# FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PROTOCOL

***NOTE:*** *Focus Group Discussions will be conducted in Spanish, and the final version of the protocol will include this language. This draft is presented in English for initial review of the content and flow of questions.*

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) will focus on the perceptions of relevant LRDP beneficiary sub-populations in the programming municipalities. FGDs will include discussion of perceptions of the restitution process and relevant institutions, challenges citizens face with land titling and obtaining documentation, rural development, tenure security, the role of land in past conflict, and their relationship with and trust in government institutions.

FGDs will be held in a location that is convenient and comfortable for participants. This protocol covers group discussions with the following groups and topics:

##### GROUPS

* Women
* Ethnic Minorities (Indigenous and Afro Colombian Communities)
* Producer Association Members
* Youth

##### TOPICS

* Restitution (R)
* Land Titling and Documentation (L)
* Rural Development (RD)
* Tenure Security and Conflict (TS)
* Government Relationships and Institutional Support (G)
* Producer Associations (PA)

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| **FGD Location** | **Group** | **Specific Population** | **Topics** | **LRDP Notes** |
| Corinto (Cauca) | Youth | NA | L, TS, G | Fundacion Ayara - Music |
| Santander (Cauca) | Afro Colombian |  | R, L, RD, TS, G |  |
| Santander (Cauca) | Women |  | R, L, RD, TS, G |  |
| Carmen de Bolivar (Montes de Maria) | Producer Association |  | PA, R, L, RD, G | ñame + yuca, cacao |
| Carmen de Bolivar (Montes de Maria) | Women |  | R, L, RD, TS, G, PA | Ñame |
| San Jacinto (Montes de Maria) | Afro Colombian | Eladio Ariza | R, RD, TS, G |  |
| Pueblo Bello (Cesar) | Producer Association | Farmers & Indigenous (Arhuacos) | RD, TS, G, PA | Honey, Coffee, Cane |
| La Paz (Cesar) | Indigenous | Yukpas | R, D, TS, G |  |
| Chaparral (Tolima) | Women |  | L, RD, TS, G | Coffee PPP, formalization |
| Maria la Baja (Montes de Maria) | Afro Colombian Women |  | R, L, RD, TS, G, PA | Cacao |

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| **Information for Discussion Record** | |
| FGD Type (Women, Afro Colombian, Indigenous, Farmers, Producer Association, etc.) |  |
| Name of Facilitator: |  |
| Date of Discussion: |  |
| Location of Discussion (City, Municipality) |  |
| Description of Discussion Location (Office, School, etc.) |  |
| Discussion Start Time: |  |
| Discussion End Time: |  |
| Number of Women |  |
| Number of Men |  |
| How was FGD organized? (by what organization, etc.) |  |

*Thank you for coming today to tell us about your experiences with land and rural development in your community. Your thoughts and opinions are important to us because we are trying to help the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to assist the Government of Colombia in improving land management issues and to better understand any challenges you are facing. This discussion will be about two hours long. It’s also important that you know that we do not work for the government and that any personal information about you or will not be collected or shown to anyone other than who is currently in this space. We have an audio recorder that will help us capture everything you say and take better notes. These recordings are ONLY for our personal use so we can listen again to what you say today. If you have questions at any time, please feel free to ask.*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Enumerator: the goal of this part of the discussion is to try to develop a little bit of trust and confidence between enumerator and the respondents. In the process, we will also learn a bit about who they are and their background.

*First we would like to understand who you are and a little bit about your background. Can a few of you tell me a bit about yourself? I’ll start. My name is (enumerator can state their name and talk a bit about themselves, their family, some personal information)*

## RESTITUTION

*This discussion is about your experience with the restitution process. Land restitution refers to the process of returning property to people who have been displaced as a result of the conflict.*  *We are trying to understand what challenges you have experienced or are currently experiencing in regards to restitution and what your thoughts are about how to improve the process. We would also like to understand if your perception has changed about restitution over the past 3 years.*

1. First I’d like to understand how many of you have ever experienced or are currently involved in the restitution process? Please raise your hands. Have any of you completed the process? Please raise your hands.
   1. *Note taker: estimate and record the % of respondents involved in process*
   2. *Note taker: estimate and record the % of respondents who have completed process*
2. Can you describe what the restitution process has been like for you or someone you know?

*QUESTIONS TO PROBE:*

* 1. *Were they previously displaced by conflict? Why did they leave?*
  2. *How did they learn about the restitution process? Did you hear about it from a neighbor, organization, TV, radio program etc.?*
  3. *Did they return before starting the restitution process? Why do you think they felt they could return? What changed?*
  4. *Is the land they are seeking to be restituted currently occupied by someone else? If so, are they an individual or a company?*
  5. *Not in this case specifically but in general, do you think that occupants know that the land they occupy was previously occupied by a displaced person?*
  6. *How common is it for someone in your community to have land legally restituted to them?*

1. How common is it for someone in your community to have land legally restituted to them?
   1. How easy or difficult is it in your community for a victim to have land restituted to them? Why do you think this is the case?
   2. How long would you estimate it takes to go through the restitution process?
2. What have been the most challenging or confusing parts of the restitution process?
3. What parts of the restitution process would you improve and how would you improve it?
4. When and how do you engage with local government officials, agencies or people regarding restitution? Who are they and in what ways do you engage with them? What is their role?
5. Is your local government more or less involved in restitution than they used to be?
6. Some people say that some of those seeking restitution are not actually victims, but people trying to receive free land from the government. How common do you think this is in your town?
   1. If common, how do you know?
   2. If not common, why do you think some people believe this?
7. Now thinking about restitution as a whole, how do you see the restitution effort in your community changing in the past three years? Is it better, worse, or the same?

### FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES

1. We have heard that restitution claims may be harder for some groups than others. Do you agree or disagree? Please explain.
2. Being part of a minority group, do you feel that government officials treat you any differently regarding the restitution process? Please explain. Who do you normally engage with and what is their role?
3. When you have had interacted with public officers from LRU and lawyers, have you perceived a differential treatment regarding the collective land rights and the daily realities and histories of being part of an ethnic group?

### FOR WOMEN

*Women in Colombia have sometimes been excluded from restitution processes and face obstacles that other groups do not face.*

1. Do you feel that restitution claims may be harder for women than for men. Have any of you experienced or know about this? Do you agree or disagree? Please explain and provide examples.
2. As women in this community, please describe the relationship with government officials regarding the restitution process? Which officials do you work with and in what ways do you engage with them? What is their role? Have you perceived a change in their treatment towards women over the past 3 years?
3. Have you had the opportunity to participate in activities that promote women’s rights to land and raising awareness of the ways that state institutions can help fulfill those rights? What activities have you participated in? Please provide example and explain how, if at all, they were helpful.

## LAND TITLING AND DOCUMENTATION

*Now I’d like to discuss your experience with land titling and documentation, if any, that you have for your land. Land titling refers to the process of ensuring people have legal documents that indicate they own the property they live on.*

1. In your opinion, do most, many, some, or few of the people in your town have formal title over their land? *Ask participants to raise their hands and record a rough % estimate.*

*QUESTIONS TO PROBE:*

1. *What do you see as the primary obstacle to obtaining legal title over land?*
2. *Has this changed over the last three years? Was it better or worse in the past?*
3. *If it has gotten better, why do you think that is? What has made formal land ownership more common in your community?*
4. *If worse, why do you think that is? What has made formal land ownership less common in your community?*
5. Can you describe what the land titling process has been like for you so far?

*QUESTION TO PROBE:*

* 1. *How long have you been going through the process?*
  2. *What have been the most challenging or confusing parts of the land titling process?*

1. Are there organizations or state agencies working to increase access to formal titling? If so, which ones? How effective do you think these agencies have been at increasing formal titling in your community? Please be specific when describing each agency and their role.
2. What parts of the land titling process would you improve and how would you improve it?
3. For those of you that have documentation:
   1. Has this changed the way you invest in your land? For example, did you decide to building a fence, upgrade your roof or start farming your land once you had documentation?
   2. Have you used the document to attain credit or get a bank loan?
   3. Do you feel more confident in your rights to your land and property now that you have documentation? If no, why not?
4. For those of you who DO NOT have documentation:
   1. If you do not have documentation, what is stopping you from getting it? Can you please explain what would help you make this process easier?
5. When and how do you engage with local government officials, agencies or people regarding land titling? Who are they and in what ways do you engage with them? What is their role?
6. Is your local government more or less involved in land titling than they used to be?
7. Now thinking about land titling as a whole, have land titling efforts in your community been improving in the past three years? Please explain or describe why not.
8. Now thinking about buying and selling land in your community, can you tell me a bit about what this process is like?
   1. How difficult is it generally to buy/sell land in your community? What are the challenges to doing so?
   2. Is there a place or person who has information on what is for sale?
   3. How has the process of buying and selling land in your community changed in the past three years? Can you provide an example?

### FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES

1. Do you feel that being an ethnic minority has affected getting documentation for your land? Please explain.

### FOR WOMEN

*Women in Colombia have traditionally been excluded from land titling processes.*

1. Do you feel that being a woman has affected getting documentation for your land? Do you feel you are treated any different because you are woman in regards to land titling processes? Please provide examples and explain.

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

*Now I’d like to discuss how you use your land currently and your experience with various rural development initiatives in your area We are trying to understand what rural development services you may or may not be using and what could be done to improve these programs.*

1. First, can you tell me a bit about how you use your land productively? Do people cultivate crops, engage in cattle or other livestock raising, or other agricultural activities?
2. Has the way you use your land in the past 3 years changed? Can you provide examples of how things have changed or stayed the same? For example, did you change the type of crop you were growing or changed the types of agricultural practices you use?
3. Does your local government in your municipality or department offer services or assistance to victims or those who have been displaced? Probe and describe.
   1. If yes, can you give examples of how you access these services?
   2. If services or assistance is available, but you don’t have access, why not?
   3. Are these services only for people that have been displaced or for the entire community?

4. Are there any other ways that your local or regional government supports your livelihood?

* 1. If not already mentioned, have you received any form of government subsidies, technical assistance or public goods for farming related activities?
  2. If you could choose, in what ways would you like the local government to support your livelihood? What services or assistance would help you to use your land more productively or to make more money for your household?
  3. Do you feel that the government’s support of your livelihoods has changed in the past 3 years? Has it increased, decreased, or stayed the same. Please explain.

5. Have you seen improvements in infrastructure in your community such as water infrastructure or roads in the past 3 years? If so, please give examples.

* 1. If yes, have these improvements in infrastructure helped you? In what ways? If they have not helped you, how could they have been more useful?

1. Do any members of your community engage in any other partnerships with the private sector/companies relevant to the production of agricultural products? If yes, please describe the nature of these partnerships.

*QUESTIONS TO PROBE:*

* 1. *What is the name of the company involved?*
  2. *What members of your community are involved? Are there any specific groups/members of your community that are involved?*
  3. *How did this partnership come to be? In other words, who initiated the process (i.e., the Government, the private sector, an NGO, indigenous leaders, etc.)? Who from your community was involved in negotiating/establishing this partnership?*
  4. *Does your community receive any benefits as a result of this partnership? If yes, please describe. (Carefully probe any benefit sharing arrangements)*
  5. *Do you feel this partnership is helpful for your community? Please explain why or why not. If not helpful, what could they do to be more helpful?*

### FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES

1. Do you feel like these partnerships engage ethnic minorities? Please explain.
2. In your opinion, do any of these partnership impact your communities’ right to self-determination (i.e., affect your ability to live in accordance with your values and traditions)? How so?

### FOR WOMEN

1. Are any of the partnerships specifically targeting women or engage women in their work? Please explain.

## TENURE SECURITY AND CONFLICT

*This part of our discussion is about land-related conflicts in your community. When I am thinking about land-related conflicts, I am thinking about disagreements or disputes that arise between people in your town as to who rightfully owns a piece of land. These disputes can be between two people, a person and a company, or two companies that own land in your community. I am also thinking about the ways in which the armed conflict has affected land ownership in your community.*

1. How common would you say land-related disputes are in your community? Would you say that they are very common, somewhat common, or rare? Can you give an example of a land-related dispute?

*QUESTIONS TO PROBE:*

* 1. *Who were the sides in the conflict? How did it begin?*
  2. *What steps did the two parties take in the dispute?*
  3. *Was someone from the local government consulted? Why or why not?*
  4. *Who do you think was at fault in that example, and why?*

1. Thinking about the armed conflict in Colombia, can you tell me a bit about how the conflict has affected the way you use your land in your community?
   1. Has the conflict impacted the types of things that people do with their land? For example, what they grow?
2. Compared to three years ago, how secure do you feel about your land? “Secure” means that you are confident that no one can take your land or encroach on your land without your permission.
   1. If you are feeling secure, why is this?
   2. If you are feeling insecure, why is this?
   3. What authorities/actors/institutions are involved in this feeling of security or lack thereof?
3. How concerned are you that you may be involved in a land-related dispute in the future? Is this something you worry about often?
   1. If so, do you feel less worried, more worried or the same as you did 3 years ago?
   2. If you are not worried about this, why not? What is it that makes you feel confident that you will not be pulled into a land conflict?
   3. If you are worried about this, why? What is it that makes you concerned you will be pulled into a land conflict?
   4. What steps can a person take to ensure that they do not become involved in a land dispute?
   5. If you were involved in a dispute, what would you do to try to resolve it? How confident do you feel in your ability to resolve it?

### FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES

1. More generally, what challenges does your community face in land disputes that makes you different from other communities?
2. Thinking of your community as a whole, how confident do you feel that your community will not be involved in a land-related dispute, either with the state, an individual, or a company, in the future?
3. Thinking about collective titling, do you feel that your community owning property collectively makes disputes more likely, less likely, or neither? (If applicable)

### FOR WOMEN

1. As women in this community, can you tell me how or whether being involved in a land dispute is different for a woman than it is for a man?
2. Do women have it easier, the same, or harder than men when involved in a land dispute?
3. If you think women have it easier/harder, why do you think this is? Is it because of how men in the community treat women, because women face unique legal issues that men don’t, some other issue, or all of the above?

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

*A lot of ongoing government relationships and changes are happening now in the country, which may be impacting you and your family. I have a few questions about your engagement with and trust in your local government.*

1. When and how do you engage with government officials regarding community land management or rural development? Which officials and in what ways do you engage with them? What is their role?
2. In the last 3 years, is your local government more or less involved in land management or rural development than they used to be?
3. In the last 3 years, have you observed any differences in how local leaders work with/interact with government officials on land or rural development issues? How has this changed for you personally? Please explain these changes.
4. What is the relationship like between your community and the government officials from institutions such as the mayor’s office or Secretariat of Agriculture?

## PRODUCER ASSOCIATIONS

1. To begin, can you talk a bit about the producer association that you belong to? What product or crop does the producer association work with? Who belongs to the producer association and across how many municipalities? What is the relationship of each individual farmer/producer to the association?
2. What sort of assistance does the producer association provide its members? Lobbying efforts? Technical assistance? Access to credit etc? Tracking progress in the industry? What else?
   1. [Lobbying Only] If the producer association has been lobbying the government for any particular types of policies associated with your industry, what policies are they?
      1. What is the impact that these policies would have on your industry?
      2. What barriers or obstacles are you facing in regards to lobbying for these policies?
      3. If relevant, what government support would you need to help you push forward these policies?
   2. [Technical Assistance] If the association provides technical assistance, what sort of technical assistance does it provide?
      1. How has this technical assistance helped the communities you work in?
      2. What barriers or obstacles are you facing in regards to providing this technical assistance?
      3. What support has the government been providing you thus far? How could this support be improved?
   3. [Access to Credit] If the association provides access to credit, can you please explain this process?
      1. How does the association select who to help get access to credit?
      2. How has access to credit helped the communities you work with?
      3. What support has the government been providing you thus far? How could this support be improved?
   4. In the case of technical assistance and access to credit, what would producers in your community do to gain access to either credit or technical assistance before the association was formalized? Do you find that the association is more efficient at providing these things?
   5. Do you work in more than one municipality? If so, are there any particular challenges that differ across the municipalities that you work in?
3. Is the producer association that you belong to engaged in a Public-Private Partnership? If so, can you describe this Public-Private Partnership? Who belongs to the partnership? Who are the “public” partners? Who are the “private” partners?
   1. What are some of the results of having your producer association be part of a public-private partnership? What do the “public” and “private” partners provide to your association as a whole and the producers individually?
      1. If your association has experience working in the past with private entities, how does having [‘public partner’ described above’] involved change the relationship between the association and the private entity? Please explain.
      2. Do you feel that the association has gotten a “fair deal” in the partnership with the public and private partner, overall?
   2. Even if on the whole you find the public-private partnership favorable, are there any challenges or difficulties to having your producer association be part of it? Please explain.
   3. Overall, how would you say that belonging to a public-private partnership altered the way your association functions? What are some of the more significant changes?
4. In looking for producers to incorporate into the association, how do you engage and make choices about which producers to approach about joining the association? Do you look for new associates or do they come to you, generally? Are there any challenges reaching or connecting with certain types of populations?

*QUESTIONS TO PROBE:*

* 1. *Do you specifically try to engage any ethnic minorities? If so, how do you do this and what groups do you engage (Afro Colombian, Indigenous)? Are there any barriers you experience in engaging these groups? If so, what do you think could be done to overcome these barriers?*
  2. *Similarly, do you try to engage women producers? If so, please explain. Are there any barriers you experience engaging women? If so, what do you think could be done to overcome these barriers?*
  3. *Now, thinking about producers who have been victimized in the past as a result of the conflict, do you find that you try to engage these producers in your association? How do you engage producers with these backgrounds? Do you find that there are specific challenges to working with and engaging producers who have been victimized?*

1. Do you feel that the government has been supportive of the work that you do? Please explain why or why not?
   1. What do you feel they have been doing well to support your work?
   2. What do you think they could change in order to improve your work?
2. Looking to the future, what do you see as the biggest areas for growth and improvement for your producer association? How can it be made better and what would that process look like? What would you say are some of the bigger challenges that producer associations face in your region and in the country?

## CONCLUSION

I asked a lot of questions today. Is there anything that you would like to ask me? Did my questions allow you to express your thoughts and feelings about the land and rural development issues of importance to you? If not, is there anything else that you want to add?