The responsibility of representing so many women who have suffered because of the conflict, and carrying their voice is rewarding

María Eugenia Cruz
Victim of sexual violence (Bogotá).

Women build peace, and their reparation contributes **to the reconstruction of the social fabric**

The internal armed conflict generates violent environments that produce a disproportionate impact on the guarantee and effective exercise of women's rights, as the Constitutional Court has already indicated. **The invisibility of how serious violence against women is allows new ways of discrimination against them, and sometimes puts them in a situation of exclusion.**

The national government is aware of the social, economic, and political contribution of women to the development processes, **and it is improving its initiatives, with gender and human rights based actions.**

The Victims Unit works to leave behind the underestimation in the cases of crimes against sexual integrity and freedom, by coordinating 'statement-taking' days with other entities and civil society organizations. **That underestimation comes from the fear to report these violations, and the fact that this sort of violence is somehow subsumed in events such as forced displacement, among others.**

Women victims of the conflict are acknowledged as the main actors of the policy, and full-right citizens. **In fact, the list of crimes against sexual integrity and freedom on occasion of the armed conflict was extended, and they were set as one of the gradualness and progressiveness criteria established by the Colombian State to access to comprehensive reparation.**

The participation protocol is the only tool in Colombia to include criteria based on equal representation, which in practice means new leaderships, generational exchanges and diversity. **This enriches the process and, above all, facilitates more women to access the different levels of the participation roundtables.**

The State now has rules, a budget, and entities responsible for the implementation of the public policy on women victims within the framework of the internal armed conflict, **such as the Victims and Land Restitution Law (2011). It brings together 20 entities so as they implement 223 activities with an investment of 2.2 trillion Colombian pesos (around 1.7 US billion dollars); and Law 1719 of 2014, by which measures are adopted to guarantee access to justice for victims of sexual violence,** especially in the context of the armed conflict.

More than **3** **million women** are registered as victims of the armed conflict. The most common victimizing events are: displacement, homicide, and threat.

Around **80,000** women have participated in the financial training days, which are aimed to guide victims on the adequate investment of their compensation resources. This means 65 per cent of the total participants.

3,347 women victims of sexual violence have been compensation, for a value of 60,320 million Colombian pesos. Moreover, 407 of them have participated in the strategy of group emotional recovery.

National Day for the Dignity of Women Victims of Sexual Violence caused by the Internal Armed Conflict

The approval of Decree 1480 of 2014 will help acknowledge the courage, work, and resistance of thousands of women victims of sexual violence within the framework of the internal armed conflict. Every 25th of May, we will be reminded that there should not be a single victim of sexual violence more in the country.

Around 50% of the 28,000 fiduciary funds established for those younger than 18 correspond to girls and adolescents. **Around 4,000 plans of attention, assistance, and comprehensive reparation have been done with girls, in order to know their abilities, needs, and life projects.**

More than 300 women victims were elected to intervene in the regional participation roundtables. **The Colombian State is constantly promoting their organizational skills, which results in an effective participation.**

150 women who defend the workers' rights in the country gathered to talk about collective reparations for the trade union movement, with a gender-based approach, during the National Meeting of Trade Unionist Women, in the city of Cal.

7 women organizations began their comprehensive reparation process, and participated in the 'Entrelazando' strategy, aimed to rebuild the social fabric, and provide a community rehabilitation measure for subjects of collective reparations.

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