculture that prioritize sustainability and food sovereignty, which are fundamental elements of their cosmovision.³

Currently, the Pasto peoples continue working on preserving their cultural identity and on defending their territorial rights. However, they face challenges related to autonomy, access to land, and the effects of the armed conflict. According the Victims' Unit, more than 24,000 indigenous victims of the armed conflict have been registered in Nariño, with the Pastos peoples as the most affected community.⁴

PASTOS NOTES

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3. Concepts of everyday peace in Colombia



After visiting these 44 communities and holding approximately a hundred focus groups, we coded the 7,721 indicators that were created. Each indicator received one or two codes, which resulted in 12,262 total codes.

To understand the difference between indicators and codes, one example comes from an indicator created in San Onofre, Sucre: “There is a soccer field”. This indicator was coded in the category, “Cultural and Sports Practices”. Meanwhile, in the community of Mallama in the region of Pastos, we found another indicator: “Young people play in the soccer field on the weekends”. This indicator alludes not only to “Cultural and Sports Practices”, but also to the “Infrastructure” used, which is the soccer field. In the first case, there was only one code; in the second, there were two codes. The results below account for the over 12,000 codes. However, to make it easier, we will continue talking about indicators. At the same time, we recognize the dialectic nature of the coding exercise, which is subject to discussion with the communities and in our team of researchers.

The number of indicators per municipality and region is the result of the different projects and interests. Consequently, certain regions and municipalities conducted more focus groups than others. It is important to keep this in mind for the following analyses considering that some regions have greater weight than others. Consequently, **Chart 2** includes the percentage of indicators per department/region. Sucre and Cauca had the greatest number (with close to 30% each), followed by Antioquia and Sumapaz (with close to 17% each), and the indicators of Nariño and Putumayo of Pastos had the least (with only 7%).

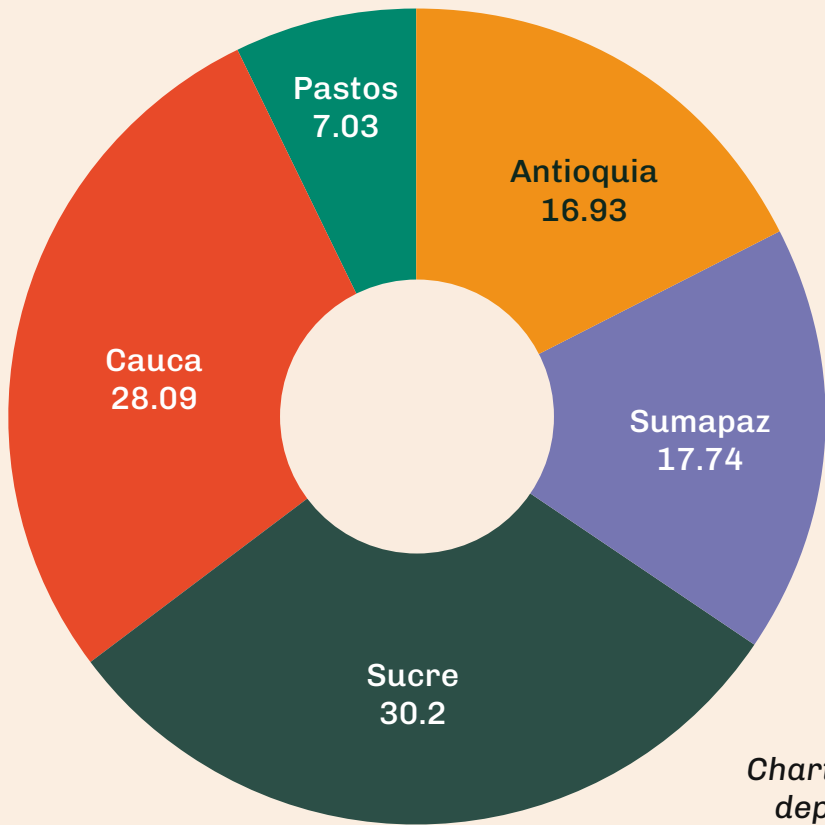


Chart 2: Indicators per department/region

We also found this differentiated weight in the municipalities and even communities, which is why it is important to be cautious when reading the localized analyses. An example is Sincelejo, with close to 15% of the total indicators collected in Colombia, and collected in five communities. This contrasts the municipality of San Antonio de Palmito, in the same region, where we only worked in one community and we collected 3.43% of the total indicators. The percentages per municipality are included in **Chart 3**.

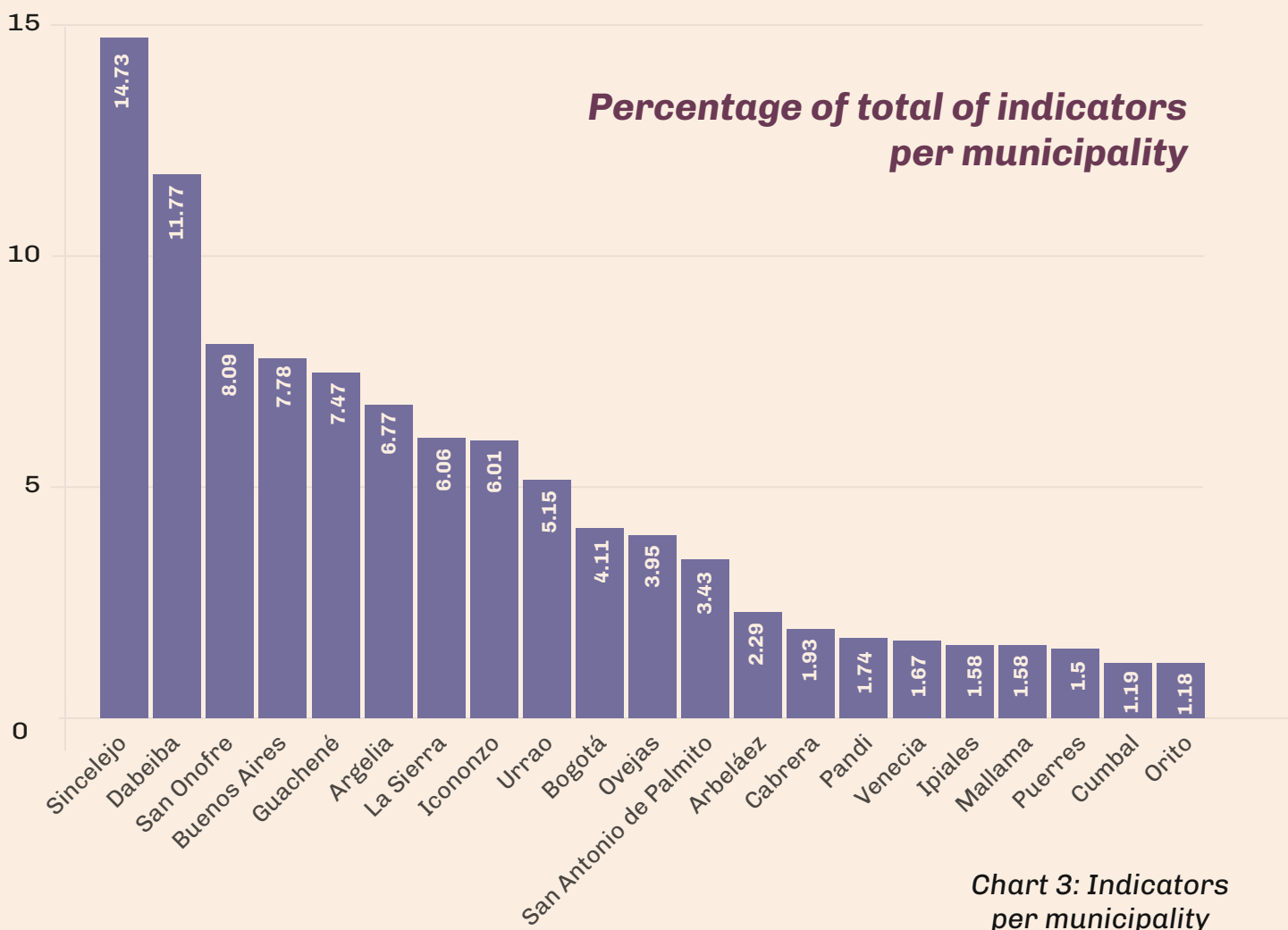


Chart 3: Indicators per municipality

Considering this universe of indicators, we provide a general outlook of the perceptions of peace that emerge based on the coding of each indicator. We will, therefore, briefly describe how EPI codes.

3.1 How do we code?

The coding process is the basis for the analysis within the EPI methodology. This systematization process consists of assigning one or more codes to each indicator to then group them and classify them in everyday language. This allows us to analyze the distribution and relation between the indicators in each community, but also between communities, regions, and/or countries in a bottom-up process.

For the coding process, we use our book of codes which is divided into three levels from the most general to the most specific: dimensions, categories, subcategories. Using an inductive vision, we begin in very broad subcategories, which is narrowed down into categories, ending with the five dimensions that group all concepts. **Chart 4** shows the meeting point of the inductive and deductive process. This makes it possible to identify similarities and differences between different places or groups.

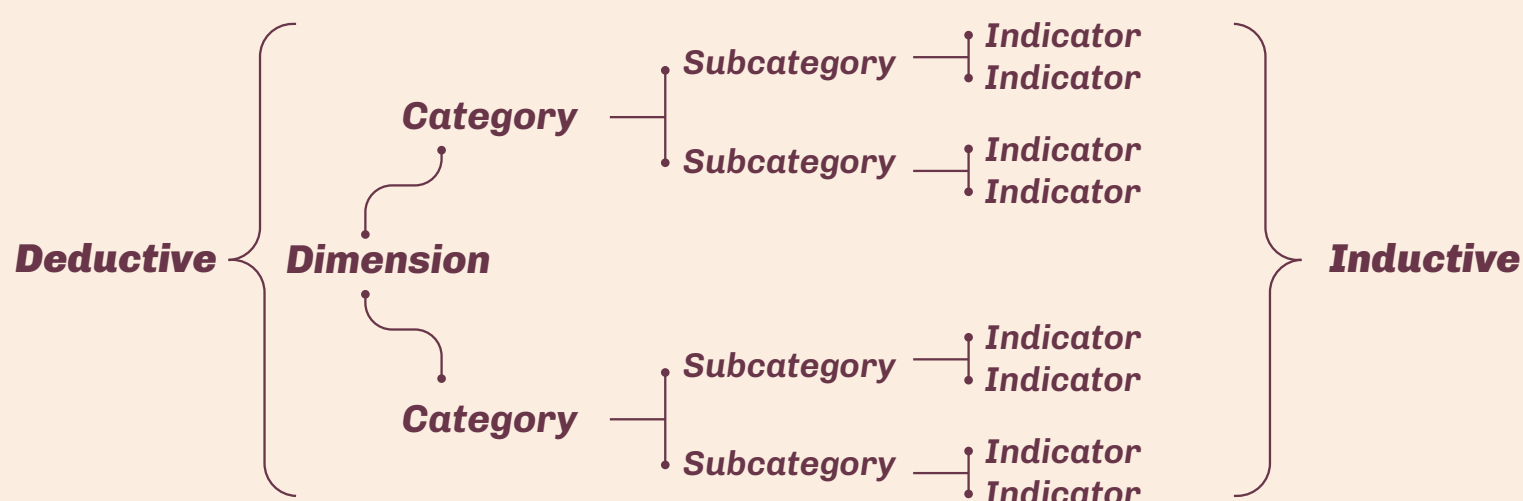


Chart 4: Coding process

The five dimensions are the same in other EPI projects around the world, and they reflect general topics where we can see a certain change related to peace, or to imagine a desired scenario that is projected as peace. These dimensions are: Violence and Safety, which refers to the perceptions regarding actors and violent situations; addressing the past, where the transitional justice or similar processes are addressed; Exercises of Citizenship, which refers to the exercise of rights and the relation to the State; Social Cohesion, which alludes to cultural practices that reproduce communal life; and living conditions, which refers to the productive activities that reproduce material life.



Below, an example of indicators for each dimension.



Addressing the past

Former combatants pay their crimes with projects for victims
Camparrusia / Dabeiba / Antioquia



Exercises of citizenship

The Guardia Cimarrona exercises control to ensure outsiders do not enter the community
San Miguel / Buenos Aires / Cauca



Social cohesion

People make the traditional soup sancocho in the river
La Primavera / Argelia / Cauca



Violence and safety

People in the communities can sleep in their pajamas
San José de Guatimbol / Icononzo / Sumapaz




Living conditions



There are second tier hospitals in San Onofre
San Onofre / Sucre

The categories and subcategories are shared in a single code book for Colombia, although each community has its own set of indicators that are exclusive of their specific context and social dynamic. In the following table, we have included the code book for Colombia, shared by all projects we mentioned in the descriptive section of the work of EPI. However, for specific analyses, in certain cases we conducted the coding process that corresponded to the specific analytical frameworks.



CODE BOOK FOR COLOMBIA

Dimension	Category	Subcategory
<div> Violence and safety</div>	Social control by armed actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social control by armed actors
	Armed actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Army• Police• Guerilla• Paramilitarism• Gangs• Drug trafficking cartels• Dissidents
	Victimizing acts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forced disappearance• Forced displacement• Sexual violence• Gender-based violence• Threats• Anti-personnel landmines• Loss of goods or theft• Extrajudicial executions• Judicial setups• Forced recruitment• Selective murders• Confinement and food blockade• Extortion
	Calm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feelings and emotions• Practice• Freedom of movement

Dimension	Category	Subcategory
<div></div> <div>Addressing the past</div>	Reparation for victims	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land restitution• Individual reparations• Collective reparations• Rural development
	Return	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Return
	Reintegration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic• Social• Family• Political
	Historic memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education/dissemination• Memory• Clarification
	Justice in transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Punitive justice• Restorative justice
<div></div> <div>Exercises of citizenship</div>	Actions of local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community action boards• Mayor’s Office/Regional Government Office• Indigenous councils/ community council• State political participation• Social leaders• Indigenous/cimarrona/rural guard• Social organizations
	Recognition and dignity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognition and dignity
	State compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State compliance• Distribution of State policies• Corruption/political patronage
	Justice dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Punitive justice• Restorative justice• Customary or ethnic justice• Informal community justice

Dimension	Category	Subcategory
 Social cohesion	Stigmatization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prejudice associated with the post-agreement• Prejudice associated with the dynamics of war• Prejudice in everyday relations
	Everyday conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family conflicts• Neighborhood conflicts• Gossip• School conflicts
	Social fabric	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community works• Non-ethnic cultural and sports practices• Cosmvision, identity, and ethnic practices• Family dynamics
	Age groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth• Children• Elders• Intergenerational relations
	Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender norms• Gender equality• Prostitution
	Other actors/ community relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NGOs/community relation• International Organizations/ community relations• Private actors/community relation• Relation with other communities and outsiders
	Ethnic relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inter-ethnic conflicts• Inter-ethnic integration• Exclusion/discrimination

Dimension	Category	Subcategory
 Living conditions	Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public services• Housing• Public works
	Means of production	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agricultural production• Commerce, tourism, and other services• Employment• Financial services• Craftwork
	Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Titles• Distribution• Collective territories
	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental health• Consumption of drugs and alcohol• Sexual and reproductive health• Health service provision
	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools• Technical and university education• Ethno-education
	Illegal economies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Illicit crops• Drug trafficking• Mining• Deforestation
	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water• Trash• Forests and green areas

Every indicator collected was submitted to two rounds of coding by at least two people from the EPI team. As previously mentioned, because indicators often encompass multiple conceptual categories, we assign up to two codes to each indicator. We then collectively analyze and resolve the discrepancies between the codes to establish a final version.

An example is useful in this case to give the issue clarity. In the indigenous community of Las Huertas in Sincelejo, Sucre, when a group of women were asked about a peace indicator in their community, they answered: **There are kitchen gardens.** This indicator was coded in the subcategory of Agricultural Production, which is part of the category Means of Production and, at the same time, part of the dimension Living Conditions. Likewise, this indicator also appeared in the reservations of Mallama, Pastos, and Panal de Nariño, and in conversations in Argelia and La Sierra (Cauca), and in Venecia (Sumapaz). Peace is the existence of kitchen gardens, which we classified as Agricultural Production. In any case, the rationale used by our researches is based on the experience expressed by the communities.

One example of an indicator that we classified with two codes is from the community of San Miguel, in the municipality of Buenos Aires in northern Cauca. The community shared that peace exists when **there are collective efforts to fix the roads.** In this case, we coded it as Community Work, which is a subcategory that is part of the category Social Fabric that is part of the dimension Social Cohesion. Likewise, we considered that it also spoke about the subcategory Public Works, which is classified in the category Infrastructure in the dimension Living Conditions. Therefore, this peace indicator appears at the intersection of Community Work and Public Works. However, if understood in a more abstract and general manner, it is also at the junction between Social Cohesion and Living Conditions. This indicator was not exclusive of this community; it also appeared in the communities of San Francisco and Palo Blanco (municipality of Buenos Aires), in Argelia (Cauca), and in Yopal (Sumapaz).

3.2 General assessment: trends of dimensions and categories

The result of coding all indicators indicates a trend where, in general, the perceptions of peace in Colombia are grouped mainly into the dimensions of Social Cohesion with 35.17%, Living Conditions with 28.4%, and Exercises of Citizenship with 16.51%. The remaining 20% consist of the indicators associated with Violence and Safety (13.26%) and issues centered on Addressing the Past (6.66%). To delve further into the composition of the dimensions, **The Code book for Colombia** contains the most common categories within the indicators in each one of the dimensions to which they belong.

The five most coded categories (that is, the analysis level immediately below the dimension) are those referring to: Social Fabric (16.82%), Means of Production (8.51%), Actions of Local Authorities (8.01%), State Compliance (7.09%), and Infrastructure (6.46%). The next five categories are Everyday Conflicts (6.35%); Age Groups, which refers to intergenerational relations (5.73%); Education (5.11%); Health (4.56%); and Armed Actors, in other words, indicators referring to their presence or actions (4.13%).



Chart 5: Most frequent categories by dimension
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/18652455/>

An aspect that stands out is that—both in the analysis based on the aggregated dimensions or the more specific one based on the categories—the peace processes tied to a cease fire or political and legal arrangements do not appear on the top of the concepts of peace.

Understanding some of these categories makes more sense by indicating certain indicators associated with them (in the section, we do not repeat categories for which we included examples in the previous section).

Table 2: Examples of indicators from the most frequent categories

Category	Indicator	Source municipalities
Actions of local authorities	The community protests	Sincelejo, Guachené, San Onofre, Icononzo, Arbeláez
State compliance	The State has projects in the community	Dabeiba, Urrao, Argelia, La Sierra, Guachené, Buenos Aires, Bogotá, Venecia, Cabrera, Pandi, Ovejas, Sincelejo, Ipiales, Mallama, Orito, San Antonio de Palmito
Everyday conflicts	The State does not prevent parents from disciplining their children with violence	La Sierra, Mallama, Guachené, Ovejas
Age groups	People from different generations help each other	Mallama, San Onofre, La Sierra, Guachené
Education	There is a university in the municipality	La Sierra, Argelia, San Onofre, Sincelejo, Ovejas, Bogotá, Venecia
Health	There is a tier 2 hospital or higher	Argelia, La Sierra, Orito, Ovejas, San Onofre, San Antonio de Palmito
Armed actors	Requesting permission from armed groups to move around is not necessary	Urrao, Argelia, Icononzo, San Onofre,

Another way to understand what was coded the most is by explaining the subcategories (the next level of disaggregation) in detail. We, therefore, introduce the five most coded subcategories, which total approximately 47% of the collected indicators. As evident in **Chart 6**, for the Social Fabric category, 6.64% of the total are within Cultural and Sports Practices and 5.73% in Social Cohesion. That means that the rest are in the subcategories of Community Work (3.4%), Family Dynamics, and Social Leaders. For Means of Production, two subcategories also

gather the majority of the codes; the main ones are Livelihood (3%) and Agricultural Production (2.7%). The rest of the indicators fall within the subcategories of Employment; Craftwork; Commerce, tourism, and other services; and Financial services.

An example of an indicator of Cultural and Sports Practices (sub-category under the category of Social Fabric) comes from Betania, a township in locality 20 in Bogotá: **The Day of the Farmer is celebrated every year.** The celebration is a tradition that strengthens the social cohesion and cultural identity of the community. It gathers rural families around cultural and recreational activities that underscore their fundamental role in producing food, caring for the territory, and reproducing the rural way of life. Maintaining this celebration in a predictable manner annually is a sign of peace.

For the Actions of Local Authorities, the indicators are spread between categories that allude to the types of local authority: Mayor's Office/Regional Government Office (1.81%), indigenous councils/community council (1.61%), and social organizations (1.6%). The rest is spread between the indigenous/cimarrona/rural guard, community action boards, social leaders (1.33%), and state political participation (0.97%).

For Infrastructure (a category within the dimension Living Conditions), a few stand out: Public Works (3.5%); Public Services (1.21%), where the majority of this category are grouped; other forms of infrastructure (1.21%); and Housing (0.55%).

An indicator of Public Works in Ovejas, Sucre is: **There is street lighting.** Access to this public service is tied to a desire for peace because it facilitates nighttime mobility and it provides a sense of security.

Finally, the category of Armed Actors is the 10th most coded, with 4.13%. It is smaller compared to the others, although it is, without a doubt, still an aspect of concern and of conceptions of peace of the communities. An example indicator of this category: **There are no illegal armed actors.** This indicator was proposed in Icononzo, Arbeláez, Venecia, Pandi, Argelia, La Sierra, Guachené, Dabeiba, Sincelejo, San Onofre, San Antonio de Palmito, Puerres, and Orito. In the following sections, where we will talk about regions and actors, we will also include specific examples of these categories.

Five most coded categories

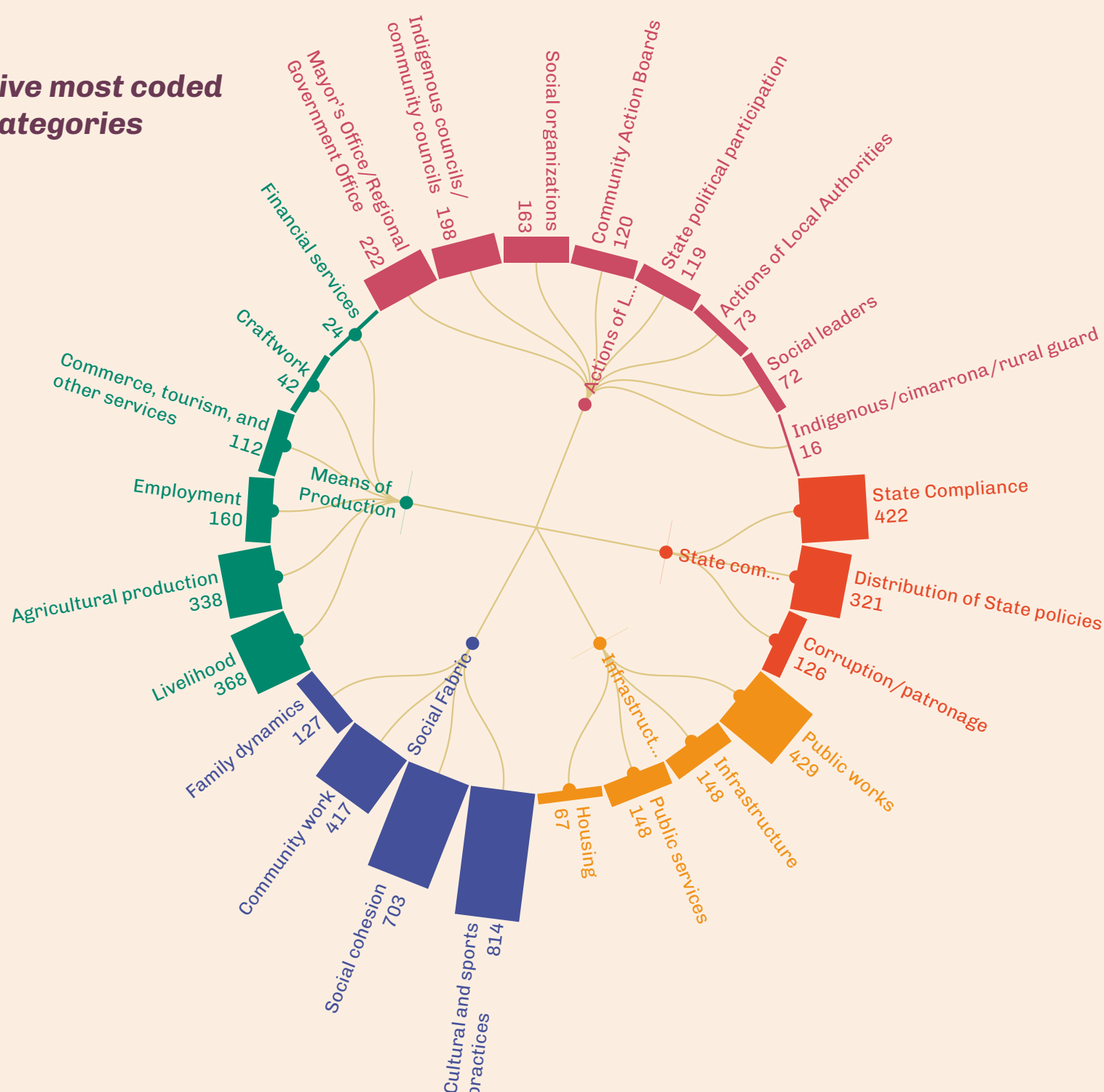


Chart 6: Most frequent subcategories within the most frequent categories
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/19729685/>

As we can see after reviewing the weight of dimensions and categories, peace is strongly associated with issues of Social Cohesion and Living Conditions, less so with issues of Violence and Safety, and even less so with issues related to Addressing the Past. In third place among dimensions, we find indicators related to ways of managing public affairs. At EPI, we called this Exercises of Citizenship. A relevant aspect is the fact that Social Fabric is the most coded category, which can be interpreted as a priority to build peace grounded in the strengthening communities. Another relevant aspect is that the subcategory Cultural and Sports Practices is the most frequently coded overall, not just within the Social Fabric dimension to which it belongs. This suggests a conception associated with a vibrant community life, with spaces for meeting, leisure, and fun where the ties of social solidarity are renewed. , not just within the Social Fabric dimension to which it belongs. This idea is reinforced when analyzing the weight of other subcategories in the Social Cohesion dimension: Community Work and Neighborhood and

Everyday Conflicts. Almost 20% of the total indicators fall within these subcategories, describing the everyday life in community: work, management of human relations, spaces to renew solidarity and identity.

We have, once again, included the categories by percentage of indicators they group together. This allows us to refine the ideas we introduced, and also to seek observations by departmental/regional contexts that do not necessarily follow the general trends.

Table 3: Indicators per category weight in Colombia

Social fabric	16.82%
Means of production	8.51%
Actions of local authorities	8.01%
State compliance	7.09%
Infrastructure	6.46%
Everyday conflicts	6.35%
Age groups	5.73%
Education	5.11%
Health	4.56%
Armed actors	4.13%
Calm	4.00%
Victimizing acts	3.91%
Gender	2.48%
Private actors/ community relation	2.43%
Environment	2.41%
Reparation for victims	2.14%
Reintegration	1.70%
Historic memory	1.50%
Social control by armed actors	1.22%
Justice in transition	1.18%
Stigmatization	1.13%
Community justice dynamics	0.85%
Illegal economies	0.77%
Lands	0.58%
Recognition and dignity	0.56%
Ethnic relations	0.23%
Return	0.14%

3.3 Comparison of perceptions of peace between regions

Percentage by dimension per region

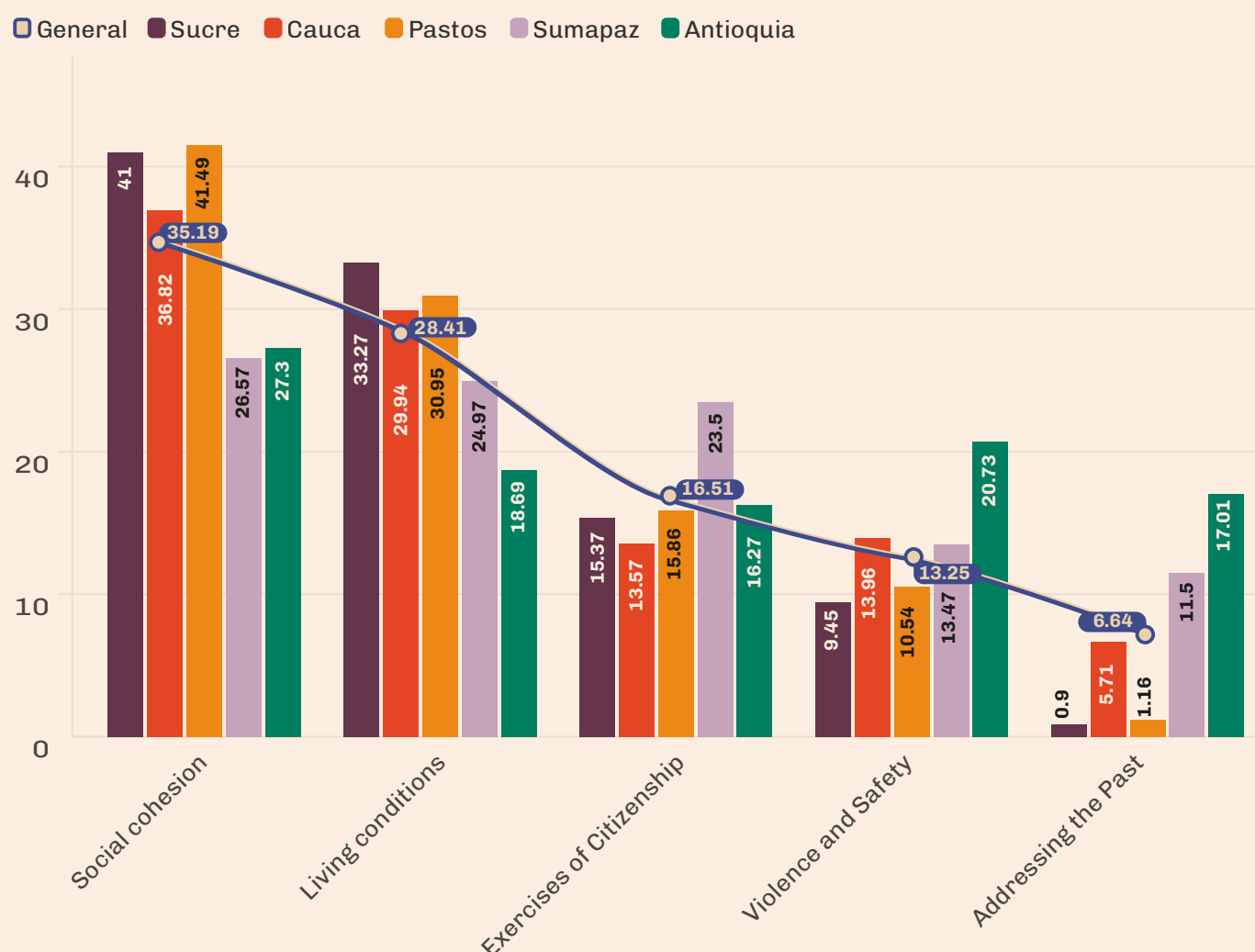


Chart 7: Variations in the peace content between departments/regions based on the dimensions
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/19751877/>

After analyzing the dimensions by departments/regions, we confirmed the leadership of the Social Cohesion dimension, followed by Living Conditions. The only exception is Antioquia, where Violence and Safety take second place, leaving Living Conditions in third place. This is a significant fact regarding the persistence of perceptions of insecurity. In other regions, third place varies: for Sucre, Sumapaz, and Pastos, it is Exercises of Citizenship, while for Cauca, it is Violence and Safety. Lower down on the list, Antioquia continues to have outstanding results considering that the Addressing the Past dimension stands in fourth place. This differs to other regions where it is in last place.

We can illustrate the exception of Antioquia with an indicator from the Violence and Safety dimension, collected in La Balsita, a township of Dabeiba which is recognized as a subject of collective reparation by the UARIV: **People in the community die from old age**. La Balista has experienced serious acts of violence, including massacres, forced displacement, and the destruction of houses. The experience of going

about life normally, where death occurs because of natural causes, is an indicator of improvement. However, it takes place within a dimension that, for other regions, is less urgent.

The mentioned indicator was classified in the Calm category, which appears in 7.45% of indicators in Antioquia. Other significant categories in the department: Armed Actors (6.19%), Reparation for Victims (6.09%), and Victimizing Acts (5.09%). If we grouped the dimensions in a different way to reflect the reality of Antioquia, we could join all categories related to the consequences of violence and add the category of State Compliance, to obtain a dimension with significant weight: 30%. Indeed, in Dabeiba and Urrao, we heard the indicator **“The Victims’ Unit prioritizes people who are more vulnerable”**.¹ This combination by relevance of indicators related to the consequences of the conflict, the harm, and reparation is consistent with a department such as Antioquia, a department with the most victims registered in the Victims’ Registry with 1,935,322 people² and where the presence of armed actors continues.

For the Department of Cauca, the category of Social Fabric (19.61%) is followed by Means of Production (9.85%), where the subcategory of Agricultural Production (4.26%) stands out. In this case, the dimensions of Exercises of Citizenship and Violence and Safety are almost the same; both of them reach close to 30% of the total indicators. Two indicators collected in the department illustrate the connection between both dimensions and their relevance in the community concepts of peace: **Social leaders are not murdered** and **The Cimarrona Guard protects against armed actors**.

We can also observe the weight of the Exercises of Citizenship in the region of Sumapaz: the categories of State Compliance gather 7.28% of the indicators and the Actions of Local Authorities 13.25%. In fact, this is the territory where these indicators are the most frequent. The subcategories are also revealing: Mayor’s Office/Regional Government Office (5.69%) and processes associated with the way in which the Community Action Boards (CAB) organize (3.0%), among others. An indicator appearing in various communities of Sumapaz is **The community participates in the CAB activities** which, in different versions, provides specifics to focus on the participation of young people and women.

In Sumapaz, the sixth category with the most indicators is Armed Actors (6.14%) and the tenth is Reintegration (3.6%). Both address the scars of the conflict, and are expressed through particularly expressive indicators, such as: **People in the communities can sleep in their pajamas**. This was collected in San José de Guatimbol, a settlement of

Icononzo. In this region, with a past afflicted by serious violence, night was not synonymous of rest, but of uncertainty and warning: community members went to bed dressed allowing them to react quickly should an emergency arise. Today, normalcy is expressed with the use of a garment characteristic of calm.

Sucre gives significant importance to Infrastructure, where it is second in terms of importance (9.32%), followed by Means of Production (9.32%). This practical attention is expressed in an indicator unanimously repeated in San Onofre, Ovejas, San Antonio de Palmito, and in four communities of Sincelejo: **roads are paved**. Many of these indicators speak to the fact that roads enable agricultural, commercial, and tourist activities: contact with others, a characteristic of safety. In Sucre, the category that groups the most indicators is Social Fabric with 21.48%, a very high frequency. Within this, half of the indicators correspond to Cultural and Sports Practices: peace creates a balance between attention to the world of work and production, but also the cultural and recreational spaces.

The categories of Everyday Conflicts (8.73%) and Actions of Local Authorities (8.04%) are significant in the community of Pastos, with positions in the five most named categories. In this region, the dimension of Social Cohesion stands out. It groups 41.49% of indicators which, together with the Living Conditions category, reaches 72.44%: a clear illustration of a concept of peace that can be summarized in the prevalence of notions that create a balance between the intensity of community ties and the productive experience.

3.4 Perceptions of peace by types of actors

In this section, we explore the concepts of peace, first, based on the demographic categories used in the process to develop indicators. Second, based on the categories used in the self-recognition of community life: rural communities, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, and peace signatories.

To understand the concepts based on the demographic perspective, remember that in each community, we divided the generation of indicators between focus groups by gender (adult women and men, in separate groups) and age (young people in an integrated group).

The following chart shows the most frequent categories for each population group, where the number is the percentage of the total indicators coded for each population group. The horizontal total does not add up to 100% because it only considers the most frequent categories.

Categories by population

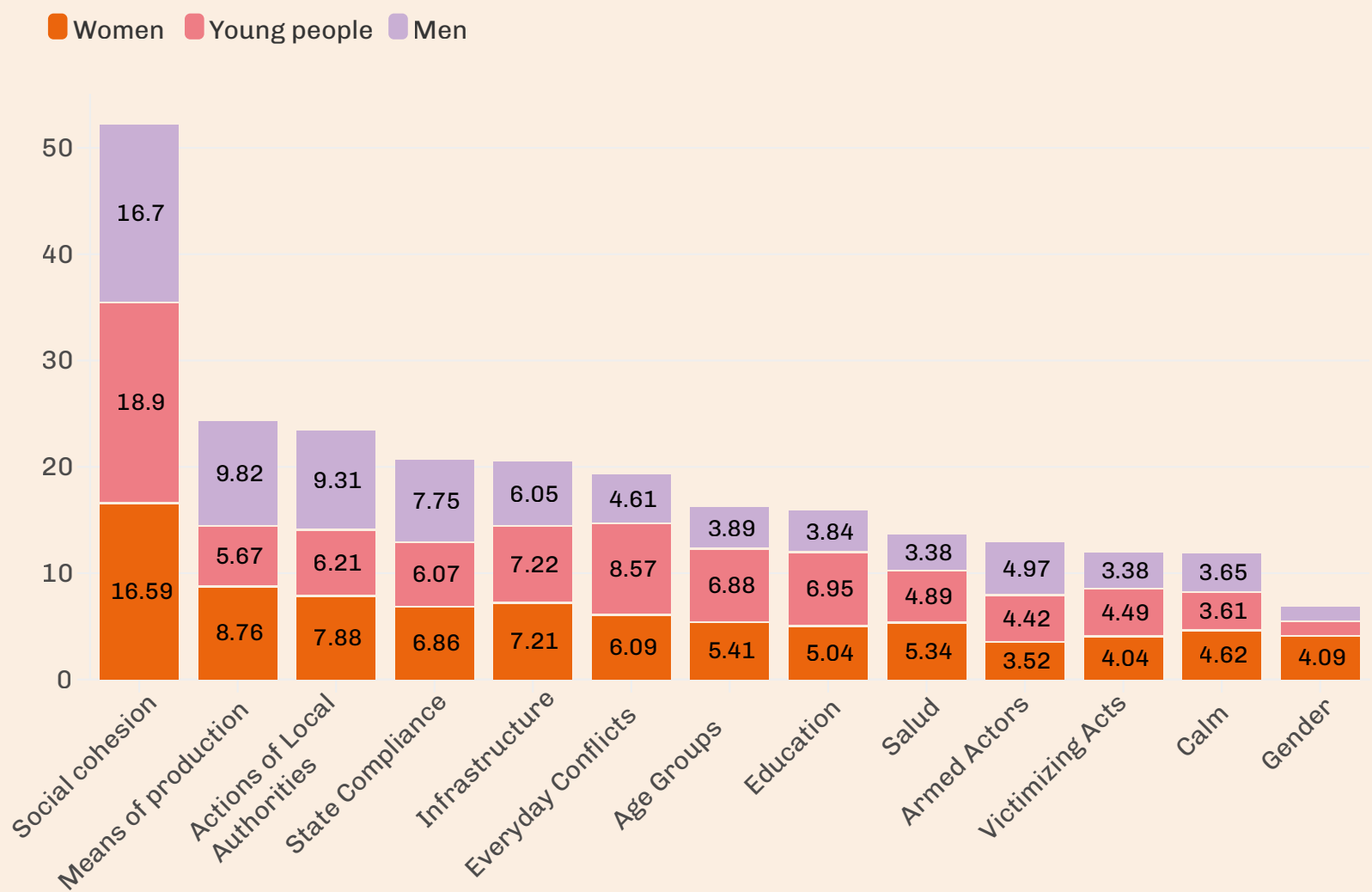


Chart 8: Variation of the peace content for each population group based on the weight of the categories
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20608963/>

For men and women, the top five is shared by the categories of Social Cohesion, Means of Production, Actions of Local Authorities, Infrastructure, and State Compliance. The only difference lies in the categories in fourth and fifth place, where Infrastructure is fourth for women, and Actions of Local Authorities fourth for men.

In contrast, there is an interesting difference for young people: for them, although Social Cohesion is also the most important, the second most important is Everyday Conflicts. This category appears in sixth place for women and seventh for men. Next comes Infrastructure, as in the other two groups, but in third place—followed by two categories that do not appear in the top five of the other two groups. Education and Age groups³. To make this clear, below we included a diagram with the five most coded categories for each population group.

Hierarchy of categories by population

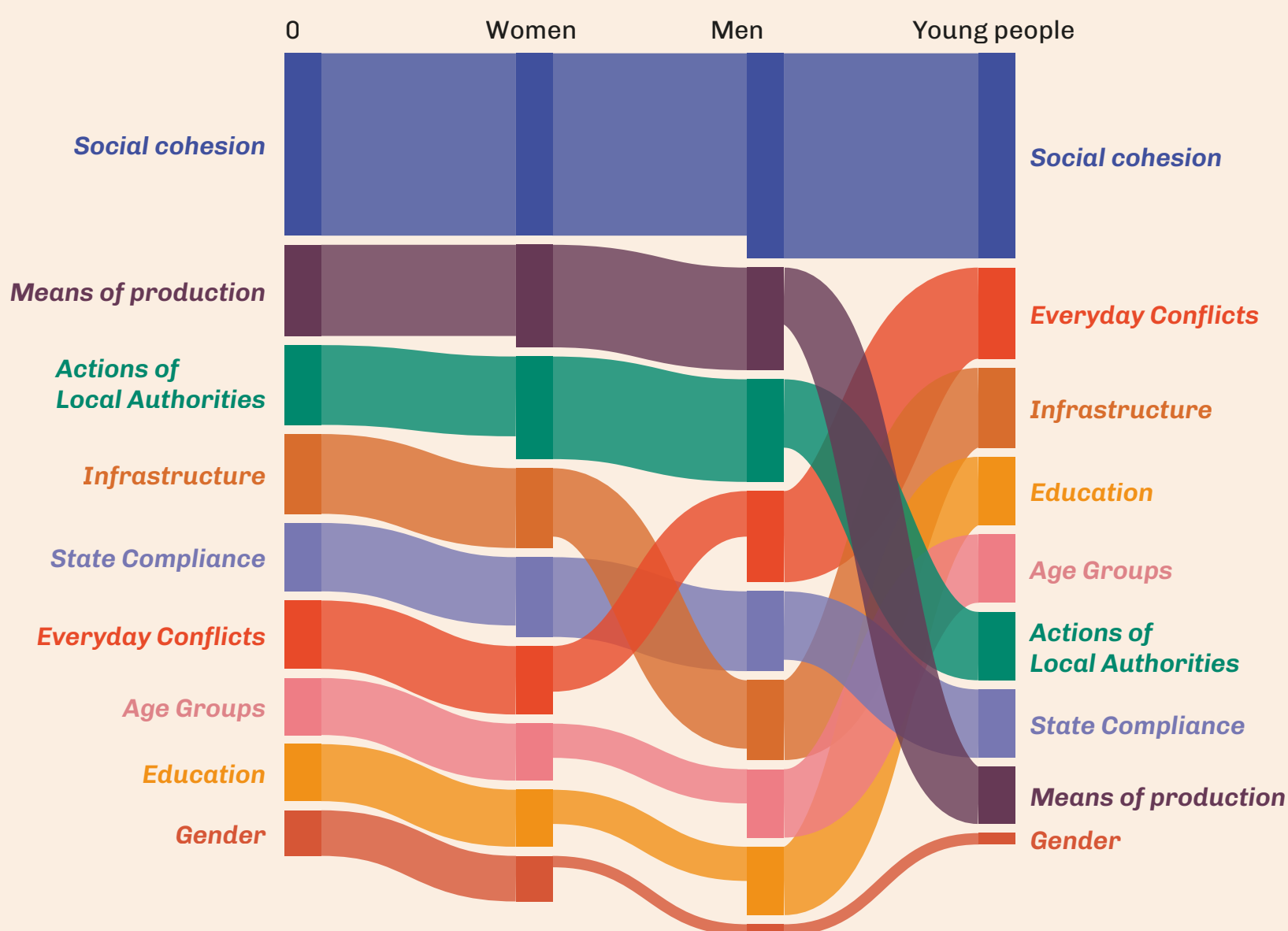


Chart 9: Variation of the peace content by population group based on the weight of the categories

<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20749501/>

After the sixth place, differences become more noticeable. For women, the position is held by Everyday Conflicts, while for men the category is Armed Actors. The category for Everyday Conflicts for men is in seventh place, while for women, the category of Armed Actors is in thirteenth place.

In the previous Chart, we included the category of Gender, which alludes to the different perceptions regarding gender, even though it was not in the top 10. It was in 11th place for women, 19th for men, and 17th for young people. We highlighted this category because another way to see the contrasts is by analyzing the weight of importance of the categories in each population group.

In the **following chart**, we can observe the weight difference between men and women for the categories, in both groups for the adult population. In other words, of the people mentioning indicators in each category, how many are men and how many are women.

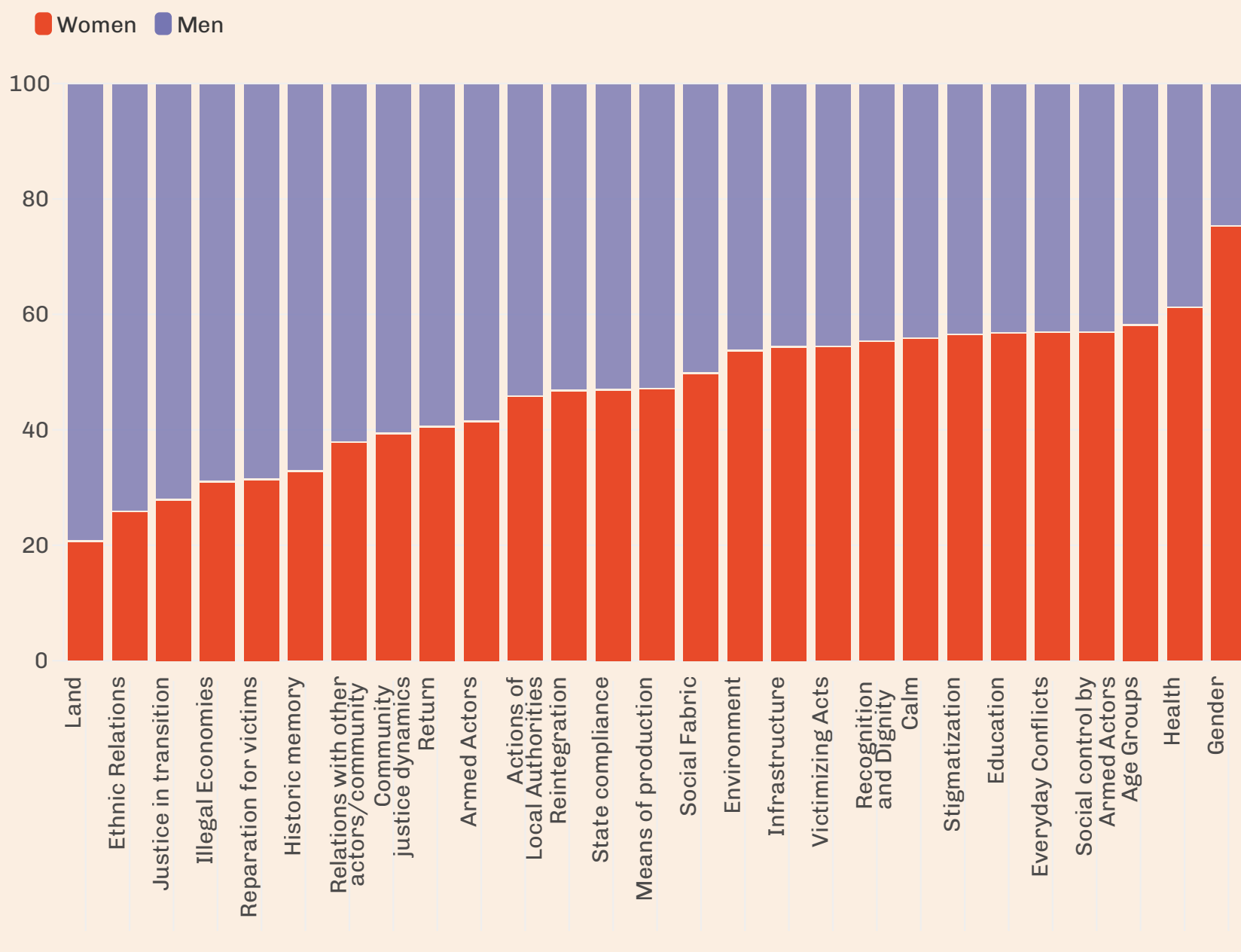


Chart 10: Variation of peace content Men vs Women based on category weight
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20609371/>

The chart does not reflect the absolute weight of each category. All of them, regardless of whether they are mentioned many times or very seldom mentioned, are grouped. The interesting issue here is, for each one, who mentions them. As a result, even though the Gender category is not in the top 10 of the most coded in general, it is the one most commonly mentioned by women. Likewise, the Land category is not very visible (appearing 22nd). However, 80% of the people who mentioned it were men.

Another characteristic that stands out is that more men mentioned categories that are part of Addressing the Past, including Transitional Justice, Reparation for Victims, Historic Memory. In contrast, more women mentioned Social Cohesion categories, such as Gender, Everyday Conflicts, and Living Conditions including Education and Health. Finally, another aspect to underscore is the fact that the categories of Means of Production, Social Fabric, Environment, and Infrastructure are equally mentioned by men and women.

Although we collected this information in the three population groups, we wanted to go a step further and analyze the concept of peace in four sociocultural groups with whom we worked: rural communities, indigenous people, Afro-Colombians, and peace signatories. The analysis can be seen below.

Number of indicators by actors and regions

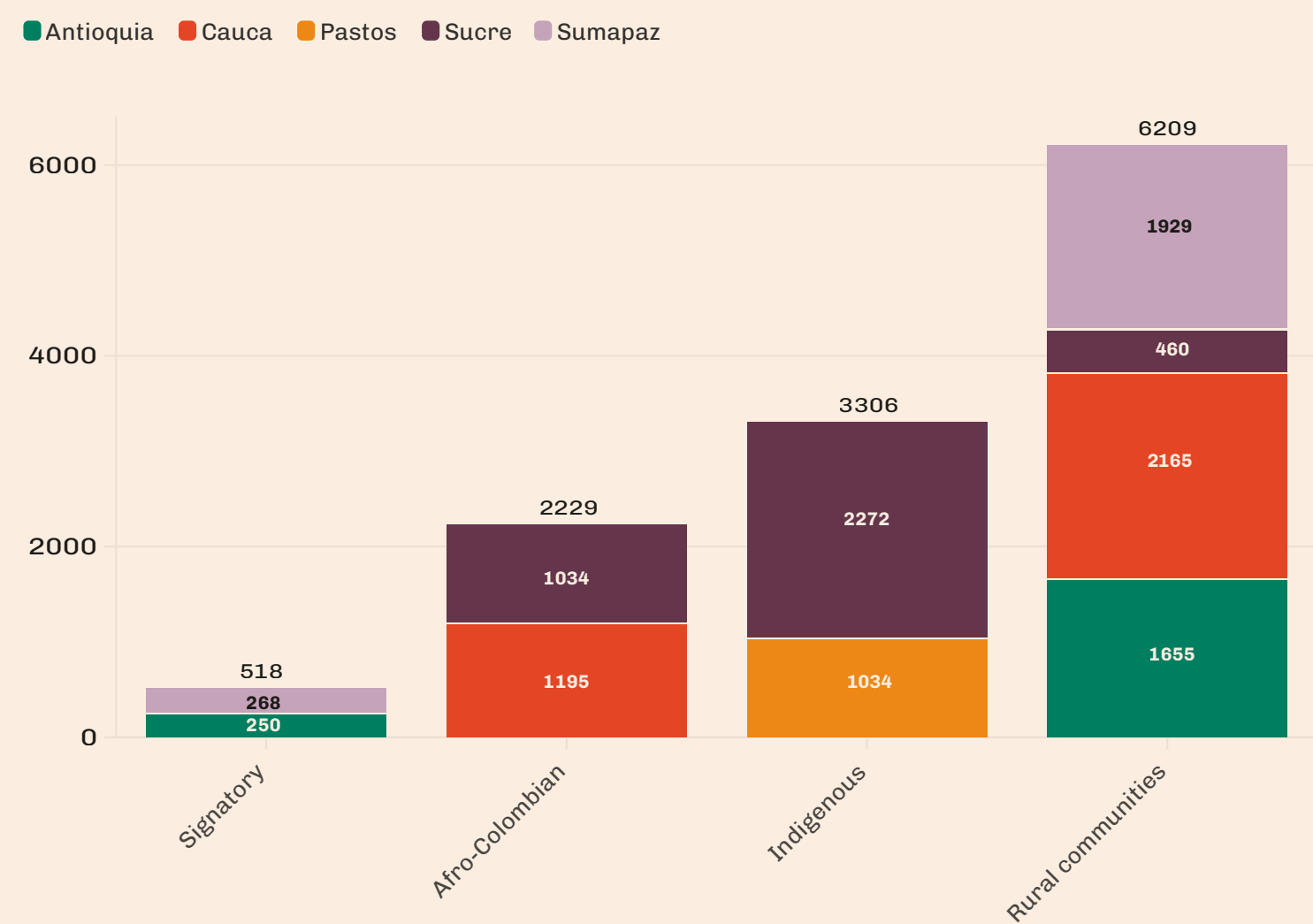


Chart 11: Number of indicators by actors and territory
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/19787839/>

Of the total indicators we collected in Colombia, half were from rural communities (50.64%), followed by indigenous communities (26.96%), Afro-Colombians (18.18%), and signatories of the peace process with the FARC in 2016 (4.22%). We can now review the trends in terms of dimensions for each one of those actors.

Percentage by dimension per actors

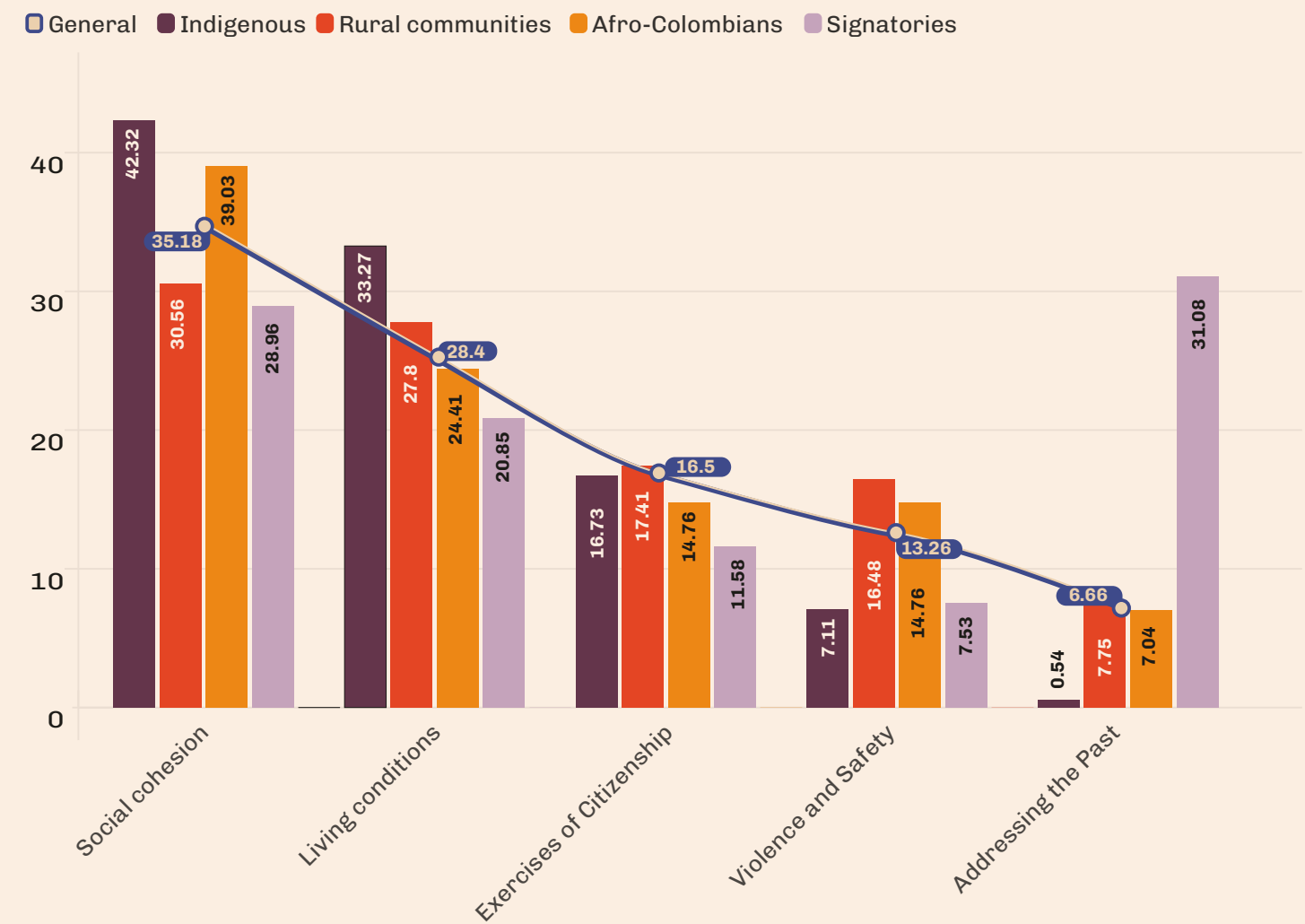


Chart 12: Variations in the peace content for actors based on the distribution of dimensions
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/19793856/>

The general trend for all actors is still the Social Cohesion category. However, an aspect that is noteworthy is the fact that, for indigenous communities, it is the highest, with 42.3% of the total. This also explains that, given the majority of indicators from indigenous communities in the sample are from Pastos (100%) and Sucre (60.33%), these two regions had the highest trend in this dimension.

For instance, the use of ancestral medicine (an indicator within the Social Cohesion dimension that is a constant aspect in the different territories), together with indicators associated with the harvest and use of medicinal plants (present in Ipiales; Orito; Tescual, from the Pastos area; Zenu councils in Sincelejo; and San Antonio de Palmito), and, in general, what they call ancestral customs themselves. An example is the indicator of Mallama: **There is a class in schools for reservation students regarding the use of customs and issues in the reservation.**

Another example is the one created in Sincelejo and in San Antonio de Palmito: **People eat ancestral food in the territories**. It is also worth highlighting that this dimension ranks highest for Afro-descendant communities as well, which underscores that, for ethnic communities, peace is strongly associated with cultural and social dynamics.

It is, therefore, no surprise that for indigenous communities the most important category is Social Fabric with 20.11% of the total. Within its subcategories, we find that those associated with cultural and sports practices surpass the others with 9.74%, which is where we find the aforementioned ancestral knowledge.

The second most important category is Means of Production, whose number of coded indicators is highest within indigenous sectors than for the rest of the actors, reaching 10.65% of the total. In terms of Agricultural Production, people in San Antonio de Palmito said: **native seeds are recovered and exchanged**. Further, that municipality and Sincelejo agreed on peace indicators associated with the fact that **cassava is gifted to neighbors**. Another aspect worth mentioning comes from Sucre where they identified over 45 indicators associated with craftwork production with Gynerium (**being able to harvest cane, knit with it, sell it...**). Further, in the region of Pastos, close to 50 indicators were associated with means of production (**being employed, productive trainings, harvest...**).

The category of Means of Production is very important for all groups: it is in second place of importance for indigenous people (10.65%) and Afro-Colombians (7.31%), and in third place of importance for rural communities (7.91%) and signatories (7.34%). Analyzing the subcategories sheds light on the fact that, for rural communities, the predominant subcategory is Agricultural Production, which is also important for indigenous communities and Afro-Colombians. Below, we include a **chart** detailing the subcategories of Means of Production and Infrastructure.

For rural communities, Means of Production (a category within the Living Conditions dimension) is the most important. However, after analyzing the five dimensions, there is a distribution with less variation compared to other groups. As such, rural communities distribute a significant number of indicators in the dimensions of Exercises of Citizenship, and Violence and Safety. Two indicators that tie these two dimensions are: **People in the communities are not threatened because of their social work** (created in Sumapaz) and **The Army does not abuse or humiliate rural communities because of false accusations of being guerilla members** (created in Antioquia).

The answers of the signatories of the peace agreement contain notable differences compared to the rest. This is the only group where the

Subcategories of Means of Production and Infrastructure

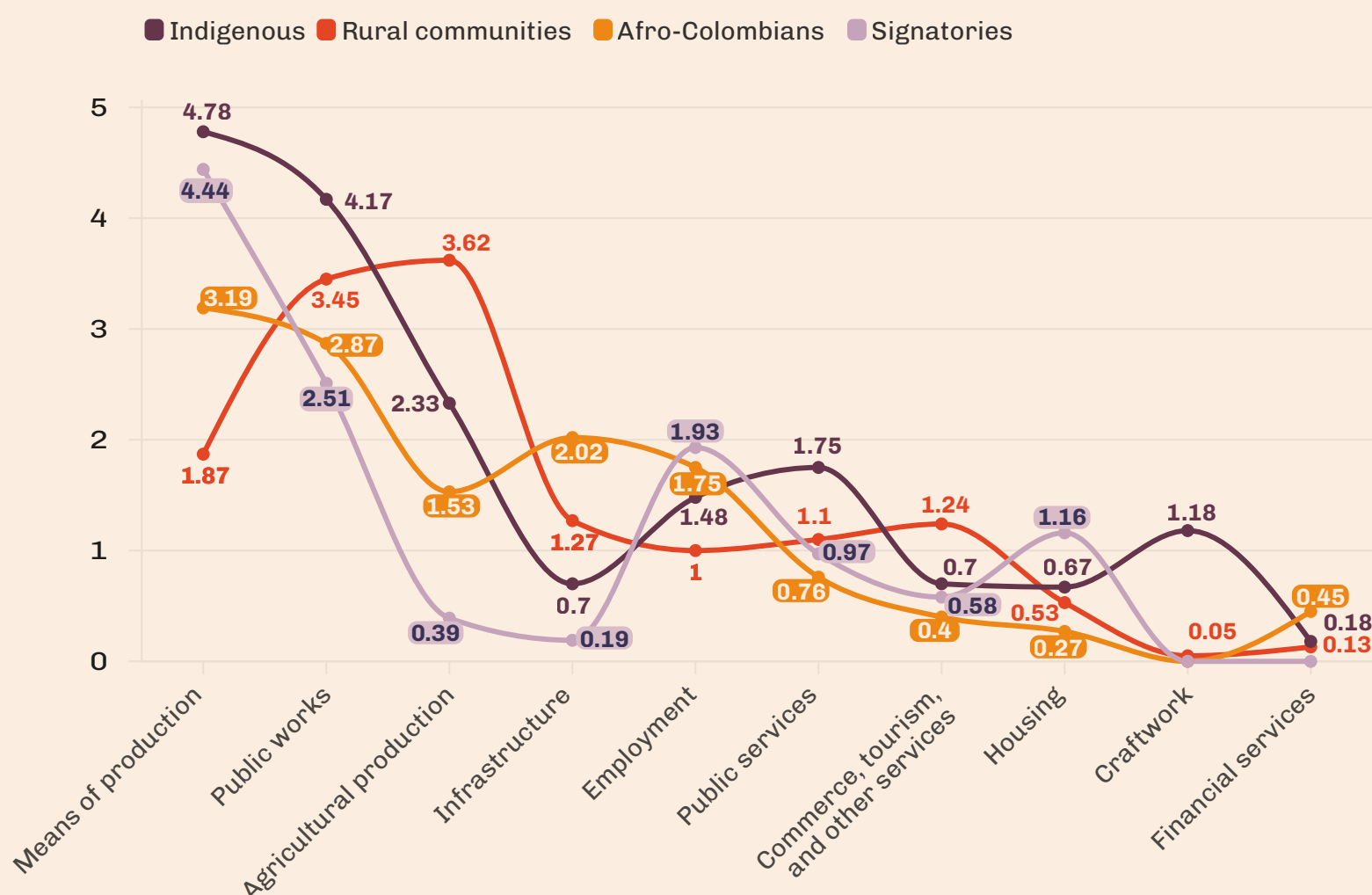


Chart 13: Variation in the categories of Means of production and Infrastructure by actors
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/19835489/>

Social Cohesion dimension is not in first place, but where Addressing the Past is with 31.08%. The latter is the lowest in the other groups. Of course, signatories are directly involved with politically and legally necessary transitional justice processes for their accountability to the State. Within Addressing the Past, the category of Reintegration is the most important with 18.73%, followed by Reparations for Victims with 4.83%. No other group has this similar weight. Other examples of indicators within Reintegration include: **Former combatants are not murdered after signing the peace agreement** (created in the AETCR of Sumapaz) or **Signatories do not abandon the space due a lack of opportunities** (created in Dabeiba). Indicators within Reparations for Victims include: **There are events with victims of the conflict** (in Dabeiba) or **Complicated procedures are not used as limitations for victims to demand their rights** (in Icononzo). These indicators are especially telling considering that they imply a will to resolve legal and political processes for everyone: signatories with an interest in reintegrating themselves into the communities, and other actors who have often been victimized. Signatories seem to understand that the process has to be successful for everyone, including former combatants and non-combatants, and people who caused harm and those who experienced it. In fact, for signatories, the weight of the category

of Justice is 4.83%, while it does not exceed 1.47% for the rest of the groups.

Another important category for signatories that is not important for the other actors is Relations with Other Actors. For signatories, this category represented 6.56%, while for indigenous people and rural communities, it does not surpass 2.16%, and for Afro-Colombians it is 3.59%.

Other significant categories are within the dimension of Exercises of Citizenship. Below, a comparison between actors.

Actions of Local Authorities and State Compliance

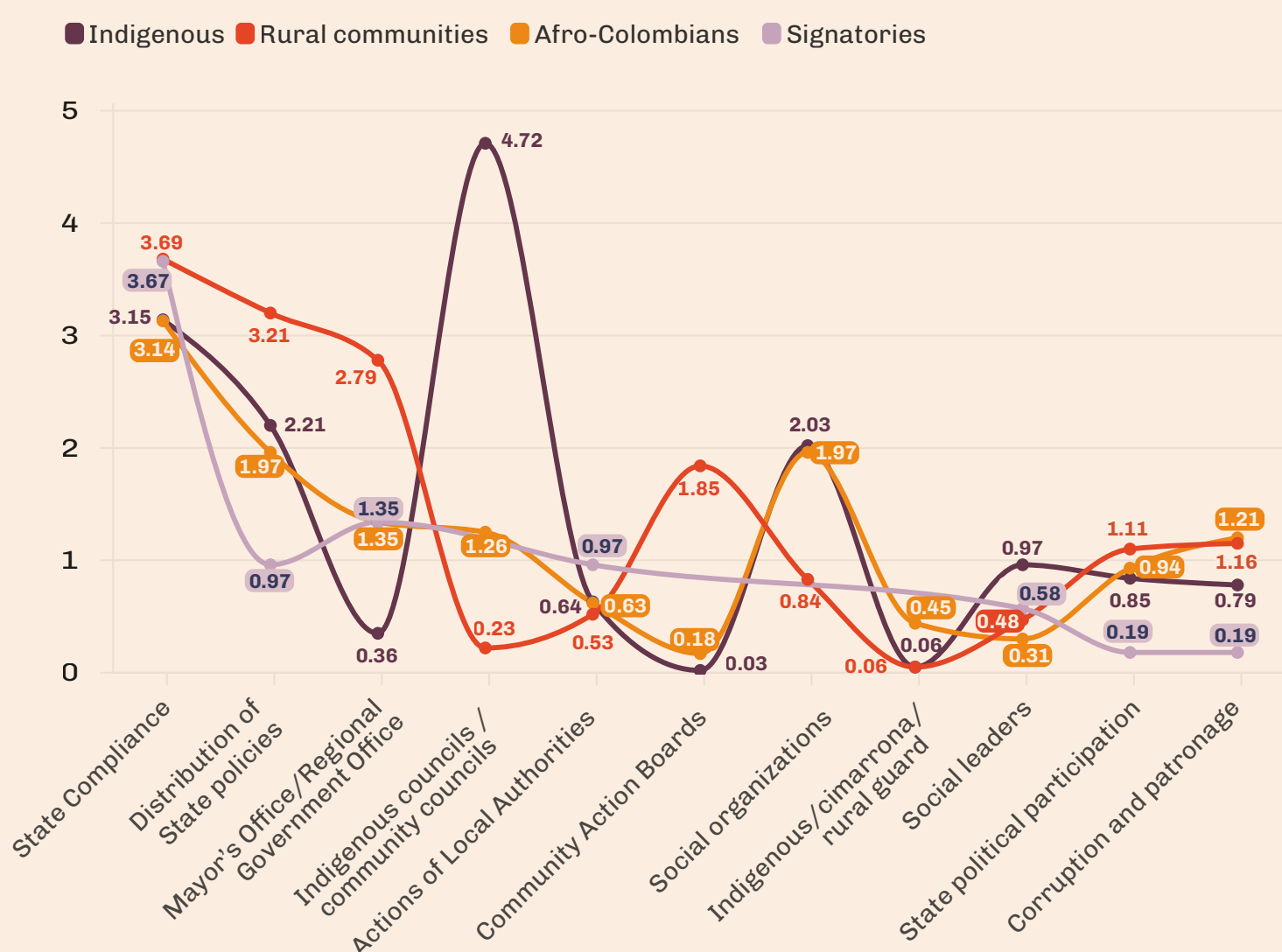


Chart 14: Variations of the Actions of Local Authorities and State Compliance categories by actors

<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/19980267/>

Evidently, despite differences in other aspects, every actor considers State Compliance to be important. In other words, whether the primary concern— as we have seen— is social cohesion and living conditions, or addressing the past, the role of the state as a guarantor, from whom coherence is expected, remains central.

An interesting difference lies in the fact that for signatories and rural communities, the Mayor's Offices and the Regional Government Offices receive a similar number of mentions, because of their role tying the

exercise of power with living conditions. For instance, an indicator appearing in both Sumapaz and Antioquia for rural communities is that the **Mayor's Office must employ equipment to fix the roads.**

For Afro-descendant communities and indigenous people, the role of social organizations and the governments themselves⁴ is crucial. A noteworthy aspect is the central role of the subcategory of Councils, where 4.72% of indicators of the indigenous communities are clustered. Both Sucre and Pastos mentioned the following: **Youth participate in council meetings.** This reveals the importance of the intergenerational transfer of forms of self-government.

For rural communities, in addition to local state institutions, the Community Action Boards play a crucial role. These are less important for indigenous people and Afro-Colombians, and not even mentioned by signatories. An example of an indicator where rural communities talk about their boards is: **The Community Action Boards lead the communities.**

3.5 Peace signatories, ETCR, and everyday reconciliation

The Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation (ETCR)⁵ were established after the signing of Peace Agreement in 2016 to facilitate the transition of former FARC-EP combatants to civil life. These spaces were created to provide peace signatories with technical training and education, while they moved forward in their socio-economic reintegration. In the ETCR, former combatants received support for productive projects, education, and employment opportunities, in addition to institutional support. They were originally envisioned as temporary. However, a few ETCR have become permanent settlements where opportunities arise, as well as tensions regarding the reconciliation with the communities affected by the conflict.

EPI created indicators in the ETCR Jacobo Arango in the settlement of Llano Grande in Dabeiba, and in the ETCR Antonio Nariño in the settlement of Fila de Icononzo. These spaces are located in predominantly rural communities, with relatively stable security conditions in relation to their continued presence in the area. They have similar realities and shared demands in terms of the compliance of the Peace

Agreement. They face difficult living conditions in terms of infrastructure, housing, employment, productive projects, and, in some case, regarding security threats. These spaces have become the setting to implement transitional and restorative justice.

The peace content for the community living in the ETCR is different than for the rest of the municipality where they are located. While the most important dimension for signatories and their families is Addressing the Past (as we have seen), for the communities in Dabeiba and Urrao, the most important is Social Cohesion. For them, Addressing the Past is relegated with the lowest percentage of indicators, as evident in the following chart.

Dimension of everyday peace

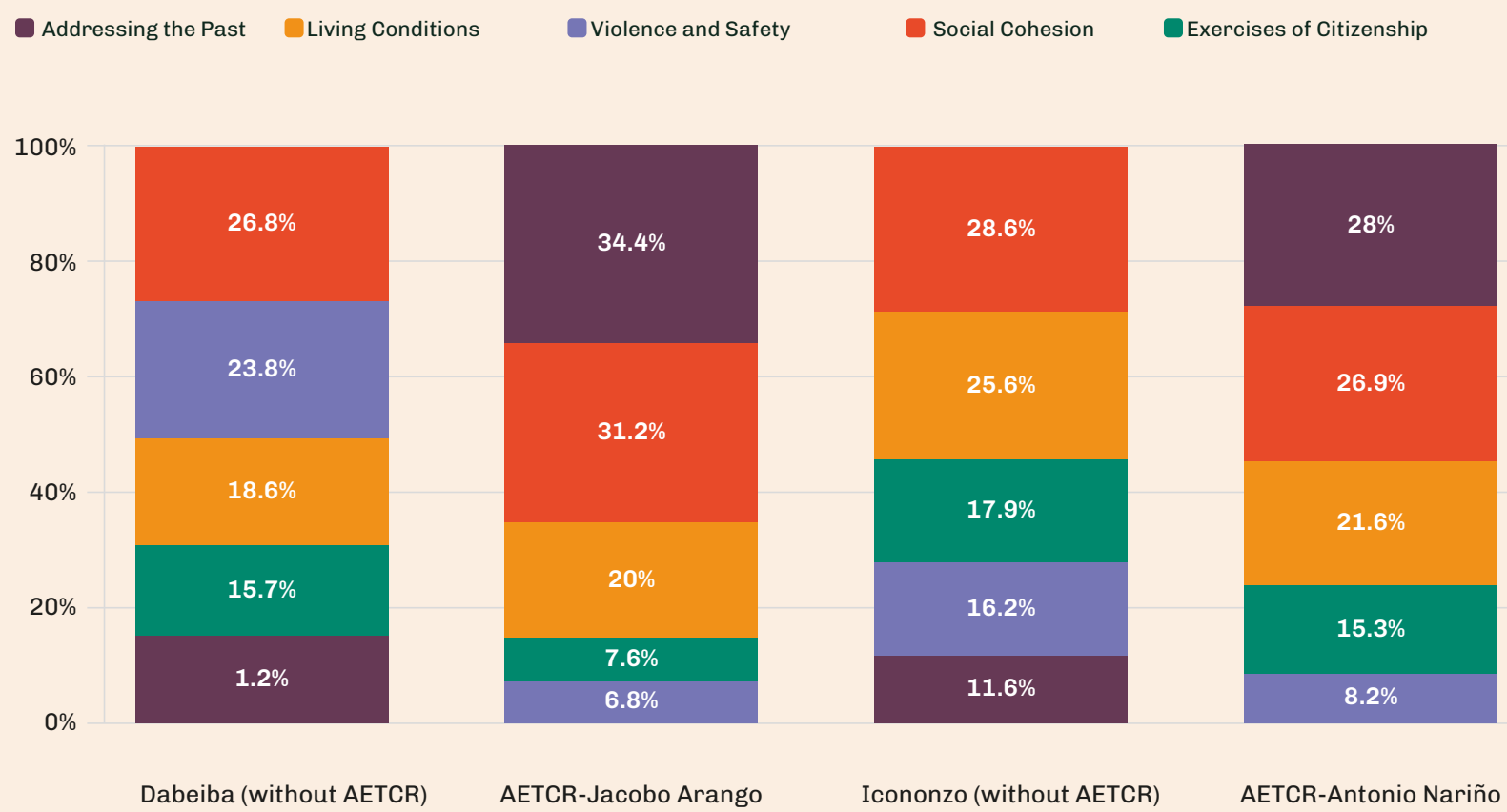


Chart 15: Variations in peace content for ETCR and municipalities where they are located
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20577015/>

After analyzing the categories instead of the dimensions, new differences come to light. Signatories focus their attention on reintegration and the everyday dynamics and conflicts in their new spaces. The distinct priorities between the AETCR and the rest of the municipality underscore potential tensions. The following charts provide a detailed distribution of the main categories.

Most frequent categories for the municipality and AETCR in Dabeiba

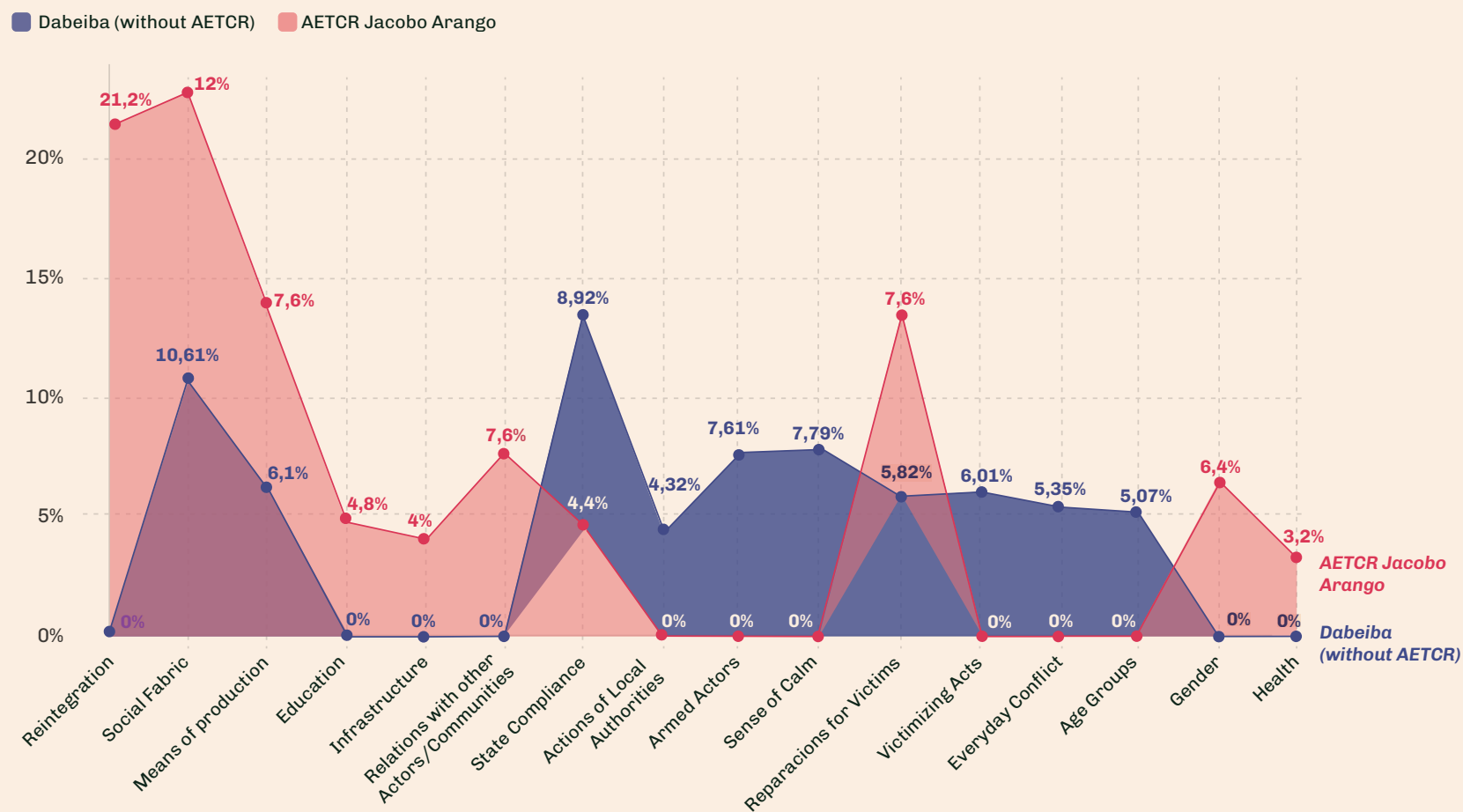


Chart 16: Variations in the peace content. AETCR vs Municipality housing it, Dabeiba
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20848681/>

Most frequent categories for the municipality and AETCR in Icononzo

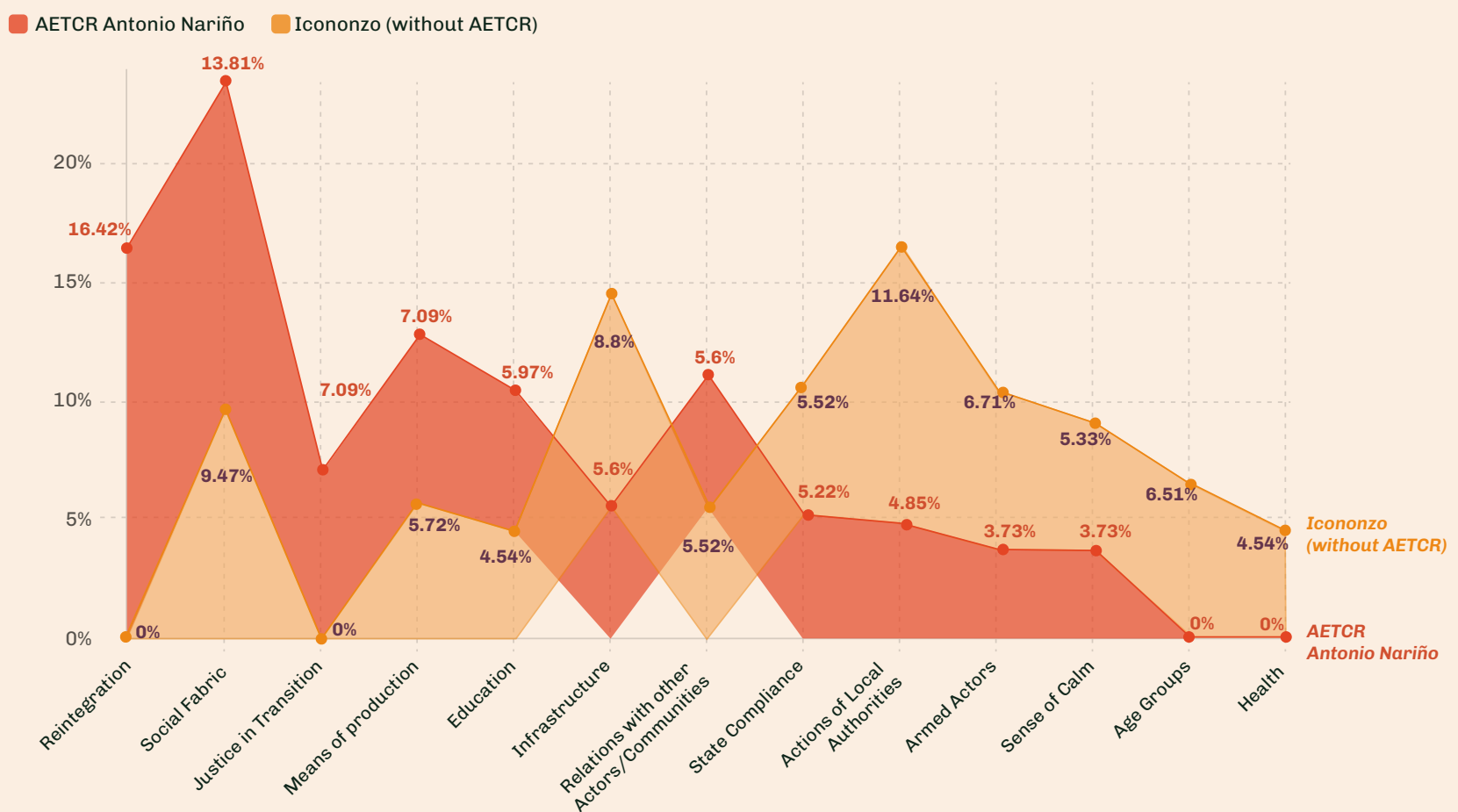


Chart 17: Variations in the peace content. AETCR vs Municipality housing it, Icononzo
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20848681/>



On restorative justice – Yeimmy Delgado, AETCR Antonio Nariño, Icononzo

The presence of ETCR brought projects and investment to the municipalities, especially in nearby settlements. It has also represented an opportunity to arrange spaces for reconciliation and local transitional and restorative justice through community work activities conducted by signatories to benefit the community. Some of these took shape through tasks, works, and activities with restorative content (TWAR) conducted in advance. That is, they were not imposed by justice. The presence of ETCR has also created the perception in rural settlements that projects center on signatories and not on the rest of the population, which they consider is unjust.

An example of local restorative justice is the case of the settlement of Yopal, in Icononzo, Tolima. In this location, former FARC-EP combatants, together with the community, built a concrete strip—in other words, a road improved with pavement—through TWAR conducted in advance. These actions significantly improved mobility in the region and created meeting and mutual recognition spaces, in line with the restorative justice approach hailed by the JEP. Including community actors in the planning and implementation of these activities ensures that they respond to local needs, including the restoration of roads, reforestation, and employment generation. Nevertheless, criminal suits still exist, in tension with the acceptance of restorative justice.

The evidence we gathered in Dabeiba and Icononzo suggests that the TWAR must align the objectives of rural development with collective reparation. One way to do so is to ensure that they are consistent with the Development Plans with a Territorial Focus (PDET). Likewise, it is crucial to promote educational efforts that explain the nature and purpose of these activities to the communities. This prevents them from being confused with conventional civil works and ensures that they are recognized as an integral part of the transitional justice system.

Below, a few indicators depicting these dynamics:

Dabeiba

- ◆ La Balsita: Former combatants must work hard instead of going to prison.
- ◆ Las Cruces: Former guerilla members provide material reparation; Families learn the truth about what happened with their loved ones in the war.
- ◆ Cañón de la Llorona: Former guerilla members are given a second chance; The Army rebuilds the school they destroyed in the war.
- ◆ Urama: There are no seats in congress for the perpetrators; Resources do not only focus on the ETCR.
- ◆ AETCR Jacobo Arango: The community of the settlement opened their doors to peace signatories; People think about the common good and not individually; The space contains rules for coexistence.

Icononzo

- ◆ AETCR Antonio Nariño: Victims receive reparation with community work; Peace signatories join the peace communities on civic days; Victims and peace signatories jointly develop the TWAR.
- ◆ Yopal: Former guerilla members do work for the community; The Army is punished for their crimes.
- ◆ San José de Guatimbol: Senior commanders receive exemplary punishments; La Fila, a neighboring settlement of the ETCR, benefits with projects.

CONCEPTS OF EVERYDAY PEACE IN COLOMBIA

NOTES

- 1 In Urrao, this was described in the following way: Help and compensations are prioritized for people with disabilities; money for peace is directed at victims not the former guerilla members; not only do the perpetrators receive help, victims do as well; money and help for victims reaches the people most in need. Meanwhile, the indicators mentioned in Dabeiba include: The perpetrators are in no better conditions than the victims; elders are given priority in the Victims' Unit; providing compensation for the people who most need it is prioritized.
- 2 Unidad para las víctimas (2024). Unidad para las Víctimas impulsa esclarecimiento de bienes y articulación con entes territoriales para la reparación en Antioquia. Accessed in: <https://www.unidadvictimas.gov.co/unidad-victimas-impulsa-esclarecimiento-bienes-articulacion-entes-territoriales-reparacion-antioquia/>
- 3 Education is in ninth place for both women and men, while Age Groups appears in seventh place for women and in eighth place for men. The other three categories that are in the top five for men and women appear in sixth place (Actions of Local Authorities), in seventh place (State Compliance), and eighth place (Livelihood) for young people. Health closes off the category in ninth place, and Victimizing Acts in tenth place.
- 4 In communities that we visited that were mostly rural communities (especially in Cauca), certain residents are also affiliated to indigenous councils or to community councils, which is why some indicators for rural communities are included there as well.
- 5 After completing their regulatory timeframe, they were then called Former ETCR. A few became populated centers or other types of administrative divisions of the municipalities where they are located.

4. Everyday peace: from concept to measurement



In the previous section, we described the general findings regarding the everyday content of peace in the communities, organized through analytical categories by department-region, type of population (men, women, young people), and actors (Afro-descendants, rural communities, indigenous people, and peace signatories). This data reflects shared local concepts, as well as contradictions, realities, and hopes related to peace. Together, they constitute key tools to measure the state of peace and its evolution in time.

To transform the qualitative dimension of the indicators into a quantitative measure, we used a participatory methodology based on the use of surveys with everyday indicators. The following section describes the results obtained based on the measurement of the previously discussed indicators.

In the measuring stage, EPI uses everyday indicators to evaluate (through perception surveys) the state of the complex processes such as peace, justice, coexistence, and reconciliation in territories where we work. The creation of indicators allows us to know what aspects of everyday life in the communities constitute peace. However, the measuring stage maps the state of these indicators in the communities.

Closed-ended questions with scales systematically implemented in the surveyed population enables a sort of thermometer to assess different events, experiences, or perceptions of their day-to-day life. Further, while indicators are created with the participation of specific groups of women, men, and young people in the community, the surveys allow us to include a greater number of residents, even achieving representativeness at the community level. Likewise, the survey itself can be

applied periodically in a territory to compare the levels of peace in time. It can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions in relation to peace, justice, and reconciliation, from public entities, social organizations, or cooperation agencies.

In this section, we will describe the EPI measurement process, using Sumapaz as an example. We will also include general results that describe the state of peace in the region of Sumapaz, making comparisons within its communities regarding the five EPI dimensions.



Justice indicator: “You shouldn’t have to hide under your bed to protect yourself from bullets” – Yuliana David Hidalgo from Las Cruces, Antioquia.



4.1 How does the EPI measurement process work?

The first step in the measurement stage in each region consisted of designing the process. To this end, we had to establish which population we intended to survey based on a sampling strategy that responded to the objectives and needs of each project, and to the financial and logistical limitations.

The first consideration to conduct appropriate crosscutting comparisons was to map the sociodemographic characteristics and the socio-political context of the communities. We selected communities with a variation in terms of key experiences or situations (for example, levels of violence, peace interventions, or social or political projects), but that we could compare regarding sociodemographic aspects (for example, socio-economic conditions, ethnic or cultural groups, or geographic proximity). For example, in Sumapaz, of the total nine geographic communities, we selected six for the measurement stage, seeking variation on important aspects of the peace process (**Table 4**). On the one hand, we considered the level of interventions or justice mechanisms that the national government implemented in the community. Likewise, the communities differ in terms of the actors living in the territory. The selected communities were AETCR Antonio Nariño-La Fila (AETCR); Yopal and San José de Guatimbol (Guatimbol) in the municipality of Icononzo; and the communities of the upper area of Cabrera (Cabrera), upper area of Venecia (Venecia), and middle and lower areas of Pandi (Pandi) within their corresponding municipalities.

Table 4: Community selection from the Sumapaz region

Municipality	Geographic community	Selected	Population/ Actors	Exposure to Transitional Justice Mechanisms
Icononzo	AETCR Antonio Nariño-La Fila	Yes	Former FARC-EP peace signatories and families	High
	Yopal	Yes	Rural communities	High TWAR conducted in advance
	San José de Guatimbol	Yes	Rural communities	Low

Municipality	Geographic community	Selected	Population/ Actors	Exposure to Transitional Justice Mechanisms
Cabrera	Upper area of Cabrera	Yes	Rural communities, presence of former FARC-EP peace signatories	Medium Economic reintegration projects, Truth Commission
Venecia	Upper area of Venecia	Yes	Rural communities, presence of former FARC-EP peace signatories	Medium Economic reintegration projects, TWAR projection
Pandi	Middle and lower areas of Pandi	Yes	Rural communities, businesspeople, presence of peace signatories	Low
Arbeláez	East-central region of Arbeláez	No	Rural communities and residents of the urban municipal seat	Low
Locality 20 (Bogotá)	Nazareth	No	Rural communities	High District PDET, JEP pilot, UARIV subject of collective reparation
	Betania	No	Rural communities	High District PDET, JEP pilot, UARIV subject of collective reparation

As the second consideration, within each geographic community included in the survey, we selected a group of residents to participate in the measurement. As a general rule, we created a representative sample at the community level, regardless of whether the community is defined in a geographic or associative way, or based on the sense of belonging and everyday life that the members of the collectivity establish.

Further, because in most cases we did not have a prior list of residents to randomly select our participants, our local teams of survey takers toured the territory randomly selecting houses and adults within

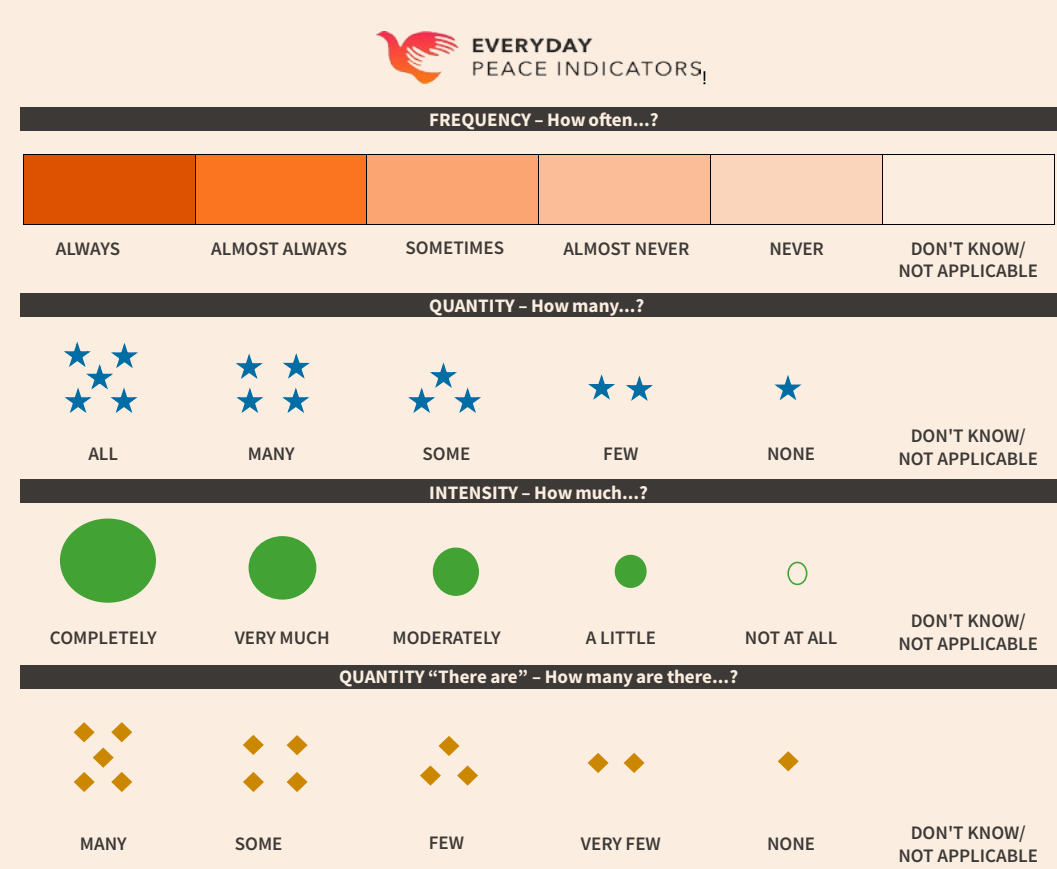
each selected house.¹ We also sought to encompass the demographic characteristics of each community, such as gender and age, allowing us to collect surveys by going around to all sectors of the settlements. Although we attempted to obtain a balanced sample, a few field conditions—including the work-related schedules—limited our ability to obtain a similar proportion of age groups. In general, however, we were able to survey members of all stratums. For instance, in Sumapaz, we generated samples that were representative of the entire population of each one of the six selected communities (**Table 5**). A total of 1,063 residents from the region participated, with an equal number of men (532) and women (531). We, nevertheless, reiterate that due to work-related dynamics and activities outside of the communities, it was difficult to obtain a balance between age subgroups within each gender group in the majority of communities.

Table 5: Total Population and Surveyed Population in the Selected Communities of Sumapaz

Municipality	Geographic community	Total population	Surveyed Population (Sample)				
			Total	Young women	Adult women	Young men	Adult men
Icononzo	AETCR Antonio Nariño - La Fila	120	86	31	14	19	22
	Yopal	560	194	45	57	25	67
	San José de Guatimbol	501	177	15	70	26	66
Cabrera	Upper area of Cabrera	702	197	59	43	43	52
Venecia	Upper area of Venecia	697	190	45	36	46	63
Pandi	Middle and lower areas of Pandi	1,068	219	32	77	28	82
Total		3648	1063	238	293	176	356

Once we had established the sample in each community in the region, the following step in the measurement stage was to develop a questionnaire that allowed us to assess the state of local peace. For each community, we designed a questionnaire with 40 questions based on the everyday indicators of each territory.² These indicators were selected based on the representativeness of the EPI thematic dimensions in each territory. The specific questions for each dimension reflect the voting results in each community.³

To ensure a systematic evaluation of the experiences and perceptions of survey respondents, the final indicators of each community were transformed into closed-ended questions with an answer consisting of a scale from 1 to 5. Certain questions alluded to issues of frequency, some to intensity, and others to the number of things, events, or experiences. On some occasions, we employed binary questions (yes or no) given the content of the indicator. **Figure 18** contains the sheet with visual scales that we used to collect the surveys, and a few examples of indicators transformed into closed-ended questions in the region of Sumapaz.



- **FREQUENCY:** How often do health centers have professionals to attend to emergencies? (*Venecia*)
- **QUANTITY:** How many people in the community know the aspects of the Peace Agreement? (*Cabrera*)
- **INTENSITY:** To what extent do Peace Agreement signatories have guarantees to transition to civil life? (*Yopal*)
- **QUANTITY (EXIST):** How many constant transportation routes exist that mobilize people that live in the ETCR? (*AETCR*)
- **YES/NO:** Does Santuario have an aqueduct? (*Guatimbol*)

Chart 18: Sheet with visual scales and examples of questions in the Sumapaz questionnaire

The surveys were conducted by local teams in each one of the communities of the regions where we work. Working with community members was key to conduct a participatory measurement, thereby integrating local knowledge and the cultural competencies of our teams into the survey implementation. In Sumapaz, as with the rest of the regions, the local teams traveled through the communities to collect surveys in person individually, using a visual sheet and registering the answers digitally on the Kobo Took app on their mobile phones (images below).

Images of Survey Collection in the Communities of Sumapaz

San José de Guatimbol



Upper area of Cabrera



Yopal, Icononzo



Upper area of Venecia



4.2 The state of peace in the communities of the region of Sumapaz

To assess the state of peace in Sumapaz (both at the community and regional levels) and to make comparisons between these territories, we created a general index of peace. Considering that each community had a unique questionnaire, creating a summation index allowed us to incorporate the 40 indicators of peace into a comprehensive measure. In it, 1 represents an inexistent or limited state of peace and 5 symbolizes the maximum level of peace. **Figure 19** includes the general levels of peace perceived in the six communities and in the region of Sumapaz. For each territory, the circle represents the average of the values of the index of all residents. All of the general indexes of peace are within an intermediate range (2.5 to 3.7), where *Pandi* stands out as the community with the lowest level of general peace (close to 2.5).⁴ Yopal and the *AETCR*—both in the municipality of Icononzo and with significant exposure to interventions of transitional justice—have the highest values of perceptions of peace (approximately 3.0 and 3.5, respectively). The indexes of the other four communities are below the average level of peace (3). Considering the confidence intervals, the *AETCR* community has distinctively higher levels than the rest. The general average is 2.77, reflecting a moderate level of peace throughout the region of Sumapaz.

Indexes of peace in Sumapaz

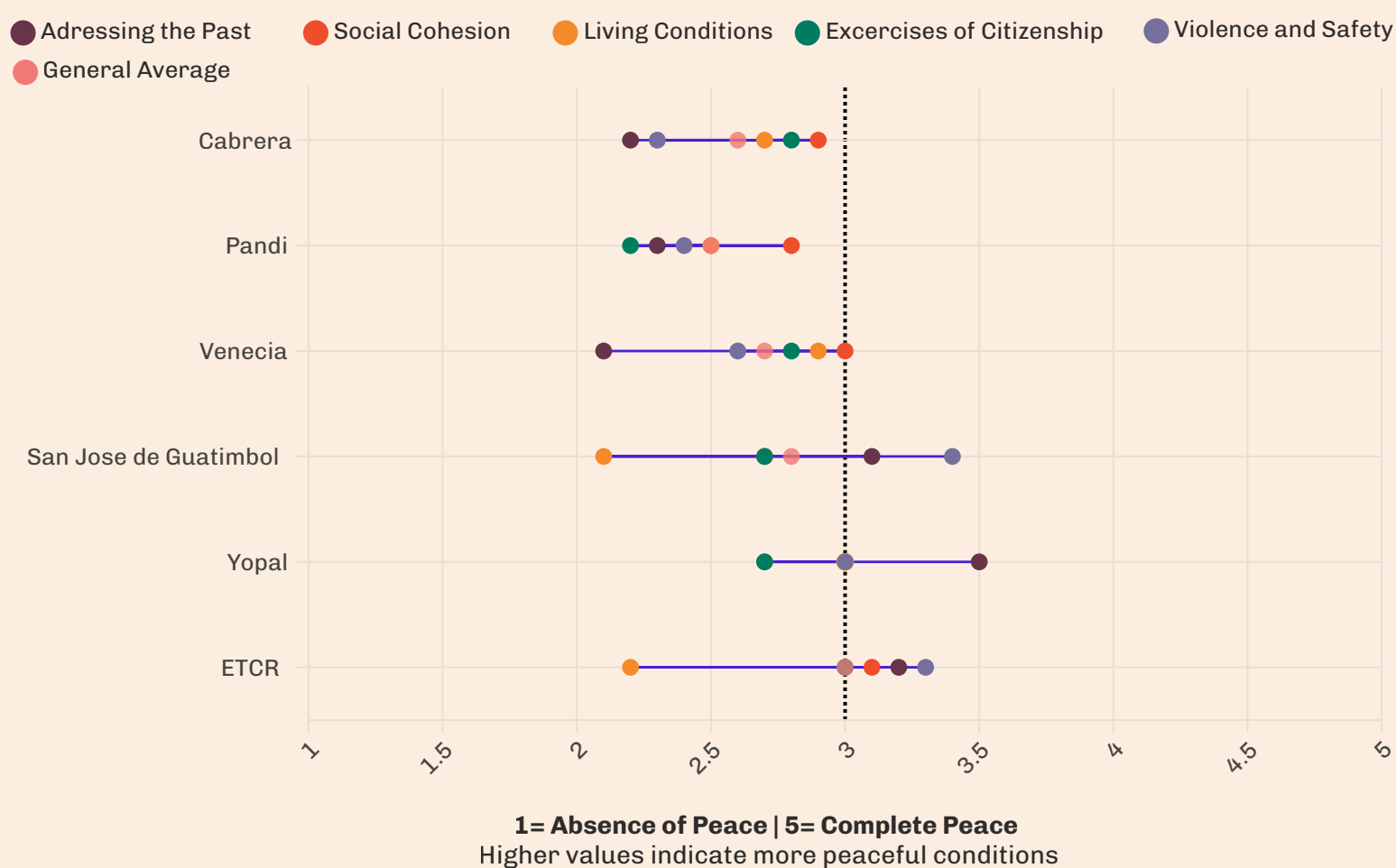


Chart 19: General Indexes of Peace
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20778972/>

Although a general index of peace provides a comprehensive vision of the state of peace in the communities, it does not enable us to assess the existence of nuances in the different aspects of life in these territories. We, therefore, segregated the results by the EPI conceptual dimensions to enable comparisons between the communities in different facets of peace. In each community, we created an index for each one of the five dimensions: Violence and Safety, Addressing the Past, Exercises of Citizenship, Social Cohesion, and Citizenship Conditions. As with the general index of peace, once we obtained the individual averages, we added them and divided them by the total number of participants in each community. With this, we calculated a general average per dimension in each community.

Figure 20 includes the community and regional indexes of the **Violence and Safety** dimension. When we focus on this dimension, the evaluated communities show moderate levels of peace, with the majority of indexes grouped between 2.0 and 3.7, and with a regional average of 2.78. Compared to the general perceptions of peace (Figure 2), *Cabrera*, *Pandi*, and *Venecia* register lower average values, while *Yopal* and *Guatimbol* have greater values. Centering on this dimension and considering the confidence intervals, we can conclude that *Guatimbol* and the *AETCR* show levels of peace that are different and significantly higher than *Cabrera*, *Pandi*, and *Venecia*. Similar to the general evaluation of peace, the communities of *Icononzo* experience better conditions than the other three communities in terms of violence and safety.

Indexes of peace in Sumapaz · Violence and Safety

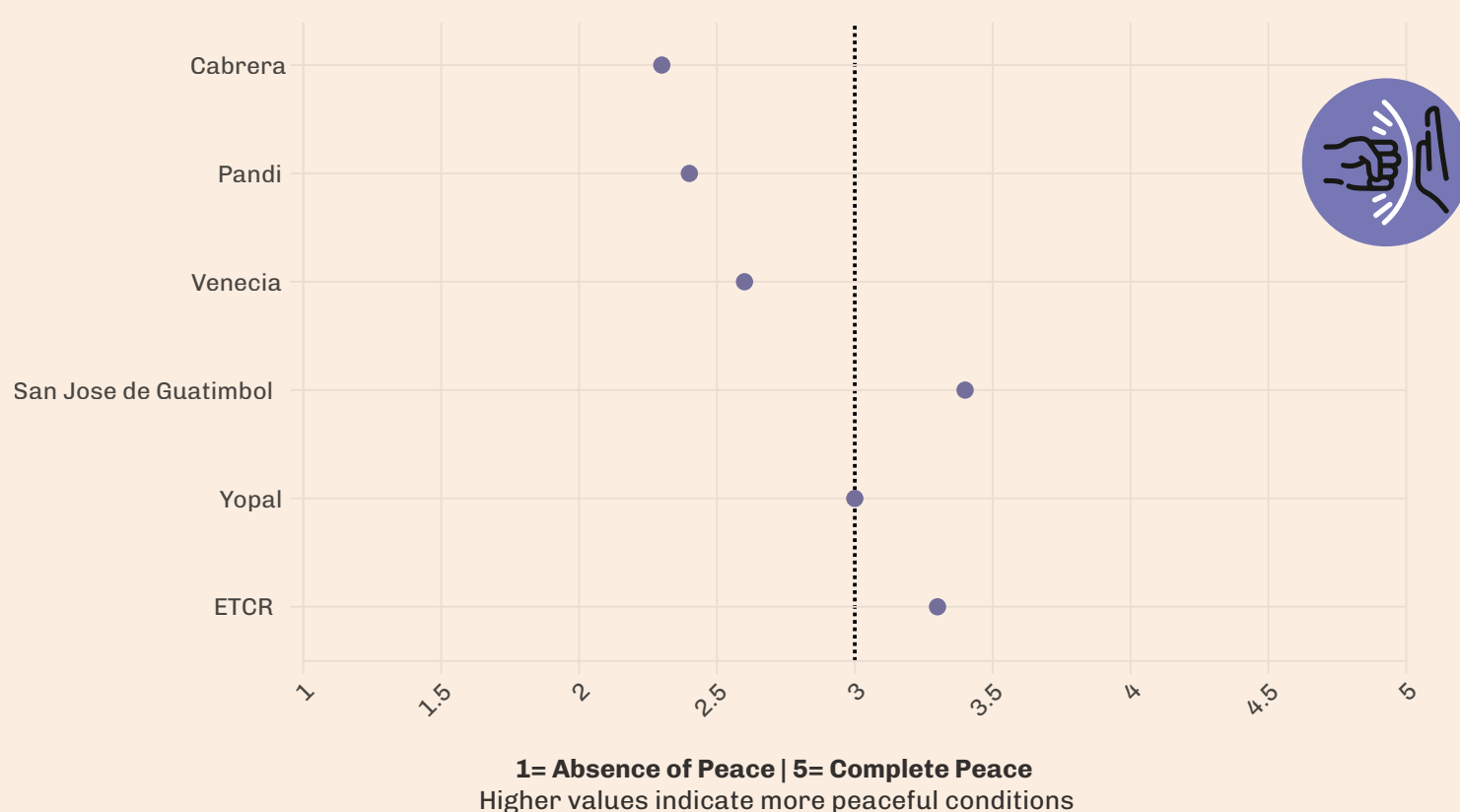


Chart 20: Indexes of the Violence and Safety Dimension
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20783037/>

The **Addressing the Past** dimension, represented in **Figure 21**, shows a broader range of values than in the previous cases (1.87 to 3.88). The average for the region of Sumapaz is similar to the other indexes (2.76). *Yopal* stands out as the community with the highest average of peace (3.5) and *Venecia* with the lowest (2.2). Considering the confidence intervals, in terms of the ways to address the past, *Pandi*, *Cabrera*, and *Venecia* show distinctly lower levels than the communities of Icononzo, where we found important interventions in terms of transitional justice. The distance between both groups of communities is even sharper when we compare these results with the values in the general indexes of peace and of Violence and Safety.

Indexes of peace in Sumapaz · Addressing the Past

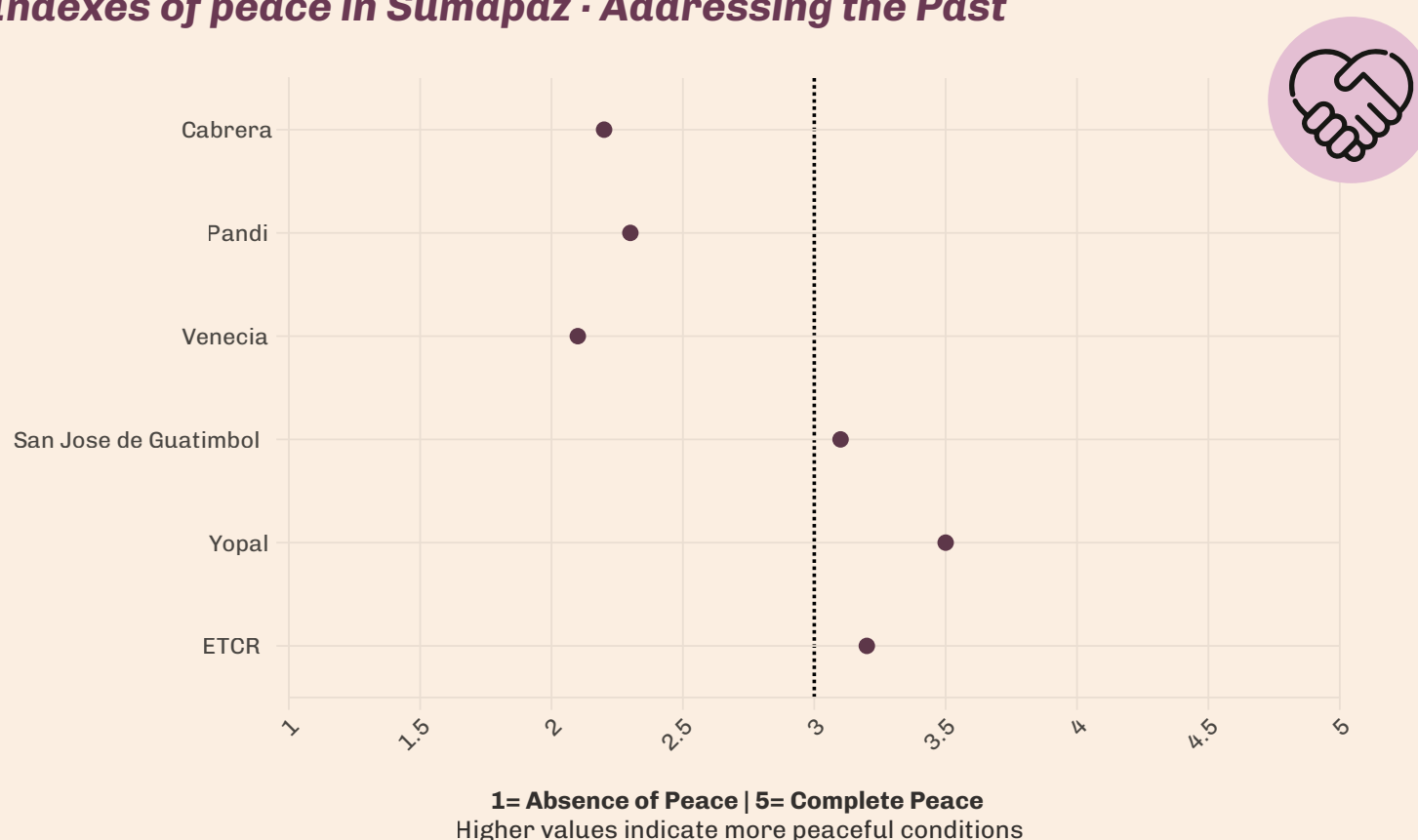


Chart 21: Indexes of the Addressing the Past Dimension
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20783080/>

Figure 22 includes the levels of peace perceived in the dimension of **Exercises of Citizenship**. In this case, the majority of the communities have similar values considering that their averages and confidence intervals concentrate within the 2.45 and 3.38 range. Nevertheless, *Pandi* stands out as one of the communities with the lowest perception of peace for this dimension of peace, below the five communities and the region. In contrast, the interval in *AETCR* is slightly above the other territories.

Indexes of peace in Sumapaz · Exercises of Citizenship

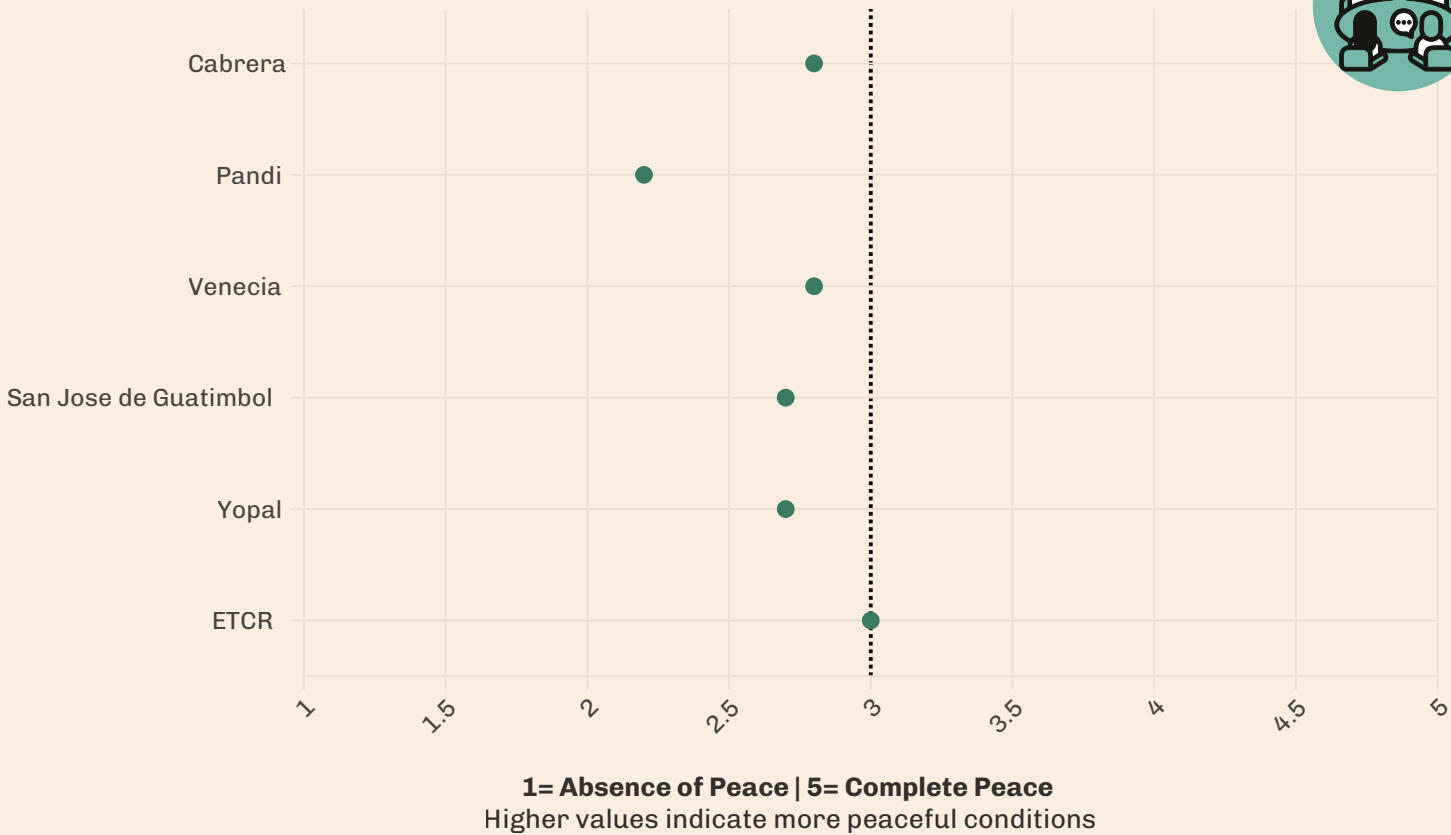


Chart 22: Indexes of the Exercises of Citizenship Dimension
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20783136/>

Similarly, the peace conditions in terms of **Social Cohesion** are comparable throughout the region (**Figure 23**). The community values center on the 2.5 to 3.25 range and their intervals intersect. However, *Guatimbol* is the only community somewhat below the general average.

Indexes of peace in Sumapaz: Social Cohesion

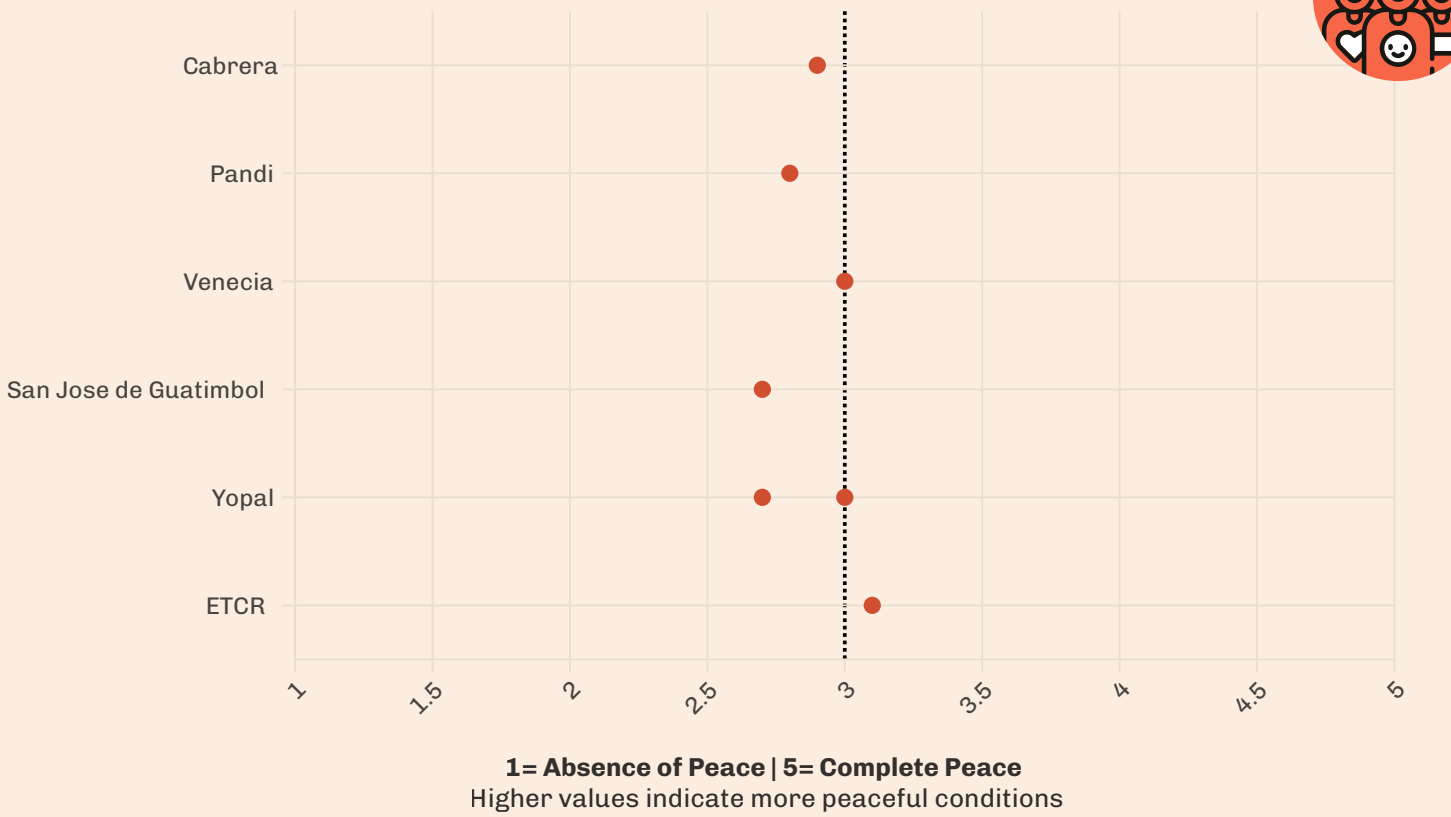


Chart 23: Indexes of the Social Cohesion Dimension
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20783166/>

Figure 24 includes the levels of peace perceived in these populations in terms of the **Living Conditions** dimension. Here, the majority of the communities show levels of peace below the average, with a range of 1.9 to 3.1. In contrast to the other dimensions of peace, every community perceives worse conditions in their everyday lives. However, *Venecia* shows relatively better living conditions compared to the rest of the communities, with an average above the regional average. Meanwhile, two communities of Icononzo—*Guatimbol* and the *AETCR*—report a lower perception of peace. With this, we observe a reality somewhat different than the one reflected in other dimensional indexes, where the communities of this municipality reflect a more positive reality.

Indexes of peace in Sumapaz · Living Conditions

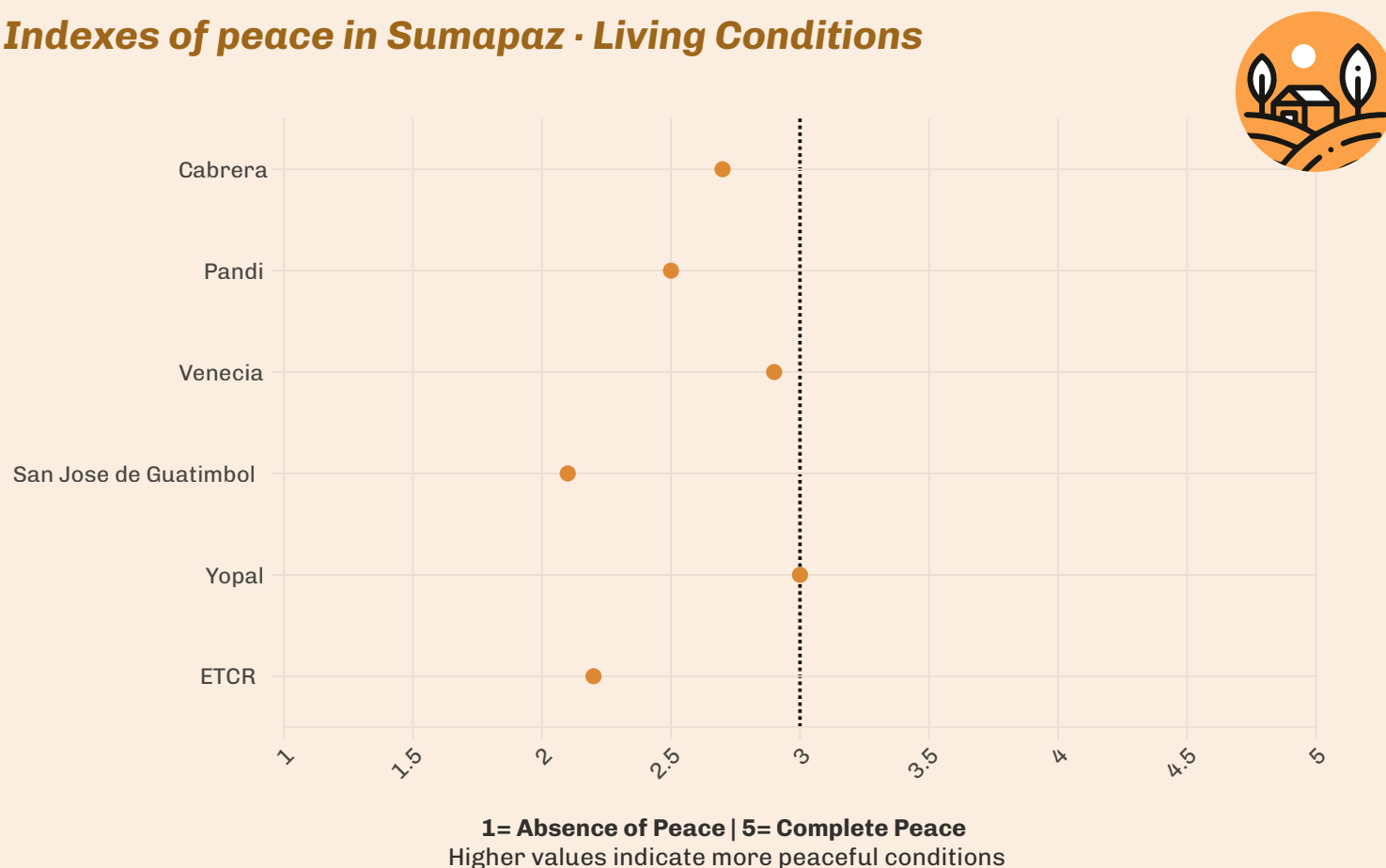


Chart 24: Indexes of the Living Conditions Dimension
<https://public.flourish.studio/visualisation/20783194/>

The general indexes of peace and the dimensional indexes included in this section allow us to summarize the perception of peace of the communities, considering both the general outlook and the specific aspects or dimensions of peace. Developing indexes enables us to compare between communities, considering that each territory has specific ways of experiencing peace, which are reflected in different indicators. However, this methodology also has limitations. Averaging individual answers can blur unique experiences and extreme perceptions,

possibly concealing important dynamics in certain population groups. In general, this analysis is a solid and understandable point of departure to describe the conditions of peace perceived at the community or regional level, and to make general comparisons between territories.

An interpretation of the results of the indexes, informed by the contextual information and concepts of peace of the previous sections, yields the main findings. On the one hand, we find that, for the community of AETCR (where peace signatories and their families live), the perception of peace is greater than in the rest of the communities. This population, which plays a central role in the formal peace processes—and in the midst of the challenges in implementing the Peace Agreement and its crucial transformation—has a more optimistic point of view.

Paradoxically, former combatants are the ones with a greater perception of peace compared to the affected communities. However, this community has seen more radical transformations in their everyday lives. Even in situations where the rest of the municipality deems unsafe still, they may be perceived as better than the ones they previously experienced as combatants in constant risk. Likewise, we found a relation between the communities of the same municipality of the AETCR, such as Guatimbol and Yopal, with greater perceptions of peace. This could be related to the projects and dynamics brought to the municipality due to the presence of the AETCR, and because of the exposure to restorative projects such as TWAR. This makes the possibility of reconciliation, transitional justice, and development at the local level tangible.

On the other hand, understanding the comprehensive content of peace for the communities—in dimensions that communities indicated as central in the contents of peace, such as Living Conditions and Exercises of Citizenship—the perception of peace is, for the most part, below the average. This underscores the historic debt of exclusion in terms of democracy and material living conditions. In contrast, the communities have a greater perception regarding their Social Cohesion, which is related to the social ties within their local life. In this dimension, we suggest the community has greater agency because it encompasses internal processes.

EVERYDAY PEACE: FROM CONCEPT TO MEASUREMENT

NOTES

- 1 We used a cluster sampling (the houses represented the collective units or clusters), followed by a simple random selection of a resident within each cluster.
- 2 In addition to the questions based on the indicators, all of the questionnaires of each region contained 15 sociodemographic questions (age, gender, and ethnicity), and pertaining to the socio-political context (experiences of violence, and local transitional justice and peacebuilding processes).
- 3 We used a percentage of codes assigned to the indicators that each one of the five EPI thematic dimensions represented to establish the number of indicators to select per dimension. Within the group of coded indicators in each dimension, we selected the indicators with the most votes in the community meetings.
- 4 In all of the community questionnaires, the majority of questions used a scale from 1 to 5 (from least to highest level of peace). However, in some cases, given the content of the indicators, the questions were binary (no or yes). To standardize the scales across all indicators, the values of the binary questions (1 or 2) were transformed (1 or 5). This calculation left out the “doesn’t know/does not apply” answers for each individual.



5. Conclusions and recommendations: working toward dog barks that do not cause fear

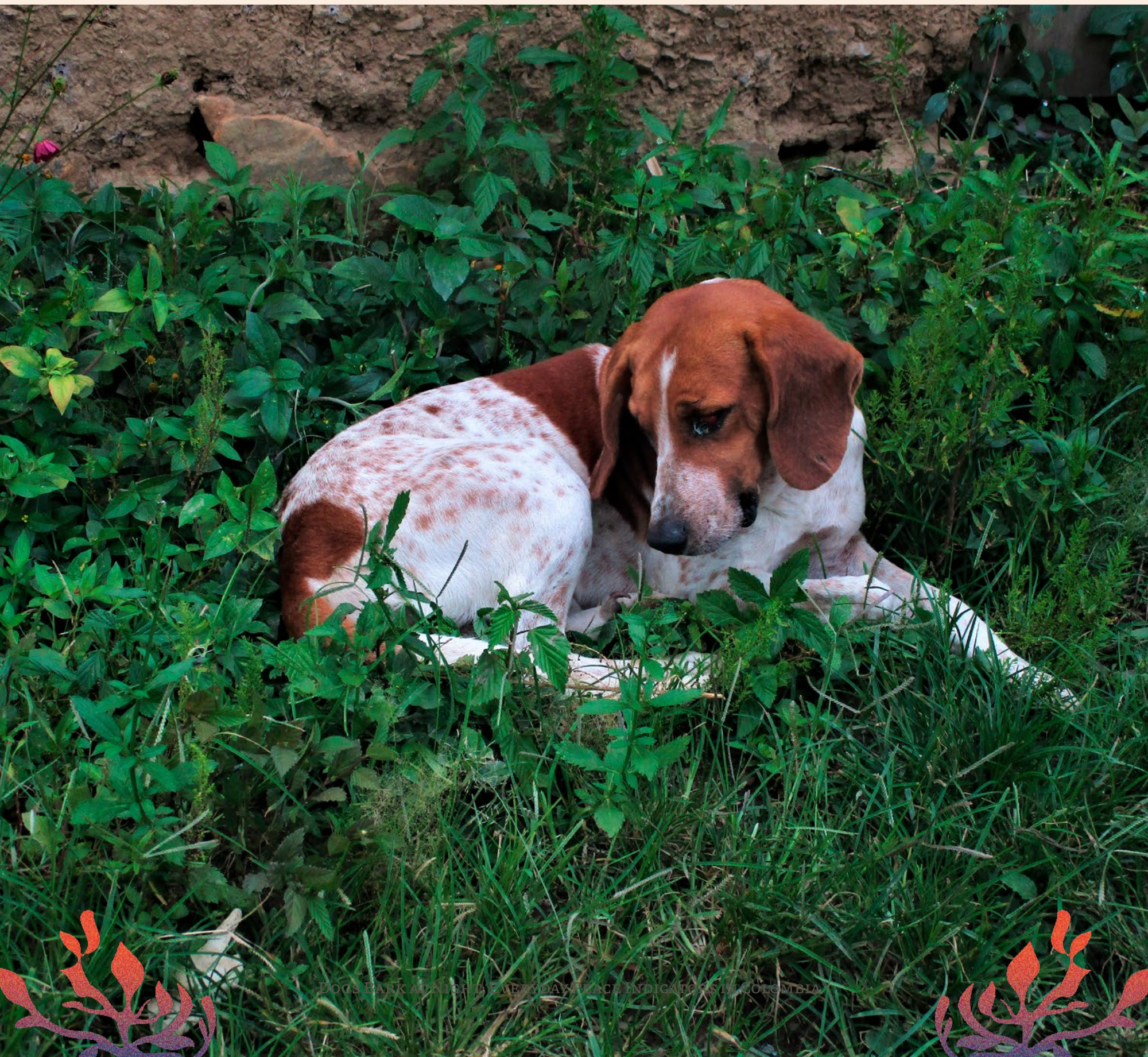


The music is turned off in the community hut, bringing an end to the fundraising bingo to improve the road connecting them to the municipal seat. During the winter days, this tertiary road becomes flooded and the trucks and *chivas* have a hard time completing their routes and achieving their objective of transporting the community and their harvests. This makes the improvement crucial. The people participating in the bingo, which became a dance party and went well into the night hours, return home walking with the light of the moon. On the way, they pass various houses and farms while dogs bark intensely. The people who did not participate in the community activity and are, therefore, sleeping in their beds open an eye and are bothered by their neighbors because they interrupted their sleep. In their mind, however, it generated a nuisance, not fear: they sleep in their pajamas and are not prepared to quickly flee if a convey of armed actors approaches in the shadows of the night. Perhaps there is greater trust: the small task is a sign that everyone is involved in peace.

Everyday peace is not an end or an ideal state, but a process. In its content, it reflects multiple dimensions experienced in a simultaneous and complementary way. It implies an end to the actions of armed actors, that the traumas of violence are psychologically overcome, and that people experience a sense of calm. It also implies a good productive infrastructure, and that the community is united and able to seek the common good and resolve conflicts that are normally non-violent.

When armed actors are still present, the issues of safety and violence become more urgent yet. However, as violence decreases, communities focus on other dimensions of life. Peace is a dynamic project where, with adaptability and resilience, communities focus on what matters in each stage of the processes they experience and in each context.

This everyday peace approach, arising from the local perceptions and experiences, is crucial because it connects abstract concepts with the specific realities of the people experiencing the conflict on their own streets, fields, and homes. By recognizing the importance of everyday peace, we pave the way to close the gaps between national policies and local needs, thus ensuring that the efforts of reparation, restorative justice, and territorial development are legitimate and sustainable. In the same way that a dog barking no longer generates fear, but a sense of calm, everyday peace demonstrates how the small and significant changes in the everyday lives of the communities are the foundation for a sustainable and inclusive peace.



5.1 Conclusions by dimensions

The aggregated analysis of the indicators created in the communities, and the inductive process to create integrative dimensions, allow us to identify a complex and demanding concept of peace for rural communities. The center of a peaceful life takes place in the interaction of social cohesion, exercises of rights, and the conditions of a material life. In other words, in the spheres and activities where life is materially and symbolically reproduced and that is, ideally, projected as a scenario where differences and inevitable conflicts in communal life are properly managed.

That scenario certainly needs appropriate levels of safety and processes that dispel the arbitrary and violent control of armed actors. However, the mere presence of safety is not peace; it is, rather, a prerequisite. Further, to ensure that the scenario of peace and the negotiation of the conflict is sustainable, another dimension of transformation is necessary: discuss what happened, its causes, the responsibilities, and, by extension, to tangibly see and feel that the people who caused harm are making efforts to rectify their path. As a result, the five dimensions we identified converge: safety as a prerequisite of, memory as a moral sustainability for, a scenario where life takes place in cohesive communities, where rights guarantee dignity, and where people can build life projects for a good and just material life with others and with nature.



Violence and safety

In various territories, the persistence of war leads to risks and to the violation of the human rights of the communities, a situation that is exacerbated in conflict zones where various groups seek hegemony. The presence of armed actors entails ways of regulating life and arbitrary acts to resolve conflicts. At times, communities legitimize this social control because it provides alternatives in the absence of the State. In contrast, there is a trend to understand peace as a scenario where communities can govern their lives without external, arbitrary, and violent interferences. For communities, safety is a prerequisite for peace, but its essence does not lie in it. Further, under the possible gaze of the armed actors, fear of directly addressing the issue persists.



Addressing the past:

Colombia faces the complex challenge of properly managing the events and harm caused by the past armed conflict in the midst of the current war. In the specific case of transitional justice, according to communities it must transcend the courts and formal punishments. At the community level, although prison punishments are still mentioned, they seem to be less of a priority because, first and foremost, they value the evidence of sacrifice and specific efforts by the people who caused harm. Communities want perpetrators to work for the common good in their territories, as a form of effective reparation.

Even so, a sense of imbalance persists in terms of the benefits granted to the perpetrators (as part of the reintegration of former guerrilla members into civil life, and the legal benefits for law enforcement members) and the reparations victims received in the institutional framework of peace, which are perceived as slow and bureaucratic.



Social cohesion:

Peace is profoundly tied to and defined by the capacity of the communities to manage their everyday lives autonomously. This includes reproducing their culture, creating new meanings, preserving their cultural practices, and strengthening an active, committed, and cohesive community life. As we have seen, this implies understanding peace differently, not as an absence of conflict, but as an integrative and non-violent or external ways to process them.

In the analyzed territories, the concept of community is of great relevance, it indicates a collective concept of life and a concern for maintaining a healthy social fabric. However, the concern for this concept of a good community life does not hide that it is dynamic and contains tension: different priorities between generations, gender, religious beliefs, cultural traditions, and ethnic identities. The community needs the necessary trust to create the spaces to manage these differences.



Exercises of citizenship:

Peace is also understood as autonomy and the full exercise of rights. Each community values their own forms of organization—including indigenous reservations, community councils, community action boards, and social leaders—while also demanding the presence of the national State and the compliance of their commitments. In reality, the perception of distance and dissatisfaction regarding how social policies are implemented and targeted persists. As a result, the communities underscore that the local State should play a key role in moving forward on a sustainable peace; it should have a territorial presence, play a leading role in the development plans, ensure a fluid communication with its residents, and have the capacity to address specific needs.



Living conditions:

In the territories historically affected by war, closing the economic and environmental gaps is essential to address the productive activity in a sustainable manner and aiming for a better future. Communities associate peace with the possibility of having basic infrastructure that allows them to include their products in the markets, as means of communication, support for agriculturally-based economy, and services that enable an improved quality of life, including access to higher education and decent health services that guarantee they can remain in the territory without having to migrate to urban centers. Here we find the confirmation of the thesis pertaining to the relation between peace and material conditions of existence which has become a vicious cycle since war delayed these changes.

Assessing the everyday life as a category

Everyday life is where these indicators were created. As such, they neither define nor determine, rather they indicate: they provide partial indications of the complexity of the experience and they allow us to establish links of meaning and complementarity in the constellation of ideas provided by the communities.

It is in this everyday life where a certain concept of peace is envisioned, fluctuating between projections of a simple and good life and the recognition that rural life is also hard and demanding. It is in the everyday life where the traditional social rules—that establish parameters

for the relations between men, women, young people, adults, elders, and ethnic groups—coexist with innovation and questioning. It is in the everyday life where a concept of what is internal and external to the community is perceived, and where the experience of repeated armed violence coupled with the State's failure to perform produces lessons of resilience and distrust. Finally, it is also in that everyday life where the perceptions and demands to resolve the experience of injustice are constantly updated.

This revindication of the everyday life is important because it gives texture and social legitimacy to the practice of public policy in all of its spheres: peacebuilding, transitional justice, material experiences of sustainable lives, and exercises of citizenship. Without the realism and the honesty of the everyday indicators, public policies inevitably prioritize the macro approaches, deductive processes, administrative considerations, and the cycles of the policy in the official realm, in addition to maintaining a gap in terms of relevance and connection between rural life and the political structure of the country, with harmful and dangerous consequences.

The analysis rooted in the everyday life is, as we have said, honest because it does not hide the existence of tensions despite the strength of the ideal concepts of peace and a good life. Our conclusions also shed light on the tensions experienced in the gender relations and in the intergenerational relations, which our method enables us to explore. We saw how, for women and men, almost 50% of the indicators share the same categories associated with the socio-economic sphere and the exercises of citizenship. This allows us to argue that, at least for adults, there is a consensus in terms of priorities, though changes are evident after the first five categories. There is a marked disparity between young people and adults considering that for young people, priorities are more social and less related to the Exercises of Citizenship. Finally, we have yet to explore the fact that there is a greater number of indicators created by women associated to categories of care, while for men, they tend to create indicators associated more with rationalized practices of peace.

Building everyday peace and local agency

The everyday peace indicators reveal not only what communities wish to transform, but also who should lead those processes. The community organizations, together with local, department, and national governments were identified as key actors to implement transformations in the social and economic dimensions that communities believe to be a priority.

The Community Action Boards, the forms of ethnic organization, and local governments stand out as the main spaces to build peace. This reflects the fact that local empowerment and community organization are fundamental to move forward on processes of reconciliation and sustainable development. These are decision-making spaces, though they also imply spaces to question, debate, and update collective perceptions. Even building peace requires dialogue spaces regarding what its content entails, and these forms of local organization are the quintessential spaces for this to occur. In this sense, the indicators collected demonstrate that many of the cultural dynamics appear as a form of conflict management, although in other communities they underscore the importance of creating and interpreting meanings. Marking the cycle of life, conceptualizing perceptions of gender, and understanding intergenerational relations are vital activities that are reproduced in everyday communication and in the collective rituals and spaces, including artistic performance, religiousness, sports, ceremonies, etc.

Continuity of war and perceptions of peace

In many Colombian territories, the Peace Agreement meant the end of the war. However, in many cases, the silence of the rifles was short lived because new actors began occupying the space left by those who retreated. Other territories did not even have the opportunity to experience a short period of calmness. The persistence of the armed conflict conditions the perceptions of peace in the communities; in territories like Antioquia and Cauca, the dimension of Safety and Violence had more weight percentage wise than in other communities. In these territories—with disputes between different actors for territorial control—the risk of violations to human rights and social control by armed actors is greater, impacting the conceptions of peace. Safety is not the main content of peace, but it is one of its most urgent requisites.

Peace signatories and everyday transitional justice

The peace signatories in the AETCR have become another community living in the territory, facing similar challenges than the communities in their surroundings. Their concerns also include their living conditions, houses, and social ties, etc. However, they also have the distinctive feature that their concepts of peace predominantly include reintegration and transitional justice, pillars of their new life.

These spaces have been key in the transition of former FARC-EP combatants toward civil life, promoting both their socio-economic reintegration and their reconciliation with the communities. The dynamics within these spaces reflect tensions between the immediate reintegration needs and the demands of neighboring communities the perceive inequalities in the investment. However, the experiences such as TWAR have proven to be efficient restorative justice tools, creating opportunities for dialogue, reparation, and social cohesion when the commitments of former combatants are aligned with the aspirations of the local communities. We believe that for these experiences, everyday indicators are fundamental for the design, monitoring, and participation, which is why we encourage using our findings in terms of Living Conditions and Social Cohesion to enrich them with substantive content.

Peace is made by the communities

One of the most powerful findings of our research was the weight that communities give their own role in building peace. A part of the content and materialization of the ideal peace depends on actors external to the community, including the national government, local governments, armed actors, transitional justice institutions, or companies. Nevertheless, a significant part of peace falls on the community itself. This is evident in the importance of the Social Cohesion dimension which talks about dynamics related to the social fabric, conflicts, and everyday coexistence.

Sumapaz, for example, illustrates the importance of the Social Cohesion dimension. The scores given to questions associated with this dimension sway the global perception of peace. This finding underscores the importance of strengthening a dynamic local life, its government, and local autonomy, which can serve to promote transformations in other dimensions. In other words, the more general peace is built by strengthening the social fabrics from the bottom.

5.2 Recommendations

To the national government

The peacebuilding and transitional justice processes under the responsibility of the national government must include an approach of co-creation with the communities. This approach must be part of the entire cycle, from the design to the implementation, evaluation, and lessons. Co-creating is a more ambitious concept than consulting, considering that the latter implies, by definition, differential power and government discretion at implementation. In contrast, a co-creation approach takes the community seriously as an equal partner, with priorities and perceptions that merit respect and with whom consensus must be established. This approach can be challenging for the traditional forms of planning and managing as these are characterized by deliverables, budgets, and urgent deadlines. However, it encompasses the possibility of moving forward at the speed of the established trust, in a more sustainable and legitimate manner.

We recommend teaching this methodology of developing everyday peace indicators. We also recommend using them in government planning and management spaces, adapting them to the specific contexts of each level of action.

It is important to strengthen and ensure the security of the ethnic forms of organization (community councils, indigenous reservations) and the community action boards as the main driver of social life, of safeguarding their culture, and of the exercise of local power. This includes the legal recognition of their collective territories and their expansion, and supporting their own forms of government in terms of strengthening their autonomy for the ethnic organizations and expanding the participation of the CAB in local governance. At the same time, it is crucial to encourage the democratization of these spaces to ensure they are appropriate and legitimized by the communities.

Establish and communicate clear targeting criteria for social programs to help resolve local conflicts over access to state benefits. Implement programs that transform the living conditions of the territories as a whole, for example, the tertiary roads, health centers, higher education in the territory, and/or support for agricultural activities.

For local governments

Local governments constitute one of the most immediate projections of the community perceptions of peace: local self-government (that is, the shared responsibility for the community's living conditions) is seen as a significant improvement regarding the arbitrary and violent control of external actors.

Based on the recommendations of the national government, local actors should be part of the peace plans within the municipal development plans. This should imply establishing dialogues with different community actors, and identifying priorities in all five dimensions of the everyday peace indicators insofar as they all contribute to a comprehensive concept of peace.

Guaranteeing the inclusion of a chapter on peace in the municipal development plans following the recommendation of the National Department of Planning (memo 0024-4). The development of the content of each municipal chapter should include participatory chapters to bring it closer to local concepts, making a profound connection between the implementation of the Peace Agreement and the local realities.

In the PDET municipalities, ensuring coordinated efforts with regional and national entities to guarantee that the implementation of the Municipal and Regional Pacts is conducted with the same participatory criteria used for their development. Likewise, it is important to consider mechanisms to update the PDET with approaches that are equally participatory to ensure progress in its execution and that it is perceived as an effective participatory process and not an unfulfilled agreement.

Manage local participation spaces that facilitate the permanent dialogue of the municipal administration with the different communities of the municipality and in the territories to obtain an assessment based on the reality and their changes, strengthening local democracy.

For the actors of the peace process

There are powerful opportunities for the peace signatories of the former FARC-EP who continue living in the AETCR and those who have started their life outside of these; for members of law enforcement; and for third party civilians who caused damage on the communities. All of these actors can design projects to repair the affected territories, guided by the local concepts of peace and the needs of the communities, as specific acts of restoration with greater levels of legitimacy because they include their perceptions. Examples include the reconstruction of a school that was destroyed and used as a military base, or

the reconstruction of a bridges demolished by the Army in the Cañón de la Llorona in Dabeiba.

These actions can be framed in the JEP's transitional justice processes, in ordinary rulings, or in the Inter-American Human Rights System. However, they should not necessarily depend on a judicial process which marks its realization as an obligation to obtain legal certainty.

Communities see the accountability and justice mechanisms as opportunities to rebuild trust that has been lost; seeing the effort it takes to build with people who are seen as capable of destroying transforms mutual perceptions. It is crucial to take advantage of these opportunities in the community rituals and forms of justice and collective work.

For peace institutions

The institutions of transitional justice and reparation for victims consist of those stemming from the 2016 Peace Agreement, including the JEP and the UBPDP; those emerging from Law 1448 of 2011, the Victims' Law, such as the UARIV; and other institutions implementing programs stemming from the Agreement, such as the ART through the PDET. All of these institutions can transform the perception of the affected communities and the victims that see a lack of balance between the size and number of institutions focused on these issues and the benefits they receive.

Beyond the obvious need to expedite reparation and healing processes—a specific opportunity for their own healing and the JEP public recognition hearings, the UARIV collective reparation plans, and the PDET, is to strengthen the participatory process. The objective with this is to align their content with the local concepts, ensuring greater legitimacy and sustainability in time. Said participation must go beyond a merely consultative nature and be reflected in plans that genuinely incorporate the contributions of communities.

The educational and dissemination processes pertaining to transitional justice have left a mark, evident in the fact that the communities know the peace institutions and the language of the public justice policy. However, we still have ways to go.

It is important to translate the technical language and legalese of the transitional justice institutions—which focus on complex legal and administrative processes—into ethical everyday considerations that make sense in the community. Challenges in this regard include explaining the relation between reparation and development, between reparation and the reintegration of former combatants, and the meaning of healing in the justice system for peace.

In addition, it is crucial that the measurement of progress (whether in the process for reparation, special justice, truth, and to search for missing persons) is done in ways that are relevant to the community. That is, the metrics pertaining to achievements must be envisioned not just for those responsible for public policies, but to understand the trends and perceptions in the communities that are, at the end of the day, the place where the legitimacy of peace and transitional justice is at stake.

For the public communications sector

Redirect the debate on peace and transitional justice, marked by legal and individualistic paradigms that, almost inevitably, lead to dichotomous and partial views of peace. For instance, that victims and perpetrators are intrinsically different: some deprived of agency and forced to wait for justice and solutions; others holding the political power to decide whether to participate and meet expectations clearly regulated by the judicial system.

This specifically implies recognizing the category of “victim”; although ubiquitous, it also encloses many meanings that are often contradictory and complex. The legal system uses a strict legal meaning: the victim is the subject who has seen their rights violated and who has a need for a redress presumed to be effective to restore the situation prior to the violation in the most complete way possible. This legal fiction gives content to the truth, justice, reparation, and guarantees of non-repetition: the implementation of these forms of transitional justice is expected to restore the full citizenship of the victim.

However, this conception may overlook the fact that victimhood—beyond being a temporary and extraordinary condition resolved through legal processes—becomes, in everyday life, a perception and an identity. Only by accepting the victimization and emotionally committing oneself to the role can a person build the necessary resilience to effectively demand their rights. However, said commitment to the role leads to developing a long-term identity: the victim demands rights, however, even if they obtain them, they may continue being a victim insofar as they witnessed an uncomfortable history.

This requires that civil society decentralize, as much as possible, the debate on transitional justice from strictly legal points of view, which are often abstruse for the legal person, to approaches that are more comprehensive and interdisciplinary. The public debate must include and normalize mental health and psychosocial support; the understanding of intergenerational trauma which is activated in the experience of communities; the recognition of spiritual and religious factors and of ancestral knowledge; and the historical memory of collective victimization transmitted in the family and community narratives.

For academia

The EPI methodology is based on a participatory approach that considers local voices in the research and measurement of, mainly, the field of peace. However, we reproduce extractive knowledge practices rooted in academia and different non-governmental organizations.

Overcoming those extractive concepts of knowledge creation is essential: not only is it correct in terms of regulations, but it also leads to better information and to a more constructive and sustainable relation between academic and non-academic actors.

The extractive knowledge paradigms, which see the community as an external object to research, deprive them of agency and produce partial visions frozen in time. They also give way to behaviors that generate a sense of distrust: communities feel used and exploited, without any consideration once they have shared their information, or even forced to share their stories over and over without any results, in a repetition that becomes humiliating.

As part of this reflection, we recommend (as a requirement of accountability and joint creation with the communities participating in the research) developing processes to present the results with methodologies and languages adapted to different realities and needs. One of the methodologies that we have found to be profoundly valuable for the research and for the communication of findings is photovoice. This participatory methodology not only improves the authenticity of and trust in the local narratives, but it also underscores the potential of the communities to contribute to the analysis and production of social knowledge.

For international organizations, donors, and peacebuilding supporters

International agencies must consider supporting initiatives tied to all the dimensions of peace included in this report, accepting that for communities peace is a complex concept that can be adjusted to the evolution of the contexts, but always comprehensive. Frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals or the human rights framework, contribute to recognizing this complexity. However, it is essential to recognize that these are very abstract frameworks that lead to deductive processes of everyday reality. Consequently, they are difficult to translate into the language and experience of the communities.

International institutions involved in the peace and transitional justice process have an important priority in measuring the impact of their interventions and local sustainability. These measurements should

transcend formal and quantitative exercises, often carried out by external actors who possess extremely specialized knowledge.

Per the article, Flipping the Power Dynamics in Measurement and Evaluation: “the everyday indicators hold the potential to redefine the direction of accountability in peacebuilding and development work. In contrast to the traditional outward and upward accountability, the indicators insist on a more robust, expansive, and inclusive understanding of accountability, one that recognizes and prioritizes accountability to the communities themselves. These models transform the traditional script, acknowledging that local communities, as those directly affected by programs and interventions, should have a decisive say in defining and measuring outcomes. Through these models, communities are not merely passive recipients of programs but active participants in shaping and evaluating them”.¹

Participatory methodologies, including the EPI, can strengthen a co-creation approach both in the content of projects and in their evaluation. These methodologies require time and resources, but they guarantee an inclusive process, transforming the relation between the aid workers and the beneficiary communities, thereby moving toward a real development of a relationship of partners.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

NOTE

- ¹ Eliza Urwin, Aisalkyn Botoeva, Rosario Arias, Oscar Vargas, Pamina Firchow; Flipping the Power Dynamics in Measurement and Evaluation: International Aid and the Potential for a Grounded Accountability Model. *Negotiation Journal* 2023; 39 (4): 401–426. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/nejo.12448>



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Colombia@everydaypeaceindicators.org



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