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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Democratic Governance

USAID's Democratic Governance program has five components: Human Rights, Justice, Regional Governance, Political Parties, and Labor Rights. The annual budgets are: FY 2007, \$25 million; FY 2008, \$35 million, FY 2009, \$24 million; and FY 2010, \$30 million (request).

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- **Human Rights:** This component supports Colombian government institutions, the UN High Commission on Human Rights, and Colombian civil society to strengthen respect for human right and adherence to international human rights principals and laws. The objectives are to strengthen State capacity and accountability with regard to human rights; improve human rights public policies; foster a culture of human rights; strengthen the capacity of civil society to promote human rights public policies and monitor the performance of government institutions; and promote victims' rights to truth, justice, and reparations. This is the largest USAID human rights program in the world with an annual budget of \$15 million in FY 2008.
- **Justice:** This component supports the implementation of legal reforms at the national, regional and local levels to foster a more transparent, democratic, and effective Colombian judiciary. The purpose is to broaden access to free and timely legal services for disenfranchised, conflict impacted, and/or geographically marginalized Colombians by expanding capacity in four core areas: effective national implementation of the new accusatory criminal justice system; strengthened court administration; expanded access to justice, especially for the disenfranchised including availability of public defense, legal aid, justice houses, and alternative dispute resolution; and improved civil society capacity to monitor, advocate for, and assist in national justice reforms.
- **Regional Governance Consolidation:** This component supports the GOC Center of Coordination for Integrated Action (CCAI) to promote state presence in underserved areas that have recently been taken back from illegal armed groups, thereby contributing to stabilization. RGCP works in three of 11 priority CCAI regions, Pacific (Bajo y Medio Atrato), Caribbean (Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta), and Andean (Catatumbo). The program focuses on building capacity of local institutions to implement good governance practices and improving local and regional governments' ability to deliver quality health and education services as well as citizen security.
- **Political Parties:** This component seeks to improve the quality of political competition in Colombia to promote positive democratic changes in political parties. The main objectives are to support the effective implementation of the 2003 electoral reform which consolidated the number of political parties; strengthen the rules and structures of parliamentary groups; and encourages internal party reform measures.
- **Labor Rights:** This component, which will begin in October 2009, will support labor unions to reorganize their structures and membership into broad-based, sustainable organizations to represent workers in important economic sectors; develop and promote proposals for sound legal reforms to increase labor rights protection of workers; and build the management and bargaining capacity of union leaders and members.

PROGRESS/RESULTS TO DATE

- GOC Human Rights Early Warning System established to prevent human rights abuses in 22 regions.
- 4,745 at-risk persons (human rights defenders, labor activists, and community and social leaders) assisted by GOC Human Rights Protection Program.
- 45 *Casas de Justicia* (justice houses) established which have handled approximately 6.1 million cases.
- 964 Judges, 1,566 Public Defenders and 342 law students and legal clinic practitioners trained in new procedures of the accusatory criminal justice system. 45 oral court rooms built or refurbished.
- 11,973 people benefited through 25 small infrastructure projects in health and education in 23 municipalities.