

**MID-TERM PROJECT EVALUATION
FOR THE
UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND**

EVALUATION REPORT

**UDF-19-870-COL Enabling Local Information and Media Literacy for a Better-Informed
Society in Colombia**

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Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in this report are those of the evaluator. They do not represent those of UNDEF or any of the institutions mentioned in the report.

Author

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Hasta ahora, nuestro trabajo ha sido posible gracias a subvenciones otorgadas por organismos multilaterales, cooperación internacional y organizaciones filantrópicas. Desde 2019, año en que se inició este proyecto, hemos contado con el apoyo del Fondo de Naciones Unidas para el Fortalecimiento de la Democracia (UNDEF por sus siglas en inglés), la Embajada Británica en Colombia, Broederlijk Delen, el Centro de Ginebra para la Gobernanza del Sector de la Seguridad (DCAF por sus siglas en inglés), la Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID), Climate and Land Use Alliance (CLUA) y la Embajada de Holanda en Colombia.

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I. GLOBAL EVALUATION: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

a. Evaluation takeaways

This executive summary synthesises the findings of the independent mid-term evaluation of the project “Enabling Local Information and Media Literacy for a Better-Informed Society in Colombia,” implemented by the Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa (FLIP) with funding from the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF). The evaluation assessed the project according to OECD-DAC criteria, considering coherence, relevance, design, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and UNDEF’s added value and visibility. It draws on documentary review, interviews with stakeholders, field visits, and surveys with project beneficiaries. The project responded to Colombia’s acute democratic challenges, notably the existence of “information deserts” in more than half of the country’s municipalities, where citizens lack access to timely and reliable information. In this context, the project aimed to restore local communication networks, build sustainable journalism practices, and strengthen media and information literacy (MIL) across schools and communities.

Coherence

The evaluation finds that the project demonstrates a high level of coherence across multiple dimensions. Alignment with UNDEF’s mandate was clear: the intervention operationalised the principle of access to information, a cornerstone of democratic governance. By equipping citizens with the ability to generate, disseminate, and critically engage with information, the project directly fostered accountability and democracy. Cases such as the coverage of school meal programmes in Tadó, which triggered an investigation by the Attorney General’s Office, exemplify this causal chain.

Internal coherence with FLIP’s strategies was also strong. The project scaled Consonante, FLIP’s pilot journalism labs, into a sustainable network of correspondents, while also transforming its media literacy initiatives into a national, certified diploma in partnership with Universidad Javeriana. FLIP’s protection programme CODAP was integrated through self-protection and digital security training, reinforcing participants’ safety. These synergies consolidated FLIP’s institutional evolution from a focus solely on protecting journalists to proactively building democratic information ecosystems.

Externally, the project aligned with Colombia’s fragile communication landscape, avoiding duplication while filling gaps in neglected Territorially Focused Development Program (PDET) territories. Partnerships with local museums, Indigenous collectives, and schools exemplify context-sensitive collaboration. National resonance was achieved through republication of Consonante stories in major outlets such as El Espectador and Vorágine. The project thus reinforced rather than competed with existing initiatives.

Relevance

The relevance of the project is rated as very high. Its overall objective—to restore local communication networks in information deserts with emphasis on media and digital literacy—was directly aligned with Colombia’s structural deficits. According to FLIP’s 2019 research, more than half of Colombia’s municipalities lacked local media outlets, leaving nearly 10 million people without access to relevant local information. The project’s three components directly addressed this deficit: training local leaders to produce content (supply), creating networks of correspondents (sustainability), and equipping teachers and students with media literacy tools (demand).

Adequacy was ensured through careful selection of 18 municipalities, all within PDET areas, chosen for their acute deficits but also for their social fabric and feasibility. Participant selection was organic and inclusive, reaching teachers, Indigenous communicators, women leaders, and youth. The project demonstrated flexibility and cultural sensitivity, adapting methodologies in Indigenous territories such as Mitú and Inírida. Gender responsiveness was integrated through measures such as flexible schedules and allowing participation with children, ensuring female inclusion despite structural barriers. The certified Media and Information Literacy (EMI) program diploma filled a national gap, being the first of its kind in Colombia, with over 140 teachers accredited by 2024.

Design

The project's design was robust and strategically sound. The three-component structure addressed supply, demand, and sustainability of information. Each component was clearly linked: journalism labs (C1) trained leaders; the network (C2) sustained their engagement; and the EMI programme (C3) equipped future generations to consume information critically. Methodologies were hybrid (face-to-face and online), participatory, and context-sensitive, with strong risk mitigation strategies.

Risks of poor connectivity were managed through printed materials, WhatsApp accompaniment, and recorded sessions. Cultural and linguistic barriers in Indigenous communities were addressed through differentiated support and intercultural co-production. Gender barriers were mitigated through safe spaces, flexibility, and targeted outreach. In conflict-affected municipalities, FLIP prioritised building trust through sustained presence and local alliances.

Activities were well linked to outputs: journalism labs produced hundreds of pieces co-created with FLIP mentors; correspondents continued publishing with editorial support; and EMI diploma graduates launched school-based media projects. Minor design gaps included the relatively short duration of the diploma and limited focus on training-of-trainers for replication.

Effectiveness

The project achieved its objectives to a great extent, often exceeding targets. Quantitatively, 371 leaders were trained (target 360), 874 journalistic pieces were produced (target 300), and over 2,000 teachers and students were reached through EMI activities. A network of 27 active correspondents was established and sustained across seven municipalities. Qualitatively, participants reported transformative impacts: changing narratives of their territories (e.g., San Vicente del Caguán), gaining confidence to speak in hostile environments (Leticia), and influencing local agendas (Tadó's school meal programme).

Implementation was largely as planned, with strategic adjustments. The initial idea of stand-alone municipal projects was replaced with a correspondent network, a more sustainable model. Contextual disruptions (armed strikes, elections) caused delays but were managed through adaptive rescheduling. Beneficiaries expressed high appreciation for FLIP's sensitivity, mentoring, and continuous support. Inclusivity and gender sensitivity were integrated throughout, with women representing nearly half of participants and gender issues featuring prominently in journalistic outputs.

Efficiency

The project demonstrated a high level of efficiency. Resource allocation was strategic, focusing on essential inputs such as equipment, materials, connectivity, and the remuneration of a lean but skilled technical team. Outputs far exceeded expectations relative

to the modest budget: training targets were surpassed, production of content tripled planned numbers, and EMI reached thousands. Budget reallocations (e.g., from COVID testing to editorial fees) were timely and approved by UNDEF, enhancing efficiency. Institutional arrangements ensured accountability, with clear division of roles, regular audits, and transparent reporting. FLIP's robust administrative systems underpinned efficient and credible implementation.

Impact

The project's impact has been substantial and multifaceted. It put in place processes and structures that transformed access to information in neglected regions. Outcome 1: strengthened capacities. Training 371 leaders and producing 874 pieces built a new cadre of local journalists. Some participants launched independent outlets, others transitioned into politics or leadership. Outcome 2: improved information availability. Consonante became a recognised medium, with 27 correspondents supplying regular content. Stories influenced local policies (Tadó's lighting contracts) and entered national debates (republished by El Espectador). Outcome 3: improved media literacy. The EMI diploma, certified by Javeriana, trained 141 teachers and generated school media projects across Colombia. Students produced bulletins and podcasts, one winning a national prize. Cross-cutting impacts included safe spaces for taboo discussions, integration of Indigenous perspectives, and national recognition of Consonante as a credible media actor.

Sustainability

Sustainability is partial and uneven. Component 3 (EMI) shows the strongest prospects: its low cost, modular design, and partnerships with universities ensure replication and continuation. Component 1 (diploma) and Component 2 (network) remain more dependent on FLIP's ongoing support, particularly financial. Correspondents rely on stipends and editorial backing; without this, attrition risks are high. Nonetheless, capacities and networks built are enduring assets, and Consonante's growing recognition provides a foundation for future partnerships. Alliances with international donors, universities, and local schools strengthen sustainability, though shrinking donor budgets and limited domestic funding remain challenges.

UNDEF Added Value and Visibility

UNDEF's added value was clear. Unlike state or NGO programmes, UNDEF enabled FLIP to work in remote, high-risk municipalities where neutrality and expertise were critical. UNDEF's flexibility allowed FLIP to scale existing initiatives, integrate freedom of expression, civic participation, and education in one project, and adapt rapidly to risks. UNDEF funding bridged hyperlocal and national levels, with rural stories gaining national traction. Nearly half the participants were women, reinforcing UNDEF's gender mandate. Visibility was consistently ensured through logos, acknowledgements, and online presence. UNDEF was recognised as the key enabler of outcomes that would not have been possible otherwise.

Overall Conclusion

Overall, the project was highly successful in meeting its objectives and generating transformative impacts. It demonstrated strong coherence, high relevance, robust design, effectiveness beyond targets, efficiency in resource use, and significant impacts on Colombia's information ecosystem. Sustainability remains a challenge, particularly for the correspondent network, but prospects are stronger for media literacy. UNDEF's support was catalytic and uniquely valuable, positioning FLIP and Consonante as key actors in Colombia's democratic landscape. Future efforts should consolidate sustainability by extending training cycles, broadening alliances, strengthening gender strategies, and institutionalising FLIP as a certified training and research centre.

b. Recommendations

Coherence and Relevance

At the level of coherence, recommendations call for maintaining a clear alignment with UNDEF's mandate to link access to information with democratic accountability. Every new initiative should ensure that journalism and media literacy efforts are explicitly tied to strengthening citizen oversight, thereby reinforcing UNDEF's comparative advantage in the field of democracy promotion. For FLIP, internal coherence requires consolidating synergies across its different lines of work—protection, training, and media literacy—so that beneficiaries receive a holistic model of support that combines safety, skills, and critical engagement. Externally, the project should expand its alliances with civil society organisations, schools, and community media, ensuring that efforts are complementary rather than duplicative and that existing local capacities are reinforced.

Relevance is further strengthened by continuing to prioritise PDET municipalities and “information deserts,” thereby ensuring that scarce resources remain directed at the communities with the greatest democratic deficits. At the same time, project content and formats should be systematically adapted to local realities: in the Amazon, radio remains the most accessible medium; for youth, TikTok and other digital platforms are dominant, though these require careful management of risks. Inclusivity and equity also remain central to relevance. FLIP is advised to adopt proactive recruitment measures to guarantee gender balance—aiming for 50% participation of women—while integrating culturally sensitive approaches for Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities. This may involve offering childcare support, flexible schedules, and intercultural facilitation, ensuring that structural barriers to participation are removed.

Design

The design of the project was assessed as robust, but recommendations emphasise the need for deeper and more differentiated training. Specifically, the duration of the Journalism Diploma should be extended, or complemented by a second phase that focuses on advanced skills such as investigative journalism, source verification, and writing. This would ensure that training moves beyond introductory competencies and consolidates professional-level capacity.

To foster sustainability and reduce dependency on FLIP's central team, the evaluation recommends the development of training-of-trainers models. By equipping advanced participants or community leaders to replicate workshops autonomously, the project can multiply its reach and embed capacities locally. Finally, design must remain sensitive to Colombia's territorial diversity. Intercultural methodologies—such as adapting language and examples in Indigenous areas, or integrating case studies from Afro-Colombian contexts—are necessary to ensure that training resonates with participants and reflects their lived realities.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

Effectiveness can be enhanced by creating clearer pathways for all trained participants to apply their skills, regardless of whether they join the Consonante network. Options include partnerships with local media outlets, collaboration with community organisations, or school-based communication projects. Without these pathways, there is a risk that acquired skills remain unused. Monitoring tools also need to be strengthened to capture qualitative

outcomes, such as influence on local public policy or shifts in community narratives. This requires moving beyond quantitative indicators and integrating case studies, perception surveys, and outcome-tracking into the project's monitoring framework. A further recommendation is to increase the visibility of participant outputs through local events, community radio, and digital platforms, both to broaden audiences and to reinforce participant motivation by showcasing their contributions.

Efficiency has been a strength of the project, but maintaining lean institutional arrangements and clear accountability remains a priority. FLIP should continue leveraging partnerships with schools, radio stations, and universities to optimise resources. At the donor level, UNDEF is advised to maintain flexibility in budget execution, allowing reallocation of funds when unforeseen challenges arise, as was successfully done with resources initially earmarked for COVID-19 testing and connectivity. This flexibility is essential for projects working in volatile environments.

Impact

The project's impact can be amplified through strategic communication and advocacy. Consonante's growing recognition as a unique media outlet rooted in local journalism should be leveraged to strengthen advocacy for press freedom and democratic accountability at the national level. FLIP is encouraged to position Consonante's stories in national debates and use them to influence policy agendas.

Documenting and disseminating impact stories is also crucial. These narratives not only illustrate the transformative effects of local journalism on governance and community empowerment but also serve as powerful advocacy tools to attract new donors and partners. Furthermore, investments should be made in platforms and partnerships that connect hyperlocal reporting to national debates, whether through collaboration with mainstream outlets or participation in national journalism forums. This would ensure that community voices are not only heard locally but also resonate in national policy discussions.

Sustainability

Sustainability remains one of the greatest challenges. For the Consonante network of correspondents, dependency on FLIP's editorial and financial support is high. The evaluation recommends diversifying funding sources to include philanthropy, private sector contributions, and governmental partnerships. Only by broadening its resource base can the network secure long-term continuity.

For the EMI programme, prospects are stronger. Embedding the diploma in academic institutions such as Universidad Javeriana and Uniminuto provides both legitimacy and scalability. Strengthening these partnerships will ensure that the programme can continue training new cohorts of teachers and expand its national reach. Additionally, correspondents and school projects should be supported in developing independent income streams, whether through local advertising, micro-grants, or collaborative projects. Such entrepreneurial strategies would reduce dependence on stipends and foster sustainability rooted in local initiative.

UNDEF Added Value and Visibility

The evaluation highlights the importance of reinforcing UNDEF's added value and visibility. FLIP should consistently emphasise UNDEF's catalytic role in enabling interventions in

conflict-affected municipalities, thereby demonstrating the donor's comparative advantage. UNDEF, for its part, should invest in producing and disseminating case studies that showcase its unique contribution to supporting freedom of expression and civic participation in fragile contexts. Finally, visibility practices—logos, acknowledgements, and verbal recognition in events—must be maintained across all FLIP-led initiatives to ensure that UNDEF's role remains visible in the public sphere.

II. PROJECT CONTEXT AND STRATEGY

2.1 Context

A. Colombia: Brief Recent Political Profile

Since Gustavo Petro assumed the presidency of Colombia in August 2022, the country has entered a **new political phase** characterized by a rupture with the traditional institutional power dynamics that had defined its democracy for decades. Petro's election, backed by the **Historic Pact coalition**—a broad alliance of progressive sectors, social movements, Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities, and grassroots organizations—marked a **profound ideological shift** and a determination to redefine Colombia's social contract from its historically marginalized peripheries.

One of the defining traits of Petro's administration has been his commitment to **structural reforms** in critical sectors such as **health, education, pensions, labour, and taxation**. His ambitious reform agenda has faced **stiff resistance** in Congress, where his political support has been inconsistent. Although his government started with a fragile majority, successive **governability crises**, cabinet reshuffles, and growing opposition from traditional parties like the Liberal, Conservative, and Radical Change have hampered his legislative initiatives.

The first major legislative success came with the approval of a **redistributive tax reform** in late 2022, focusing high-income earners and extractive industries. This was followed by a controversial **healthcare reform**, which proposes a **decentralised, public-oriented model focused on primary care**. The proposal has met fierce resistance from private healthcare providers, medical associations, and significant congressional factions. Other reforms, such as those concerning pensions and labour, remain under discussion amid **intense public and political debate**.

Facing a fragmented legislature, Petro has increasingly resorted to a **confrontational and plebiscitary strategy**, appealing directly to the populace through **social mobilization, social media, and rhetoric critical of the political establishment**. This approach has intensified **polarization**, dividing urban middle and business sectors—generally sceptical of Petro—from rural and marginalized populations, who maintain **hope in the transformative potential** of his government.

At the core of Petro's presidency is the "**Total Peace**" policy, aimed at **reviving and broadening peace efforts** in a country still marked by **multiple armed conflicts**. Building on the legacy of the **2016 Peace Agreement** with the FARC-EP, the new administration acknowledges that the armed conflict extends beyond FARC or ELN and involves a **wide range of actors**, including dissidents, paramilitary networks, drug trafficking organizations, and regional criminal gangs. The Total Peace strategy seeks **parallel negotiations**, distinguishing between groups with political motivations (like ELN) and those that are purely criminal (like the Clan del Golfo).

Key measures include **temporary suspensions of military operations**, the creation of **humanitarian dialogue zones**, and justice pathways for criminal gangs. The government has also launched **territorial peace mechanisms** such as regional peace tables and "**Binding Social Dialogues**," aimed at involving the most conflict-affected communities in crafting sustainable solutions.

Formal negotiations with the **ELN** have commenced, with rotating venues in guarantor countries like Mexico and Venezuela. Preliminary contacts with FARC dissidents and legislative efforts for collective submission to justice mechanisms are ongoing. However, progress has been **uneven and at times contradictory**: while some regions report reduced violence, others—particularly in the southwest—have seen **escalations in conflict** and social control by armed actors.

The Total Peace initiative has drawn **criticism** from political opponents and human rights organizations alike. Challenges include **unclear implementation architecture**, overlapping mechanisms, **territorial impunity**, and the difficulty of aligning peace efforts with national security strategies. Furthermore, internal divisions within armed groups and the lack of a unified agenda complicate negotiations.

Nonetheless, Petro frames Total Peace as a **structural solution** to the roots of violence—**inequality, state neglect, ethnic exclusion**, and competition over illicit revenues. His vision encompasses not just the end of violence but the creation of **lasting social and economic transformation**, integrating **rural development, infrastructure investment**, environmental protection, and **community justice**.

The peace process remains **fragile**, with **partial advances, institutional tensions, and the risk of reversibility**. Regions like **Catatumbo, northern Cauca, and Bajo Cauca** continue to experience high violence levels, while others, like **Putumayo and Arauca**, have benefited from dialogues and community oversight mechanisms.

Internationally, Total Peace has garnered **support from the UN, Norway, Cuba, Spain, and Germany**, though concerns persist regarding its **financial viability** and institutional coherence. Domestically, Petro's **strained relations with oversight bodies, the judiciary**, and the press have raised **alarm about checks and balances**. His accusations of bias against the Attorney General and Comptroller, and his critique of traditional media, have drawn both **praise and concern**—the former from progressive sectors that see **long-excluded communities gaining a voice**, the latter from defenders of institutional equilibrium and **press freedom**.

His government has also been rocked by **scandals**, notably involving his son Nicolás Petro, accused of accepting illicit campaign funds, and investigations into campaign staff. These incidents have **damaged public perception**, reinforcing opposition narratives branding his administration as **chaotic and authoritarian**. Yet, **popular mobilization** in peripheral regions has allowed Petro to retain momentum and push his agenda despite political turbulence.

Petro's foreign policy emphasizes **regional diplomacy and environmental leadership**, positioning Colombia as a champion in **Amazon protection, energy transition**, and climate change mitigation. At the UN and CELAC, he has advocated for a **paradigm shift in global economic governance** and a reformed international financial system. This stance has been welcomed in some forums but has created **friction with allies**, particularly the U.S., over drug policy.

Freedom in the World (Freedom House)

Colombia is currently classified as "Free" in the 2025 edition of Freedom in the World, achieving an aggregate score of 70 out of 100, comprised of 31/40 for Political Rights and 39/60 for Civil Liberties. This represents a sustained improvement from its previous "Partly Free" status just a few years earlier. Freedom House highlights Colombia as one of Latin America's longest-standing democracies—yet one still grappling with structural challenges such as violence, regional inequities in institutional access, and consolidating democratic norms outside major urban centres.

Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index

According to the latest report in February 2025, **Colombia saw its Democracy Index score decline** from 6.55 in 2023 to 6.35 in 2024, ranking 60 out of 165 countries, and nearing the threshold of being classified as a "hybrid regime" rather than a "flawed democracy". The most significant deterioration occurred in the categories of political culture and functioning of government, while electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, and political participation remained stable.

Global State of Democracy (International IDEA)

International IDEA places Colombia **in the mid-range across its main categories, which are Representation, Rights, Rule of Law, and Participation**. The country rates in the top 25% globally for Free Political Parties, Local Democracy, and Judicial Independence, but in the bottom 25% for Economic Equality. Over the past five years, IDEA registers little change—indicating relative stability without significant improvement.

B. Freedom of Press in Colombia

With regards Press Freedom, according to Reporters Sans Frontières, Colombia consistently ranks among the **more dangerous countries for journalists in the Western Hemisphere**. According to RSF, in 2022, Colombia was placed 145th out of 180 in the Press Freedom Index, with numerous threats including death threats, assassinations, and detentions reported by FLIP (the Foundation for Press Freedom, implementor of the project evaluated in this report). Media ownership in the country remains highly concentrated, with three dominant conglomerates and limited local news coverage for around 60% of the population. Independent outlets, particularly outside major urban centres, continue to struggle economically and face targeted harassment.

Other Relevant International Rankings include Human Development Index (HDI): Colombia ranks approximately 88th worldwide; Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI): Colombia ranked 87th globally as of 2023 and the Global Peace Index: The country ranks 144th out of 163.

Amid the sweeping changes following the election of Gustavo Petro, the relationship between the **executive branch and the press** has become **increasingly strained**. From the outset of his presidency, Petro has engaged in frequent **rhetorical clashes** with independent and critical media outlets, accusing them of **misrepresenting national reality** or being aligned with **corrupt interests**. One of the most controversial moments came when he referred to certain female journalists as "**mafia dolls**," triggering a wave of **online misogynistic abuses**.

Although Colombia maintains a **robust constitutional framework** protecting freedom of expression and adheres to international human rights standards, the country continues to report **high levels of violence** against journalists. In 2024 alone, more than **520 attacks** on media workers were documented, including **threats, forced displacement, assassinations, and smear campaigns**. These aggressions are particularly concentrated in **peripheral regions** where the **state presence is weak**, although they also take place in more central ones.

One of the most alarming phenomena is the rise of "**information deserts**," vast areas where **independent media outlets are non-existent or unsustainable**. According to FLIP, over **660 municipalities**, comprising nearly **60% of the country**, lack functioning local media. Approximately **10 million Colombians** live in areas without access to a local radio station producing news, a digital news outlet, or a local newspaper.

Even in regions with some form of local communication, such as **community radio stations**, the situation remains dire. In places like **El Charco (Nariño), El Retorno (Guaviare), or Vigía del Fuerte (Antioquia)**, journalists work under **precarious conditions**, lacking internet access, stable electricity, or institutional support. Many are unpaid **volunteer reporters**, often local leaders who use **basic tools like cell phones or loudspeakers** to broadcast essential updates about health or security issues, to name a few.

In some areas, the **absence of local journalists** means that **national media** only covers these regions during **episodes of extreme violence**, further reinforcing their **structural invisibility**. In municipalities like **Tame (Arauca)** or **Alto Baudó (Chocó)**, access to verified information is

minimal, and people rely heavily on **WhatsApp chains and rumours**, which are often **manipulated** or false. The lack of accurate reporting prevents communities from denouncing human rights violations

Despite this grim reality, several **notable community-based communication initiatives** have emerged as examples of **resilience and innovation**. In **Ituango (Antioquia)**, youth have formed a group called **Ituango Resiste**, producing digital content to **document conflict and resistance**. In the **Pacific region of Nariño**, **Afro-descendant women** lead community radio projects with a **gender and territorial focus**, amplifying social cohesion and preserving conflict memories.

The **Citizen Media Network of Southern Córdoba** is another example of rural journalists overcoming adversity. Despite threats from illegal armed actors, they have managed to **develop independent communication channels**, launch human rights education campaigns, and **sustain community engagement** through mobile loudspeakers and collective gatherings. These efforts have been supported by **international cooperation**, showing that **reliable journalism is possible** even in conflict zones.

In **López de Micay (Cauca)**, the only news source is a **school-operated radio station** run by high school students with the help of teachers. Their broadcasts have opened intergenerational dialogues and preserved **oral histories** of conflict and resistance. In **rural Tumaco**, displaced youth created the **Voces del Río** project—a digital media platform using **mobile journalism and soundscapes** to report on abuses of power and environmental degradation.

In the **Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta**, **Kogui and Wiwa Indigenous communities** use their native languages to create **informative bulletins**, broadcast via mobile loudspeakers and itinerant stations. These communications include **early warnings, public service information, and security alerts**, all rooted in **intercultural dialogue**. In **Vaupés**, the **Yuruparí Estéreo community radio**—sustained by Indigenous leaders and grassroots financing—reaches multilingual audiences with **news on education-related issues, among others**.

These efforts illustrate how, despite **extreme adversity**, communities develop and sustain **vital information ecosystems**. However, their sustainability is **tenuous**. Most lack **stable funding, technical infrastructure**, and wide distribution platforms. Constant **threats, criminalization, and institutional neglect** undermine their long-term survival.

Compounding these issues is Colombia's digital divide. **Over 40% of rural households lack internet access¹, and functional illiteracy remains high in remote areas**. This disconnect restricts access to accurate news and prevents locally produced content from reaching broader audiences. As a result, communities become increasingly isolated, stereotypes persist, and integration into national media networks remains limited.

The **lack of independent media** in these regions also prevents coverage of **key issues** such as **land restitution and local public spending oversight**. In remote Pacific and Amazon territories, where **geography and infrastructure are major barriers**, media absence leads to **political isolation**. In many such municipalities, the only available stations are **religious or governmental**, further limiting **diversity of perspectives**.

C. The Implementing Partner: Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa (FLIP)

The **Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa (FLIP)** was established in **1996**, during a period of extreme violence against journalists in Colombia. In the 1990s, the country had one of the **highest global rates of journalist killings**, a direct consequence of the armed conflict, drug

¹ https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/colombia-digital-economy?utm_source=chatgpt.com

trafficking expansion, and censorship imposed by both legal and illegal armed groups. FLIP emerged as a response to the urgent need to **protect journalists** operating under life-threatening conditions.

From its inception, FLIP has become Colombia's **leading organization** exclusively dedicated to defending **freedom of expression and press freedom**. Its mandate extends beyond individual protection, embracing a **structural understanding of the right to information**—aiming to ensure that **society at large** enjoys access to **free, diverse, and safe media**. The foundation works with a **territorial, rights-based, and differential approach**.

FLIP's work is structured around four **interconnected strategic pillars**. The first is the **protection and defence of journalists**, including the **documentation of threats, forced displacements, censorship, and assassinations**. FLIP provides **legal, psychosocial, and digital security support** to media workers at risk and assists in relocation processes, emergency measures, and protection requests to national and international entities.

The second pillar focuses on **strategic litigation and regulatory oversight**. FLIP initiates **national and international legal actions** to defend the right to inform and be informed. It has filed **constitutional lawsuits and legal challenges** to safeguard press freedom. The organization monitors legislation that may affect **freedom of expression**, public information access, or media work.

The third axis is **research and monitoring**. FLIP publishes **annual reports, thematic bulletins, and alerts** about the state of press freedom in Colombia. It conducts in-depth studies on **media concentration, structural violence, impunity**, and disinformation. It also coordinates collaborative platforms like the **Information System on Attacks Against Journalists (SIAP)** and contributes data to national and international databases.

The fourth strategic line is **promoting journalism and information access**. This includes **training programs** in media literacy, communication, and journalistic ethics, especially focusing on **youth, women, and rural communities**. FLIP promotes **collaborative journalism initiatives** and community-based storytelling.

FLIP maintains an **independent yet collaborative relationship** with the Colombian state. It plays both a **technical partner and watchdog role**, helping design public policies on press freedom while also **denouncing state failures** and censorship attempts. The organization has engaged in **technical dialogue** with agencies such as the **National Protection Unit (UNP), the Ombudsman's Office, the Attorney General's Office, and the Constitutional Court**, particularly around protection mechanisms.

However, FLIP has also raised the alarm against **stigmatizing rhetoric from public officials**, including **presidents, mayors, and congress members**, who have targeted journalists or media outlets. In such cases, FLIP not only issues alerts but also activates **solidarity networks and legal protections**.

At the **international level**, FLIP has brought cases before the **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)** and the **United Nations system**, documenting structural violence, legal restrictions, and impunity. Its efforts have been recognized by organizations such as **Reporters Without Borders, UNESCO, and the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression**.

Among FLIP's **major achievements** is the development of a **region-leading monitoring and documentation system**. Through its **Expression Freedom Observatory**, the foundation has systematized thousands of aggression cases since 1996. Its intervention has been critical in **preventing forced displacements**, saving lives, and ensuring that journalists continue to work in conflict-affected areas.

FLIP has also had a substantial **impact on legal and political frameworks**. It has helped **block regressive legislation**, influence **constitutional jurisprudence**, and promote **inclusive public policies**. The foundation's **national and international prestige** has grown steadily, earning **awards for press freedom defence** and forging partnerships with civil society organizations across **Latin America, Europe, and North America**.

Despite these accomplishments, FLIP faces significant **challenges**. Structural violence in **rural areas** has worsened due to the rise of armed actors and the fragmentation of the conflict, putting **local journalists at increasing risk**. The **lack of state presence** and the **co-optation of public institutions by criminal networks** complicate journalistic work and safety.

Another pressing issue is **territorial and informational inequality**. With more than **600 municipalities lacking operational media**, the risks of **disinformation, clientelism, and political exclusion** are considerable. Meanwhile, **anti-media rhetoric** from some public officials perpetuates a **climate of suspicion and hostility**, weakening social support for journalism and exposing reporters to **public backlash and threats**.

Additionally, FLIP must confront the **digital divide and online security threats**. The rise in **illegal surveillance, online harassment, and algorithmic manipulation** necessitates new strategies for **digital safety, technological literacy, and data privacy protection**.

Finally, the **financial sustainability of independent and community media** remains fragile. The **concentration of public advertising** and the withdrawal of private sponsors from alternative media ecosystems have made it increasingly difficult to maintain **critical, local journalism**.

In the face of these challenges, FLIP continues to stand as a **national and international beacon** for press freedom. It remains committed to building a country where **everyone can report and be informed** without fear, with **pluralism, accuracy, and justice** as guiding principles.

2.2 Brief project description

Component 1: Journalism Lab – Local Journalism Diploma

The Local Journalism Diploma, known as the Journalism Lab, was conceived as a **capacity-building initiative** designed to empower local leaders in regions historically excluded from Colombia's media landscape. Its main goal was to **train 360 community members**, ensuring at least **50% female participation**, in the development of ethical, creative, and context-sensitive journalism practices. The training program was built on a **hybrid model**, combining both **in-person sessions** and **synchronous online classes**, along with editorial mentoring and assigned readings.

Component 2: Network of Local Reporters

The second component focused on building a **sustainable and collaborative network** of trained local reporters capable of producing high-quality, rights-based journalism from some of Colombia's most peripheral municipalities. The project successfully formed **seven active reporting groups**, bringing together **27 local journalists**, most of whom were **young social leaders or rural educators** with deep ties to their communities. These individuals were not only trained in journalistic techniques, but also received continuous editorial support.

Component 3: Media Literacy Education Program

The third component focused on advancing **critical media literacy** among teachers and students, aiming to cultivate **digital awareness, resistance to disinformation, and ethical media engagement**. This was achieved through the development of a **replicable pedagogical model** transformed into a **certified virtual course** hosted by **Pontificia Universidad**

Javeriana. The course covered five core modules: **media literacy foundations, digital ecosystems, disinformation detection, artificial intelligence, and school-based media production.**

Direct beneficiaries are the 100 Young leaders selected for the Academy, while indirect beneficiaries are a) elected officials with whom the young leaders are expected to create spaces for dialogue ; b) civil society organisations (Community leaders, Youth networks, NGO representatives, Guilds representatives, Entrepreneurs, Church and Other relevant actors) ; c) the general public.

2.3 The main objective of the evaluation exercise

In addition to addressing the traditional evaluation questions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and coherence (in line with the latest version of the UNDEF evaluation manual), this evaluation integrates responses to specific questions raised by UNDEF. In this sense, **a detailed list of questions including these aspects was proposed and agreed upon in Annex 1 (evaluation matrix).**

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Evaluation scope, framing and approach

The purpose of this evaluation exercise is to assess the performance and achievement of project to date. The reason for a mid-term (instead of a final) evaluation lays in the long-term relationship between UNDEF and FLIP (cooperation has been taking place for over 8 years) in a moment where, given the challenging sustainability for Consonante required an in-depth thinking process of the initiative once the project would end². Thus, it served to generate conclusions, extract lessons learned and provide evidence-based recommendations that can improve performance, demonstrate results and inform future FLIP and UNDEF priorities and strategies related to freedom of expression/press and, more broadly, democracy promotion, in Colombia.

The evaluation has been conducted in accordance with the evaluation norms and standards developed by the United Nations Evaluation Group and the evaluation criteria of the OECD. According to UNDEF requirements, the evaluation has seven guiding criteria as follows:

- **Coherence:** first, internal coherence (to what extent are there synergies and interconnections between the project and other initiatives led by FLIP?); secondly, external coherence (to what extent is there coherence with the initiatives of other actors in the same context and on the same subject? To what extent does the project add value while avoiding duplication of efforts?)
- **Relevance:** the extent to which the problems identified and the interventions that followed have responded to the needs and priorities of democratic development in the country and those of the project beneficiaries; and how the project design responded to the context and identified risks.
- **Efficiency:** the extent to which the project has made good use of its financial and human resources.
- **Effectiveness:** the extent to which the project produced the expected activities and results.
- **Impact:** to what extent did the achievement of project objectives and project results have an impact on the specific problem(s) that the project aimed to solve? Have the

² Project duration was October 1st, 2021 to September 30th, 2025

project beneficiaries experienced tangible positive and negative impacts? Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect?

- **Sustainability:** aspects of the project that are likely to be maintained after completion, including an analysis of sustainability factors.
- **UNDEF Added Value and Visibility:** the value of UNDEF support to the project and visibility arrangements/commitments.

In line with the evaluation brief prepared by UNDEF, following preliminary review of project documents and conversations with the FLIP team, **the evaluation questions under each criterion have been expanded (see Annex 2 - evaluation matrix)**. The evaluation includes a chapter on lessons learned and best practices emerging throughout the evaluation process and others already identified by the project.

The evaluation is designed as a flexible and people-centred process of reflection and learning in which the **main stakeholders of the project (FLIP and beneficiaries) are key actors and not mere focus of the process**. Thus, the evaluation has been designed to (1) providing stakeholders with the opportunity to reflect on project progress and obstacles; and (2) generating knowledge to inform practice.

The evaluation has been primarily informed by **qualitative methods and data**. Furthermore, assuming that there are no gender-neutral interventions when the aim is to strengthen democracy and ultimately improve people's lives, the evaluation has been a **gender-sensitive exercise**. This has implications on two levels:

- What the evaluation has examined: it focuses on the integration of gender dimensions in the project and its contribution to the advancement of gender equality.
- How the assessment has been conducted: it has ensured inclusive, respectful and participatory approaches, methods and tools to capture a diversity of voices, ensuring that the voices of women and men are heard.

The assessment has been carried out with a **7-day mission in Colombia (with key focus groups and interviews in Bogotá, San Vicente del Caguán and Leticia)** as well as with substantial work carried out from the place of residence of the consultant, before and after the field visit. The working from home phase included **desk review, active data collection and online meetings**, while always keeping the evaluation approach flexible, in order to adapt to the availability of participants in the process.

3.2 Data collection and analysis

a. Feasibility of the assessment and related limitations (with proposed mitigations)

One of the main challenges of the evaluation stems from the project's broad geographical scope, which includes 18 municipalities classified as "information deserts." These areas are characterized by both **limited physical accessibility** and **poor digital connectivity**, making it particularly difficult to gather remote input from project stakeholders across all locations. To address this constraint, the following **mitigation strategy** has been put in place:

- **Field visits** have been conducted to two of the most emblematic municipalities: **San Vicente del Caguán and Leticia**. These visits have allowed for direct engagement with participants and local stakeholders, as well as first-hand observation of project outcomes.
- A **permanent coordination channel with FLIP** has been maintained throughout the evaluation. As the implementing partner, FLIP has an established territorial presence and a trusted **network in more than 50 municipalities** (including the 18 municipalities

being focused on by the UNDEF project), which has been instrumental in facilitating access and communication.

b. Information sources

The data collection tools chosen for the evaluation exercise have been discussed with the FLIP project team to ensure that they are most familiar to the various project stakeholders. These are:

- **Document analysis:** UNDEF and FLIP provided a large preliminary corpus of programming documents. They include the Project Document, progress reports and final report, milestone verification reports and project outputs, which have been further reviewed with additional relevant documentation collected during the data collection phase. The consultant also reviewed a number of third party reports and official documents.
- **Individual interviews:** the consultant conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with FLIP and UNDEF. Although the interview guide is structured, the assessor has freely followed up on any emerging issues that seem relevant to the core questions.
- **Focus groups:** a total of 3 focus groups have been conducted, in cooperation with FLIP, with a selection of participants to the three components of the project (Consonante Lab, Journalists Network and the Programme on Media Literacy), with between 4 and 8 participants per focus group. Each focus group lasted between 2 and 3 hours. Guidelines and reports templates have been produced by the consultant.
- **Online surveys** have been disseminated among participants involved in each of the project's three components, across all target municipalities. The surveys have been administered via Google Forms, ensuring that respondents with intermittent internet access can still participate. As a result, 92 full responses from different project stakeholders have been collected.

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

4.1 Coherence: the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in the country, sector and institutions related to the project

Coherence with UNDEF's mandate. The intervention is grounded in the principle of access to information, which is inseparable from the right to freedom of expression. By equipping citizens with the capacity to generate, disseminate, and critically engage with information, the project contributes directly to accountability and the deepening of democracy. The journalism labs in "information deserts" and the networks of local correspondents exemplify how the project links the exercise of freedom of expression to improved governance: in Tadó and El Carmen de Atrato, for example, Consonante's sustained reporting on school meal programmes triggered an investigation by the Attorney General's Office, which led to changes in the local contractor and improvements in food quality for students. Such outcomes illustrate the causal chain that UNDEF prioritises—information leading to expression, expression leading to accountability, and accountability fostering democracy.

Internal coherence (with FLIP mandate). The project is fully embedded in FLIP's institutional evolution. Traditionally dedicated to protecting journalists under threat, FLIP has, in recent years, expanded its agenda to include the proactive strengthening of local journalism, the mapping of the information deserts mentioned above and the promotion of media and

information literacy. In this, the UNDEF-funded intervention did not create new or parallel structures, but rather consolidated and scaled existing programmes:

- The Consonante initiative, launched by FLIP in 2020, had already piloted journalism labs in marginalised municipalities. With UNDEF support, these labs were expanded, systematised, and linked to a permanent network of local reporters. In municipalities like San Vicente del Caguán and Leticia, participants trained through the labs are now active correspondents producing regular content for www.consonante.org.
- The Media and Information Literacy (EMI) programme followed a similar path. Initially tested in schools, UNDEF funding allowed FLIP to convert the training into a structured national programme, culminating in the diploma “Herramientas para leer el mundo” certified by Universidad Javeriana, with more than 140 teachers accredited by 2024.
- In addition, FLIP’s protection unit, CODAP, was also articulated with the project. Self-protection and digital security workshops were integrated into the journalism labs, ensuring that participants not only gained technical skills but also tools to protect themselves in hostile environments.

Through these synergies, the project reinforced FLIP institutionally, broadening its scope beyond protection to encompass training, literacy, and content production. The project thus acted as a catalyst for FLIP’s organisational growth and visibility.

External coherence (with other actors within the same sector). The initiative also shows strong consistency with the Colombian context, despite the fact that only a few actors operate in the same thematic niche. Consonante is widely recognised as a pioneering initiative in addressing the lack of local news production in more than half of Colombian municipalities and while some independent media and local organisations have emerged in parallel, the project remains unique in its scope and methodology.

Importantly, the project actively sought complementarity with local actors and institutions. In Leticia, events organised with Consonante were integrated into the cultural agenda of the Banco de la República Museum, linking local journalism with broader educational and cultural programming. In Inírida, alliances with Indigenous communication collectives allowed the co-production of intercultural news pieces, strengthening both FLIP’s outreach and Indigenous voices in local media. In Mahates, where the only local radio station was military-run, the project worked with grassroots groups that relied on Facebook for information circulation, helping them to professionalise content production and strengthen community communication dynamics.

Beyond these alliances, the project has also achieved resonance at the national level. Consonante’s investigative stories have been republished by major national outlets such as El Espectador and Vorágine, bringing local realities into national debates and ensuring complementarity rather than duplication.

Adding value while avoiding duplication of efforts. Unlike other interventions, which are scarce in Colombia’s information deserts, the project addresses contexts historically neglected by the State and marked by the armed conflict. All participating municipalities are part of the PDET (Territorially Focused Development Programs), which underlines the strategic relevance of intervening in areas most in need of renewed communication channels. The project avoids replicating existing interventions and instead prioritises access to information and critical content production.

From its very design and implementation, the project incorporates mechanisms to ensure complementarity rather than duplication. Prior to deploying activities, diagnostic studies and mapping exercises are conducted to identify the actors and initiatives already present in the territory. These include community organisations, school-based media projects, community radio stations, and popular education initiatives. The goal is to articulate with and strengthen these local processes, amplifying their reach and quality rather than substituting them. This approach has allowed the project to insert itself in existing communication ecosystems with sensitivity, ensuring that efforts are perceived as reinforcing rather than competing with local actors.

“Learning to Read the World Differently”

The 2024 satisfaction survey for the Media and Information Literacy (EMI) programme confirms the project’s significant added value in shaping critical citizenship while avoiding duplication of efforts. With more than 2,370 participants across Colombia, the results reveal both the depth of learning achieved and the strong motivation generated among students and teachers. Nearly half of respondents (47%) stated they had learned “a lot,” while another 48% reported learning “something new,” underscoring the strong pedagogical impact of the programme. In addition, over three quarters (78.2%) recognised the *very high importance* of verifying information in the age of artificial intelligence, demonstrating that the workshop effectively raised awareness of digital disinformation.

Beyond figures, the qualitative feedback paints a vivid picture of how participants appropriated the content. Many highlighted the practical skills gained to detect false news and read media with greater critical distance. One student explained: *“It was a very good experience; it helps me to know how to identify information that is false.”* Others pointed to the novelty of discussing artificial intelligence as both a risk and an opportunity: *“I like knowing that artificial intelligence and ChatGPT are not entirely safe, and that I need to improve my studies by reading more.”*

While some suggestions emerged—such as extending workshop duration or adding more local examples—the overall consensus was that EMI provided an engaging, relevant and transformative learning experience. As one participant concluded: *“I liked the way the presentations were delivered, teaching us to be more cautious with technology.”*

4.2 Relevance: the extent to which the project, as it was designed and implemented, is adapted to the context of Colombia and to the needs of the beneficiaries, at the local and national levels

Alignment of the objective and expected results with the needs of the context of the 18 selected municipalities (components 1 and 2) and of the country as a whole (component 3)

The overall objective of the project—restoring local communication networks in regions considered information deserts, with a strong emphasis on media and digital literacy—is highly adequate and directly aligned with the needs and realities of the project municipalities, as well as with the broader Colombian context. The 18 municipalities prioritised under components 1 and 2 share structural conditions that severely limit the exercise of the right to information: a low or absent presence of local media outlets, weak digital infrastructure, unequal access to education, and a profound disconnection from national news agendas.

These are also territories disproportionately affected by armed conflict and institutional neglect, all of them classified as PDET areas.

At the national level, the project responds to a structural gap. According to FLIP's research *Cartografías de la Información* (2019), more than half of Colombian municipalities—666 in total—do not have a single news outlet or team of journalists producing local content. This reality translates into nearly 10 million citizens living without access to timely, relevant, and trustworthy information about their immediate environment. In the absence of local journalism, public authorities can more easily avoid accountability, while communities remain uninformed about issues that directly affect their daily lives. Moreover, when these municipalities do appear in national media, coverage tends to be focused on negative events such as natural disasters or violence, further entrenching stigmas and invisibility. In such a landscape, the absence of local news weakens democracy and prevents citizens from exercising their rights fully.

The expected results of the project address these conditions in a direct and strategic manner. The project has filled critical gaps in information access. Training local leaders in journalistic production has proved key to reducing informational asymmetries and amplifying silenced voices in municipalities such as Leticia, Puerto Asís, Inírida or Cartagena del Chairá. Participants have produced journalistic outputs on topics ranging from environmental degradation and corruption to gender-based violence and Indigenous cultural practices. This has given visibility to issues that would otherwise remain hidden, while simultaneously building sustainable local capacities.

The adequacy of this approach is further reflected in the design of Consonante as a decentralised and participatory newsroom model. Rather than creating isolated communication projects, the initiative brings together local voices into a collective editorial process. Citizens are trained in essential journalistic skills and then collaborate with FLIP's professional team to co-produce news pieces. This model responds to three urgent needs: first, to explain what is not immediately visible, thereby filling informational voids; second, to give visibility to underrepresented groups and perspectives, thus contributing to a more diverse and representative media landscape; and third, to influence local public agendas from a position of independence from political and economic elites. The process itself is as important as the outputs, since it fosters trust-based, transparent and collaborative relationships with local actors motivated by the desire to strengthen their communities through information.

The two main entry points of Consonante reinforce this adequacy. The diploma in local journalism provides intensive, practice-oriented training over two months, building eight fundamental skills for local reporting: observation, verification, narration, research, networked work, and entrepreneurship, among others. This diploma has already reached more than 50 municipalities, equipping a diverse array of social leaders, teachers, artists, youth and community representatives with the tools to become local journalists. Meanwhile, the permanent network of local correspondents ensures that those trained can continue to publish stories regularly and be remunerated for their work, consolidating sustainability and credibility in their territories.

The results to date confirm that this design was adequate to the context. By the end of 2024, the project had trained 371 local leaders—surpassing the original target of 360—and consolidated a network of 27 active correspondents across municipalities in Chocó, La Guajira, Caquetá, Amazonas and Guainía. More than 870 journalistic pieces have been produced, far above the expected 300, covering issues that directly affect citizens but are

often absent from the national media. For example, in Tadó, Chocó, persistent coverage by Consonante of the school meals programme revealed irregularities that prompted an investigation by the Attorney General's Office, which subsequently replaced the contractor and improved food provision for students. In San Juan del Cesar, La Guajira, the network's coverage of environmental issues surrounding mining and energy projects has influenced both local debates and national media agendas.

The project has also demonstrated **strength in the way it identified both municipalities and participants**. Municipalities were selected through a rigorous process that combined FLIP's *Cartografías de la Información* with practical criteria such as population size (avoiding very small or large urban centres), logistical feasibility, presence of social fabric, security conditions, and alignment with PDET priorities. Within each municipality, participants were recruited through a combination of word-of-mouth, recommendations from local correspondents, and field missions. This organic and context-sensitive approach ensured that the project reached active and credible community leaders, including women, Indigenous communicators, artists, teachers, and social activists. Selection criteria were adapted to local idiosyncrasies, ensuring diversity and relevance. The resulting profiles reflect active citizenship, rooted in the realities of the territories, which in turn enhances the legitimacy of the initiative.

In terms of adaptation to context, the project also showed **flexibility and cultural sensitivity**. In municipalities with strong Indigenous presence such as Mitú, Inírida, or Sibundoy, the programme incorporated intercultural perspectives, recognising linguistic and cultural diversity and co-producing content with Indigenous collectives. This not only ensured relevance, but also strengthened legitimacy and trust among historically marginalised groups.

The educational component (Component 3) was equally adequate to both local and national needs. The Media and Information Literacy (EMI) programme addressed a critical problem identified in baseline surveys: a widespread lack of tools among students and teachers to analyse, verify and contextualise information. Surveys on media consumption confirmed both a high level of distrust in media and weak habits of verification. By directly targeting high school teachers and students, the programme responded to this gap, equipping new generations with critical skills to navigate today's complex information environment. Workshops and the certified diploma "*Tools to Read the World*", developed with Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, provided teachers with structured tools to embed media literacy in their classrooms. By 2024, 141 teachers from across the country had been certified, each developing a school-based media project as part of their final coursework. Students trained through EMI reported increased ability to recognise disinformation and greater interest in fact-checking. For example, several participants highlighted that learning about artificial intelligence and fake news changed the way they consumed and shared information.

The adequacy of EMI lies **not only in its innovative content, but also in its delivery**. Recruitment strategies through WhatsApp networks, partnerships with local schools, and the integration of both formal and non-formal educators ensured broad participation. The four-month virtual diploma, combined with in-person workshops in the same municipalities where Consonante operates, created a coherent and holistic territorial strategy that simultaneously addresses content production (supply) and information consumption (demand). This integrated approach is unique in Colombia, as no comparable national programme exists that combines grassroots journalism training with systematic media literacy education.

The relevance of the project is further confirmed by its responsiveness to emerging needs. The increasing role of artificial intelligence and digital platforms in spreading misinformation was quickly integrated into EMI's curriculum, making the content timely and engaging. Participant feedback emphasised how novel and motivating it was to discuss AI as both a challenge and a tool for responsible information use. Teachers valued the certification process and its recognition by a leading university, while students appreciated the interactive methods, videos, and practical exercises that made the sessions engaging and relevant to their daily lives.

At the local level, the adequacy of the project was also evident in the participatory definition of agendas. During journalism labs, participants themselves identified the issues most urgent in their communities—ranging from environmental pollution and lack of basic services to gender-based violence and youth unemployment. These agendas became the basis for producing journalistic pieces, which were then disseminated locally and, in many cases, attracted attention at regional or national levels. In this way, the project ensured that content was not only produced locally, but also responded directly to the informational needs of the population.

Should another project strategy have been preferred to the one implemented by FLIP to better reflect these needs, priorities and context?

The strategy adopted by FLIP has proven to be both pertinent and context-sensitive, which a comprehensive approach which addressed not only the acute informational gaps in the targeted municipalities but also contributed to long-term transformations in the exercise of the right to information and active citizenship.

The territorial and participatory methodology ensured that **activities were not imposed as a one-size-fits-all model but were adapted** to the specific capacities, cultural dynamics, connectivity barriers, and socio-political conditions of each municipality. For instance, in areas such as Mitú, Puerto Guzmán or Inírida, where logistical, linguistic, and cultural obstacles were especially pronounced, the project was able to adjust its methods—integrating intercultural perspectives, using alternative formats, and pacing activities according to local rhythms. This flexibility was a key factor in achieving sustainable impacts in highly challenging environments.

The challenges encountered **confirmed the importance of interventions designed from the local level and responsive to community realities.** Moreover, the project demonstrated adaptability by incorporating lessons learned, such as redesigning the diploma's digital platform to reduce access difficulties, or accommodating the participation of women with caregiving responsibilities. These adaptive measures underline the strength of the chosen approach.

Alignment of the project with the mandate of key stakeholders and consistency with their strategic framework

At the institutional level, the intervention **built directly on FLIP's mission**, whose objectives encompass the promotion of freedom of expression, the strengthening of independent media, and the protection of journalists working under risk. For over three decades FLIP's focus had been on protecting journalists; with the support of UNDEF, these efforts expanded into training and capacity building, the promotion of media literacy, and the mapping of "information deserts." The project therefore did not operate as an isolated initiative but as an extension and consolidation of FLIP's evolving strategy.

The project also aligned closely with the **broader priorities of the United Nations system in Colombia, particularly with UNDEF's mandate** to strengthen democratic governance, guarantee access to information, empower citizens, and enhance civic participation. By linking community-based journalism with media literacy and accountability practices, the project contributed directly to these goals, adding value by targeting territories historically marginalised from the national information ecosystem.

A further dimension of alignment was its **integration of gender priorities**. The project demonstrated a clear commitment to women's participation in both training and leadership roles. Despite structural barriers such as disproportionate domestic responsibilities and restrictive cultural norms in several municipalities, the implementing team adopted concrete measures to ensure women's inclusion. These included flexible scheduling, creating safe and supportive environments, and even allowing participation with children. Such measures not only increased female retention but also fostered women's visibility and leadership within local communication processes, reinforcing the project's consistency with gender-sensitive frameworks.



Design

The design of the project was robust and appropriate. Its three-component strategy addressed Colombia's information deserts from multiple angles—supply, demand, and sustainability—while methodologies ensured participation, territorial adaptation, and tangible results. Risks were well identified and managed, often leading to methodological innovations. Activities were carefully selected and tailored to context, and while minor gaps were observed, the evidence demonstrates that the project's design provided an effective and adequate path to achieving its objectives.

Extent to which the project strategies, methodologies, activities and products were properly linked and the results provided the best approach to achieving the project results and

objectives

The design of the project can be assessed as both coherent and strategically sound. From its inception, the project structured its strategy around **three complementary components**; each of these components addressed a different dimension of the broader challenge posed by Colombia's "information deserts," while together they provided a holistic response to the structural lack of access to relevant, trustworthy and locally produced information.

The **methodologies adopted were consistent with the project's objectives.**

- The Consonante *journalism labs (component 1)* combined virtual and face-to-face training, equipping local leaders with technical skills, ethical principles, and narrative tools to produce local content. The training was participatory and hybrid—face-to-face workshops every two weeks were complemented by an online platform that offered flexibility and continuity. This combination was crucial for strengthening trust with participants and ensuring their safe participation, especially in conflict-affected areas where face-to-face accompaniment played a role in building confidence.
- For *component 2, the establishment of the Consonante Network of Journalists*, extended the logic of component 1 by ensuring sustainability beyond initial training. Those who showed commitment and skill in the labs could integrate into the network and continue producing content with editorial support and remuneration. In this way, the project not only trained but also created pathways for continuity and professionalisation. As a result, 27 community journalists across diverse municipalities became permanent contributors, generating hundreds of pieces that addressed issues ranging from corruption in school feeding programmes to environmental degradation in Indigenous territories.
- *Component 3, the Media and Information Literacy programme*, was directly linked to the other two components by focusing on the "demand" side of the information ecosystem: how students and teachers consume and interpret information. By equipping over 2,000 teachers and students with critical thinking tools, EMI created a new generation of informed citizens and potential journalists who could participate in or support the emerging local media ecosystem. The certified diploma "*Tools to Read the World*", developed with Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, gave this component academic credibility and national reach, ensuring that MIL is recognised as part of professional teacher training.

Activities and products were well linked to expected results. Journalism labs led to tangible products such as podcasts, investigative reports, and video pieces. Participants applied their training directly to co-produced stories on citizen agendas—environmental pollution in Leticia, tourism challenges in Villagarzón, and gender-based violence in San Vicente del Caguán. The co-production process meant that training was not theoretical but resulted in outputs visible to communities, reinforcing both learning and local trust. Similarly, the MIL diploma culminated in the creation of school-based projects such as bulletins and podcasts, ensuring that pedagogical content was translated into practice.

The articulation across components meant that **knowledge acquired did not remain abstract but became visible** in stories circulated in local media, in access-to-information requests filed with public institutions, and in the creation of communication projects in schools. This comprehensive approach maximised synergies, with each component reinforcing the others. The result was a design that not only achieved but often surpassed its objectives: 371 leaders trained (against a target of 360), more than 870 journalistic pieces produced (versus 300 planned), and over 2,000 teachers and students trained in MIL.

Have the risks been appropriately identified by the project? To what extent are/were the strategies developed appropriate to address the identified risks?

The project design demonstrated awareness of the risks inherent to working in remote, conflict-affected, and culturally diverse municipalities. Several key risks were identified early and addressed with adaptive strategies.

- One of the most critical risks was **the limitation of digital connectivity in rural and Indigenous areas**, particularly in Amazonas, Guainía, Caquetá and Putumayo. This posed challenges for participation in virtual sessions of the journalism diploma and for continuous editorial accompaniment. The project responded with pragmatic mitigation measures: distribution of printed training materials, flexible deadlines, support through WhatsApp and telephone calls, and the recording of virtual sessions for later access. These strategies allowed participants with poor connectivity to remain engaged and minimised drop-out rates.
- A second risk related to **linguistic barriers and cultural diversity in Indigenous communities**, where Spanish is not always the first language. This could have hindered comprehension of training and discouraged participation. To address this, FLIP incorporated differentiated accompaniment, adapted training exercises, and worked closely with community leaders who served as bridges between cultures. This intercultural approach not only mitigated the risk but enriched the project's methodology, producing content that reflected Indigenous perspectives and narratives often absent from Colombian media.
- **Gender-related barriers** were also identified as a structural risk. In many municipalities, women face disproportionate care responsibilities and restrictive cultural norms that limit their participation in public life. To mitigate this, the project introduced flexible schedules, created safe and supportive environments, and allowed women to attend sessions with their children when necessary. These adjustments were crucial in enabling women's sustained participation and leadership in communication processes.
- A further risk was linked to the **broader context of distrust and low social cohesion** in municipalities heavily affected by conflict and state neglect. In places like San Vicente del Caguán or Leticia, residents are often wary of external interventions. The project mitigated this by adopting participatory methodologies, holding preliminary dialogues with local stakeholders, and maintaining a continuous physical presence in the territories. This long-term engagement helped to build trust and legitimise the project among local communities.

Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives?

The selection of municipalities was particularly strategic. Using FLIP's *Cartografías de la Información* as a baseline, combined with practical criteria such as population size, security, social fabric, and logistical feasibility, the project prioritised 18 municipalities where the absence of local journalism was most acute. These municipalities, many of them PDET areas, were also territories where local communities expressed readiness to engage. This careful selection enhanced the project's chances of success.

The selection of participants was also a key for project success. In San Vicente del Caguán, for example, participants included leaders from the tourism sector, a local councillor, a community leader from the campesino guard, and a journalist from Radio Televisión Nacional de Colombia's (RTVC) Peace Radio. This diversity reflected the reality of local social leadership and allowed training to reach individuals with direct influence in their

communities. Under component 2, the network of correspondents included a primary school teacher who grew into a respected community journalist, a woman activist already known as an audiovisual communicator, and a community leader active in municipal committees. These profiles ensured that participants were not isolated individuals, but people embedded in community structures, capable of multiplying the impact of their training.

With regard to contents, the journalism diploma combined a standard core curriculum with adaptations to local citizen agendas. This balance was highly relevant: all participants received training in core skills such as interviewing, fact-checking, and multimedia storytelling, but the topics selected for reporting reflected local realities. In San Vicente, the stigma of being known only for conflict was addressed through stories highlighting tourism, culture and everyday life. In Leticia, stories addressed environmental challenges and Indigenous perspectives. While some participants noted that the programme could have benefited from a stronger emphasis on narratives or more fieldwork, the overall consensus was that the training was enriching, well-delivered, and transformative.

The hybrid methodology—combining face-to-face workshops with online sessions—was also a key factor. The in-person sessions allowed participants to feel safe, build trust with facilitators, and open up about sensitive issues. They also reinforced the symbolic message that their communities were worth visiting and engaging with directly. Participants valued the personal contact with trainers, which distinguished the programme from many virtual-only initiatives.

By offering remuneration and continuous editorial accompaniment, the project ensured that the network of correspondents remained active and sustainable. Journalists produced stories with real local impact—such as the investigation of irregularities in school feeding programmes in Tadó, or coverage of environmental threats in La Guajira. The network model created continuity, professionalisation, and credibility for participants, transforming them from trainees into recognised local journalists.

While some limitations were noted—such as the relatively short duration of journalism labs, or the lack of a stronger “training of trainers” approach for replication—these do not undermine the overall design of the activities.

Learning by Doing: lessons from the Consonante Diploma in San Vicente

The evaluation of the Consonante Diploma in San Vicente del Caguán during Cycle 2 of 2024 confirms the programme’s **high impact and broad satisfaction among participants**.

Quantitative results were consistently strong: expectations were rated at 8.9, methodology at 9.3, topics at 9.4, and tutors at 9.5. The quality and commitment of the teaching team stood out as the most valued dimension, with nearly all participants scoring them between 9 and 10.

Qualitative feedback enriches this picture. **Face-to-face sessions were praised for their dynamism and closeness**, and several participants requested more time for in-depth clarification of topics. Virtual sessions via Zoom were useful, though some found them harder to follow, highlighting the importance of balance between online and in-person formats. Webinars were welcomed as reinforcement spaces, and communication channels such as WhatsApp reminders were seen as effective for maintaining engagement.

In terms of content, participants identified areas requiring greater depth, particularly in social media, video editing, and the financing of journalistic projects. Environmental and animal-

related issues also emerged as themes of interest. **These suggestions reveal both the appetite for a more specialised curriculum and the potential to tailor training to local priorities.**

Looking forward, participants recommended extending the duration of face-to-face meetings, enhancing the pedagogical dimension, and expanding the thematic scope. Many also expressed gratitude and admiration for the Consonante team, urging them to “keep working as they have been.”

In conclusion, the San Vicente Diploma has been a **highly satisfactory, useful, and well-executed experience**, combining strong pedagogical delivery with relevant content. The lessons collected provide a roadmap for improvement: more time in person, more thematic depth, and continued investment in the trust-building approach that makes Consonante unique.

Voices of the Amazon: lessons from the Consonante Diploma in Leticia

The auto-evaluation of the Consonante Diploma in Leticia and other municipalities of southern Colombia during Cycle 1 of 2024 shows the programme’s **powerful impact on technical skills, leadership, and community empowerment**. Quantitative results highlight remarkable improvements: 85.8% of participants reported significant progress in reading media critically, while 87.3% improved their ability to analyse local news. More than 93% said they had become better at identifying newsworthy issues in everyday life, with over half indicating a major improvement. Between 82% and 94% strengthened their interview, writing, and video editing skills, and nearly 98% improved their use of digital tools and online searches.

Beyond technical training, the diploma fostered confidence and recognition. **Participants reported gaining credibility and visibility in their communities**, where their voices and reporting were often overlooked before. Testimonies emphasise the transformative role of “assertive communication” and “journalistic ethics” in giving local leaders the tools to share their processes and influence decision-making. For many, the training created a sense of legitimacy and opened spaces for dialogue with neighbours and institutions alike.

The diploma also contributed to **stronger social leadership and networks of collaboration**. Respondents highlighted its role in identifying community problems, approaching territorial entities, and promoting teamwork. Others stressed professional growth, new tools for self-protection, and a deeper awareness of respect, responsibility, and punctuality. These learnings translated into greater autonomy and a more critical understanding of inequality and media roles.

In conclusion, the Leticia Diploma was a **transformative learning experience**, combining technical excellence with empowerment and collective voice. By equipping participants with new skills and recognition, it not only strengthened their individual capacities but also reinforced the community’s ability to engage, question, and participate in local democratic life.

4.3 Effectiveness: extent to which the project, as implemented, has achieved objectives and goals

The achievement of objectives can be observed across three levels: quantitative data, qualitative transformations, and sustainability outcomes.

- **Quantitative indicators.** The most tangible achievements are visible in the numerical results: 371 local leaders trained in journalism (surpassing the target of 360), the production of 874 journalistic pieces in multiple formats (well beyond the planned 300), and more than 2,000 teachers and students engaged in media and information literacy workshops and diplomas. A network of 27 active local correspondents has been established and sustained across seven municipalities, ensuring ongoing production and circulation of locally relevant content.
- **Qualitative transformations.** Beyond numbers, the project has triggered meaningful changes in how communities access, produce, and value information. In municipalities such as San Vicente del Caguán, participants not only acquired technical skills but also began to reframe local narratives long dominated by conflict and stigma. In Leticia, participants highlighted how the training provided tools to confront the risks of speaking publicly in a context where voicing dissent can carry severe consequences. These outcomes illustrate that the project moved beyond outputs to influence practices, attitudes, and civic participation.
- **Sustainability outcomes.** Perhaps the strongest evidence of achievement lies in the establishment of a structured and functioning network of local correspondents. By receiving continuous editorial support and economic recognition, these correspondents now produce regular content that circulates on Consonante.org and other platforms. This achievement represents not only the attainment of project goals but also a strategy for long-term sustainability of local journalism.

The project used multiple tools to assess achievements:

- **Baseline surveys** in participating municipalities captured levels of digital skills, leadership capacity, gender sensitivity, and media literacy competencies prior to training.
- **Pre- and post-training self-assessments** documented improvements. In Leticia and Inírida, for instance, over 49% of participants reported a significant increase in media literacy knowledge after the educational sessions.
- **Monitoring of outputs** allowed the team to track application of skills. Completed podcasts, video news items, and written reports demonstrated both technical proficiency and relevance to local agendas.
- **Satisfaction surveys** among teachers and students in the EMI programme confirmed perceived improvements in critical thinking and verification practices, with 78% acknowledging that fact-checking was “very important” in the age of artificial intelligence.

Implementation as planned. All main activities were executed as foreseen. Outputs exceeded the initial targets, showing not only successful implementation but also robust over-performance. However, some adjustments were made:

- **Strategic adjustments.** The most notable adjustment concerned the initial plan to support stand-alone communication projects in each municipality. Early assessments revealed that such projects faced sustainability risks, especially given weak institutional support and precarious local conditions. Instead, FLIP, with UNDEF’s

approval, shifted towards consolidating a network of correspondents. This network-based approach proved more impactful and sustainable, providing ongoing editorial mentorship and remuneration that allowed correspondents to remain active and committed.

- **Operational adjustments.** The project also had to adapt to contextual realities. Electoral cycles and outbreaks of violence, including armed strikes and threats to journalists, delayed the entry into some municipalities. The team responded by conducting thorough risk assessments, adjusting schedules, and in some cases reassigning activities to municipalities where conditions allowed safe implementation.
- **Budget adjustments.** Certain budget lines—such as funds initially earmarked for internet connectivity or COVID testing—were underutilised. With UNDEF’s approval, these resources were redirected towards workshop materials, equipment, editorial fees and banking costs. These reprogramming measures did not undermine the project; instead, they enhanced efficiency and allowed activities to remain on track.

With regards to project achievements, these have been outlined in the sections above and are in line with the project document. The only major shift was the abandonment of municipal-specific communication projects in favour of the correspondent network. This change was not due to failure but to strategic reorientation, which increased sustainability. Other challenges, such as threats to journalists and public order disruptions, caused delays but did not prevent eventual achievement.

In relation to the appreciation of beneficiaries of the support received by FLIP, beneficiaries consistently expressed high appreciation for FLIP’s role in implementing the project. Teachers, students, community leaders and journalists emphasised the technical quality of training, the relevance of content, and the participatory approach. In addition, participants highlighted that **FLIP’s team was sensitive to local social, cultural and security realities, adapting training to fit conditions in each municipality.** For example, in areas with poor connectivity, materials were shared offline, while in Indigenous communities, content was adapted to reflect local cultural perspectives. Lastly, **many reported feeling empowered as local information producers.** Leaders in San Vicente del Caguán, for example, noted that training allowed them to tell stories beyond the stigma of war, highlighting tourism, culture and everyday resilience. In Leticia, participants valued the tools provided to navigate high-risk environments where “opening your mouth can be a condemnation.” **The continuous mentorship, editorial support, and economic recognition offered to correspondents were particularly appreciated,** as they translated skills into tangible opportunities. For many, integration into the correspondent network represented not only training but a pathway to recognition, legitimacy and sustainability as community journalists.

Lastly, there was no significant rotation in project management staff during the implementation period. The stability of the team contributed to effective continuity, consistent relationships with local communities, and high-quality delivery of activities.

With regards to partnerships and alliances, three dimensions are to be considered. **Firstly, with regards inclusivity,** the project actively promoted the participation of women, youth, Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendant communities and victims of armed conflict. Recruitment strategies relied on organic, community-based identification processes (such as word-of-mouth and local missions), which ensured that participants reflected the diversity of their municipalities; **secondly, regarding gender sensitivity,** across the journalism labs, female participation averaged or exceeded 48%. Methodologies were adjusted to address gender barriers: workshops allowed attendance with children, schedules were flexible, and safe spaces were prioritised. Training content also incorporated modules on gender

representation in media, inclusive language, and coverage of structural violence. Some of the journalistic outputs explicitly addressed gendered issues, such as barriers faced by rural women or the leadership roles of female activists. **Lastly, with regards, the project's evidence of adaptation,** baseline surveys revealed low levels of knowledge on gender issues in municipalities such as Villagarzón, Cartagena del Chairá and Leticia. The project used these findings to adjust training approach and methodology, tailoring discussions and examples to local realities. This responsiveness enhanced both the relevance and impact of the gender-sensitive approach.

Lastly, the project has strongly **promoted participation, ownership, alignment and accountability** across community and institutional levels. With regards **participation**, from the design stage, participatory methodologies were embedded. Local actors were consulted in the identification of agendas, and training was designed to allow co-production of content. This participatory ethos created high levels of engagement and ownership among beneficiaries; in relation to **ownership**, the creation of the correspondent network has been central to fostering ownership. By producing regular content, correspondents have assumed roles as recognised information agents in their municipalities. Their sense of ownership is reinforced by continuous mentorship and recognition of their work. As per **contents alignment**, the project has aligned itself with local institutional frameworks, working with schools, municipal administrations, and community organisations. Partnerships with universities, particularly Javeriana for certification of the EMI diploma, further reinforced alignment with educational and professional systems; lastly, as per **mutual accountability**, by strengthening local capacities to identify and report on community issues, the project has fostered horizontal accountability. Citizens are now better equipped to monitor authorities, while local authorities, aware of new scrutiny, have begun to adjust practices. This mutual accountability dynamic demonstrates the deeper democratic impact of the intervention.



4.4 Efficiency: extent to which there was a reasonable relationship between the resources spent and the impacts of the project and if the institutional set up optimised the efficiency in the resources' utilisation

Considering the budget and the volume of activities, participants and products delivered, **the project made a highly strategic use of its inputs.** Investments were concentrated in essential

areas such as the acquisition of basic production equipment (cameras, recorders, editing software), the development of pedagogical materials, the provision of connectivity in rural zones, and the remuneration of a lean but highly skilled technical team. These resources enabled the delivery of quality training processes and the production of hundreds of journalistic pieces in diverse multimedia formats. With the resources available, the project exceeded its initial targets, as stated above; and a sustainable network of community correspondents was consolidated, which not only fulfilled the strengthening component but also enhanced the long-term impact of the intervention. Adjustments in budget execution—such as reallocating unused funds initially reserved for COVID testing or internet connectivity—were managed in a timely and transparent manner, with donor approval, and redirected towards emerging needs such as workshop materials, editorial fees, and banking costs.

Institutional arrangements also promoted efficiency in resource use and accountability.

Project execution was led by a management team with clearly defined roles: the Director was responsible for strategic decision-making, while the administrative unit managed financial execution in line with UNDEF guidelines and Colombian fiscal regulations. This division of responsibilities facilitated agile and transparent operations. Continuous monitoring by the project team ensured close follow-up of targets and indicators, enabling timely adjustments without compromising efficiency. All financial and narrative reports were delivered as required, and any budget modifications were duly reported, justified, and approved. FLIP's robust administrative and accounting systems, subject to regular audits, guaranteed the traceability of resources and full documentation of expenditures.

Finally, the budget was both well designed and effectively implemented to achieve the project's objectives. From the outset, it realistically incorporated the operational and strategic requirements necessary for training, content production, equipment acquisition, and travel to remote territories. The budget was also structured around the three central components of the project—capacity building, media literacy in schools, and sustainability through the correspondent network—ensuring coherence between financial allocations and strategic priorities. Procurement of equipment and services followed criteria of quality, relevance, and cost-efficiency, thereby maximising the impact of each investment. Overall, the project's financial management enabled the efficient use of limited resources, the achievement and surpassing of planned results, and the reinforcement of FLIP's credibility as an effective and accountable implementing partner.



4.5 Impact: extent to which the project has put in place processes and procedures supporting the access to information in Colombia

Outcome 1: Strengthened capacities of local actors to produce local content with emphasis on media and digital literacy

Although **numbers** have been outlined above, it is worth mentioning again that 371 local leaders were trained across 16 municipalities, surpassing the goal of 360. Participants were diverse, including social leaders, independent journalists, members of communication collectives, victims of armed conflict, teachers, and students. Nearly half (49.8%) were women. Training sessions combined technical skills in multimedia production with modules on journalistic ethics, self-protection, and digital literacy. As a direct result, participants collectively produced 874 journalistic pieces, well above the expected 300.

Beyond the numbers, **the training created tangible changes in participants' lives and communities.** Some went on to create local media outlets, including community radios. Others used their training as a springboard into public life, applying journalistic skills to community leadership and local politics. Conversely, not all participants remained in journalism—some left due to political pressures or limited opportunities—but even in these cases, the skills gained proved useful in civic engagement and daily life.

In addition, **the journalism diploma had impacts beyond professional journalism.** Participants reported that its tools were valuable for everyday life, from public speaking to digital literacy. More importantly, the training allowed participants to reshape narratives about their territories. In San Vicente del Caguán, often stigmatised as a cradle of guerrilla activity, local trainees began producing stories about tourism, culture, and community resilience. This helped communities project alternative narratives to the national public and strengthen local identity. The diploma also raised awareness about freedom of expression and the role of journalism in democracy.

Outcome 2: Improved availability of relevant information in targeted municipalities

Creation of Consonante as a medium. Perhaps the most significant impact was the evolution of Consonante into a communication medium with its own identity, beyond the boundaries of the UNDEF project. Consonante now operates as a national reference point for community-based journalism, recognised by mainstream media and invited to national events. This institutionalisation represents a lasting impact on Colombia's media ecosystem.

Network of correspondents. The creation of a correspondent network transformed the availability of local news. Rather than isolated stories, municipalities now benefit from regular, structured flows of information. The network currently includes 27 reporters in seven municipalities, who collectively produced at least 639 quality pieces during the project. This represents a consistent supply of content where previously there was none.

Qualitative impacts of the network. The added value of the network lies in changing community narratives, co-creating citizen agendas, amplifying underrepresented voices, and fostering accountability. National media outlets such as El Espectador republished Consonante stories, and the national Emisora de Paz cited its work on freedom of expression. This amplified local voices and integrated them into national debates. The network also cultivated investigative practices, self-protection strategies, and collaborative journalism across territories.

Outcome 3: An improved educational programme on media and digital literacy for schools and organisations

From booklet to diploma. Initially, the project envisaged a pedagogical booklet. This was successfully developed but later expanded into a 16-week certified diploma, "Media and Information Literacy: Tools to Read the World", accredited by Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. By 2024, 141 teachers had been certified. The programme provided 80 hours of training for teachers, covering verification, fact-checking, artificial intelligence, bias, and classroom-based media projects.

Impact on schools. Certified teachers implemented their own school-based media projects. For example, in Tolima, students created the Boletín Científico Alouatta, producing content on climate change and conservation. These initiatives embedded media literacy into school culture, ensuring long-term impacts on critical thinking and civic engagement.

Workshops in schools. In addition to the diploma, 20 workshops were held in schools in 16 municipalities, reaching 2,142 people. Students reported greater awareness of fact-checking and increased interest in media. In a remote Amazonian community, students produced a podcast that became their local medium, later gaining national attention and even a documentary.

Cross-cutting impacts

Beyond outcomes, the project generated broader impacts that reinforce Colombia's democratic fabric.

- **Freedom of expression and democracy.** The project raised awareness of freedom of expression as a fundamental right, linking journalism to democracy.
- **Safe spaces.** Consonante created safe spaces for discussing taboo topics—gender, mining, corruption—often for the first time.

- **Indigenous peoples.** In Indigenous territories, the project integrated cultural perspectives, enriching narratives and ensuring relevance.
- **National recognition.** Consonante is now recognised as a medium with its own identity, and its stories reach national debates.
- **Forward-looking impacts.** FLIP is mapping new actors, such as online influencers producing public-interest content, to extend protection and capacity development.

Success Stories: Voices Emerging from Colombia's Information Deserts

The project has left tangible marks on the lives of its beneficiaries. Their stories illustrate how journalism training, media literacy, and collaborative networks have transformed individuals and communities in Colombia's "information deserts."

Sory Jordán – From Dream to Reality

Born in Tadó, Chocó, Sory long dreamed of being a journalist but had no access to higher education or local media outlets. In 2021 she joined FLIP's *Consonante* lab, participating actively despite lacking equipment. Soon after, she became one of Tadó's local correspondents. Her stories on gender violence and water shortages quickly gained traction; in one case, local authorities improved water service after her report. Later, her investigation on public lighting led the Mayor's Office to expedite contracts, illuminating the town's streets. Today Sory is recognised by both neighbours and authorities as a journalist, fulfilling a dream she had carried for 16 years.

Maira Fragozo – A Voice for San Juan del Cesar.

At 21, Maira joined the *Consonante* network in her hometown in La Guajira. Initially detached from municipal affairs, she now writes to "tell the other history" of her community. For Maira, journalism became a way to question silent authorities while celebrating her neighbourhood and cultural identity. Her weekly editorial meetings with peers symbolise how *Consonante* has given young people both a platform and a sense of responsibility for local narratives.

Silencio, estamos al aire – Children's Podcasting.

In Bogotá, educator Andrey Suárez transformed his workshops after taking part in FLIP's media literacy course "*Tools to Read the World.*" Together with children, he launched *Silencio, estamos al aire*, a podcast by and for kids. Mixing playful storytelling with critical reflection, the programme became a community success and won the National School Journalism Prize in the audio category. With the award came professional equipment, expanding its reach to radio, social media and even television. For children, it meant their voices were finally included in public debates, with episodes addressing myths, environmental issues, and youth concerns.

Broader ripples.

These individual stories are part of a wider wave: journalists in San Vicente del Caguán counteracting stigma by telling stories of resilience; students in Tolima publishing a scientific bulletin on climate change; and Indigenous youth in Wualamaná tackling themes such as gender and health. *Consonante* correspondents now adopt self-protection measures and are cited by national outlets such as *El Espectador* and *Emisora de Paz*.



4.6 Sustainability: extent to which the project, as designed and implemented, has created what is likely to be continued momentum towards reinforcing the access to information in Colombia

The sustainability of the project must be assessed with nuance. FLIP has taken important steps to ensure that the results obtained under this intervention generate continued momentum towards reinforcing access to information in Colombia. The analysis considers both processes put in place and the willingness and ability of stakeholders to continue activities beyond the project period.

Processes to Ensure Sustainability

FLIP has adopted several measures to promote the sustainability of project results. The most significant step has been the **consolidation of the Consonante network of 27 correspondents in seven municipalities**, who continue to produce stories with financial and editorial support. This model not only ensures continuity of local journalism but also incentivises the production of quality information in areas historically devoid of independent media. In addition, Consonante itself has grown into a communication medium with a unique identity, increasingly recognised by national media outlets such as El Espectador and Vorágine. The replication of stories at the national level expands visibility and provides correspondents with further legitimacy.

In the educational component, **sustainability has been strengthened through the partnership with Universidad Javeriana**, which accredits the diploma “Media and Information Literacy: Tools to Read the World”. By 2024, 141 teachers had been certified, and the modular design of the programme allows for future cohorts without depending on the original project structure. Complementary resources such as the practical guide “Manos a los medios” provide schools and organisations with tools to replicate training autonomously. Some

teachers have already integrated these contents into their curricula, with examples such as the creation of school radios in Putumayo.

Results and Stakeholder Willingness

The sustainability of results also depends on the commitment of participants and institutions. Evidence shows that **in many cases, beneficiaries have continued applying their skills beyond the project**. Some correspondents have launched independent media initiatives or transitioned into leadership roles in politics, culture, or tourism. For example, a teacher who completed the diploma went on to establish a school radio station with an environmental focus, training 15 students in news production. The school embraced the initiative fully, commissioning content regularly and showing strong interest in integrating into the EMI programme.

Nevertheless, sustainability is uneven. While Component 3 (media literacy) benefits from institutional partnerships and a low-cost model, Components 1 and 2 (journalism training and correspondent networks) remain more dependent on FLIP's continued technical and financial support. Economic incentives, including monthly stipends and coverage of production costs, are crucial to maintaining correspondent engagement. Without FLIP's backing, the risk of attrition is high.

Alliances and Institutional Cooperation

Alliances are critical to sustainability. International cooperation has been a key enabler, with support from UNDEF, Germany (DICAF), the Netherlands, the UK, Canada, and Sweden. However, reductions in international aid budgets raise concerns for the medium term. Nationally, FLIP has cultivated partnerships with universities (Javeriana, Uniminuto) and sought collaborations with civil society. Yet current domestic funding only covers around 2% of operational needs, underscoring the necessity of engaging philanthropy, the private sector, and governmental institutions. Developing stronger alliances with Colombian authorities could help reduce costs and anchor sustainability.

Relations with authorities are complex. At the national level, President Petro's government has simultaneously raised the visibility of FLIP and posed challenges through confrontations with the press. Nonetheless, FLIP maintains access to ministers, prosecutors, and the Ministry of the Interior, ensuring its advocacy role remains strong. At the local level, cooperation varies by municipality and is often constrained by security issues and the presence of armed groups. While Component 1 generally avoids friction with authorities, Component 2 has sometimes faced tensions as local reporters begin to scrutinise officials more closely.

Future Perspectives

Looking ahead, FLIP envisions consolidating Consonante as a certified training entity capable of charging for services and scaling its model. Plans include strengthening the correspondent network to provide training to others, thus multiplying impact at territorial level. **For EMI, partnerships with universities such as Uniminuto** (with over 50,000 online students) could expand reach and embed media literacy in educational systems nationwide. While support from local authorities remains limited, some school leaders and rectors have embraced the programme, suggesting a potential path to institutionalisation at municipal level. Given that the resources required for EMI are relatively modest, sustainability prospects for this component are high.

Ultimately, the sustainability of Components 1 and 2 depends on continued external support, particularly economic. This is of particular importance given the fact that the project is about to end. Correspondents require stipends and resources for transport and production. However, the networks, experiences, and capacities built during the project remain in place and can continue generating value even if external support is reduced. Consonante has already evolved into a recognised medium, which provides a foundation for attracting new partners and ensuring longer-term viability, being key for advocating to reinforce the right to information.

4.7 UNDEF added value and visibility

UNDEF Added Value

UNDEF's support enabled transformative outcomes in Colombia's information deserts that other donors or stakeholders could not have replicated with equal impact. Several factors highlight UNDEF's comparative advantage:

- While state programs typically focus on urban centres or infrastructure, **FLIP reached remote, high-risk municipalities** such as Tadó and San Vicente del Caguán, where neither the government nor most NGOs had the expertise or neutrality to rebuild independent journalism networks.
- FLIP's reputation as a defender of press freedom gave it **unique access to communities often distrustful of state-led initiatives**, particularly in conflict zones. UNDEF's flexible funding enabled FLIP to leverage this credibility to build trust and establish networks of correspondents.
- Unlike many donor-funded projects that end after training workshops, UNDEF supported the creation of a **sustainable network model** where journalists now receive income through Consonante.org. This long-term vision gave participants incentives to continue producing local news.
- The project evolved from a static pedagogical booklet to a **certified virtual course** endorsed by the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, lending academic legitimacy and scalability that would have been difficult to achieve through typical NGO-led initiatives.
- UNDEF funding **bridged the gap between hyperlocal reporting and national media**, with local investigative stories—such as the case of Tadó's public lighting—picked up by major outlets like El Espectador and Vorágine.
- Nearly **half of the participants were women (48%), and many stories centred on gender issues** such as caregiving in Amazonas, an angle often overlooked in public sector initiatives.
- Public initiatives in Colombia often suffer from bureaucratic delays and politicisation, especially in conflict zones. **UNDEF's agile funding allowed FLIP to adapt rapidly to emerging risks**, such as relocating workshops in response to armed strikes.

Visibility

The visibility of **UNDEF's support was consistently highlighted throughout the project.** Although no printed materials were produced—given the emphasis on digital communication—UNDEF's role as primary donor was clearly acknowledged in all online publications, special reports, social media content, and on the Consonante.org website.

Additionally, UNDEF's visibility was ensured in **all events organised by FLIP** that were related to the project, including workshops, diploma launches, editorial councils, and webinars. This included:

- Display of the UNDEF logo in presentations and visual materials;
- Verbal acknowledgements during sessions;
- Mentions in press releases and multimedia coverage of events.



V. CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation of the project “Enabling Local Information and Media Literacy for a Better-Informed Society in Colombia” demonstrates that the initiative has been highly effective in addressing Colombia’s acute information deficits. It has restored communication networks in marginalised municipalities, empowered local leaders to become journalists, and created a national media and information literacy programme. The project aligns strongly with UNDEF’s mandate and FLIP’s strategic direction. Its design has proven robust, flexible, and context-sensitive, with implementation exceeding most planned targets. Nonetheless, sustainability remains uneven, particularly for the correspondent network, which depends on FLIP’s continued support. The project provides clear lessons for future interventions, especially the need for longer training cycles, stronger replication mechanisms, greater gender inclusivity, and deeper partnerships with national institutions.

Component 1 – Local Journalism Training (Diplomado)

The journalism diploma succeeded in training over 370 leaders across multiple municipalities, surpassing targets and producing hundreds of journalistic pieces. Participants gained skills in multimedia production, ethics, and self-protection. However, the

two-month duration proved too short to consolidate advanced skills such as investigative journalism, writing, and sourcing. Without a second phase or integration into the Consonante network, some participants did not continue applying their skills. Content adaptation to cultural and technological realities was sometimes insufficient, particularly in Amazonian municipalities where radio or TikTok are dominant formats. Gender representation varied, with some regions such as Leticia showing low female participation. Despite these limitations, the diploma was highly valued, provided safe spaces for dialogue, and gave participants tools for civic engagement.

Component 2 – Consonante Network of Correspondents

The network transformed initial training into sustainable practice, with 27 correspondents producing regular content across seven municipalities. This model proved more effective and sustainable than the initially planned stand-alone projects. Correspondents generated investigative stories that influenced local governance, were cited by national outlets, and changed community narratives. Nevertheless, disparities in skill levels persisted, outreach was constrained by technological barriers, and local authorities sometimes resisted scrutiny. The network remains dependent on FLIP's editorial and financial support. While highly impactful, its long-term sustainability is uncertain without continued investment.

Component 3 – Media and Information Literacy (EMI)

The EMI component represents one of the strongest achievements of the project. More than 2,000 teachers and students participated, with 141 teachers certified by Universidad Javeriana through the diploma "Tools to Read the World." The programme was timely, innovative, and nationally relevant, addressing widespread deficits in critical media skills. Teachers created school-based media projects, students reported greater awareness of disinformation, and some outputs won national prizes. EMI's modular design, low cost, and academic partnerships provide strong prospects for sustainability. Future improvements include broadening participation beyond teachers to community leaders and integrating more content on digital platforms and social media use.

Cross-Cutting Lessons

Several lessons emerge across components. First, training cycles must be longer and provide pathways for continuity. Second, replication capacity at the local level is critical to sustainability. Third, gender strategies need strengthening to ensure equitable participation. Fourth, articulation with local media, civil society organisations, and schools increases impact and sustainability. Finally, visibility and outreach mechanisms must be improved, especially in rural and Indigenous territories, to ensure local resonance of project outputs.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS PER DAC CRITERION

Coherence

- 1st Recomm. **Continue aligning with UNDEF's mandate** by linking access to information with democratic accountability. This means ensuring that every new initiative explicitly connects journalism and media literacy efforts to democratic participation and citizen oversight. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: UNDEF)
- 2nd Recomm. **Consolidate synergies within FLIP, ensuring protection, training, and media literacy programmes remain integrated.** This requires intentional coordination across FLIP's units so that beneficiaries experience a holistic model of support that combines safety, capacity building, and literacy. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)
- 3rd Recomm. **Strengthen alliances with local civil society, schools, and community media** to expand networks and avoid duplication. This should involve mapping local

partners in each territory and formalising collaboration, so the project strengthens rather than competes with local actors. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

Relevance

4th Recomm. **Maintain focus on PDET municipalities and 'information deserts'** to ensure interventions target high-need contexts. This strategic targeting ensures that scarce resources continue addressing the most urgent democratic deficits in Colombia. (Applies to: C1, C2 | Responsible: FLIP)

5th Recomm. **Adapt content formats systematically to local realities** (e.g., radio in Amazon regions, TikTok for youth), while addressing risks of digital platforms for Indigenous communities. This will make project outputs more relevant and impactful to local audiences while recognising cultural sensitivities. (Applies to: C1, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

6th Recomm. Adopt **proactive recruitment measures** to ensure gender balance (50% participation of women) and culturally sensitive approaches to Indigenous and Afro-Colombian participants. This should include conciliation options, flexible schedules, and intercultural facilitation to remove structural barriers to participation. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

Design

7th Recomm. **Extend the duration of the journalism diploma or introduce a second phase focused on advanced skills** (investigation, source analysis, writing). **Longer cycles or tiered modules** would ensure participants consolidate skills beyond basic reporting. (Applies to: C1 | Responsible: FLIP)

8th Recomm. Develop **training-of-trainers models** to build replication capacity at local level, reducing dependency on FLIP's central team. This would allow community leaders and advanced correspondents to replicate workshops autonomously in their municipalities. (Applies to: C1, C2 | Responsible: FLIP)

9th Recomm. Embed **differentiated and intercultural methodologies**, ensuring that training content reflects the realities of each territory. This includes language adaptation in Indigenous regions and context-specific case studies. (Applies to: C1, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

Effectiveness

10th Recomm. Ensure **pathways for all trained participants to apply their skills**, through integration into networks, partnerships with local media, or community initiatives. This prevents skills from being lost if trainees do not join the correspondent network. (Applies to: C1, C2 | Responsible: FLIP)

11th Recomm. **Strengthen monitoring tools to capture qualitative outcomes**, such as policy influence or changes in local narratives. This requires expanding monitoring frameworks beyond quantitative indicators to include case studies and perception surveys. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

12th Recomm. **Enhance visibility of participant outputs at local and regional levels**, using community events, radio, and digital platforms to amplify impact. This would reinforce participant motivation and broaden the audiences reached by their stories. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

Efficiency

13th Recomm. **Maintain lean institutional arrangements** with clear accountability, while optimising partnerships with schools, radio stations, and universities to share resources. This will preserve agility while lowering costs. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

14th Recomm. **Ensure flexibility in budget execution** to adapt to contextual challenges while keeping donor oversight. UNDEF should continue allowing timely reallocations to respond to unexpected needs such as connectivity or editorial costs. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: UNDEF)

Impact

15th Recomm. **Leverage Consonante's growing recognition** to strengthen advocacy for press freedom and democratic accountability at the national level. This means positioning Consonante's stories in national debates and using them to influence policy agendas. (Applies to: C2 | Responsible: FLIP)

16th Recomm. **Document and disseminate more impact stories**, illustrating the links between local journalism and changes in governance or community empowerment. This would serve advocacy purposes and attract new donors. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

17th Recomm. **Invest in platforms and partnerships that connect hyperlocal reporting to national debates**, increasing the reach of community voices. This may involve partnerships with mainstream outlets or national journalism forums. (Applies to: C1, C2 | Responsible: FLIP)

Sustainability

18th Recomm. Prioritise **sustainability of the correspondent network** by diversifying funding sources (philanthropy, private sector, government partnerships). This is crucial to reduce dependency on donor grants and ensure correspondents can continue their work long-term. (Applies to: C2 | Responsible: FLIP)

19th Recomm. Consolidate **institutional partnerships with universities** (Javeriana, Uniminuto) to ensure continuity of the EMI programme and expand its reach. Embedding the diploma in academic institutions provides scalability and permanence. (Applies to: C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

20th Recomm. Support correspondents and school projects in developing **independent income streams** (local advertising, micro-grants, collaborative initiatives). This would reduce dependency on stipends and foster entrepreneurial sustainability. (Applies to: C2, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

UNDEF Added Value and Visibility

21st Recomm. **Highlight UNDEF's catalytic role** in enabling work in conflict-affected municipalities across all project communications. This reinforces donor visibility and demonstrates UNDEF's comparative advantage. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

22nd Recomm. **Produce case studies showcasing UNDEF's comparative** advantage in supporting freedom of expression and civic participation in fragile contexts. UNDEF should disseminate these stories to build global evidence of its impact. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: UNDEF)

23rd Recomm. **Maintain consistent visibility practices**, including logos, acknowledgements, and mentions in all events and digital outputs. This ensures donors remain visibly linked to project successes. (Applies to: C1, C2, C3 | Responsible: FLIP)

ANNEX 1: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

<p>Outcome 1: Strengthened capacities of local leaders, young people, victims of armed conflict, community journalists, members of social organizations and active citizens to produce local content with emphasis on media and digital literacy</p>		
<p>Target Indicator 1.1: By the end of the project at least 75% (=300) of the 360 training participants can provide concrete examples of applying the new skills and knowledge gained in the Journalism Lab.</p>	<p>Baseline Data: Lack of training in journalism and communication for social leaders. Communication is still not a transversal aspect to the internal work of social organizations. Source: Own 'Cartographies of Information' research.</p>	<p>Method of verification: We will conduct interviews with the participants in each of the municipalities following completion of the mobile Journalism Lab activities, which will enable us to receive concrete examples how new skills and knowledge gained are being applied.</p>
<p>Target Indicator 1.2: By the end of the project, at least 80% (=320) of training participants that have provided their feedback on the Journalism Lab reported that their capacities for production of local content have been increased.</p>	<p>Baseline data: In these municipalities, there has not been an interactive space, such as the mobile Journalism lab, where leaders, not journalists, can participate in journalism training programs. Source: Own 'Cartographies of Information' research.</p>	<p>Method of verification: Reviewing attendance and collecting feedback from participants after the program. We will conduct interviews with the participants of the school and other leaders and authorities in each of the municipalities during the stay of the schools which will allow us to receive feedback and understand what can be improved during the implementation of the project.</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Improved availability of relevant information in the targeted municipalities through the regular supply of locally produced journalistic pieces</p>		
<p>Target Indicator 2.1 : By the end of the project, at least 50% of the local population of each municipality is aware of the communication project and receives information about what happens in their own municipality.</p>	<p>Baseline data: According to 'Cartographies of Information', these municipalities are in silence: places with no media outlets, or if there are any, they do not produce local information. Also, these municipalities are priority areas in the implementation of the Peace Agreement.</p>	<p>Method of verification: These municipalities will no longer be silent areas, as they will have some local information offer. This will be evident in the 'Cartographies of Information' research website, where municipalities will progress from red (silent areas: places with no media outlets, or if there are any, they do not produce local information) to orange</p>

	Source: Own 'Cartographies of Information' research.	(insufficient local information, places with at least one media outlet that produces local information) or even green (enough local information, places with more than one media outlet that produce local information) status.
Target Indicator 2.2 : By the end of the project municipalities increase the local production of news, as new projects are associated to the network and produce and disseminate new content regularly.	Baseline data: Until now with the municipalities intervened by the journalism laboratory 9 initiatives has emerged and continue with the production of local information. Source: FLIP website	Method of verification: Publication of journalistic production with local contents by the initiatives selected.
Outcome 3: An improved educational program on media and digital literacy for local schools and organizations from participating municipalities.		
Target Indicator 3.1: By the end of the project, at least 75% of professors and organization members from the participating schools and social organizations can provide concrete examples how the disseminated booklet and information regarding media and digital literacy has provided them with new skills and knowledge.	Baseline data: In these municipalities, there has not been an interactive space, such as the mobile Journalism Lab, where leaders can participate in training programs related to the consumption of information or social media. Source: Own 'Cartographies of Information' research.	Method of verification: We will conduct interviews with the direct participants (professors and members of organizations) in each of the municipalities following completion of the activities, which will enable us to receive concrete examples how new skills and knowledge gained are being applied.
Target Indicator 3.2: By the end of the project, at least 80% of the participants from 18 schools and 90 social organizations reached by the educational program achieved awareness on the importance of digital and media literacy.	In these municipalities, there has not been an interactive space, such as the Information School, where leaders, not journalists, can participate in training programs related to the consumption of information or social media. Source: Own 'Cartographies of Information' research.	Method of verification: Results of the Questionnaire applied at the end the program to measure the knowledge acquired. Feedback from the participants related to the consumption of news, information through digital platforms and social media after receiving the training developed by FLIP, through interviews with participants, after two months of receiving training.

ANNEX 2 : EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS MATRIX³

DAC criteria	Evaluation question	Sub-questions		Data collection tool	Source of data	Limitations/ Risks
Coherence	The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in the country, sector and institutions (taking into account the extent to which other interventions (especially policies) support or hinder the intervention, and vice versa	Internal coherence	To what extent are there synergies and interconnections between the project and other initiatives led by FLIP?	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Focus groups	-Project documents -FLIP direction team -Project implementation team (project coordinator and leads of the 3 components) -Other international actors implementing related actions (Holland, UN Peace Trust Fund)	-Documents are put at the evaluator's disposal -FLIP is available to provide feedback -Other international actors are available to provide feedback
		External coherence	To what extent is there consistency with the initiatives of other actors in the same context and on the same subject? To what extent does the project add value while avoiding duplication of effort?			

³ The content of the matrix is indicative and may be adapted/refined according to the information collected by the consultant

Relevance	To what extent was the project, as it was designed and implemented, adapted to the context of Colombia and to the needs of the beneficiaries, at the local and national levels?	Adequacy	Are the objective and expected results aligned with the needs of the context of the 18 selected municipalities in Colombia? Should another project strategy have been preferred to the one implemented by FLIP to better reflect these needs, priorities and context? Why?	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Focus groups	-Political economy assessments and other relevant data available online -Project documents -FLIP direction team -Project implementation team (project coordinator, leaders of each of the 3 components, implementation staff) -Project	-Documents are put at the evaluator's disposal -FLIP is available to provide feedback -Other international actors are available to provide feedback
		Alignment	Was the project clearly aligned with the mandate of key stakeholders and consistent with their strategic framework, including gender-specific policies and priorities?	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Focus Groups		

		Design	<p>Were the project strategies, methodologies, activities and products properly linked and did the results provide the best approach to achieving the project results and objectives? (proposed by UNDEF)</p> <p>Have the risks been appropriately identified by the project? To what extent are/were the strategies developed appropriate to address the identified risks (included with a risk mitigation strategy)? (question proposed by UNDEF)</p> <p>Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives?</p>	<p>Desk Review</p> <p>Individual interviews and questionnaires</p> <p>Focus groups</p>	beneficiaries	
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Effectiveness	To what extent has the project, as implemented, achieved the objectives and goals?	Achievement of objectives	<p>To what extent have the project objectives been achieved? How was this measured?</p> <p>To what extent was the project implemented as planned by the project document? If not, why not?</p> <p>What did the project achieve? When it did not achieve the results identified in the project document, why?</p>	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Project documents -FLIP direction team -Project implementation team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - project coordinator - leads of the 3 components - implementation staff (teachers, curricula designers, others) -Project beneficiaries 	-Availability of the team and stakeholders to provide feedback
		Governance, management and FLIP's role	<p>How did the beneficiaries appreciate the support of FLIP in the implementation of the project?</p> <p>Did rotation of project management staff have an impact on the effectiveness of project implementation? (proposed by UNDEF)</p>	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Surveys		
		Partnerships and alliances (external coordination)	<p>To what extent did the project have an inclusive and gender-sensitive partnership strategy?</p> <p>To what extent has the project fostered participation, ownership, alignment and mutual accountability among all relevant stakeholders?</p>	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Surveys		

Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between the resources spent and the impacts of the project?	Value for money	Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and outputs? Did the institutional arrangements promote efficiency in the use of resources and accountability? Was the budget designed and then implemented in such a way as to enable the project to achieve its objectives?	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires	-Project documents -Project coordinator -Project financial officer	-Availability of stakeholders to provide feedback
Impact	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures promoting democracy in Colombia, through restoring local communication networks in media deserts regions with emphasis on digital and media literacy?	Outcome 1 Strengthened capacities of local actors to produce local content with emphasis on media and digital literacy	Has the capacity of local actors to produce local content with emphasis on media and digital literacy been strengthened through: training 360 local leaders on tools and equipment to produce local content production and publication of 300 journalistic pieces in different multimedia formats in each targeted municipality	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Surveys	-Project documents -Project team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Coordinator • Implementors of the 3 components -Trainers/activity designers -Direct beneficiaries	Availability of key stakeholders to provide feedback

		<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Improved availability of relevant information in the targeted municipalities through the regular supply of locally produced journalistic piece</p>	<p>Has relevant information in the targeted municipalities made more available, through the regular supply of locally produced journalistic pieces through</p> <p>The establishment and production of a work plan for each communication project</p> <p>The establishment of a local communication project in each municipality and produces, at least, two quality journalistic products per month.</p> <p>The establishment of a network composed by leaders of each local communication project where the Journalism Lab was carried out.</p>	<p>Desk Review</p> <p>Individual interviews and questionnaires</p> <p>Surveys</p>	<p>-Project documents</p> <p>-Project team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Coordinator • Implementors of the 3 components <p>-Trainers/activity designers</p> <p>-Direct beneficiaries</p>	<p>Availability of key stakeholders to provide feedback</p>
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		Outcome 3: An improved educational program on media and digital literacy for local schools and organizations from participating municipalities.	Has an educational media and digital literacy programme been made available for local schools and organizations from participating municipalities through: The development of a Pedagogical Booklet with the content program on media and digital literacy for schools and organizations. The organisation of 18 open classes and 20 sessions held on digital and media literacy in schools and organizations.	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Surveys	-Project documents -Project team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Coordinator • Implementors of the 3 components -Trainers/activity designers -Direct beneficiaries	Availability of key stakeholders to provide feedback
Sustainability	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be continued momentum towards reinforcing the role of youth in the promotion of democracy in Colombia?	Process	What measures has FLIP put in place to ensure the sustainability of the results obtained? (proposed by UNDEF)	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Surveys	-Project documents -FLIP direction team -Project implementation team (project coordinator and leads of the 3 components) -Beneficiaries of the three components	-Availability of people to provide feedback -Availability of target people to complete the survey
		Results	Are the parties involved willing and able to pursue project activities on their own?	Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Surveys		

FNUD added value and visibility	To what extent has UNDEF been able to leverage its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved if support from other donors had been provided?	UNDEF added value	<p>What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project, that could not have been achieved as well by alternative projects, other donors or other stakeholders (government, NGO, etc). Did the project design and implementation arrangements leverage UNDEF's comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?</p>	<p>Desk Review Individual interviews and questionnaires Surveys</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Project documents -FLIP direction team -Project implementation team (project coordinator and leads of the 3 components) -Project beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Availability of people to provide feedback -Availability of target people to complete the survey
	Visibility	<p>Is there evidence that UNDEF's support to the project appears in all printed materials distributed during the project? (proposed by UNDEF) The visibility of UNDEF also appears in all the events organized by FLIP and which are related to the project? (proposed by UNDEF)</p>	<p>Desk Review Individual interviews Surveys</p>			

ANNEX 3: CALENDAR AND DISTRIBUTION OF ACTIVITIES

Phases	Activities	Indicative dates	Main actors	Activity breakdown and distribution of responsibilities
Preparation	Desk review and definition of the support to be provided by FLIP	Week 13 may '25	- FLIP - Consultant (Jena)	- Documentary review of all project documents. - Agreement with FLIP on the methodological support to be provided. - Signature of the JENA contract with UNDEF.
	Kick-off meeting with UNDEF	Week 1 st June '25	- FNUD - Consultant	- Presentation of the consultant's methodology. - Individual interview with the UNDEF task manager.
	Kick-off meeting and brief interview with FLIP (followed by an online questionnaire)	Week 1 st June '25	- FLIP - JENA	- Presentation of the consultant's methodology and presentation of next steps. - Brief exchange with the task manager of FLIP - Online questionnaire to be filled in by FLIP
	Launching note drafting	Week 25 th June '25	- JENA	- Drafting and delivery of the launch note (including indicative questions for the evaluation).
Data Collection and Analysis	Design of surveys and focus groups	Week 1 st June '25	- JENA	- Design of the topics to be discussed, methodology and guide for the focus groups (through a methodological concept note). - Design of surveys - Design of focus groups and one-to-one interview guidelines
	Mission to Colombia	14 th -22 th July	- JENA - FLIP	- Briefing with FLIP - Focus groups in Bogotá, San Vicente del Caguán and Leticia - One-to-one interviews in Bogotá, San Vicente del Caguán and Leticia - Debriefing with FLIP
	Final desk review	Week 25 th August	- JENA - FLIP	- Final analysis of all data collected from the mission to Colombia - Final analysis of online survey responses - Final review of collected documents and online sources
	Consultation reports analysis	Week 10 th August '25	- JENA	- Action to be fully carried out by JENA
Reporting	Final report drafting	Week 17 th August '25	- JENA	- Action to be fully carried out by JENA
	UN/FLIP comments integration	31 st August '25	- JENA	- Action to be fully carried out by JENA

