



**USAID**  
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## EVALUATION

# Final Performance Evaluation of the Public Policy Program

October 2014

This evaluation was made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this evaluation are the sole responsibility of its authors Keri Culver, Edna Bonilla Seba, Paola Benítez and Management Systems International and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

# FINAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION: PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAM

**Management Systems International**

200 12<sup>th</sup> Street South, Suite 1200

Arlington, VA 22202

[www.msiworldwide.com](http://www.msiworldwide.com)

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# CONTENTS

- Acronyms ..... i
- Executive Summary ..... ii
- Evaluation Purpose & Evaluation Questions ..... 1
- Project Background..... 2
- Evaluation methods & limitations ..... 4
  - Design..... 4
  - Sampling..... 4
    - Respondent samples ..... 4
    - Activity Sample ..... 4
  - Methods..... 5
    - Document review..... 5
    - In-depth interviews ..... 5
    - Case studies ..... 5
  - Data analysis ..... 5
  - Limitations ..... 5
- Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations ..... 6
  - 1. Relationships and Influence between the GoC, AECOM and USAID..... 6
  - 2. International Best Practices ..... 8
  - 3. PPP’s effectiveness ..... 10
  - 4. Quality of PPP’s Technical Assistance..... 14
  - 5. Institutional Strengthening..... 16
- Additional Findings: Project Management ..... 18

# ACRONYMS

CONPES	Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social; GoC regulatory document
EVAL	Evaluation and Analysis for Learning
GoC	Government of Colombia
INCODER	Colombian Rural Development Institute
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPP	Public Policy Program
PWS	Program Work Statement
SOW	Statement of Work
TA	Technical assistance
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purpose of the evaluation was to extract institutional strengthening and policy reform lessons from the experience of the USAID-funded Public Policy Program (PPP). Results will inform future Mission project design and implementation efforts.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The USAID-funded Public Policy Program, implemented by AECOM, helped the Government of Colombia (GoC) develop policy and build institutional capacity from 2010 to 2014. PPP provided technical expertise to form, adopt and support the implementation of public policies, focused on the following thematic pillars: Land and Rural Development, Victims, and Consolidation. It also supported the following cross-cutting issues considered critical to each pillar: mechanisms at the territorial level; sustainable livelihoods and access to finance; environment, biodiversity and climate change; and gender.

## DESIGN, METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The evaluation design was systematically qualitative. The team reviewed activity documentation to understand PPP's interventions, clients, modes of operation, accomplishments and challenges. The team then aligned the many policy and institutional strengthening contracts executed against the higher-order objectives they sought to address. The team interviewed a select set of GoC clients; USAID Contracting Officer's Representative and pillar-based Technical Monitors; and AECOM staff and consultants. Five case studies highlight lessons learned and best practices.

The team addressed the following challenges:

- (1) PPP was executed in an environment where priorities, political relationships, and USAID's own targets and goals were in constant flux. This complexity and dynamism means that the multiple facets and perspectives around PPP's achievements can be contradictory or unclear, even after extensive data collection and analysis.
- (2) Some actors (key GoC stakeholders, AECOM staff and contractors, and interested parties at USAID) have changed positions since the project was implemented. Some individuals sought for interview were unreachable; and
- (3) The absence of a Performance Management Plan and baseline data for the complex activities meant the team had to rely on the Program Work Statement (PWS) as a performance measurement framework.

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

PPP generally achieved its objectives. Many of its implementation approaches should be integrated into future USAID/Colombia policy reform initiatives. AECOM recruited and managed a highly competent staff and an unusually large group of consultants, managed GoC relations with aplomb, was very highly regarded by the GoC, and achieved a great deal. While administrative matters held the project back at first, these issues were largely overcome in time. USAID/AECOM relations were productive, though rocky and stressful at times, with a compressed agenda (from five to three years, eight months for implementation) and demanding, politically contentious thematic areas.

PPP experience indicates technical assistance in Colombia is most effective when it links senior GoC officials with senior consultants as a committed change team over the significant time periods required to affect change. Expatriate assistance is helpful to integrate international best practices, but this is most effectively accomplished through a thoughtful integration of Colombian expertise and professional linkages in adapting those practices to the complex Colombian context. USAID can most effectively achieve its policy reforms when those targets are aligned with GoC priorities and when those policies are realistically scaled: fewer GoC entities, focused institutional reform or establishing institutions from scratch, linking national and regional levels, etc.

Policy reform projects – entering as they do into inner government sanctums and touching on important national (and minor individual) political interests –require USAID sensitivity in implementation. USAID must clearly define its policy priorities, based on its Country Development and Cooperation Strategy; understand which of these coincide with GoC interests through direct and ongoing USG/GoC dialogue; and work with the implementing partner to develop strategies to achieve them. After that, a light touch to USAID intervention may be called for, enabling the IP and GoC units to navigate the sensitive processes. For this scheme to work, the IP must invest heavily in proactive communication so that USAID can be kept abreast of developments and to build IP/USAID confidence and collaboration. The importance of adept diplomacy and effective project management cannot be overstated.

Themes for intervention must be selected carefully. USAID should consider periodically (perhaps annually) convening a project advisory committee – including GoC, thematic experts and civil society leaders – to revisit the policy agenda, discuss challenges and plan for the coming period.

Designating themes as “cross-cutting” can be fatal, particularly if not aligned with expert staff, IP, GoC and USAID commitment and budgetary resources. This has been the fate with themes such as “environment” and “gender” in many projects and it occurred with PPP, too. If environment, for example, is important, make it an objective unto itself – or recognize that attention will falter.

Policy projects often are thought of as finite, seeking to have a quick impact and then leave. In contrast, PPP demonstrates how effectiveness must be seen as navigating a river of local policy and political dynamics for change. Many of the talented staff came from prior USAID efforts and many of the themes began in prior projects and continue with later projects (such as work with victims, reconciliation, and land restitution to support peace.) Thus, while accountability and results orientation remains paramount, success must be considered in the context of this longer effort to support peace in Colombia. It should be managed by USAID as a portfolio of medium-term investments that need prolonged tending over time rather than quick purchases with an iron grip. All stakeholders involved in each policy effort need to examine realistically the obstacles and potential timelines of a given effort, and plan accordingly.

In this context, the Mission should integrate any specific policy projects into the rest of its work. Thus, firewalls between sectors, between policy and institutional strengthening and policy change, and between national dynamics and reaching local government units must be carefully managed by USAID and communicated to implementing partners to achieve maximum efficiency and impact.

# EVALUATION PURPOSE & EVALUATION QUESTIONS

## EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purpose of this performance evaluation is to extract lessons from the experience of the USAID-funded Public Policy Program (PPP) regarding institutional strengthening and policy reform in Colombia. Key questions on government-level relationships, appropriate management structures within USAID and the implementer, quality and effectiveness are intended to provide information on policy reform and institutional strengthening processes and results, to improve future Mission project design and implementation efforts.

The evaluation is particularly opportune in that further policy-related activities are being designed and solicitations issued at the time of writing. As a result, the evaluation should be useful for the program and technical offices for whom policy efforts are current or imminent.

This evaluation also meets the USAID requirement to conduct at least one performance evaluation of activities that are larger than average (in dollar terms) for a given Mission Development Objective.

## EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions around which this evaluation was based are as follows. (For a full description, please see the evaluation's Statement of Work in Annex V.)

- A. To what extent were international best practices introduced vs. relying on Colombian expertise and models? How effective was the approach?
- B. To what extent did AECOM's technical assistance feed into policy development and adoption?
- C. How effective was PPP in assisting the GoC to adopt policy changes?
- D. What was the level of quality in assistance provided?
- E. What characteristics of AECOM's work supported institutional strengthening most effectively and which were less useful?

# PROJECT BACKGROUND

PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION DATA	
Program Title:	Public Policy Program (PPP)
Award Number:	AID-514-C-11-00001
Award Dates:	October 2010 – October 2015, accelerated to May 2014
Funding:	USD \$22,487,555, increased to \$27,387,555
Implementing Organization:	AECOM
COR:	Norberto Martinez

PPP was intended to provide technical management expertise to form, adopt and implement public policies and GoC structural reforms designed to break the cycle of poverty that leads marginalized, poor communities in areas with weak state presence to undertake illicit crop production and illegal activities, fueling violence and the further degradation of Colombia's social, economic and environmental resources. AECOM supported a wide variety of GoC policy initiatives, including, but not limited to, land reform, access to financial services, labor and vulnerable populations.

PPP was designed at a time when peace negotiations and a potential end to conflict did not seem to be an immediate possibility. The design was focused on general policies addressing important issues of application to all Colombians, intended to improve the economic and social conditions of vulnerable Colombians through effective rights-based institutional presence.

In its first phase, from October 2010 until March 2012, PPP worked through six components:

1. Land policy;
2. Access to finance;
3. Policies toward conflict-affected populations;
4. Support for decentralization and improved public economic management;
5. Labor issues; and
6. Environmental policy.

As the political climate in Colombia changed over time, so did USAID objectives in the development of public policies and the urgency in program implementation. USAID decided to pursue policy areas critical to consolidation of good governance throughout the country, many of them specifically related to new GOC policies and the peace agenda. This shift in USAID objectives was expressed by the modification of the implementation contract concluded in September 2012, providing additional resources as well as accelerating implementation. Contract Modification 3 (March 1, 2012) changed the results established within the Performance Work Statement (PWS) to a new three-pillar structure: Land Policy, Victims Policy, and Consolidation Policy. The modification also replaced key personnel and realigned the budget.

PPP attempted to focus on strategic interventions and promoting synergies across a wide range of GoC and USAID priorities and regional programs. It supported a number of cross-cutting issues considered critical to each pillar to ensure integration of policy implementation at the regional level. These included budgeting and coordination mechanisms at the territorial level; sustainable livelihoods and access to finance; environment, biodiversity and climate change; and gender.



The GoC demands and needs that drove the PPP model were complex. The GoC needed to establish the Victims' and Land Restitution Units, ensure their capacity to implement new legislation and policy frameworks, and improve coordination with departmental and municipal governments. Regional offices were still being created and staff trained while having to process massive numbers of restitution and reparations claims. Similarly, the Consolidation & Territorial Reconstruction Unit was still hiring personnel in the regions and faced major challenges to respond rapidly to community needs and coordinate service provision from different GoC agencies and local governments.

Provision of social services, housing, and support for income generation to victims and communities in regions affected by conflict remained a challenge. Despite significant budget allocations identified in the Victims' CONPES regulatory document and the revised National Consolidation Plan, GoC service delivery did not respond effectively to the needs of victims, ethnic minorities, and consolidation zones. Novel funding and service delivery methods were needed to reach vulnerable populations and regions devastated by decades of internal conflict. The GoC had to eliminate rigidities that restricted service provision, create conditions for communities to build their own infrastructure, and provide services that took into account gender and ethnic disparities as well as victims' physical, psychological and social rehabilitation needs.

To help GoC institutions reach their goals, PPP:

1. Supported the Victims', Land Restitution, and Consolidation Units, and INCODER and MARD to strengthen their operations;
2. Worked with institutions to coordinate across government and to extend from national policy formulation to implementation at regional and local levels; and
3. Harmonized sectorial policies to promote coordinated, effective programming for priority populations and regions.

With frequent changes to its mission, and the output-oriented nature of the PWS structure (PPP never had a PMP), PPP seems to have been focused on executing its many deliverables. PPP served as a vehicle to meet the diverse policy demands of the GoC and various technical offices within USAID. Although international consultants and subcontracts to Colombian firms were also used, PPP chiefly met demand by issuing contracts to individual Colombian consultants to work individually, or in teams, to complete assigned deliverables. Over the course of the contract, PPP issued contracts to over 400 individuals and firms, with some receiving more than one contract.

PPP closed during the course of the evaluation.

# EVALUATION METHODS & LIMITATIONS

## Design

The evaluation design was systematically qualitative. PPP’s work to support policy and institutional strengthening was complex, with multiple stakeholders and potential spoilers, in a context of evolving political will and interests. Program effects are nationwide and diffuse, making quantitative study less helpful than probing the *how* and *why*. The evaluation therefore included in-depth, semi-structured interviews, document review, and case studies.

Resultant data are necessarily subjective: each respondent is likely to have a unique perspective on the topic under discussion. To be able to review those variances and weigh the values placed on them, the evaluation design is based on triangulating sources. For each case study, for example, perspectives were sought from GoC, USAID, and AECOM staff and consultants.

Evaluation methods are described fully in Annex II, including the team’s Getting to Answers matrix, describing how data were collected and analyzed to respond to the evaluation questions.

## Sampling

Annex III includes the full list of sources consulted, and a disaggregation of the sample. The samples were selected per the following parameters.


### Respondent samples

The evaluation team conducted 36 in-depth interviews (19 women; 17 men) including 19 AECOM staff and consultants, five USAID staff, and 12 GoC actors. Of the individuals consulted, 25 were related to the case studies. To the extent possible, responses of individual interviewees are anonymized in the report, to ensure candor.

### Activity Sample

In concert with USAID technical and program offices, the team selected a purposive sample of PPP activities for the evaluation. Cases were classified by their predominant area of effort (policy or institutional strengthening) and whether impressions of program results tended toward the positive, or toward the negative. The interviews captured a fuller picture of each case and, especially, its lessons learned. This sample includes the following case studies:

**Table 1: Case studies**



<b>Policy effort</b>	Access to financial services	Rural development law
<b>Institutional strengthening</b>	Victims’ Unit	Consolidation Unit

In addition, while data collection was underway, USAID requested that the evaluation team examine a fifth case study, on income generation activities undertaken with the GoC.

## **Methods**

### **Document review**

The team reviewed work plans, quarterly reports, and PWS for the life of PPP. Deliverables for each case study were also read closely. Each case study also required a review of policy and/or institutional strengthening documentation.

### **In-depth interviews**

The team triangulated data from in-depth interviews from with GOC, AECOM and USAID perspectives. Interview guides were tailored for each respondent to answer the relevant evaluation questions from the evaluation design, per the individual respondent's role in or with the program. Sample instruments are included in Annex IV. The team adapted these questions in the field as themes emerged in an individual interview or across a set of interviews.

### **Case studies**

As a method, case studies are tailored to fit the purpose for which they are used. In this evaluation, cases integrate perspectives on a particular policy reform or institutional strengthening effort, about which actors shared varying opinions and experiences – even contradictory ones. Case studies also required secondary data review, including policy documents and deliverables, results data, institutional strengthening manuals and work plans.

## **Data analysis**

The evaluation team answered the evaluation questions by systematically analyzing interview transcriptions to discern patterns, convergence and divergence of opinions and experience, and trends. Interview data were coded according to the themes and dynamics most important for answering the evaluation questions. The team also noted emergent codes – that is, themes that occurred in the responses that had not been considered in the evaluation questions. In this way, the team attempted to capture unintended consequences of the PPP activities.

## **Limitations**

The team faced the following challenges:

- (1) PPP was executed in an environment where priorities, political relationships, and USAID's own targets and goals were in constant flux. This complexity and dynamism means that the multiple facets and perspectives around the Program's achievements can be contradictory or unclear, even after extensive data collection and analysis.
- (2) Some actors (key GoC stakeholders, for example, or AECOM staff and contractors, or even interested parties at USAID) have changed positions since the project was implemented. Some individuals sought for interview were unreachable; and
- (3) The absence of a Performance Management Plan and baseline data for the complex activities meant the team had to rely on the Program Work Statement (PWS) as a performance measurement framework.

# FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This section discusses the key findings, conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation research. These elements are organized by a set of key themes that emerged from the field data, and which respond to the evaluation questions that the research was designed to answer. Also included are case studies of five PPP interventions, as described in the section on sampling. These are highlighted in text boxes, with particular attention to the ways these particular experiences exemplify the work of PPP, highlight challenges, or answer one or more of the evaluation questions.

A table listing the detailed Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations is in Annex I.

## 1. Relationships and Influence between the GoC, AECOM and USAID

*Evaluation question 1: To what extent did AECOM influence the GoC in defining its policy decisions in the content of the project deliverables?*

**Summary:** AECOM/ GoC/USAID relations were important for success in PPP efforts. The working style AECOM fostered – flexible, collaborative, high-level working groups – was widely appreciated. AECOM was able to influence policy through the quality of its teams. Success was more difficult with complex and cross-agency policies and could become variable as political commitment waxed and waned over time.

## FINDINGS

Government respondents roundly appreciated the PPP consultant teams with whom they worked. The PPP teams brought innovation and worked collaboratively with government partners to reach consensus. One called this style of work “useful, pertinent and very productive.” Others reported that they valued the consultants’ skills, the extended timelines of support and, particularly, the collaborative style of work. Evidence pointed to genuine collaboration, rather than solutions imposed from outside. For example, respondents reported that the GoC always gave feedback on the deliverables, allowing for a follow up and control of the technical assistance (TA) provided by PPP.

PPP leadership, staff and consultants used their high-level connections to open doors, and create good relationships from the start of PPP activities. Respondents frequently noted the need to work with the leaders of various entities, rather than with mid-level functionaries, because decision-making is centered in the heads of offices. At the same time, having such high-level and close contacts occasionally resulted in an awkward situation where USAID staff felt excluded from the communications.

The following challenges to influencing policy were repeatedly mentioned:

- (1) *The wider the participation of multiple GoC agencies, in general, the more challenging the*

*influence*. There was competition for resources among agencies and varying levels of commitment from each. In the Income Generation mission, for example, respondents reported that various partners in the working group – Ministries of Work and Commerce, for example, and the national apprenticeship office (SENA) – did not fully incorporate their work with the round table back into their home institutions. This limited the long-term effects of the income generation activity.

- (2) *Vacillating political priorities during implementation greatly affected the influence PPP had on its GoC interlocutors' decision-making*. Several respondents noted that productive discussions around the Rural Development Law affected how development is conceived and planned. However, for what were cited as political reasons, the law was not passed.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Diverse experts brought innovation and interesting debates to the decision-making (such as Colombian and international best practices; see section below for greater detail on this theme.)

Factors that supported successful outcomes included:

- 1) Extended efforts
- 2) Building consensus through collaborative work (rather than imposing solutions from without)
- 3) PPP staff and consultant connections with high-level GoC actors with decision-making power

Factors that inhibited success or increased the likelihood of difficulties included changes in GoC political priorities and activities in which multiple agencies were responsible for pieces of a reform.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Future policy activities should replicate PPP's staffing patterns of high-level staff and consultants, working closely with high-level government contacts, to help empower GoC staff to act. Future projects should replicate PPP's practice of working hand in hand with the GoC on each activity, over time, seeking consensus, as a team. Seek common ground between USAID and GoC priorities (see the following recommendation) in selecting thematic areas and priorities.

Implementing Partners (IPs) for future policy projects should support a high-level, ongoing round table with the GoC that provides a space for proposing thematic areas for joint action. If a given theme is not part of both USAID and GoC priorities, it may well be best to drop or postpone it rather than continue without consensus. Let this process set the Mission's expectations and goals.

IPs and USAID must plan for the likelihood that any effort that involves inter-agency arrangements will require more time, more effort, more consensus, and more political will. Such efforts are an order of magnitude more challenging than working with just one entity.

## The Income Generation Mission

The Mission was led by the Department for Social Prosperity (DPS). It exemplifies the strengths and limitations of PPP support in a specific policy effort. Key success factors included:

- A space for discussion and consensus, based on national and international research.
- Efficient work style, well-connected experts with international experience, and professional, committed DPS team.
- Identification of policy or institutional gaps and acceptable solutions.
- Concrete diagnosis and deliverables on management, rural/ urban implementation, institutional coordination, and monitoring.

Limitations included:

- Results varied. GOC entities (SENA, MARD, ADR, Ministries of Interior and Commerce) participated weakly and did not take shared agreements back to their home institutions.
- Six months was too brief to address this complex theme and accompany interventions. Action planning left much “pending.”

The strong relationship with DPS and their constant participation was key to the process. If the GOC counterpart is not this involved or capable, it is unlikely to be successful.

## 2. International Best Practices

*Evaluation question 2: To what extent were international best practices introduced, versus relying on Colombian expertise and models? How effective was the approach?*

**Summary:** International best practices (IBPs) were important in many of PPP’s policy and institutional strengthening efforts. They came in the form of international round tables and seminars, consultant experiences, literature review, and specific cases known to teams or to individual consultants. Respondents were also nearly unanimous in saying that IBPs were not sufficient tools on their own, and had to be adapted substantially to meet Colombia’s unique institutions and conflict contexts.

## FINDINGS

Consultants, GoC, USAID, and PPP staff reported that PPP activities sought out IBPs when relevant to their work. One USAID respondent was concerned that this consultation was not systematic or thorough, perhaps thereby missing an opportunity to place Colombia’s efforts in a wider context and choose the optimal policy response. PPP staff and consultants, as well as GoC respondents, did not describe systematic attention to IBPs, but rather reviews that differed by activity and thematic area. There were, for example, international seminars about relevant issues, literature reviews, use of consultants’ experiences overseas, and specific practices from other countries known by to the consultant or GoC teams, or researched by them. There were reports also of the use of national best practices, such as Antioquia’s experience with victims’ reparations.

Respondents noted several specific examples. In PPP’s work with the Consolidation Unit, for example, the team made use of international cases from Brazil, Mexico and Chile. With the Victims’ Unit, the team examined the Antioquia model as well as examples from former Yugoslavia. A respondent from the Ministry of Agriculture cited best international practice cases that were reviewed in their PPP activities from Brazil, Peru, Chile, Africa and Southeast Asia and were analyzed to determine what could be incorporated in Colombia.

Respondents frequently noted, however, that IBPs were insufficient on their own as inputs to the planning process in Colombian institutions. “Forums, events and studies are probably less useful elements, we really need more tangible support,” recounted one. A government respondent said the IBPs that were consulted for their work were too abstract and with insufficient detail, while a USAID respondent added that when an international case provided good detail, those details would not work in Colombian legal or social conditions.

One such case involved international experts helping with the rural cadaster. Their help when visiting Colombia was useful, but their international experience (according to the USAID respondent) was less useful. Another government respondent related a similar mismatch with IBPs on income generation. When respondents were asked why they felt the IBPs were not adaptable for Colombia, they mentioned Colombia’s particularities because of the ongoing conflict and the overarching importance of addressing victims’ concerns here, which is an order of magnitude larger than in other environments. The experience of providing services to victims in Antioquia was cited by PPP staff and government as particularly useful since it was a proven experience in a related context.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

IBPs were generally effectively integrated to PPP activities. There was variation in the degree to which IBPs were incorporated, in part because of the differences in how IBPs were brought to the table. As a result, it seemed there was a variable level of confidence on USAID’s part about whether there was systematic consideration of options from international cases. The focus appeared to be on inclusion of IBPs as part of deliberations on policy design and formulation, with less attention given to IBPs that supported aspects of implementation.

GoC partners valued the support in cutting-edge themes that IBPs put on the table, while also noting that these inputs were not always sufficiently tangible and detailed. PPP staff and consultants also brought national best practices, and the ability to incorporate IBPs in ways that were appropriate to the Colombian context. This came from their high-level technical expertise and knowledge of the institutional environment.

IBPs were useful inputs in some cases, were perhaps not considered systematically in others, and were rarely definitive responses in any case.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Future projects should always scan international experience for applicable best practices to address policy changes. If USAID is concerned that IBPs are not adequately being considered, it should monitor their systematic inclusion activity by activity, and include in work planning that each policy or institutional strengthening activity effort be accompanied by a systematic review of relevant options. The options pursued should go beyond policy designs to focus instead on the ways in which new and reformed policies can best be implemented in challenging environments.

At the same time, future projects should remain flexible about how these IBPs are sourced and incorporated. Remember that the IBPs put into practice must be relevant, instructive, and apt for incorporation into Colombian institutions and contexts.

## THE LONG-TERM NATURE OF POLICY REFORM

**Findings:** PPP staff worked on the same policy efforts over time: from ADAM/MIDAS to PPP to The Land Project, building political will for significant institutional change over time. The more contentious and political a contemplated reform, the longer it takes to build a coalition for change. Some complex changes initiated under PPP (such as rural development and financial service policies) are only now coming to fruition, a year after work ended in PPP.

Another example is from the peace talks in Havana, where the first point discussed was rural development and the integrated, “territorial” approach, vital issues in a post-conflict situation. “We brought those people together and now our proposal on land and rural development comprises the discourse.”

Shortening the program to three years, eight months contradicted this need to tackle long-term, controversial themes with many interests that need to be included if a reform is to succeed.

**Conclusion:** The ultimate impacts of USAID-funded policy projects are often not clear during the project period. Sometimes they come to fruition later. But, the analysis and processes begun are vital to subsequent project generations. This is also true of the professionals who work on these projects, who are hired by subsequent projects and/or move into public service. They are important resources.

**Recommendation:** USAID’s policy reform efforts should be thought of as a portfolio of initiatives that mature at different times. USAID should monitor the progress of various initiatives and accelerate or pause activities accordingly – recognizing that ultimate impact may go beyond the project period.

### 3. PPP’s effectiveness

*Evaluation question 3: How effective was the Public Policy Program in assisting the GoC to adopt policy changes?*

**Summary:** Effective adoption of policy changes varied by thematic pillar, as these coincided with the political environment and GoC interests. Cross-cutting themes, which were to be applied to each pillar, were quite variable in their effectiveness. It is important to examine effectiveness in terms of USAID’s long-term policy efforts, and their particular focus on national and regional implementation of the reforms. In sum, there is strong evidence of important successes in PPP’s support to new GoC policies and reforms, as well as a set of valuable lessons learned. The evaluation’s answer to this question is linked to the next question, on the quality of PPP assistance.

## FINDINGS

### *The three pillars*

Timing was propitious for PPP, which began operations alongside a new government in Colombia. Many government offices were highly motivated to take advantage of PPP’s opportunities for technical assistance (TA) and support to new policies. At the same time, there were circumstantial challenges that affected the new government and PPP’s effectiveness. An *ola invernal*, a particular winter storm, caused a humanitarian crisis near the start of the program; agrarian strikes applied pressure for particular kinds of land reform; peace talks were in the offing; and other national and regional circumstances opened windows of opportunity, or closed them. Working hand in hand with government interests and requests for assistance, PPP was often poised to take advantage of opportunities that arose. Government respondents to this evaluation frequently lauded this



flexibility.

This flexibility is notable in the context of AECOM’s contract and PWS and work planning. It was a balancing act to maintain flexibility before government counterparts, while also maintaining the standards and benchmarks demanded by USAID in these documents (and changed substantially after the close of the first year.) Nevertheless, there is every indication that PPP was able to balance these two sets of overlapping, but not completely coincident interests. First, the PWS in Year One required workshops and papers, but the teams were able to adapt the content and the duration of TA support as long as the document or event was delivered as promised. Quarterly reports show the achievement of milestones almost always precisely as planned, even when plans changed.

Second, USAID CPARS (Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System) ratings were consistently high for the first three years of the contract, receiving consistent Exceptional and Very Good ratings for product quality and management of key personnel. PPP was also praised for the acceleration of its goals in line with opportunities provided by the Santos government.

On the other hand, the most frequent obstacles were political in nature. The Consolidation Unit, for example, was unable to secure agreement on a CONPES document because of political disagreements over its content and role. “A technical document became a political football,” one respondent reported. When leadership changed hands, work carried out with PPP was in at least three cases shelved by incoming leadership with different ideas. INCODER was reported to have resisted reform at its regional levels, because of political appointees who were protecting their interests, and the Agriculture Ministry was said to have a limited absorptive capacity.

These political obstacles were also clear in the tendency for wider reforms – that is, across agencies – to stumble. It was difficult to work jointly across agencies with competing interests and timetables. These inter-institutional commitments were called “very fragile” by one respondent, and another said that participants in a multi-agency mission for income generation did not take the agreed-upon actions back to their institutions for implementation.

Smaller, concrete reforms within one institution proved more straightforward to implement and their effects less subject to political challenges. One example is the computerization of INCODER’s files; another was the strategic planning, indicator dashboard and index for the Consolidation Unit.

Respondents were asked to rate the TA they received, in

**Case study  
Consolidation Unit, Institutional  
Strengthening**

PPP’s support to the Consolidation Unit demonstrated that requirements to coordinate agencies and institutions limits effectiveness, due to fragile and varying commitments and resource constraints. Also, working with an existing entity was politically challenging, as entrenched actors resisted change and the loss of influence.

PPP support helped to adjust administrative and political bases for the Unit. An indicator dashboard was designed and implemented with PPP support. The *Respuesta Rapida* program was reported to be useful to the Unit, as was the Unit’s introduction into consolidation zones. Challenges included:

**Consolidation Index:** The Consolidation Index was perhaps overly sophisticated for the Unit. Fundamental issues such as contracts and administrative issues were not resolved, making the large number of indicators not functional. AECOM helped to reduce the number from 700 indicators to 80, something more manageable for the Unit.

**Interagency coordination** was difficult with changes inside the Unit and in its many relationships with DPS and other institutions.

The Consolidation Unit couldn’t get CONPES because of a **lack of political support** and direction. Sector stakeholders inhibited the work if their political and resource needs were not addressed.

The Unit’s basic **institutional capacity** and a lack of political interest were important limitations. According to its own staff, the Unit needs help administratively, technically and with respect to its budget. These issues needed to be resolved first in order to absorb the TA.

a Likert scale from one to five, with one being very poor and five being very good. Rating the effectiveness of the PPP TA, respondent scores averaged 4.5; when asked about the results of the guidelines or practices they were provided, the average score was also 4.5.<sup>1</sup>

Where both USAID and the GoC had a strong interest in a given reform, this shared interest also supported success, even where there were competing political interests, as in the case of the creation of the Social Inclusion Sector and the Victims' Unit. Similarly, with these two bodies, PPP activities were related to the creation of new institutions, rather than reforming existing ones – which, by definition, would be challenged by existing political interests. Respondents involved with the Victims' Unit also noted that the GoC lacked budget for this work, which made the PPP institutional strengthening all the more welcome.

### *Cross-cutting themes*

PPP was designed to include themes across pillars – gender, the environment, good governance, access to financial services, and bridging the national-regional divide. In terms of gender, there was a spoken commitment to what is called the differential approach<sup>2</sup> within several PPP activities. This was incorporated in Victims' Unit definitions and priorities, but had less traction in the other two pillars, according to respondents. PPP's Gender specialist worked with the President's High Commission on Gender-Based Violence, but this work was not linked to PPP pillars. The Gender specialist noted that her expertise was not, strictly speaking, in gender, and that having such expertise on staff would likely have improved the way PPP addressed the theme.

Other evidence points to a lack of real commitment to the cross-cutting issues. The USAID technical monitor on environmental issues had \$70M in programming but no budget at all under PPP; one respondent reported that as a result, PPP was not high priority. In fact, all budget for cross-cutting themes had to come out of a pillar's budget, which meant that the technical lead for that pillar had to value those themes against the pillar-specific activities being undertaken. One respondent who worked on cross-cutting issues said, "I had to convince the pillar leaders that they needed me, because I had no budget. The cross-cutting matrix looks good on paper, but I had to force myself on the pillars, where they were not at all focused on these themes. They didn't even know they needed certain support."

In addition, the Chief and Deputy Chief of Party for PPP committed their own time across the three pillars, though neither reported having been (nor were they reported to have been) drivers for the cross-cutting themes. Their leadership on cross-cutting issues appears to have been weaker than

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<sup>1</sup> The interview questions were used as guides for protracted conversations with respondents, and as such not all respondents answered all questions (as not all questions pertained to the work with all respondents.) However, the evaluation team feels that these "scores," though subjective, are indicative across the verbal responses in the interviews even when numeric responses were not provided.

<sup>2</sup> Differentiated attention to women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and other groups, as a standard for all government interventions.

their very targeted participation in the implementation of the pillars. In this environment the cross-cutting themes became less transversal and more opportunistic.

Respondents who worked on the theme of access to financial services reported benefiting from a USAID technical monitor who was tirelessly supportive. At the same time, respondents said the USAID Mission leadership held financial services for rural development in low esteem, and cut the budget throughout the project. Positive outcomes from this cross-cutting theme included coordinating government entities and the private sector, which showed significant interest in participation.

In the environment cross-cutting theme, much effort was focused on response to victims of the natural disaster that occurred near the start of PPP. When efforts to restore housing for the crisis victims had ended, this component was closed, in line with the restructuring of the PPP contract and pillars.

#### **Policies on Access to Financial Services (AFS)**

PPP sought to improve vulnerable rural population's AFS, to facilitate their inclusion in regional development and growing prosperity. Policy and regulatory instruments were designed to expand financial networks, and leveraged US\$38 million in public and private resources. Success factors included:

- An early start in the GoC, making consultants' project time more productive.
- A high quality technical team to develop the program's objectives.
- GoC willingness to implement proposed changes.
- Positive pilot outcomes, allowing for more precise policy proposals.

Access to financial services is bound up with Colombia's structural issues and rural development as a whole. As a cross-cutting issue, AFS worked closely with the three pillars, but its lower priority meant challenges in budget, coordination and implementation.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

### ***The three pillars***

Windows of political opportunity and commitment were crucial dimensions of successful PPP efforts. USAID and PPP were frequently flexible in responding to GoC concerns and priorities. Political pressures could limit common ground within the GoC or between USAID and the GoC. Where GoC priorities and PPP work themes were aligned, activities were more effective, and had more lasting effects. Other characteristics of success included working on targeted, smaller-scale reforms, within one agency rather than various. However, where commitment was high – such as in the case of the Social Inclusion Sector and the Victims' Unit – PPP offered effective support despite challenges that arose.

Impediments to adoption of PPP recommendations included:

- Changes in GoC staff, priorities and interests
- Multiple agency coordination, with greater or lesser commitment from each agency
- Corruption and regional politicking
- Lack of institutional capacity or maturation
- External shocks such as the agrarian strikes, fiscal challenges, the peace process
- Delays due to AECOM and USAID procedures

### ***Cross-cutting themes***

Cross-cutting themes in USAID's initial design did not become fully cross-cutting as implemented by PPP. Lack of appropriate expertise or influence on the team (environment, gender), and political challenges or lack of mandate (nation-region and good governance) limited integration in the pillar structure. PPP's leadership focused on the pillars and their deliverables, which meant that cross-cutting themes were put on the back burner. Neither USAID, GoC, or PPP appeared to place gender

or environment high on their priorities.

A strong champion for a given cross-cutting effort (such as in the case of access to financial services, as noted above) increased impact, even while the theme was given less official priority. The lack of specialist team members who are also strong advocates limited PPP's ability to bring (for example) a gender lens to bear on a range of efforts with competing priorities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Pillar areas*

Work closely with the GoC to identify policy reforms that are high priority for both, in line with USAID's CDCS and with GoC priorities in the National Development Plan, potential peace accords, or other high-level areas. Remain flexible during implementation to take advantage of windows of opportunity. Planning should include attention to targeted, single-agency efforts as well as over-arching, inter-institutional reforms. Where the latter are contemplated, build in more time, effort and resources.

### *Cross-cutting themes*

If a theme is important enough to include as cross-cutting, USAID and IPs should ensure that it is explicitly covered, with appropriate expertise, with its own budget, on relevant topics, with sensitive M&E targets, and adequate resources. IPs must be explicitly engaged with these themes or they are not likely to be addressed adequately. USAID should monitor that cross-cutting themes are genuine priorities during implementation, beyond any proposal language.

## NATION-REGION

**Findings:** The need to bring reform to all Colombian territories was a PPP cross-cutting theme— as well as a Mission-wide USAID priority. There were successes within the pillars: working with the Victims' Unit and Social Inclusion Sector to ensure territorial presence; orienting financial products toward micro-business people while expanding coverage; and integrating regional level indicators into INCODER's planning. But PPP did not have a contractual mandate to operationalize and implement at the regional level. Rather, other IPs were charged with addressing regional needs.

**Conclusion:** PPP's mandate was at the national level only. But implementation at the regional level is vital for impact. PPP and region-based IPs appear to have worked more in isolation. Relative to its priority at USAID, the territorialization of results was not as successful or as visible as desired.

**Recommendation:** Include regional participation and coordination to support GoC decision making within and among USAID interventions. Set goals for regional implementation and uptake where the key geographies for execution are regional rather than national. Link national and regional USAID programs better, or combine national and regional activities for one pillar in one contract, so that the IP can strategize and implement vertically in partnership with the GoC.

## 4. Quality of PPP's Technical Assistance

*Evaluation question 4: What was the level of quality in assistance provided?*

**Summary:** High technical quality supported PPP's successes, and PPP was largely successful in meeting its deliverables and contractual requirements. Across respondents,

the evaluation team heard extensive and specific praise of PPP consultants and staff. For their part, the PPP staff and consultants also lauded their government counterparts, and all agreed that the TA was a joint effort.

## **FINDINGS**

PPP was largely successful in meeting its contractual requirements with high quality deliverables. The deliverables were reviewed by the technical staff and then by the contracting office to ensure compliance with the contract's scope of work. A knowledge management staff member also reviewed and classified the deliverables, making them available to various audiences when this was useful.

Moreover, the deliverables were almost unanimously lauded by government respondents; one called them “pertinent and flexible,” while another noted the value of the continuous support in the context of an immature institution advancing very rapidly. Respondents were asked, in interviews, to rate the quality of the technical assistance and of the technical tools provided, in a Likert scale from one to five, with one being very poor and five being very good. Rating the technical tools they received from PPP, respondent scores averaged 4.5; when asked about quality of the TA, those who responded with a numeric score all gave PPP the highest score of 5.

Many specific examples of quality in PPP processes and deliverables were cited in evaluation interviews. PPP was successful in the creation, institutional capacity building and policy implementation at the Victims' Unit because of the quality of people and deliverables, according to one government respondent. Another government official said that PPP provided clarity and vision for the Unit “from day one” on the registry, assistance and reparation themes. A USAID respondent noted that the PPP designed the unit and trained Unit staff in a way that changed the trainees' views of victims – from people looking for a handout, to a reparative and differentiated approach. Another government respondent remarked that the entire social inclusion sector is well positioned, in part because of the quality of PPP's work with the Victims' Unit.

Government and consultant respondents said that the work in access to financial services was of very high quality, including their work in transferring knowledge and supporting strategic planning with the Banca de Oportunidades. PPP staff applied their awareness of the issues and limitations their government counterparts faced to put feasible plans on the table that contemplated those limitations. This was due to the broad range of consultants with USAID experience as well as experience in and outside the GOC. PPP team members were routinely lauded as “high-level,” experienced, adaptable and collaborative.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

An important part of PPP's success was the excellent selection of staff and consultants. The personal relationships with the GoC, high-level national consultants, quality in the deliverables and commitment were key elements consistently identified by the GoC. Frequently cited complements included: “committed people”, “effective results”, “able to work point by point with their GoC counterparts over extended periods.” PPP's staff conducted strict quality control on deliverables. They knew what the client expected and ensured it. *(Please see also the section on relationships with the GoC, above.)*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

IPs should continue to use strong and connected Colombian individuals and teams, to ensure the consistently high levels of quality attained in PPP. IPs must cover the thematic areas of the program with this kind of quality technical support in staff and consultants, and with cross-cutting themes as well.

Staff should be predominantly Colombian. Where international expertise is sought and included, ensure that that international presence is balanced with Colombians. The connections and understanding of local context are important for what they bring to the work.

### The Rural Development Law policy effort

PPP supported the GOC in drafting the Rural Development Law, currently in consultation with communities. The effort enjoyed a high quality, high-level technical team and an in-depth review and integration of international best practices on the subject. The draft was innovative and caused wide debate on the integrated model, financial integration and differential approach.

These and other elements of the law emerged from the wide debate, and changed how GOC and other practitioners have conceptualized rural development. The law's innovations were important for discussions with the FARC in Havana on point one of the peace talks agenda in 2013.

The success of PPP's technical and policy support cannot be fully evaluated, as the Law has not yet been enacted for political reasons. However, it is worth noting how work on the Law supported last year's land formalization program (Decree 1465 of 2013).

USAID may wish to further support the passage of the Law. To do so, any follow-up work would need to address the entrenched political interests related to rural development issues, and who oppose its passage. If a peace accord is signed, the passage of the Law may become even more important, and more challenging, given the dimensions of the changes it proposes.

## 5. Institutional Strengthening

*Evaluation question 5: What characteristics of AECOM's work supported institutional strengthening most effectively and which were less useful?*

**Summary:** As with the policy efforts described above, institutional strengthening worked best with targeted efforts, collaborative work styles, fewer political interests at risk, and agreement between GoC and USAID on priorities. But institutional strengthening faced more operational obstacles, not least of which was the lack of contractual mandate to engage in these activities. Also, institutional maturity and absorptive capacity limited the degree to which institutional strengthening activities took hold.

## FINDINGS

According to one USAID respondent, “PPP’s success was in funding receptive government agents who needed help, every day for a year.” A PPP staffer said that institutional strengthening worked best in the form of “focused efforts within particular, amenable offices of the government.” A PPP consultant said that PPP’s diagnostic work helped to “identify failure in the institutional order and make recommendations.” Where institutional strengthening was carried out, such as in a targeted civil service reform effort, the work was valued by respondents across the evaluation.

At the same time, the ongoing challenges inherent in institutional strengthening – as opposed to passing a policy reform – were evident: “It was an achievement to mount the structures of the Victims’ Unit and Center for National Historical Memory. But much harder to put them into action, with institutional strengthening.” Competition for resources, political positioning, staff rotation, and low capacity in the target agency were cited as obstacles to success in the Victims’ Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, INCODER, Consolidation Unit, and others.

## CONCLUSIONS

There is reversion to the mean in highly transient bodies of the GoC: reforms and institutional strengthening activities are diluted over time and where staff are transient or leadership changes occur. Institutional strengthening worked better in a new institution like Victim’s Unit than in an existing one, like INCODER, where reform raised hackles and was resisted vociferously.

Political pressures were a key obstacle to efforts, as it was difficult to obtain consensus within the GoC or between the GoC and USAID. Activities were limited by GoC political priorities. PPP did diagnostics and wrote recommendations, however the adoption of these proposals depended on the government’s will to implement them. The impediments to effective work in policy reform, listed above, apply here as well (changes in GoC

### Case Study:

#### Institutional strengthening of the Victim’s Unit

Support to the Unit illustrates these success factors:

- A **strong technical team with high-level connections** achieved shared goals;
- PPP worked hand-in-glove with the GoC and came to **consensus**, rather than imposing pre-designed activities;
- Both GoC and USAID had **political will and interest** in establishing a Victims’ Unit;
- PPP helped the GoC **gather political support and resources, and draft regulations**, to operate the Unit; and
- The Unit had **capacity to absorb PPP support**.

For the GoC and USAID, the passage the Victims’ Law (1448/11) opened a window of opportunity for priority support. PPP’s institutional strengthening added value to the Unit’s launch of a new entity in Colombia’s complex institutional context.

PPP’s institutional strengthening included strategic planning, complex interagency mapping, technical design, and differential approaches for vulnerable populations. Challenges included:

- USAID respondents perceived as “lack of control” what PPP felt was “maneuvering room.” The work moved quickly, and PPP did not always share these advances quickly with USAID.
- The design includes significant inter-agency roles that have proven problematic in practice.
- On at least two occasions PPP’s team was not able to come to consensus with the National Planning Department (DNP), and the Victims’ Unit’s General Secretariat, during the design of an “End to vulnerability” index and in work to make the application of the Unit’s offerings more flexible.

Not coming to consensus, however, indicates as well that the PPP team was on an equal footing with GoC partners. Rather than a failure of PPP, this respectful group work environment is a significant part of the overall success. The Unit continues to work with the consultant team after PPP’s support ended (now under IOM’s Victim’s Program, *Maximizar*).

Gender considerations were integrated into the VU mandate in outreach and in differentiated approaches for victim reparation. PPP’s technical gender specialist was not involved, as PPP’s technical specialist on victims assumed responsibility for gender within the pillar.

staff, priorities and interests; corruption and regional politics; lack of institutional capacity; external shocks; and delays due to AECOM or USAID procedures.) If anything, these affected institutional strengthening even more than policy reform efforts, because of the ongoing nature of institutional work.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

USAID must make explicit any goals for institutional strengthening just as for policy. If these reforms are expected to be operationalized, including at regional levels, this must be clearly designed, budgeted, monitored and carried out. As with policy goals, it is not worth the expense or effort if the GoC is not fully on board. USAID should choose these activities in full consultation with the GoC and include an assessment of whether the institution has the absorptive capacity for the reform, as well as the political commitment to follow through with it.

### **Additional Findings: Project Management**

*Summary:* Technically, PPP set a high standard for management, including seeking and contracting high-level contractors with knowledge of government, and putting them to use in collaborative work groups with government. Administratively, the contracting process to make this technical side work was daunting. USAID’s decentralized technical monitoring aided project activities but also had drawbacks. Most important for USAID’s management were issues around communication, timing, and trust. PPP’s staff could move quickly because of their high-level working relationships with their GoC contacts; sometimes their speed outstripped that of their USAID leadership. When communication on these fast-moving activities lagged, USAID felt cut out of the loop. At the same time, USAID’s slower pace sometimes caused PPP to miss windows of opportunity.

## **FINDINGS**

### *PPP’s management*

PPP managed its work efficiently and with attention to technical needs, offering a collaborative structure among GoC, staff and consultants. Its staff and consultants were selected for their experience, knowledge of the themes, familiarity with the functioning of the GoC, and ability to open doors at the highest level of relevant government offices. The high level of the consultants helped to guarantee direct communication with the GoC. Government respondents told us that PPP consultants adapted to their changing priorities, but also were frank enough to say “no” when necessary. They also knew the strengths and weaknesses of the GoC and were able to situate policy and institutional reforms within that context.

AECOM used hundreds of contracts, with individuals and firms. These required both home office and USAID approval. The pace and paperwork of contracting were frequently mentioned as problematic. “We lost one valuable consultant who could no longer wait,” said one government respondent. Contracting was tedious and complicated, and took too long, according to government, contractor and PPP respondents. Even after contracts were issued, the process used multiple deliverables as a way to control payments. This meant “a lot of deliverables to review and rate,”



according to a PPP respondent.

### *Cost-effectiveness*

The flip-side of the slow contracting process was that the project appeared to be very cautious with expenses, and remained audit-ready at all times. Government respondents reported that the expenses were low compared to the high return they received. This was mentioned in particular regarding the income generation mission as well as the work in creating the social inclusion sector and its components. One USAID respondent asserted that the return-on-investment was much higher than USAID's regional-level programs, because PPP was able to affect policy across the country all at once.

### *USAID's guidance*

Given the high level of PPP's teams, their existing relationships with government, and the autonomy under which they worked, the degree to which they communicated their progress with USAID varied. Where their USAID technical monitors were confident in the process and the degree to which their wishes had been communicated to the teams, this more distant relationship ran smoothly. As one USAID respondent put it, "Where there was trust top to bottom – Mission Director, COTR, Technical Monitor, AECOM, GoC – things worked. Without it, nothing else mattered."

There were instances where PPP pursued courses of action in concert with GoC independently, when the consultant team and GoC were in sync, when they had approval from USAID for the general course of action, and where the effort was reflected in the work plan. It does not appear that such actions were committed (thinking particularly of the Victims' Unit work under very capable leadership) without approval. The level of trust was higher with some consultant teams than others. More trusted teams seem to have been granted greater latitude. This depended largely on the consultant team, the thematic area, USAID technical leadership, and the window of opportunity offered by the GoC. Often these were in equilibrium, while other times (such as a change in USAID's technical leadership around land and rural development) new equilibria were sought with the new conditions.

Outside of USAID, the dominant perspective seemed to be that less involvement from USAID was better. Though one government respondent told the evaluation team, "The relationship between USAID and the DPS was positive and helpful, they [USAID] didn't appear much once we [the DPS and PPP consultants] were working well together," others were less positive. There were some GoC environments in which active USAID participation was not welcome. A USAID respondent told the evaluation team, "If the USAID person is in the room, the meeting is not the same," and a government respondent said, "I don't want a bunch of Americans coming in here." Two GoC respondents spoke about unprofessional behavior on the part of USAID actors who participated in PPP activities. A USAID respondent reported that two complaints were raised by the GoC about such behavior, which they called disrespectful.

Although USAID succeeded in procuring well-connected, high-level staff on the PPP team, there were two competing perspectives about the Mission's management of the project. USAID respondents tended to report that PPP staff acted on their own and failed to inform USAID; at the same time, PPP and government respondents said USAID's management sometimes tied the hands of the PPP experts, insisting on closer and closer control. Over time, USAID staff exerted increasing control. While the Mission Director who launched PPP was said to have given AECOM

“free rein,” later leadership took the reins in hand.

### ***Technical management***

USAID built a structure of six technical monitors who supervised different aspects of PPP’s operations and one COR who managed things administratively. Communication channels included meetings with the technical monitors, quarterly reports, and weekly and biweekly reports, where the main advances in politics and the main challenges were shared. The biweekly reports and meeting were said to require a lot of work by PPP. They were also considered a valuable opportunity to study the context, update the current policy debates, and show program advances. USAID respondents said these communication methods worked well and that PPP was good at delivering reports while ensuring quality control.

Three USAID respondents discussed the disadvantages of the system, however. The technical monitors competed for program resources to support their technical areas. Communication among six to eight people involved with technical matters was hard to manage. The three pillars were, essentially, different mandates. Technical differentiation was necessary but difficult to manage.

Also challenging were the timelines for review within the Agency. “Where we lost out was when the whole thing took too long, and the window of opportunity closed. The difficulty here was more with USAID,” said one of the USAID technical team that monitored a PPP pillar. A government respondent lamented a long-awaited decision from USAID on regional support that PPP would be allowed to provide to a Contrato Plan office. When USAID eventually denied the request for funding, the GoC respondent blamed USAID. PPP staff may also have made promises to the GoC that were not yet approved by USAID. In either case, the relationship with the GoC suffers when the USAID and IP relationship is not well-defined. There were cases where the USAID response timeline was longer than the GoC was prepared to wait.

USAID requested that no large close-out event be held across the project. As a result, PPP conducted handovers with each GoC partner individually, over a period of six months. This included handing over the technical reports to each partner. However, many respondents – government, USAID and PPP – said that the lack of a visible ceremony or handover of the activity at close out was an oversight. It was felt that this impeded handover to the government, as well as from an outgoing government lead to one who is incoming – because no formal packet of the inputs and deliverables, by agency, was made available. Respondents also said that a formal ceremony would have underscored the importance and contributions of the interventions.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

### ***PPP management***

PPP got many things quite right: it was flexible in its support, adapting to USAID and GoC needs in many instances. PPP successfully identified the right professionals, who:

- Were of high technical quality and knowledge level;
- Had important connections with GoC; and
- Were able to identify policy and/or institutional gaps and propose acceptable solutions.

PPP’s teamwork model helped to secure consensus (see also the findings in the first section on

the relationship between GoC and PPP.)

The contracting model used in PPP had many important technical benefits, such as having the right people for the tasks at hand, at the right moment. (Please see also the findings in the section on how PPP worked with the GoC.) However, AECOM's contracting processes were tedious and complicated the work.

PPP did not uniformly inform USAID of advances with sufficient time for their participation. This eroded trust with USAID and resulted in USAID wanting even closer control.

### ***Cost-effectiveness***

Though PPP's expenditure data per activity were not available, indications from government, USAID and the contractor indicate (1) close attention to spending rules and regulations; (2) attention to national-level priorities which leveraged or attempted to leverage effectiveness at more local levels; and (3) impressionistic evidence of policies and reforms implemented successfully, at reasonable cost.

### ***USAID management***

As Mission leadership and management rotated, they changed the rules of engagement for the IP. In some respects the change was significant and affected the IP's ability to do its work with sensitive GoC offices.

Very close USAID oversight created some problems. There was some desire expressed among GoC counterparts to do the work with less direct USAID presence. GoC representatives raised formal complaints, and it is unknown the extent of the damage to the relationship this may have caused. The lack of a significant ceremonial "closure" – some kind of formal handoff from USAID and AECOM to the GoC – was keenly felt.

USAID has an obligation to oversee its contractors, technically as well as administratively. And PPP's reform agenda must hew to USAID priorities. If not managed with aplomb, efforts to control can create tensions in a country, and with a consultant team, with a high level of capacity (see findings on the quality of staff above.) If there is uncertainty or lack of trust between USAID and the IP, there can be a negative effect on the IP's ability to manage its high-level relationships with GoC and to get things done.

Increased communication, though time-consuming, appeared to have been both appreciated by all respondents who spoke to the topic, and useful for USAID's maintaining technical oversight, perhaps with a bit of strategic distance. The decentralized technical management provided detailed technical focus. Technical monitors provided timely and contextualized guidance to the IP. At the same time, the model is not perfect, as it resulted to some extent in competing silos.

Taking advantage of windows of opportunity was successful. As noted in government relationship findings above, the new GoC presidential administration coincided with PPP and USAID was able to create a lot of synergy through PPP.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

PPP's model of flexible, consensus-oriented teamwork that responded agilely to the GoC should be replicated as closely as possible for future efforts. Similarly, its recruiting criteria should be used as a basis for team member selection: experience, technical knowledge and relationship

with GoC are all important characteristics.

It is essential to get the contracting process right, early in the program, with a minimum of layers of approval and potential for delay. IPs should look for ways to minimize contracting requirements for consultants, or at least for alternative (such as interim) hiring mechanisms to avoid losing good team members

USAID should look for a happy medium between an iron grip on policy efforts and allowing IPs free rein. Particularly where relationships with GoC are strained, or where GoC offices have expressed misgivings about “gringo involvement,” find ways to work at a distance through the IP. Keep in mind the ultimate goal of successful policies: if this can be accomplished through a trustworthy partner, the presence of USAID in individual meetings is not as crucial.

USAID should replicate the structure with thematic technical monitors – including for cross-cutting themes – who have day-to-day contact with and control over IP activities in each pillar, and extend it to include territorial-level activities that fall under the same topic area. USAID will have to avoid creating isolated silos, but the technical focus is worth the effort. Hold biweekly technical meetings (by pillar) and monthly cross-pillar meetings.

IPs should have a planned closure (with budget, timing and activities) to show the results, deliverables, and future recommendations to the government offices. This way the program leaves documentation, a presentation and/or a final report for every GoC office served by USAID support.

# ANNEXES

## CONTENTS

Annex I: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations Table .....	24
Annex II: Design, Methods and Limitations.....	58
Design.....	58
Sampling.....	58
Respondent samples .....	58
Activity Sample .....	59
Methods.....	60
Document review.....	60
In-depth interviews .....	60
Case studies .....	60
Data analysis .....	61
Limitations .....	61
Getting to Answers Matrix.....	62
Evaluation questions .....	62
Annex III: Information sources.....	64
Annex IV: Instruments.....	67
Annex V: Evaluation Statement of Work .....	68
Annex VI: Conflict of Interest Forms.....	79

# ANNEX I: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE

**Note to reader: the findings are comprised of quotes and paraphrased statements from the interview respondents. The origins of the findings are indicated after each finding, by a letter G (GoC), A (AECOM), C (Consultants) or U (USAID). Where multiple respondents from the same type of source are referenced, a number follows the letter (e.g., G2 or A3.) This protects sources’ confidentiality while offering information on how responses were triangulated.**

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<b>RELATIONSHIPS AND INFLUENCE: USAID – GoC – AECOM</b>		
<b>How PPP worked with the GoC</b>		
<p><i>Extended and in-depth group work</i></p> <p>Having a large number of consultants fostered innovation and consensus (A) More than PPP, “the Mission (DGI) did it” [By “the Mission”, this respondent referred to PPP’s income generation work in which he participated, comprised of a team of GoC representatives from DPS, DNP, SENA and other bodies, plus the AECOM PPP consultants.] (G).</p> <p>Government respondents greatly appreciated extended, collaborative work style (“useful, pertinent and very productive”) (G)</p> <p>PPP provided a comprehensive but small work team of consultants, and this team had good relations with the GoC (A)</p> <p>The GoC always gave feedback on the deliverables, which allowed carrying out a follow up and control of the technical</p>	<p>Diverse experts brought innovation and interesting debates to the decision-making (such as Colombian and international best practices; see section below for greater detail on this theme.)</p> <p>Efforts of extended duration, in collaboration with the GoC, were an essential success factor.</p> <p>Consensus-building was critical to success.</p>	<p>Future projects should replicate PPP’s practice of working hand in hand with the GoC on each activity, over time, seeking consensus, as a team. Seek a common ground between USAID and GoC priorities (see the following recommendation) to decide on thematic areas and priorities.</p> <p>Future Implementing Partners (IPs) should support a high-level,</p>

<p>assistance provided by PPP. (A)</p> <p>GoC respondents valued the consultant skills, the extended timelines of support (G2, U2) and, particularly, the collaborative style of work (G4).</p> <p><i>Please also see below the section on the process and success of thematic selection, for a discussion of the importance of political and thematic considerations that lead, in part, to the recommendations at right.</i></p>		<p>ongoing round table with the GoC that provides a space for proposing thematic areas for joint action. Follow the suggestions and requirements expressed there. If a given theme is not part of both USAID and GoC</p>
<p><i>Other important aspects of PPP's way of working</i></p> <p>One of PPP's strengths was that it worked across different levels of institutional maturity and functionality (U, G2)</p> <p>To work successfully in GoC it is essential to work with the heads of the relevant entities, not with mid-level staff (U2, A). PPP could operate at high political levels. The staff's close relationships with GoC seemed to go around USAID at times. Also having a Colombian COP was very useful; the Colombian staff were able to open doors (U)</p> <p>The fact that PPP could say "no" to GoC entities requesting support provided considerable negotiation leverage and flexibility. (U) At the same time, another respondent said that PPP did not critique the GoC enough (A)</p> <p>PPP staff's personal ties were at the foundation of successes. (U2, A2)</p> <p>There were two cases in the Victims' Unit work when [AECOM Staffer] couldn't reach consensus with the DNP and with the Unit's General Secretariat. These were when [her team was] trying to make their offering more flexible, and when [they] were working on an index to measure the end of vulnerability. (A)</p>	<p>PPP staff had excellent connections, at very high levels, within the GoC. These personal ties were part of the foundation of PPP successes. High level GoC staffers are defined as the ones in charge of policy decision-making and budget allocation, and PPP's connections at that level made it possible to insert the program where its activities could be most successful.</p>	<p>it may well be best to drop it rather than continue without consensus. Let this process set the Agency's expectations and goals.</p> <p>Future activities should replicate PPP's staffing patterns of high-level staff and consultants, with appropriately high-level government contacts, to ensure that functionaries involved in policy activities are fully empowered to act.</p> <p>IPs and USAID must plan for the likelihood that any effort that involves inter-agency arrangements will</p>
<p><i>Challenges and limitations:</i></p>		

<p>The most the consultants can do is make the best recommendations they can and hope that the GoC adopts them. The consultants cannot guarantee implementation of the recommendations. (C) For example, the Law on Rural Development that PPP developed but that did not pass. At the same time, the collaboration and discourse on the “territorial approach” advocated by PPP and its GoC interlocutors has now become part of the general discussion on how to better incorporate rural productive areas post-conflict, including in Havana. (U2, A2, C, G)</p> <p>Interagency work was a challenge (C). When the new Unit was created, it was in the midst of a battle for resources, because the Social Inclusion Sector was also being created. (G) It would have been better if our table of experts and representatives of SENA, MinTrabajo, MinCom would have taken what we did together back into their institutions. (G)</p> <p><i>Politics always played a part (discussed in further detail below)</i></p>		<p>require more time, more effort, more consensus, more political will. Such efforts are an order of magnitude more challenging than working with just one entity.</p>
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## INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES (IBPs)

International best practices were important in many of PPP's efforts (C, A, G)

A USAID respondent doubted that activities systematically considered IBPs, saying that PPP shouldn't "waste time reinventing the wheel." (A) Using IBPs successfully would have been systematic in the search for the right response to use here, now, not improvising or working just from theory (A)

### *Examples of IBPs in use*

International seminars about rural development models were carried out, and were integrated to the rural development management model. (C) IBPs were brought in through literature review, seminars, consultants' experiences, and specific and relevant examples from other countries (known to the consultant or GoC teams, or researched by them.) National examples were also used, such as Antioquia's experience with victims' reparations. (C) Victims' Unit also looked at examples from former Yugoslavia. (G)

The Consolidation Unit activity with PPP made use of international cases from Brazil, Mexico and Chile. (G) I'm not sure if it was all AECOM's doing, but in the Vice Ministry we looked at best international practice cases like Brazil, Peru, Chile, Africa and Southeast Asia and analyzed what could be incorporated here. But forums, events and studies are probably less useful elements, we really need more tangible support. (G)

"The IBPs were brought to the table in the form of my experience". (C) PPP staff brought a great deal of international experience and IBPs to the table (A)

In the change from Acción Social to DPS, experts studied and offered IBP information on specific themes like planning, M&E, methodologies and work procedures. However, local expertise was fundamental to work within the local context. (A)

IBPs were generally effectively integrated to PPP activities. There was variation in the degree to which IBPs were incorporated, in part because of the differences in how IBPs were brought to the table. As a result, it seemed there was a variable level of trust on USAID's part, about whether there was systematic consideration of IBP options. The focus appeared to be an inclusion of IBPs as part of deliberations on policy design and formulation, with less attention given to IBPs that supported aspects of implementation.

GoC partners valued the support in cutting-edge themes that IBPs put on the table, while also noting that these inputs were not always sufficiently tangible and detailed. PPP and its consultants also brought

Future projects should always scan international experience for applicable best practices to address policy changes. If USAID is concerned that IBPs are not adequately being considered, it could monitor their systematic inclusion activity by activity, and include in work planning that each policy or institutional strengthening activity effort be accompanied by a systematic review of relevant options. The options pursued should go beyond policy designs to focus instead on the ways in which new and reformed policies can best be

<p><i>IBPs had to be closely contextualized</i></p> <p>IBPs were not uniformly easy to adopt due to the particularities of the Colombian conflict (U) and the particularity of the topic of victims in Colombia. (G, A) At times they were too abstract, not concrete enough, with insufficient detail or, when there was detail, it was not immediately adaptable to Colombian needs. (U, G) IBPs were taken as reference and studied but not always incorporated. The experience of providing services to victims in Antioquia was included since it was a proven experience in a related context. (A, G)</p> <p>Very good, important international help. But, it's important to note that their knowledge didn't always translate to the Colombian environment (as in the cases of the rural cadaster, and the income generation work with DPS) (U, G)</p>	<p>national best practices, and the ability to incorporate IBPs in ways that were appropriate to the Colombian context. This came from their high-level technical expertise and knowledge of the institutional environment.</p> <p>As a result, IBPs were useful inputs in some cases, were perhaps not considered systematically in others, and were rarely definitive responses in any case.</p>	<p>implemented in challenging environments.</p> <p>At the same time, future projects should remain flexible about how these IBPs are sourced and incorporated. Remember that the IBPs put into practice must be relevant, instructive, and able to be incorporated into the Colombian institutions.</p>
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<b>THE THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT OF PPP ACTIVITIES</b>		
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<b>Politics and the selection process</b>		
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<p>USAID was an ally, not only an aid partner. (A)</p> <p>Deep interest on the part of the new president was vital, and coincided with the start of the PPP. (U)</p> <p>Context mattered: Internal problems, like agrarian strikes, affected the development of PPP activities. (C)</p> <p>When the mechanism is good, one will use it more [as did the Office of the Presidency with PPP.] Their [PPP's] flexibility was key... it was what we needed, when we needed it. They [PPP] were present. (G)</p> <p>We had meetings, so many meetings with GOC in the beginning, and we wrote the PWS listening to them and to what USAID demanded. That's how we were able to meet our goals – we set them together. (A)</p> <p>The first PWS was very, very detailed, every comma and period was listed. In later years the benchmarks were higher-order. (A)</p> <p>According to AECOM interviews and the evaluation team's document review, PPP met all or nearly all of its contract benchmarks (which changed substantially after the close of the first year.) The PWS in Year One required workshops and papers, but the teams were able to adapt the content and the duration of TA support as long as the document or event was delivered as promised. Quarterly reports show the achievement of milestones almost always precisely as planned, even when plans changed. Second, USAID CPARS (Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System) ratings were consistently high for the first three years of the</p>	<p>Windows of political opportunity and commitment were crucial dimensions of successful efforts. Alignment of GoC priorities and PPP work themes was important to the success of the project. When PPP responded to GoC demands the activity functioned better, and had more lasting effects. PPP gave the government the impression of flexibility, while also meeting their PWS targets with USAID – this balancing act was deftly managed.</p> <p>Political pressures could limit common ground within the GoC or between USAID and GoC, reducing success. Policy and institutional strengthening are limited (or enabled) by GoC political priorities. PPP would diagnose issues and draft recommendations. But, adoption of these suggestions depended on the government's will to implement them.</p> <p>Impediments to adoption of PPP recommendations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in GoC staff, priorities and interest</li> <li>• Corruption and regional politicking</li> <li>• Lack of institutional capacity/maturation</li> <li>• Context/external shocks such as the agrarian strike, fiscal challenges, peace process, etc.</li> <li>• Delays due to AECOM and USAID procedures (please see section on project management.)</li> </ul> <p>These affected institutional strengthening even more than policy; challenges were pervasive through certain bodies such as INCODER, MADR, and the Consolidation Unit.</p> <p>Some policies and institutional efforts required coordinating government agencies. Such efforts</p>	<p>USAID should start from its CDCS to identify thematic areas of interest – niches – where there is a shared interest with the GoC, and a commitment from the GoC. This commitment and level of interest (both at USAID and GoC) should continually be tracked for changes, because they can and do change unexpectedly. IPs must identify responsible parties with sufficient interest for each effort, across the agencies affected by a proposed reform, and involve them in decision-making on policies to be targeted.</p> <p>Where reforms or activities affect GoC vertically, through regional levels, each level must be considered and</p>
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<p>contract (Exception and Very Good for product quality and Management of Key Personnel, consistently.) PPP was also praised in the 2011 CPARS for accelerating progress dramatically, in taking advantage of a window of opportunity with the new Santos government. In response, USAID shortened the timeline for completion of the contract, while adding new funding, to address more GOC requests and themes.</p> <p><i>Political pressures</i></p> <p>We couldn't get past regional [INCODER] leadership. They're politically appointed and not technically capable. Everything we did came from Bogota-based people going to the field (U, G) The changes in INCODER's administration blocked the complete adoption of the proposed normative changes. (C) MADR just didn't have the capacity to do what [PPP consultant team] were working on with them (U)</p> <p>Consolidation Unit couldn't get a CONPES because of a lack of political support. A technical document became a political football. We came in in the middle, the hand-off was not very smooth (G) Sector stakeholders made the work nearly impossible. (G) The <i>Respuesta Rapida</i> program was well done and it's useful to the Unit, however, the strategic planning wasn't used due to the lack of interest of the Director's Unit. (A)</p> <p><i>Inter-agency challenges</i></p> <p>VU's interagency structure: Victim's Unit</p>	<p>were the most problematic, due to weak commitment, differing interests, and lack of resources. Uncommitted partners perceive the programs as just "more work."</p> <p>Creating new entities was less politically challenging than changing an existing body, due to entrenched interests and practices in the latter. Land issues are politically sensitive, for the number of interests involved. As the number of GoC offices involved in a reform increased, the effort tended to become more challenging, and ultimately less successful.</p>	<p>included in planning and execution. See <i>also the nation-region section for additional findings on this recommendation.</i></p> <p>Each reform effort should have concentrated, politically savvy attention.</p>
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depends on other institutions offerings to serve the victims. The inter-institutional commitments are very fragile. (C)

It was difficult to get participants from different GoC offices (SENA, MADR, MinInt, MinComm) to take the agreed-upon actions back to their institutions and get them implemented. (G)

Where some things did not change, it was due to trying to work jointly across competing agencies interests. (G)

<b>Selecting Themes</b>		
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<p><i>Overall</i></p> <p>Nearly all PPP respondents mentioned the change in PPP structure as an important rupture. They report that it was driven by desire from the top Mission leadership that all topic areas had to conflict-related. (A) That change elevated some themes and diminished others; at times without resources to ensure their successful completion. (U, A) There was a lot of pressure to do a lot. PPP had strong leadership and some very important themes to work on, in which there was plenty of GoC interest. The three pillars helped to focus the program (C) At the same time it was challenging to respond to three major pillars, with significant reforms, in the same program. (U)</p> <p>Large reforms were fraught with competing definitions, unclear goals, and old institutions' baggage. Smaller targeted efforts were more fruitful. (G) We were able to re-do and update all the archives – which were a mess – and computerize it all. Now going to INCODER is pleasant, not a cave of papers and files (G)</p> <p>Some products just sit on the shelf at the GoC. (U)</p> <p>“Politics” refers also to USAID switching priorities (A2, U)</p> <p><i>Specific themes</i></p> <p>PPP's Victims pillar was more proactive, with more visible outputs or products. Others were</p>	<p>PPP's three pillars helped to focus the program. However, each pillar was extensive and worked across multiple GoC institutions. Because of this inter-agency nature, the work was at times more difficult to take root.</p> <p>Smaller, targeted efforts were less problematic, and needed less time, money and effort to reach consensus, than did overarching reforms, especially where these crossed agencies.</p> <p>Supporting GoC reforms that were not yet funded sufficiently proved successful, where political will for the reform was sufficient.</p> <p>Themes that aren't high short-term GoC priorities are difficult to develop.</p> <p>PPP's mandate did not extend to regional implementation. Full piloting would likely have run up against important problems - capacity gaps, contracting needs, special auditing and anti-corruption needs, how to make budgets and resource flows compatible from these differing bodies - in short, the types of problems that any complex, inter-agency program could be expected to face in implementation. But PPP's mandate was to design the mechanism and not to implement it; it is of course unknowable what adjustments, and what learning, would have taken place had</p>	<p>Work closely with the GoC to identify policy reforms that are high priority for both, in line with USAID's CDCS and with GoC priorities in the National Development Plan, potential peace accords, or other high-level areas. Working with a presidential administration that is favorable to desired reforms means tailoring the contracting process to coincide with that administration's own timing. Remain flexible during implementation to take advantage of windows of opportunity. Planning should include attention to targeted, single-agency efforts as well as over-arching, inter-institutional reforms; where the latter are contemplated, build in more time, effort and resources.</p>
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<p>reactive. Access to Financial Services and Labor had strong results (U) From the approval of Law 1448/11 PPP was side-by-side with the GoC, with a team dedicated to the effort. GoC had no budget for this. (G)</p> <p>One of DPS' needs was the Income Generation Mission (G) For Consolidation Unit, strategic planning, index, and dashboard were the "spine" of cooperation (G)</p> <p>There were contradictions between the rural development law and environmental rules. The land and development pillar met only 10% of its goals as a result. (U)</p> <p>The Contratos Plan (CP) mechanism was designed with close attention to Colombian systems and weaknesses, while offering a profound change and very new mechanism with integrated goals from national and territorial levels, for 8-10 year time horizons. Importantly, the GoC (DNP) took ownership of the design, showing their commitment to making it work and implanting their own criteria, and building on Colombian-based theoretical precepts, such as those of Orlando Fals Borda, including the regionalization of social and state institutional problems, and their localized resolution.</p> <p>However, the DNP did not take on board PPP's key recommendation, to ensure that the creation of an independent (not national, not territorial) management system. As a result, the constituent bodies were left in charge of</p>	<p>PPP taken the pilot to conclusion. But these problems rather must be worked out in practice, using the experience as a proving ground to address the unique Colombian challenges Don mentions here. No policy mechanism could foresee how the challenges would play out, especially considering the significant regional differentiation of governance and power in Colombia.</p>	
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<p>implementation (with their own agendas, for example.)</p> <p>PPP worked with the pilot Contratos Plan programs only to the point of pre-accords. PPP's COR cut support to the regional level design and preparation (in Nariño) before the pilot was done.</p> <p>With the Victims' Law, the Constitutional Court requested a costing of the Law after passage, which is the correct regulatory sequence for Colombia, and the Ministry of Hacienda carried out the study. The GoC requested further support from PPP to plan the CONPES document that would allot resources. PPP thus worked to write the regulatory documents for (1) the creation of the institutional framework necessary to carry out the law, and (2) the development of the policy, in the CONPES. In this work, PPP estimated 80MM COP for implementation of the law, of which the GoC allotted 54MM COP. (D, A)</p>		
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<p><i>Cross-cutting themes</i></p> <p>There was a spoken commitment to the differentiated approach across PPP's pillars. This was incorporated more easily in the Victims' Unit than in other pillars, including attention to ethnic communities. (A3) The cross-cutting topic managers worked without budget, convincing the pillar leads of the need for addressing themes related to the themes, but goals and expectations for these themes were unclear. (A2)</p> <p>Those cross-cutting themes that were pillars in the first AECOM contract are slightly easier to tease out - totally a bit over \$2MM COP in contract-by contract allocation. But Good governance, Nation-Region, Gender and post-modification Access to Financial Services, are components of given contracts that are allotted to pillars in the AECOM expenditure data we received. We are just wholly unable to estimate, for example, how much of a given contract (like 1.2.3 for Benchmark Diseño de Medios de Vida Sostenible en el Marco de Políticas) on Land Restitution should be attributed to gender, how much to good governance, how much to Nation-Region, and how much to the pillar area itself.</p> <p>Other evidence points to a lack of real commitment to the cross-cutting issues. The USAID technical monitor on environment had \$70M in programming compared to no budget with PPP – this project was not his priority. (U) All budget for cross-cutting issues had to come</p>	<p>Cross-cutting themes in USAID's initial design did not become fully cross-cutting as implemented by PPP. Lack of appropriate expertise or influence on the team (environment, gender), and political challenges or lack of mandate (nation-region and good governance) limited integration in the pillar structure. Achieving success in the pillars was demanding, even without including gender, for example.</p> <p>PPP's leadership focused on the pillars and their deliverables, which meant that cross-cutting themes were put on the back burner. Neither USAID, GoC nor PPP appeared to place gender or environment high on their priorities.</p> <p>In some PPP activities (for example, strengthening certain institutional structures in the Consolidation Unit), cross-cutting themes were not included because they did not apply.</p> <p>Changing USAID priorities based on high-level interest or lack of interest in a given theme made for instability in the PPP team's planning and implementation.</p> <p>A strong champion for a given cross-cutting effort (such as financial inclusion) can have a big impact. The lack of specialist team members who are also strong advocates, limited PPP's ability to</p>	<p>If a theme is important enough to include as cross-cutting, USAID and IPs should ensure that it is explicitly covered, with appropriate expertise, with its own budget, on relevant topics, with sensitive M&amp;E targets, and adequate resources. IPs must be explicitly engaged with these themes, with agreed upon targets, or they are not likely to be addressed adequately.</p> <p>USAID should monitor that cross-cutting themes are genuine priorities during implementation, beyond any proposal language.</p>
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<p>out of a pillar's budget. They had no resources of their own. (A2) Who at AID cared about gender? Who had one meaningful conversation about it? (U) The program mandate did not include implementation, or taking the policy work down to the regional level; the contract said nothing about institutional strengthening. (U2)</p> <p>I had to convince the pillar leaders that they needed me, because I had no budget. The transversal matrix looks good on paper but I had to force myself on pillars where they were not at all focused on these themes. They didn't even know they needed certain support. (A2)</p> <p>PPP's COP had particular interest in two pillars, and the DCOP in the third pillar. (A2, U) The DCOP is mentioned as having a particular interest in bringing reforms to the territorial levels with appropriate institutional reform. (A, U) Neither reflected deeply on any of the other cross-cutting themes, nor were mentioned as drivers for them.</p> <p>For some of its cross-cutting themes, PPP lacked appropriately skilled persons to champion them. The pillars were all-consuming, with enormous responsibilities, and gender and environment, for example, were very low priorities for government and PPP. (U, A2) Cross-cutting activities became smaller and not actually transversal. (A)</p> <p>For Consolidation Unit, the cross-cutting themes</p>	<p>bring (for example) a gender lens to bear on a range of efforts with competing priorities.</p>	
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<p>didn't fit in with the work substantially. For example, with the Index, we understand the need to disaggregate, but our institutional strengthening didn't really have anything to do with the differential approach at the national level. (G)</p> <p>Financial inclusion suffered from having a small budget that was cut time and time again. Mission priorities changed, and rural development work was no longer valued at high levels in the Mission. At the same time, this PPP team was able to accomplish a great deal with limited resources, in part because of strong commitment and tireless work from the Mission's technical monitor. (U) PPP's assistance was very good in articulating different actors like government's entities and the private sector. This was carried out with a fund for which private sector partners competed, and awareness events with the financial sector. (G)</p> <p>Gender did not have such traction. It worked with the Alta Consejería on Gender-Based Violence, which was not linked to PPP's pillars. (A) PPP lacked technical specialists in two cross-cutting themes: gender and environment (A). Environment focused on response to victims of a natural disaster. When those efforts to restore housing for the crisis victims had ended, this component was closed. (A)</p> <p><i>Nation-region (detailed in its own section below)</i></p>		
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<p><i>Long-term nature of reform</i></p> <p>Several PPP staff and consultants worked on the same policy efforts over time, both before PPP in ADAM/MIDAS and after it in the Land activity. They noted that the policy efforts they were working on were of necessity long-term – significant institutional change was challenging and took time, and building political will for policy change also took time. The more contentious and political the policy proposal, they noted, the longer it would take to build up a coalition to make the change. But their work was coming to fruition, with both land and rural development and access to financial services policies still making progress a year after work on those areas had finished (A3, U) In the discussion of the first point of the peace talks, there were strong links to the work we had done prior to that on rural development and the integrated, “territorial” approach that has been so well received by rural producers and others, and touching on such important issues that we will face in post-conflict. (G, A) What we worked on with ADAM MIDAS laid down the basis for what we did in PPP. (A) They’re about to pass the financial access rules we advocated. (A)</p> <p>We now work on land and rural development law. What we worked hard on – a territorial approach – is part of the discourse here and in Havana [i.e., at peace talks.] (A)</p> <p>We brought those people together and now our proposal on land and rural development</p>	<p>The ultimate impact of USAID-funded policy projects are often not clear during the project period. Sometimes they come to fruition under a later project when the timing is more propitious as the process matures. But, the analysis and processes begun are vital to subsequent project generations.</p> <p>This is also true of the professionals hired to work on these projects, who often are hired by subsequent projects and/or move in and out of public service with the GoC. They constitute important resources.</p>	<p>USAID’s policy reform efforts should be thought of as a portfolio of initiatives that mature at different times, based on issues discussed elsewhere in this document. USAID should monitor the progress of various initiatives and accelerate or pause activities accordingly – recognizing that ultimate impact may go beyond the project period, if the initiatives are powerfully seated within the GoC.</p>
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comprises the discourse. (A) We had to bring so many people into it- all the thinkers on these topics who otherwise would have shot us down, if they hadn't been included. (A, U)

Shortening the program to 3 years was a mistake. We had to run as if in a marathon, but policy efforts are more long-term, particularly on controversial, robust themes with many interests that all have to be included in the discussions. (A2)

<b>Nation-Region</b>		
<p><i>Examples PPP's efforts, successes and challenges:</i></p> <p>PPP worked with the Victims' Unit to develop the theme of territorial presence (expanding upon a prior vision that was restricted to a national level.) Though PPP proposed this link the team did not have the contractual mandate to operationalize and implement it. (G) In the social inclusion sector, PPP provided important inputs to the final structure of the sector, including its regional presence. (G)</p> <p>PPP helped orient financial products toward low-income populations and micro-business people, and helped to increase and improve coverage. (G)</p> <p>PPP successfully promoted integration of regional level indicators into INCODER's territory-level plans. (G)</p> <p>In the design of the interagency coordination system, PPP team helped in the coordination of regional entities for the supply of state services. Still, what is lacking today is how to address regional differences. (G)</p> <p>Though PPP proposed the importance of territorial linkages (see above) it did not have resources or mandate to operationalize and implement it. (G, U)</p> <p>It was difficult for this national-level project to see the experiences from more local levels,</p>	<p>PPP's mandate was at the national level only. At the same time, getting the policies implemented – especially down to the regional level – was important for eventual impact. Other USAID programs were tasked with regional work. However they and PPP did not work as closely together as might have been required for success. Results are therefore mixed. Some successes are noted but relative to the level of USAID priority, the territorialization of results was not as successful or as visible as desired.</p>	<p>Include regional participation and coordination to support GoC decision making within USAID policy projects, and among the family of USAID interventions, in future USAID-supported reform efforts. At the same time, set goals for regional implementation and uptake where the key geographies for execution are regional rather than national.</p> <p>USAID should link national and regional USAID programs better, or combine national and regional activities for one pillar in one contract, so that the IP can strategize and implement vertically in partnership with the GoC.</p>



<p>especially with respect to policy implementation. Nevertheless, regional-level impacts were a priority for USAID. Other IPs were charged with addressing regional needs. PPP had to abandon efforts to reach the regional level. It was beyond its mandate (U)</p>		
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## **INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND TA STRATEGIES**

<p><i>Examples:</i></p> <p>The Institutional Strengthening Component was highly valued, such as in civil service reform. This was a smaller, targeted effort. (A) There were other such efforts, all sort of juggled by [name redacted]. These were focused efforts within particular, amenable offices. (A, G, U)</p> <p>PPP's success was in funding receptive government agents who needed help, every day for a year, in much larger ways than international best practices language would suggest (U) The identification of failure in the institutional order and the recommendations are important to the needed modifications of the agrarian processes and will be very useful to the GoC in the future. (C)</p> <p>It was an achievement to mount the structures of the Victims' Unit and Center for National Historical Memory. But much harder to put into action, with institutional strengthening. An example is the Unit's targets, which seemed to be based on political concerns. (U)</p> <p>PPP was not charged with bringing policy down to the level of the government user, in implementation. PPP did institutional gaps diagnostics for us. But the effort was lost, and impact low, because there were limits to GoC absorption. (U) The Victim's Unit design is inefficient. It has no procedures or budget. It cannot offer direct services to the victims; it has to coordinate with other entities. (C) The results in the institutional strengthening were limited in cases where the GoC counterpart was not strong. (C) Results in INCODER were strong on activities like the archiving project, as it was no threat to political interests. But institutional reform never passed, for the opposite reason. (G)</p> <p>The lack of technical skills in the MADR has kept the</p>	<p><i>Post facto</i>, there is reversion to the mean in highly transient bodies of the GoC: reforms and institutional strengthening activities are diluted over time and where staff are transient.</p> <p>Smaller, targeted efforts with real constituencies – especially with one or two agencies, rather than a multitude – were more successful.</p> <p>Institutional strengthening worked better in a new institution like Victim's Unit than in an existing one, like INCODER, where reform raised hackles and was resisted vociferously.</p> <p>Political pressures were a key obstacle to efforts, as it is difficult to obtain consensus within the GoC or between the GoC and USAID. Activities are limited by GoC political priorities. PPP did diagnostics and wrote recommendations, however the adoption of these proposals depended on the government's will to implement them.</p> <p>Impediments (as noted above in the thematic selection section) included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in GoC staff, priorities and interest</li> <li>• Corruption and regional politicking</li> <li>• Lack of institutional capacity/maturation</li> </ul>	<p>USAID must make explicit any goals for institutional strengthening just as for policy, if such efforts are prioritized. If these reforms are expected to be operationalized, including at regional levels, this must be clearly designed, budgeted, monitored and carried out. As with policy goals, it is not worth the expense or effort if the GoC is not fully on board. USAID should choose these activities in full consultation with the GoC and include an assessment of whether the institution has the absorptive capacity for the reform, as well as the political commitment to follow through with</p>
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<p>institution from completely appropriating and using the information from the consultancies. (C) Similar comment on the Consolidation Unit. (C)</p> <p>In at least one occasion, USAID stopped PPP's support (to Contratos Plan.) "Adoption" could have been more complete had USAID allowed PPP to work regionally. (A) USAID did not have institutional strengthening as a standalone requirement in the contract. No budget; no staff. If USAID wanted it, they should be able to point to it in the contract. (U)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Context/external shocks such as the agrarian strike, fiscal challenges, peace process, etc.</li> <li>• Delays due to AECOM a/o USAID procedures (please see section on project management.)</li> </ul> <p>These affected institutional strengthening even more than policy; challenges were pervasive through certain bodies such as INCODER, MADR, and the Consolidation Unit.</p>	<p>it.</p>
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<p><b>High technical quality supported PPP's success</b></p>		
<p>PPP was largely successful in meeting its deliverables and contractual requirements (Desk review) PPP's deliverables were of high quality. (G4) The deliverables were reviewed by the technical staff and then by the contracting office to make sure of the TOR's compliance. Also, there was a knowledge management office to review and classify the deliverables. (A) PPP was successful in creation, institutional capacity building and policy implementation at the Victims' Unit, because of the quality of people and deliverables. (A) Today the sector is well positioned, in part because of the quality of the work from PPP – like Alzate in the VU. (G)</p> <p>The quality of the work in access to financial services (later cross-cutting) were very high, despite limited budget (G). The private sector was very interested. (A, G, C) Banca de Oportunidades: Qualified consultants and staff transferred knowledge, defined priorities, and strategies with the staff of BdO. All this improved access. (G)</p> <p>The most important success was PPP's clarity and vision from day one, on the [VU] registry, assistance and reparation. (G) In designing the unit &amp; training staff, PPP changed the VU's view of victims, from assistentialism to a reparative and differentiated approach, in line with the new</p>	<p>PPP's staff quality-controlled the deliverables. They knew what the client expected and ensured it.</p> <p>An important part of PPP's success was the excellent selection of staff and consultants. The personal relationships with the GoC, high-level national consultants, quality in the deliverables and commitment were key elements consistently identified by the GoC. Committed people, effective results, able to work point by point with their GoC counterparts, over extended periods.</p> <p>Mutual confidence between PPP staff and consultants and their GoC counterparts was an important element of successful initiatives. (See also the section on relationships with GoC, above.)</p>	<p>IPs should use strong and connected Colombian teams, including individuals with significant USAID project experience. IPs must cover the thematic areas of the program with this kind of quality technical support in staff and consultants, and with cross-cutting themes as well.</p> <p>The staff as described above should be predominantly Colombian. Where international expertise is sought and included, ensure that that international presence is balanced with Colombians. The connections and understanding of local context are important for what they bring to the work.</p>

<p>law. (U)</p> <p>PPP's leadership, technical and managerial staff quality, and strong staff relationships with high-level GoC were important to PPP's successes. High level team with good experience. PPP was willing to adapt to the GoC needs and support them. (G) PPP hired the best consultants and consultancy firms. (A2) We had good, useful debates. (A)</p> <p>USAID involvement was not always welcomed (U, A4, C2; <i>see further comments below on USAID management, guidance, trust</i>) such as a high-level GoC staffer saying they didn't want "a bunch of Americans to work on this."</p> <p>PPP almost never suggested an activity with which the GoC wasn't already on board. (U, A) The staff were up on the issues and on their counterparts' interests and limits.</p> <p>PPP's teams provided high quality documents, they were pertinent and flexible. (G)</p> <p>I don't want to score the support [on the scale of 1-5] because I came into the project late, but I will say the support was very valuable because it came at a time when our very young institution was growing very rapidly. PPP followed up with us continuously and were very helpful.</p> <p>On the 1-5 scale, with 1 being very poor and 5 being very good, government respondents rated PPP with the following scores:</p> <p>The totality of the technical tools: 4.5. (6 voters)</p>		
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<p>Results of PPP guidelines and practices: 4.5 (4 voters)</p> <p>Effectiveness of the TA: 4.5 (7 voters)</p> <p>Quality of the TA: 5 (6 voters)</p> <p>Quality of the institutional strengthening, and quality of the use of international best practices: 4.2 (2 voters each)</p> <p>The interview questions were used as guides for protracted conversations with respondents, and as such not all respondents answered all questions (also, not all questions pertained to the work with all respondents.) However, the evaluation team feels that these “scores” are quite indicative of the verbal responses in the interviews even when numeric responses were not provided.</p>		
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<b>PROJECT MANAGEMENT</b>		
<b>PPP's management</b>		



<p><i>Successes and good practices</i></p> <p>Work was well-planned. (A2). Efficient support, flexible, fast. (U, C, G) PPP’s way of working was in teams with GoC, staff and consultants. (C) Without good management, the GoC can be dysfunctional (A) PPP had high-level staff close to the decision-making positions in the GoC. (C) PPP assumed high risks and was successful. PPP faced vested interests and there were political costs involved in tackling these themes in Colombia. (C)</p> <p>PPP selected a team with experience, knowledge of the themes, people in GoC and local context, some government insiders and others from outside. (A, G) Efficient support thanks to the consultants’ high levels, which guaranteed direct communication with the GoC representatives. PPP team adapted to changing priorities of government, and knew its weaknesses. (G) They were frank with us, and told us “no” when they thought the government shouldn’t be outsourcing some piece of work. (G)</p> <p><i>Challenges</i></p> <p>Administrative and financial themes in PPP made work difficult; we lost one valuable consultant who could no longer wait. (G3) The dynamics in the Ministry require promptness, but there were long delays in the administrative and contracting process. (G) There were no clear rules to follow in the admin process. (A) Contracting was tedious, and complicated. (G, C, A) Contracting took too long. The rules were too many and somewhat</p>	<p>PPP got many things quite right: it was flexible in their support, adapting to USAID and GoC needs in many instances. PPP successfully identified the right people for the job (staff and consultants.) They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were of high technical quality and knowledge level</li> <li>• Had important connections with GoC</li> <li>• Were able to identify policy and/or institutional gaps and propose acceptable solutions</li> </ul> <p>PPP’s teamwork model also helped to secure consensus (see also the findings in the first section on the relationship between GoC and PPP.)</p> <p>The contracting model used in PPP had many important technical benefits, such as having the right people for the tasks at hand, at the right moment. (Please see also the findings in the section on how PPP worked with the GoC.)</p> <p>However, AECOM’s contracting processes were tedious and complicated the work. It is essential to get the contracting process right, early in the program, with a minimum of layers of approval and potential for delay.</p> <p>PPP teams did not uniformly inform USAID of advances with sufficient time</p>	<p>PPP’s model of flexible, consensus-oriented teamwork that responded agilely to the GoC should be replicated as closely as possible for future efforts. Similarly, their recruiting criteria should be used as a basis for team member selection: experience, technical knowledge and relationship with GoC are all important characteristics.</p> <p>IPs should look for ways to minimize contracting requirements for consultants, or at least for alternative (such as interim) hiring mechanisms to avoid losing good team members.</p>
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absurd. (A) AECOM's contracting process was not efficient. Consultants had to provide a lot of deliverables as a way to control payments and this meant a lot of deliverables to review and rate. (A)

At times PPP did not reconcile its work with what USAID wanted. It's a huge challenge. (U) The program used hundreds of contracts, with individuals and firms. (A2, U2) requiring home office & USAID approval, and could be so slow as to miss programmatic windows of opportunity.

for their participation. This eroded trust with USAID and resulted in USAID wanting even closer control.

<b>Cost-Effectiveness</b>		
<p>Administrative costs were appropriate for a PPP. (A)</p> <p>How much have we dropped into consolidation municipalities, for very low ROI? 10:1 for PPP versus other USAID projects (U) Compared to my current project, the expenses for PPP were fractional. (A)</p> <p>Contracting slow, justifying expenses. They were very cautious with expenses and being audit-ready. That took a lot of time. Also took additional time every time they had to correct the work of a subcontractor. (G)</p> <p>Some consultants were guided to leave after being paid. Should be more commitment. (G) Others took less than their normal rate, just to participate (C, A)</p> <p>Worthy. Contributed a lot to us in only 6 months that the (income generation) Mission lasted. (G)</p> <p>This was a project with low resources and very significant impact for us, deploying nationally in very little time. (G)</p>	<p>Though PPP's expenditure data per activity were not available, indications from government, USAID and the contractor indicate (1) close attention to spending rules and regulations, (2) attention to national-level priorities which leveraged or attempted to leverage effectiveness at more local levels, and (3) impressionistic evidence of policies and reforms implemented successfully, at reasonable cost.</p>	

USAID Management		
<p><i>Guidance and trust</i></p> <p>There were communication channels through meetings with the technical monitors, quarterly reports, weekly and biweekly reports, where the main advances in politics and the main challenges were shared. (A)</p> <p>The Biweekly reports/meeting were a lot of work for PPP, but at the same time, were a good opportunity to study the context, be updated to the current policy debates in different topics and show the current advances in the PPP. (A2, U2)</p> <p>Where they had trust top to bottom – MD, COTR, TM, AECOM, GoC – things worked. Without it, nothing else mattered. (U)</p> <p>First Mission Director gave PPP free rein; the second took it back (A, U). If USAID person is in the room, the meeting is not the same. (U, A) USAID’S presence in the meetings was sometimes counterproductive. In ADAM MIDAS it was different: the team had USAID’s total confidence in the meetings with the GoC. (A)</p> <p>Although USAID succeeded in procuring well-connected, high-level staff on the PPP team, the Mission sometimes tied those experts’ hands, insisting on closer and closer control. USAID changed guidance about relations between AECOM and USAID. At the beginning the team was accorded broad freedom. Over time USAID staff exerted increasing control and was more interventionist. (A3, U)</p> <p>One example: The relationship between USAID and the DPS was positive and helpful, they [USAID] didn’t appear much once we were working well together. But they always</p>	<p>As Mission leadership and management rotated, they changed the rules of engagement for the IP. In some respects the change was significant and affected the IP’s ability to do its work with sensitive GoC offices.</p> <p>USAID oversight created some problems. There is a desire among many GoC counterparts to do the work without USAID’s explicit presence. GoC representatives raised formal complaints, and it is unknown the extent of the damage to the relationship this may have caused.</p> <p>USAID has an obligation to oversee its contractors, technically as well as administratively. And PPP’s reform agenda must hew to USAID priorities. If not managed with aplomb, efforts to control can create tensions in a country, and with a consultant team, with a high level of capacity (see findings on the quality of staff above) and the ability to manage their high-level relationships with GoC to get things done.</p> <p>Increased communication, though time-consuming, appeared to have been both appreciated by all</p>	<p>USAID should look for a happy medium between an iron grip on policy efforts and allowing IPs free rein. Particularly where relationships with GoC are strained, or where GoC offices have expressed misgivings about “gringo involvement”, find ways to work at a distance through the IP. Keep in mind the ultimate goal of successful policies: if this can be accomplished through a trustworthy partner, the presence of USAID in individual meetings is not as crucial.</p>

<p>worked in a spirit of support when they were there. (G2) A more challenging example: USAID, (...) were not professional, even lacked respect for GoC counterparts (G). A couple of complaints were raised by the GoC with the USAID MD. (U) At times we receive invitations for an event in which the Ministry's presence is announced right in the invitation, without USAID ever agreeing with us what kind of participation we're supposed to be bringing to the event. They over-reach with us. (G) PPP team members entered their upcoming meetings in OneSource, to which USAID had access and both USAID and AECOM had approval rights. (A)</p> <p>With Economia Urbana, there appeared to be a very serious case of mistrust with respect to a PPP staff member... you can't climb out of that trust deficit. Both sides documented it poorly. (U)</p>	<p>respondents who spoke to the topic, and useful for USAID's maintaining technical control, perhaps with a bit of strategic distance.</p> <p>There appeared to be a precipitous decline in trust during the third year of the program. This deteriorating relationship had effects on activity outcomes in some cases.</p> <p>As noted in the findings of the management section that follows, the lack of "closure" – some kind of formal handoff from USAID and AECOM to the GoC – was keenly felt.</p>	
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<p><i>Technical management: structure</i></p> <p>Newsletter, Weekly Meetings, Briefers were good communication methods. (U) PPP was good at delivering reports and had a good monitoring and control system. The multi-pillar meetings at USAID provided valued integration space for USAID managers, but only at the end of the project. (U) The methods adopted to encourage cross-pollination worked, though apparently these were adopted late in the project (U2)</p> <p>Multiple projects, instead of one, fought for resources. There was no meaningful self-evaluation of the project. No common vision of success. There were benchmarks for GoC, but not for us. (U)</p> <p>Better to have one COR with one mandate. (U) Hard to communicate with 6, 8 heads. (U)</p>	<p>The decentralized technical management provided detailed technical focus. Technical monitors provided timely and contextualized guidance to the IP. At the same time, the model is not perfect, as it resulted to some extent in competing silos.</p> <p>Taking advantage of windows of opportunity was successful. As noted in government relationship findings above, the new GoC presidential administration coincided with PPP and USAID was able to create a lot of synergy through PPP.</p> <p>On the other hand, USAID did on occasion then lose those windows through inefficient internal management. There were cases where the USAID response timeline was longer than the GoC was prepared to wait.</p>	<p>USAID should replicate the structure with thematic technical monitors – including for cross-cutting themes – who have day-to-day contact with and control over IP activities in each pillar, and extend it to include territorial – level activities that fall under the same topic area. USAID will have to avoid creating isolated silos, but the technical focus is worth the effort. Hold biweekly technical meetings (by pillar) and monthly cross-pillar meetings.</p> <p>IPs should have a planned closure (with budget, timing and activities) to show the results, deliverables, and future recommendations to the government offices. This way the program leaves</p>
<p><i>Technical management: quality</i></p> <p>USAID is opportunistic, in a good way, taking advantage of the windows of opportunity offered by the GoC. (C)</p> <p>Where we lost out was when the whole thing took too long, and the window of opportunity closed. The difficulty here was more with USAID. PPP’s consultants rarely produced something not already agreed with the GoC. (U) One respondent reported 42 days’ wait for a contract approval. (A) Internal USAID response times and procedures stretched out; products arrived late to GoC. (U2) On one occasion, AECOM said it would manage a regional office [of Contrato Plan]. AECOM discussed it with USAID, who asked for justification and eventually denied it. We lost a lot of time waiting for the decision. (G) USAID requested no large close-out event be held across the project. PPP</p>		

<p>handed over with each GoC partner individually, over six months'. This included handing over the technical reports to each partner. (A)</p> <p>Success requires clear, logical procedures: dialogue with the GoC; procedures for planning and execution; internal consensus on objectives; timelines. (U)</p> <p>There was a lack of closure, no ceremony or handover to the GoC at program end. This made it feel less accountable to the GoC. (U, G,A4)</p> <p>IOM and PPP both worked on the Victims Unit – it was very inefficient. (U)</p>		<p>documentation, a presentation and/or a final report for every GoC office served by USAID support.</p>
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# ANNEX II: DESIGN, METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

## Design

The evaluation design was systematically qualitative. Activities undertaken in PPP to support policy and institutional strengthening environments are complex, with multiple stakeholders and potential spoilers, in an evolving context of political will and interests. Further, program effects are nationwide but quite diffuse. These conditions make quantitative study less helpful than understanding the *how* and *why* of program practices and lessons. Methods used in the evaluation therefore included in-depth, semi-structured interviews, document review, and case studies.

The data from such a study are by definition subjective: each respondent is likely to have a unique perspective on the topic under discussion. To be able to review those variances and weigh the values placed on them, the evaluation design is based on triangulating sources. For each case study, for example, perspectives were sought from the GoC, USAID, AECOM, and consultants.

This annex relates the complete set of evaluation methods, along with the team's completed Getting to Answers matrix. The latter shows, in tabular form, the relationship between the methods used for data collection and analysis, and each of the evaluation questions listed above.

## Sampling

### Respondent samples

The team reviewed project documentation to understand the project's activities, its clients, its modes of operation, its accomplishments and its challenges. The team then aligned the many policy and institutional strengthening contracts executed over the life of PPP against the higher-order objectives they sought to address. Against this universe of PPP activity the team:

- A. Purposively selected a set of GoC clients with substantial involvement with PPP to interview;
- B. Interviewed USAID staff (Contracting Officer's Representative and thematic Technical Monitors);
- C. Interviewed key AECOM staff and consultants; and
- D. Purposively selected five case studies into which to delve more deeply, to illustrate lessons learned and best practices.

The evaluation team conducted 36 in-depth interviews. AECOM staff and consultants comprised 19 of these; along with five USAID staff and twelve GoC actors. Of the individuals consulted, 25 were related to the case studies. Of the respondents, 19 were women and 17 men. To the extent possible, the responses of individual interviewees are anonymized in the report, to ensure candor.

The full list of respondents is included at Annex III. The evaluation used qualitative methods to extract lessons learned for the Mission in terms of institutional strengthening and policy reform



programming. Based on the evaluation questions, the team designed the interview protocols to capture different perspectives regarding each activity under study.

### Activity Sample

In concert with the USAID technical and program offices, the evaluation team selected a purposive sample of PPP activities to include in the evaluation. Cases were classified by their predominant area of effort (policy or institutional strengthening) and the impressions of program results – whether tending toward the positive, or toward the negative. The range of interviews provided a more robust picture of each case and its nuances and, especially, its lessons learned. This sample includes the core of the four case studies, as follows, and a set of ancillary results presented in a second table:

**Table 1: Case studies**

	<b>More positive impressions</b>	<b>Less positive impressions</b>
	←—————→	
<b>Policy effort</b>	Access to financial services	Rural development law
<b>Institutional strengthening</b>	Victims' Unit	Consolidation Unit

**Table 2: Additional themes examined in the sample:**

<b>Thematic area/transversal axis</b>	<b>Specific result set</b>
Victims' pillar	The treatment of gender in the unit
Consolidation pillar	Consolidation Index
Land and rural development pillar	INCODER strategic planning process
Nation-region, good governance	Contrato-Plan, royalties law

In addition, while data collection was underway, USAID requested that the evaluation team examine a fifth case study, on income generation activities undertaken with the GoC.

## Methods

### Document review

There are a wide range of documents of import to the evaluation. The team reviewed work plans, quarterly reports, and PWS for the life of the PPP. Deliverables for each case study were also read closely. Each case study also required a review of policy and/or institutional strengthening documentation as suggested in the table below. For those activities selected for the further in-depth case studies, this document review expanded to include all relevant documentation as part of the case study.

**Table 3. List of documents consulted**

<b>Implementer documents</b>	<b>Policy documents</b>	<b>Institutional strengthening</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work plans</li><li>• Quarterly reports</li><li>• Deliverables</li><li>• PWS</li><li>• Contract and activity databases and spreadsheets</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conpes</li><li>• Regulations</li><li>• Decrees</li><li>• Circulars</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Process manuals</li><li>• Strategies and missions</li><li>• Functional plans and strategies or mission statements</li><li>• Diagnostic documents</li></ul>

### In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews were used in the evaluation of the PPP to examine the activities from different perspectives. Evaluating an institutional strengthening activity, for example, included interviews with the implementer and contractors, as well as the group of government staff and decision-makers involved. To the degree possible, EVAL interviewed those individuals who were involved at the time of the activity, as well as any replacement personnel, to understand both the conduct of the activities and any ongoing results the present staff were able to cite.

The interview guides for various parties were constructed to answer the relevant evaluation questions from the evaluation design, per the individual respondent's role in or with the program. The team also adapted these questions in the field, when themes became emergent in an individual interview or across a set of interviews.

### Case studies

Case studies are a way to look at activities, opinions, institutions or other phenomena in human social relations, as part of social science research. They are qualitative and provide insight for individual cases rather than a generalizable experience. In social science research, case studies are often best used in four circumstances:

1. There are a few examples or cases, rather than a large sample.
2. The researchers or others need to understand the nuances of social phenomena, such as how a change occurs within a given institution. This is contrasted with understanding simple but observable behaviors across a wide sample.

3. There is a complexity to the phenomena being studied that does not lend itself to quantitative study. This might include closely-held opinions, networks of political influence, or other themes that may emerge from discussion.
4. No comparator exists – such as a government agency – within the same or a very similar context.

As a method, case studies must be tailored to fit the purpose for which they are used. They include various perspectives, coming from interviews or discussion groups or both, of a phenomenon (such as public policy reform or institutional strengthening in the current study) about which actors may have various opinions and experiences – even contradictory ones. Each case study for this evaluation also required further documentary or secondary data review, such as with policy documents or other deliverables, results data, and institutional strengthening manuals and work plans.

## **Data analysis**

The PPP evaluation team conducted a systematic analysis of the interview transcriptions, examining patterns, convergence and divergence of opinions and experience, and trends analysis, to answer each of the evaluation questions. Notes and transcriptions from interviews were coded according to the themes and dynamics most important for answering the evaluation questions. The team also paid attention to emergent codes – that is, themes that occurred in the responses that had not been considered in the evaluation questions. In this way, the team attempted to capture unintended consequences of the PPP activities.

## **Limitations**

Three particular limitations for this evaluation should be made explicit. First, the program activities were performed in a highly dynamic environment, with changes in priorities, political challenges, and USAID's own changes in targets and goals. This complexity and dynamism means that the multiple facets and perspectives around the Program's achievements can be contradictory or unclear, even after extensive data collection and analysis. Second, some actors (key GoC stakeholders, for example, or AECOM staff and contractors, or even interested parties at USAID) had changed positions since the project was implemented. Some individuals sought for interview were unavailable. And finally, the absence of a Performance Management Plan (PMP) and baseline data for the activities undertaken, the evaluation team focused on the Program Work Statement (PWS) results as a measure of performance.

## Getting to Answers Matrix

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	Data collection		Sampling or selection criteria	Analysis plan
	Source(s)	Method(s)		
1. To what extent did AECOM <b>influence</b> the GoC in defining its policy decisions in the content of the project deliverables?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GoC officials and functionaries</li> <li>USAID staff</li> <li>Implementer staff and contractors</li> <li>Reports</li> <li>Deliverables</li> <li>Administrative and legislative acts and policies</li> <li>Documentary references</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth interviews</li> <li>Document review</li> <li>Case studies</li> <li>In-depth interviews</li> <li>Document review</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definition of criteria for the case studies</li> <li>Related GoC officials, USAID staff and IP staff</li> <li>Relevant documents LOP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content analysis</li> <li>Analyses of convergence and divergence</li> </ul>
2. To what extent where international <b>best practices</b> introduced vs relying Colombian expertise and models? How effective was the approach?				
3. How <b>effective</b> was the Public Policy Project assisting the GoC to adopt policy changes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GoC officials and functionaries</li> <li>USAID staff</li> <li>Implementer staff and contractors</li> <li>Reports</li> <li>Deliverables</li> <li>Administrative and legislative acts and policies</li> <li>Database of PWS and deliverables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth interviews</li> <li>Document review</li> <li>Case studies</li> <li>Review of PWS and deliverables data from IP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criteria for the case studies</li> <li>Related GoC officials, USAID staff and IP staff</li> <li>Relevant documents for the life of the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content analysis</li> <li>Frequencies from among project deliverable data</li> </ul>

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	Data collection		Sampling or selection criteria	Analysis plan
	Source(s)	Method(s)		
4. What was the level of <b>quality</b> in assistance provided?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GoC officials and functionaries</li> <li>• USAID staff</li> <li>• Implementer staff and contractors</li> <li>• Reports</li> <li>• Deliverables</li> <li>• Administrative and legislative policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth interviews</li> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criteria for the case studies</li> <li>• Related GoC officials, USAID staff and IP staff</li> <li>• Documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis</li> </ul>
5. What characteristics of AECOM's work supported institutional strengthening most <b>effectively</b> and which were less useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GoC officials and functionaries</li> <li>• USAID staff</li> <li>• Implementer staff and contractors</li> <li>• Reports</li> <li>• Deliverables</li> <li>• Administrative and legislative policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth interviews</li> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criteria for the case studies</li> <li>• Related GoC officials, USAID staff and IP staff</li> <li>• Relevant documents for the life of the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis</li> </ul>

## ANNEX III: INFORMATION SOURCES

Type	Name	Title	PPP activity area
USAID	Norberto Martinez	COR	PPP in its entirety
USAID	Angela Suarez	Technical COR	Victims pillar
USAID	Thea Villate	Technical ACOR	Victims pillar
USAID	Marcela Chavez	Technical Monitor	Land and rural development pillar
USAID	Amy Meyers	Technical Monitor	Land and rural development pillar
AECOM	Jaime Andrés Niño	Chief of Party	General; rural development emphasis
AECOM	Diego Bautista	Deputy COP	General; consolidation, contrato-plan
AECOM	Adriana Velez	Technical Lead	Land and rural development pillar
AECOM	Diana Parra	Technical Lead	Access to financial services
AECOM	Lina Ibañez	Technical Lead	Consolidation pillar
AECOM	Sandra Alzate	Technical Lead	Victims pillar
AECOM	Francisco Osuna	Knowledge Mgt.	Cross-pillars
AECOM	Marcela Bustamante	Technical team	Victims pillar
AECOM	Juan Guillermo Rubio	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
AECOM	Patricia Henao	Cross-cutting	Gender and environment
AECOM	Ana Maria Rivera	Cross-cutting	Institutional strengthening
CONS	Carlos Rodríguez	Consultant	Contratos Plan
CONS	Santiago Tobón	Consultant	Land and rural development pillar
CONS	Eduardo Noriega	Consultant	Land and rural development and access to financial services
CONS	Arturo García	Consultant	Land and rural development pillar
CONS	Diana Medrano	Consultant	Victims pillar
CONS	Consuelo Corredor	Consultant	Income generation mission
CONS	Jaime Arteaga	Consultant	Consolidation pillar
CONS	Carlos Sandoval	Consultant	Access to financial services
GoC	Paola Buendía	Subdirector	Office of the Presidency
GoC	Anibal Fernández Soto	Vice Minister	Min. Agr. and Rural Development
GoC	Myriam Villegas	Former director	INCODER
GoC	Ricardo Sabogal	Director	Land Restitution Unit
GoC	Germán Chamorro	Director	Consolidation Unit

GoC	Juliana Alvarez	Director	Banca de Oportunidades
GoC	Angela Penagos	Director	National Planning Department
GoC	Iris Marín	Subdirector	Victims' Unit
GoC	Mariana Escobar	Subdirector	DPS, income generation mission
GoC	Julio Abril	Subdirector	DPS, income generation mission
GoC	Carlos Parodi	Subdirector	Planning, Consolidation Unit
GoC	Carlos Córdoba	Manager	Contratos-Plan

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Also reviewed: Program reports and documents provided by AECOM, including:

- Program Work Statements (PWS) 2011, 2012, 2013
- Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) reviews 2011, 2012, 2013
- Work Plans 2011, 2012, 2013

- Quarterly reports (project timeline inclusive, through Q12.)



# ANNEX IV: INSTRUMENTS

The interview instruments were highly customized for each respondent, given their singular roles and experiences with the PPP. All instruments (with these substantial variations) are included in the supplementary disk submitted as part of this report, along with anonymized interview data.

# ANNEX V: EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK

## Statement of Work

### Performance Evaluation of the Public Policy Project (PPP)

## 1. THE ACTIVITY TO BE EVALUATED

The Public Policy Project is being implemented through a cost-plus-fixed-fee contract (Contract No. AID-514-C-11-00001) to AECOM. The original contract award amount of USD \$22,487,555 was increased on September 2012 by \$4,900,000, to \$27,387,555, through Modification #7.

The initial period of performance was from 21 October 2010 to 20 October 2015 (a five-year program). However, project reports indicate that because of Colombian government (GOC) demand, completion of activities was accelerated. Thus, the project is now scheduled to close July 2014, at the end of its third year of operations.

## 2. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND USE

*Purpose:* To extract lessons from the experience of PPP regarding institutional strengthening and policy reform. The evaluation results will be used by USAID to guide future Mission project design and implementation efforts. This evaluation also meets the USAID requirement to conduct at least one performance evaluation of activities that are larger than average (in dollar terms) for a given Mission Development Objective.

## 3. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- A. To what extent were international best practices introduced vs. relying on Colombian expertise and models? How effective was the approach?
- B. To what extent did AECOM's technical assistance feed into policy development and adoption?
- C. How effective was PPP in assisting the GOC to adopt policy changes?
- D. What was the level of quality in assistance provided?

- E. What characteristics of AECOM’s work supported institutional strengthening most effectively and which were less useful?

## **4. PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The PPP was originally a five-year program (reduced to three years) that was intended to provide technical management expertise to form, adopt and implement public policies that would improve the business environment, promote sustainable income generation, strengthen state presence and improve the provision of social services to poor and vulnerable groups throughout Colombia. It was also intended to gather and support reform priorities from Colombia Strategic Development Initiative (CSDI) regional and other USAID programs.

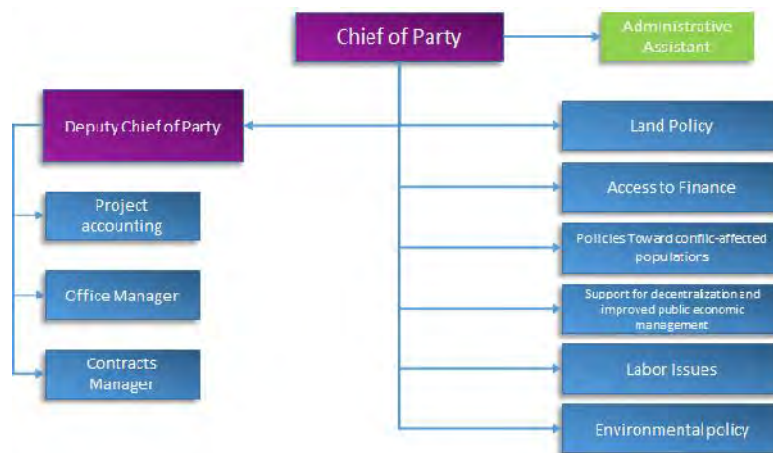
PPP's main goal was to support GOC structural reforms designed to break the cycle of poverty that leads marginalized, poor communities in areas with weak state presence to undertake illicit crop production and illegal activities, fueling violence and the further degradation of Colombia's social, economic and environmental resources. AECOM supported a wide variety of GOC policy initiatives, including, but not limited to, land reform, access to financial services, labor and vulnerable populations.

PPP’s strategy changed frequently during its relatively short lifetime. The original purpose of the contract was to improve the advocacy, capacity and soundness of the private financial sector through targeted reforms and institutional building and improvement of the quality and availability of finance and business education. (The original Program Work Statement – PWS – is too large to include in this document; but will be made available to the evaluation team.) In the first phase, from October 2010 until March 2012, PPP worked through six components:

7. Land policy;
8. Access to finance;
9. Policies toward conflict-affected populations;
10. Support for decentralization and improved public economic management;
11. Labor issues; and
12. Environmental policy.

The original organizational chart is presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1:** Public Policy Project Initial Organizational Chart



Contract Modification 3 (March 1, 2012) restructured PPP by replacing the PWS, replacing key personnel and realigning the budget. PPP began focusing its capacity building and technical assistance to support the key pillars of the GOC strategy: Land Policy, Victims Policy, and Consolidation Policy.

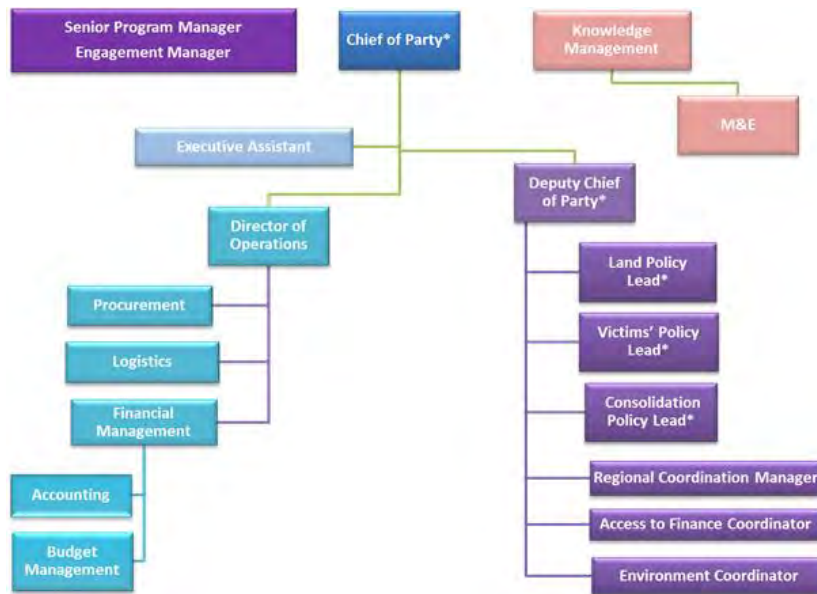
PPP continued supporting the creation and strengthening of key national institutions in support of the GOC strategy and development of key policy frameworks and their programmatic design at the national level. PPP increased its focus on designing mechanisms to enhance planning, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation cycle in national-level institutions.

PPP attempted to focus on strategic interventions and promoting synergies across a wide range of GOC and USAID priorities and regional programs. PPP supported a number of cross-cutting issues considered critical to each pillar to ensure integration of policy implementation at the regional level. These included budgeting and coordination mechanisms at the territorial level; sustainable livelihoods and access to finance; environment, biodiversity and climate change; and gender.

Knowledge management had two objectives: (1) to support strategic communications related to GOC policy reform and PPP achievements and (2) to build a knowledge base regarding the policy change processes employed by the project.

The revised staff chart is presented in Figure 2; the revised PWS as Figure 3.

**Figure 2: Public Policy Project Second Organizational Chart**



**Figure 3: Public Policy Project Second Program Work Statement (PWS)**

NEW PERFORMANCE WORK STATEMENT (PWS)								
Results/Performance Standards	Delivery Requirements/Milestones	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Quality Assurance/Quality Control	
Program Goal: Improved economic and social conditions of vulnerable Colombians through effective rights-based institutional presence								
PILLAR ONE: LAND POLICY								
1.1 Land restitution chapter of the Victim's Law implemented	Land Restitution Unit established		☐				Expert panel	
	Inputs to Compensation decree		☐				Expert panel	
	Inputs to Land Restitution for Ethnic Minorities decree	☐					Expert panel	
1.2 Land and Rural Development Law drafted	Inputs to Law for Rural Development			☐			Expert panel	
	Design of Unit for Rural Land Use Planning	☐					Expert panel	
	Design of Sustainable Livelihoods Policy Framework			☐			Expert panel	
	Design of Regional Rural Development Areas Programs		☐				Expert panel	
1.3 Rural property formalization program designed, including regulatory framework and institutional infrastructure	Design of formalization program		☐				Expert panel	
	Regulatory framework for land formalization	☐					Expert panel	
	Design of institutional structure for formalization program	☐					Expert panel	
PILLAR TWO: VICTIMS POLICY:								
2.1 Victims' Law institutions designed	Design of Department of Social Prosperity (DAPS)			☐			Expert panel	
	Design of Victims' Unit		☐				Expert panel	
	Design of Regional Victims' Assistance Centers		☐				Expert panel	
	Design of Center for Historical Memory		☐				Expert panel	
2.2 National plan for Victims' humanitarian assistance and reparations	National Plan for victims' reparations in place		☐				Expert panel	
	Design of regional reparations plans		☐				Expert panel	
2.3 Victims and civil society stakeholders participate in the implementation of the Victims' Law	Victims and stakeholder participation in policy design		☐				Expert panel, Meeting evaluations, stakeholder surveys	
PILLAR THREE: CONSOLIDATION POLICY								
3.1 National Consolidation Policy (NCP) framework revised	Revised NCP framework	☐					Expert panel	
	Regional Consolidation Action Plans			☐			Expert panel	
	Design of interagency and inter-governmental budget and coordination mechanisms			☐			Expert panel	
3.2 Institutional structure designed to implement the NCP at the national and regional level	Design of Consolidation Unit		☐				Expert panel	
	Design of Consolidation Fund		☐				Expert panel	

The GOC demands and needs that drove the PPP model were complex. The GOC needed to strengthen the Victims' and Land Restitution Units to ensure their capacity to implement new legislation and policy frameworks, and improve coordination with departmental and municipal governments. Regional offices were still being created and at the same time had to process massive numbers of restitution and reparations claims, while personnel were being trained. Similarly, the Consolidation & Territorial Reconstruction Unit was still hiring personnel in the regions and faced major challenges to rapidly respond to community needs and coordinate service provision from different GOC agencies and local governments.

Provision of social services, housing, and support for income generation to victims and communities in regions affected by conflict remained a challenge. Despite significant budget allocations identified in the Victims' CONPES document and the revised National Consolidation Plan, GOC service delivery did not respond effectively to the needs of victims, ethnic minorities, and consolidation zones. Novel funding and service delivery methods were needed for vulnerable populations and regions devastated by decades of internal conflict. The GOC had to eliminate rigidities that discouraged provision of services, and had to create conditions for communities to build their own infrastructure and provide services that took into

account gender and ethnic disparities, and victims' physical, psychological and social rehabilitation needs.

In this new phase of work, PPP addressed the aforementioned challenges to ensure previously supported reforms and policies would become a reality. In order to help GOC institutions reach their goals, PPP:

6. Supported the Victims', Land Restitution, and Consolidation Units, and INCODER and MARD to strengthen their operations;
7. Worked with institutions to coordinate across government from the national policies level to implement at regional and local levels; and
8. Harmonized sectorial policies to ensure coordinated, effective programming for priority populations and regions.

As a result, the PWS was replaced, as shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4: Public Policy Project Third PWS**

Replacement of the PWS in its entirety							
PERFORMANCE WORK STATEMENT: USAID PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAM							
Results/Performance Standards	Delivery Requirements /Milestones	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Quality Assurance/Quality Control
Program Goal: Improved economic and social conditions of vulnerable Colombians through effective rights-based institutional presence							
<b>PILLAR ONE: LAND POLICY</b>							
1.1 Land restitution chapter of the Victim's Law Implemented	1.1.1 Land Restitution Unit established			●			Expert panel
	1.1.2 Inputs to Compensation decree		●				Expert panel
	1.1.3 Inputs to Land Restitution for Ethnic Minorities decree	✓					Expert panel
1.2 Land and Rural Development Law drafted and implemented	1.2.1 Inputs to Law for Rural Development		●				Expert panel
	1.2.2 Design of Unit for Rural Land Use Planning	✓					Expert panel
	1.2.3 Design of Sustainable Livelihoods Policy Framework			●			Expert panel
	1.2.4 Design of Regional Rural Development Areas Programs			●			Expert panel
	1.2.5 Reform of INCODER Implemented			●			Expert panel
	1.2.6 Reform of MARD Implemented			●			Expert panel
1.3 Rural property formalization program designed, including regulatory framework and institutional infrastructure	1.3.1 Design of formalization program		●				Expert panel
	1.3.2 Regulatory framework for land formalization	✓					Expert panel
	1.3.3 Design of institutional structure for formalization program	✓					Expert panel
	1.3.4 Formalization of Land Tenure Rights Policy Document developed			●			Expert panel
<b>PILLAR TWO: VICTIM'S POLICY:</b>							
2.1 Victims' Law institutions designed	2.1.1 Design of Department of Social Prosperity (DAPS)		●				Expert panel
	2.1.2 Design of Victims' Unit			●			Expert panel
	2.1.3 Design of Regional Victims' Assistance Centers		●				Expert panel
	2.1.4 Design of Center for Historical Memory		✓				Expert panel
	2.1.5 Design of Victims Registration System		●				Expert panel
2.2 National plan for Victims' humanitarian assistance and reparations	2.2.1 National Plan for victims reparations in place			●			Expert panel
	2.2.2 Improved service delivery for victims			●			Expert panel
	2.2.3 SNARIV Strengthened to Monitor Agency Action Plans			●			Expert panel
	2.2.4 Support implementation of Cessation of Vulnerability Index			●			Expert panel
	2.2.5 Design and implementation of regional reparations Plans		✓				Expert panel
Program Goal: Improved economic and social conditions of vulnerable Colombians through effective rights-based institutional presence							
2.3 Victims and civil society stakeholders participate in the implementation of the Victims' Law	2.3.1 Victims and stakeholder participation in policy design		✓				Expert panel Meeting evaluations; stakeholder surveys
<b>PILLAR THREE: CONSOLIDATION POLICY</b>							
3.1 National Consolidation Policy (NCP) framework revised and under implementation	3.1.1 Revised NCP framework	✓					Expert panel
	3.1.2 Support for development and implementation of Regional Consolidation Action Plans			●			Expert panel
	3.1.3 Improved service delivery in Consolidation Zones			●			
	3.1.4 Design of interagency and inter-governmental budget and coordination mechanisms		●				Expert panel
3.2 Institutional structure designed to implement the NCP at the national and regional level	3.2.1 Design and Implementation of Consolidation Unit			●			Expert panel
	3.2.2 Design of Consolidation Fund		●				Expert panel



With frequent changes to its mission, and the output-oriented nature of the PWS structure (in fact, it never had a PMP), PPP seems to have been focused on executing its many deliverables. Reports indicate that it served as a vehicle to meet the diverse policy demands of the GOC and various technical offices within USAID. Although international consultants and subcontracts to Colombian firms were also used, PPP chiefly met demand by issuing contracts to individual Colombian consultants to work individually, or in teams, to complete assigned deliverables. Over the course of the contract, PPP issued contracts to over 400 individuals and firms, with some receiving more than one contract.

The contract is currently in close-out mode, with the staff having dwindled from approximately forty men and women to five.

## 5. EVALUATION METHODS

The approach will be systematically qualitative. The team will begin by reviewing project documentation to understand the project's activities, its clients, its modes of operation, its accomplishments and its challenges. The team will then align the many policy and institutional strengthening contracts executed over the life of PPP against the higher-order objectives they sought to address. Much of the raw data will be arrayed by AECOM, as described in Section 6, below. Against this universe of PPP activity the team will:

- E. Purposively select a set of GOC clients with substantial involvement with PPP to interview;
- F. Interview USAID staff (COR, PROG, Technical Office Heads);
- G. Interview key AECOM staff and ex-staff;
- H. Purposively select two policy case studies and two institutional strengthening case studies into which the team will delve more deeply, possibly using Social Network Analysis method, among other approaches.

For budget and timeline purposes, EVAL estimates 40 in-depth interviews. One quarter to one-third of these would be with current and former AECOM staff, and the remainder with participating GOC partners and USAID. Case studies will also comprise at least one-third of the interviews.

These data will be analyzed and reported to USAID using a standard Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations matrix that will inform a draft report to be submitted to USAID as well as a debriefing. Based on feedback from the briefing and draft report, the Evaluation Team will submit a final report.

## **6. EXISTING PERFORMANCE AND OTHER PROJECT INFORMATION**

The following information will be made available to the evaluation team by AECOM:

- All strategic documents, such as PWS and records of achievement against these goals
- All work plans
- All quarterly and annual reports
- A table listing all subcontracts, including:
  - person/entity awarded;
  - period of performance;
  - amount of contract;
  - link to the completed product (if a document);
  - if readily available:
    - assessment of performance (if any); and
    - assessment of use of the product;
- For each of the policy initiatives, a list including:
  - Name of policy initiative
  - Contact details of GOC participants
  - List of contracts to support the policy
  - Outcome of the initiative.
- For each institutional strengthening initiative, a list including:
  - Name of organization to be strengthened
  - Contact details of GOC participants
  - List of contracts to support the policy
  - Major outputs of the support
  - Outcome of the initiative.
- A file containing all technical documents completed.
- A list of current and past AECOM staff, with current email and cell phone contacts.
- A listing of complete AECOM staffing patterns as of the end of each Fiscal Year.

## **7. TEAM COMPOSITION**

The team will be comprised as follows:

- A. The Team Leader will be a Senior Public Policy/Public Administration Expert, with experience implementing policy reform projects that have a high technical assistance component. S/he will also be an experienced evaluator.
- B. The Senior Researcher will be an experienced analyst with significant experience gathering and analyzing data and excellent English speaking and writing skills.

C. Junior Data Analyst with experience managing quantitative and qualitative data.

Combined, the team will have the following experience:

- Leading and participating in performance evaluations;
- Supporting policy processes in Colombia and elsewhere;
- Working with USAID and understanding its practices;
- Managing field projects;
- Supporting capacity development of government institutions;
- Evaluating policy and capacity building projects;
- Working directly with GOC institutions;
- Experience working in a wide range of sectors, such as agriculture, micro-enterprise, environment, Colombian process of consolidation, among others; and
- Excellent written and spoken English and Spanish.

**NOTE:** A Senior Development Expert, with significant experience evaluating and managing USAID field projects, will be added to serve on a temporary basis, if the above staff do not have sufficient familiarity with USAID.

## 8. SCHEDULING, TIMING, AND DELIVERABLES

Subject to various approvals, the team is expected to begin work in March, completing deliverables as outlined in the following section.

DELIVERABLE	DESCRIPTION	Timing (calendar days)
Work plan and evaluation design	A written evaluation design and detailed operational work plan will be prepared and submitted to USAID for review prior to fieldwork.	14 days after Start Date (subject to availability for interviews with USAID and implementers)
Data collection and analysis tools	All draft instruments and the analysis plan will be prepared and submitted to USAID for review prior to fieldwork.	21 days after SOW Start Date
Field data collection	Weekly electronic reports of the progress made covering key scheduled activities, completion status, constraints identified with approaches to address constraints.	Throughout data collection and analysis period
First draft report	Rough draft of the report submitted to the USAID COR, who will provide preliminary comments – one unified document from whatever sources are required within USAID – to facilitate preparation of the debriefing.	60 work days after SOW Start Date
Debriefing with USAID	EVAl will present the evaluation findings to USAID through a presentation and discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The team will consider USAID comments and revise the draft report, as appropriate.	Ten work days after submission of draft
Final report	Final report incorporating written comments received from USAID and issues identified by USAID during the debriefing.	Seven work days after receipt of final comments from USAID

## **9. REPORT SECTIONS AND CONTENT**

The report will not exceed 30 pages, excluding table of contents, executive summary, acronyms list, references and annexes. The format will be consistent with the 2011 USAID Evaluation Policy and November 2012 USAID How-to Note on Evaluation Reports.

At a minimum, the report will include the following sections:

- Executive Summary (3 to 4 pages);
- Evaluation Purpose and Questions (1 to 2 pages);
- Project Background (1 to 3 pages);
- Evaluation Methods and Limitations (1 to 3 pages, with full version in an annex);
- Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations (15 to 25 pages); and,
- Annexes.

The report may include additional content, split the sections up differently, or present the sections in a different order.

# **ANNEX VI: CONFLICT OF INTEREST FORMS**

Please see additional file in PDF form, "Signed PPP COI forms"

U.S. Agency for International Development  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20523