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# RECONCILIATION FOR THE PEACE, CULTURE AND POSSIBILITY OF LIFE ACTIVITY (IRENE)

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Promoting a culture of peace through reconciliation, cooperation, and education.

## OVERVIEW

The Reconciliation for the Peace, Culture and Possibility of Life Activity (IRENE) builds the social fabric among victims, ex-combatants, and host communities in conflict-affected municipalities. It does this by strengthening skills and attitudes associated with a culture of peace and coexistence. IRENE promotes safe spaces where beneficiaries can come together to reconcile differences, create common understandings, and harness peaceful conflict resolution skills. IRENE also uses education to develop and scale-up conflict resolution skills and peacebuilding values in the communities where it works. IRENE is implemented in the municipalities of Cucuta, Bogotá, Ibagué and Pitalito, and it runs from March 2020 to March 2022.

## COMPONENTS

### STRENGTHENING *PACICULTURA*

IRENE strengthens individual and community knowledge, understanding and internalization of a culture of peace, otherwise known as *pacicultura*. The activity works with beneficiaries to: 1) reconcile differences; 2) cultivate conflict resolution skills; 3) transform stigmas and stereotypes; and 4) foster a culture of self-care and care for others based on respect, recognition, and responsibility.

### DEVELOPING THE ITINERANT SCHOOL

IRENE established an itinerant school to train community peace advocates called *pacicultores*. Through this school, *pacicultores* learn about human rights and peace as a culture. *Pacicultores* also learn about peace and reconciliation processes around the world, and they develop the necessary skills to scale-up IRENE's peacebuilding and conflict resolution methodology in their communities.

## RESULTS

- Strengthened 400 conflict victims, demobilized ex-combatants and host community members' attitudes and skills associated with *pacicultura*;
- Succeeded in helping 77 percent of participants use newly acquired tools for peaceful conflict resolution;
- Helped students in the itinerant school to develop peacebuilding skills, values and knowledge related to *pacicultura*; and
- Encouraged 206 participants to overcome the fear and stigma they associated with conflict victims and demobilized ex-combatants.