Support for the Administration of Justice in Nicaragua—The Rural Judicial Facilitators Program

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Executive Summary

With the Nicaraguan Supreme Court, the Organization of American States (OAS) is supporting the Rural Judicial Facilitators (RJF) Program in Nicaragua. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) provides financial support to the program. The RJF program’s objective is to improve the people’s access to justice in 57 rural municipalities with poverty head count ratios above 60 percent and poor access to urban areas and services.

In 1997, the OAS developed a Technical Collaboration Program (PCT) to support local conflict management in rural areas in the central northern part of Nicaragua, where violence had continued after the war and lawlessness plagued the villages. The program supported local Peace Commissions as a means of strengthening the local civil society’s capacity to prevent and mediate in local conflicts. Support was also provided to establish a functioning legal system, including a layperson corps to assist local judges, named rural judicial facilitators (RJF).

The rural judicial facilitators mediate in minor criminal cases, family conflicts, and property-related disputes by providing alternative solutions. They advise community members on legal issues and inform them of their legal rights. The facilitators are leaders who are recognized in and elected by their communities. They hold no political posts; the only academic requirement is that they must read and write. Community leaders participate as facilitators on a voluntary basis.

PCT program evaluations concluded that the program had been very successful in providing legal services in poor rural areas and that the RJF component was especially innovative. Given that the limited access to justice in rural areas is not only a problem in Nicaragua’s central northern parts, it was decided that the RJF program would be expanded and implemented in 57 rural municipalities in Nicaragua.

The RJF program currently involves 400 judicial facilitators, 14 percent of whom are women, who help people in 400 communities. Other actors are also involved. The local judges are in charge of the facilitators’ education and counseling. OAS field promoters support the activities and follow up on the program results. The Supreme Court is in charge of the supervision and of the relations between the judges and the judicial facilitators. The latter task is conducted through a special office. The Supreme Court is also responsible for guaranteeing the program’s sustainability.

The RJFs have played a significant role in improving the administration of justice in their communities. During the 2002-2003 period, the RJF program worked on 10,998 cases, which included assault, family violence, property-related disputes, cases remitted to the local judges, and mediations.

The RJFs have contributed to the presence of law in remote communities; this has helped to prevent violence, crime, and further conflicts. They have also created a closer relationship between the judicial branch and the people. The program gives people a voice in the judicial process and increased their participation in legal reform. In this sense, the program provides an
opportunity for people to overcome the unequal distribution of power and resources that characterize Nicaraguan society.

Furthermore, the RJF program has contributed to legal reform, more specifically the reform of the Criminal Code of Procedures (CPP), which recognizes the judicial facilitators as **auxiliary staff** in the administration of justice (Art. 423 CPP). This is an important acknowledgement of the need to improve the access to justice and of the communities’ capacity to actively participate in that process.

**Background and development**

Nicaragua is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, despite being the largest country by area in Central America, with many natural resources and good agricultural potential. About half of the population live in rural areas; 70 percent of these people live in poverty. Of those 70 percent, 30 percent live in extreme poverty. Of the 16 departments and two autonomous regions in Nicaragua, 10 are in rural areas, where the poverty headcount ratios are above 50 percent. Of the country’s 152 municipalities, 70 percent are predominantly rural, with less than 20,000 inhabitants, most of them very poor.

The initial program supported rural judicial facilitators in 13 poor municipalities, where they promoted the administration of justice in 1,700 cases and provided extra-judiciary mediation in 1,850 family and property-related disputes.

These positive experiences brought about the extension of the Rural Judicial Facilitators Program. The expanded program began in November 2002 and will continue, with the help of SIDA funding, until 2006. In the expansion process, priority is given to rural population with small incomes and high poverty levels. The RJF program directly influences poor communities’ access to justice and is expected to serve 275,000 people through 700 rural judicial facilitators and 67 local courts, working directly with the Supreme Court and civil society.

**Key components**

The RJF Program activities can be divided into six key components:

- **Program promotion:** The program identifies target groups, holds meetings with local judges, and conducts visits with key actors. Exchange of experiences among judges take place.

- **RJF training:** The facilitators are trained in legislation, human rights, family violence, environment, and children’s rights. The training process involves state institutions as well as the civil society, taking into account each municipality’s specific conditions.

- **Program operations:** The program has defined a feedback mechanism that gives continuous information on the progress of the operational plans. The feedback mechanism includes monthly meetings with local judges, national meetings with RJFs, and other activities that allow a systematic evaluation of program objectives.
• **Material support**: The program distributes material resources to local courts and judicial facilitators, with the purpose of facilitating their activities. This is particularly important given the scarcity of resources where the activities are conducted.

• **Extension**: The program seeks to establish links with different local actors, such as the local government and social organizations. These activities include the exchange of experiences and information disseminated to people living in the communities.

• **Institutional strengthening and sustainability**: This includes actions that aim to set the conditions to ensure program sustainability. For example, the recognition on behalf of the judicial power that the RJFs are *auxiliary staff* in the justice administration with the authority to mediate in conflicts.

**Crosscutting issues**

In all these components, crosscutting issues such as children’s rights, adolescent issues, environmental issues and, in particular, gender equity and indigenous rights, are taken into account.

The program’s aim is to achieve broad participation of both men and women. It is estimated that 30 percent of the RJFs will be women by 2006. These female facilitators serve as role models for many women, which is particularly important for those who live with intra-family violence. In addition, several program activities aim to increase people’s gender awareness and to find solutions to problems of inequality between men and women.

The program’s extension to the Atlantic region of Nicaragua has given the RFJ program a more complete and multifaceted understanding of indigenous issues, since the region includes various ethnic groups and indigenous peoples with their own values and customs. A working methodology that takes indigenous issues into account is being developed in the Atlantic region, without altering the key program features. In two municipalities of this region, a pilot project was initiated where the RJFs established working links with the indigenous judges or *withas*. Moreover, a special addition to the RJF’s regulation takes into consideration the indigenous cultures’ customs, values, traditions, and the mechanisms of imparting justice. The focus on indigenous communities is important because these communities have poverty levels that are far higher than the national average.

**Results**

• It has been estimated that 40 percent of the population living in the communities covered by the program resort to the judicial facilitator for conflict resolution, saving time and economic resources.

• The reports of the national police, local courts, and the district attorney’s office indicate that crime has gone down by 10 percent in the communities where the program was introduced.
The facilitators’ presence has increased people’s trust in the justice system in the targeted communities.

Civil society’s role has been strengthened as a result of the promotion of links among different civil society organizations within the program framework.

**Driving factors**

The RJF Program is now in a consolidation phase and many factors point toward its continuity and sustainability.

The five-year Operational Plan of the Supreme Court (CSJ) establishes the RJFs as a highly prioritized long-term strategy; the CSJ has opened an RJF office, which will ensure the program’s technical sustainability. Its financial sustainability has been achieved by integrating its administration into the CSJ budget. The reinforced Poverty Reduction Strategy (ERCERP) aims at improving the resources allocated and increasing civil society’s active participation, particularly towards the poor.

Given the program results to date, many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are interested in expanding the project to other municipalities. Furthermore, they suggest that the number of RJFs per community (that conforms to a municipality) be higher than 10, with the aim of benefiting more poor social groups.

The Criminal Code reform provided the RJF with a legal and institutional role, while the Swedish government’s contribution to the program fulfills a catalytic function, spurring further action by the government, the Supreme Court, and people living in remote communities.

**Lessons learned**

- The rural judicial facilitator model could be applied in other countries where the population lives mainly in rural areas and where access to justice is hampered by long distances and by a lack of financial means in poor communities.

- With the RJF program, the rural population can communicate more directly with the judicial system. It brings judges and people closer together, breaking a historic distance between them and reducing the unequal power balance between state public officials and the people they serve.

- The program’s working method can be applied to different social sectors, including indigenous groups, without violating their customs, values, culture and traditions.

- The program’s working method has brought together government institutions, NGOs, and the civil society, with the objective of expanding the program to other areas.

- The RJF program significantly contributed to a reduction in crime and violence by promoting a civil culture in the communities with the mediation process.

- The RJF program promotes citizens’ participation in the administration of justice, which allows for an efficient use of limited resources.
Implementation Process

Background and development

Nicaragua is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, despite being the largest on in territorial extension in Central America, with much natural resources and vocation for agriculture. About 50 percent of the population live in rural areas, of which 70 percent lives in poverty. Of those 70 percent, 30 percent live in extreme poverty. Of the 16 departments and two autonomous regions that form the country, 10 are made up of rural population, which presents poverty head count ratios above 50 percent. 70 percent of the country’s 152 municipalities are predominantly rural and have less than 20,000 inhabitants, most of them very poor.

From 1970 to 1990 the country was haunted by armed conflicts. Today one of the main challenges is the consolidation of the rule of law. In this process, the citizen’s access to justice in poor rural areas is vital.

In October 1997, the Organisation of American States (OAS), supported by Sweden, initiated the Technical Collaboration Program (PCT) to support the democratisation process in rural conflict areas of Nicaragua. The program had a profound impact on the local organisation and on the state’s presence in the most remote rural communities.

Through the institutionalisation of the Rural Judicial Facilitators in 13 poor municipalities of the country, the initial program supported the administration of justice in 1700 cases and provided extra-judiciary mediation in 1850 family and property related disputes.

These positive experiences brought about the extension of the Rural Judicial Facilitators Program. The expanded program was initiated in November 2002 and will continue, with the help of Sida funding, until 2006. In the process of expansion, priority is given to rural population with small incomes and high levels of poverty. The RJF Program directly influences poor communities’ access to justice and is expected to serve 275 000 people through 700 Rural Judicial Facilitators and 67 local courts, working directly with the Supreme Court and the civil society.

Key components

The RJF Program activities can be divided into 6 key components:

- **Promotion of the Program**: Within this component the target groups are identified, meetings take place with local judges and visits are carried out with the key actors. Exchanges of experiences among judges take place.

- **RJF’s training**: The facilitators are trained in legislation, human rights, family violence, environment and children’s’ rights. The training process involves state institutions as well as the civil society, taking into account each municipality’s specific conditions.
• **Operation of the program**: The Program has defined a feedback mechanism that gives continuous information on the progress of the operational plans. The feedback mechanism includes monthly meetings with local judges, national meetings with RJFs and other activities that allow a systematic evaluation of the objectives of the program.

• **Material Support**: The program distributes material resources to local courts and judicial facilitators, with the purpose to facilitate their activities. This component is particularly important, taking into consideration the scarcity of resources in the locations where the activities are carried out.

• **Extension**: The program seeks to establish links with different local actors, such as the local government and social organisations. These activities include interchange of experiences and dissemination of information among people living in the communities.

• **Institutional strengthening and sustainability**: This component includes actions that aim to set the conditions to secure the sustainability of the program. A concrete example is the recognition on behalf of the judicial power that the rural judicial facilitators are “auxiliary staff” in the justice administration and that they have the authority to mediate in conflicts.

**Crosscutting issues**

In all these components, crosscutting issues such as children’s rights, adolescent questions, environmental issues and particularly gender equity and indigenous rights are taken into account.

The aim of the program is to achieve a broad participation of both men and women. It is estimated that 30 percent of the RJFs will be women by 2006. These female Facilitators serve as role models for many women, which is particularly important for those women who live with intra family violence. In addition, several program activities aim at increasing people’s gender awareness and finding solutions to problems of inequality between men and women.

The extension of the program activities to the Atlantic region of Nicaragua has given the RFJ-program a more complete and multifaceted understanding of the indigenous issues, since the region counts with various ethnic groups and indigenous people who have their particular values and customs. A particular working methodology that takes indigenous issues into account is being developed in the Atlantic region, although without altering the key features of the program. In two municipalities of this region a pilot project has been initiated, where the RJF’s have established working links with the indigenous judges called *withas*. Moreover, a special addition to the RJF’s regulation takes into consideration the indigenous cultures’ customs, values, traditions and the mechanisms of imparting justice. The focus on the indigenous communities situated in the Atlantic region is important particularly because these communities present levels of poverty far higher than the national average.

**Coverage**

The program is expected to cover 67 municipalities by the end of 2006, with the performance of 700 rural judicial facilitators assigned by the Supreme Court of Justice.
The following chart shows a projection of the results of the foreseeable activities to be carried out by the RJFs until 2006.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RJF Operational Activities</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cases known by the judge</td>
<td>2,630</td>
<td>3,117</td>
<td>3,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceedings advised by the judge</td>
<td>4,239</td>
<td>5,024</td>
<td>5,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise to the population</td>
<td>16,146</td>
<td>19,136</td>
<td>19,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps with the institutions</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>1,133</td>
<td>1,133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrajudicial mediations</td>
<td>5,724</td>
<td>6,784</td>
<td>6,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29,694</td>
<td>35,194</td>
<td>35,194</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Resources**

The Supreme Court of Justices provides institutional backup. The five-year Operational Plan of the CSJ establishes the RJFs as a highly prioritised long-term strategy and the CSJ opened an attention office of RJF. Furthermore, the project receives the support of the International Co-operation (Sweden) and the civil society.

As far as the human resources are concerned, the project requires the minimum labour input of one local co-ordinator responsible for the execution of the project, one local technical team composed of four specialists and 14 territorial Promoters.

The persons from OAS responsible for the execution and follow up of the different activities in the field are the territorial promoters, who are professionals (lawyers, sociologists, social workers, teachers) living in the field.

**Planning, control and evaluation**

As far as the planning and control go, the program is executed according to the annual operational plans of implementation and according to monthly work plans, which is the base for the co-ordination of the activities. The plans are elaborated with ample participation of the Supreme Court of Justice and the technical team. The project’s co-ordination group meets every month with the technical staff to analyse the fulfilment of the working plans, which constitutes an effective procedure of monitoring the work.

As far as the evaluation is concerned, the Supreme Court of Justice, the technical team and facilitators all take part in a process of participative evaluation, which serves as input for the operational planning.

The participative evaluation is carried out through the realisation of workshops for several days, where the program, institutional changes, achievements and problems are discussed.
All the program staff, the Judicial Facilitators and officials from the attention offices take part. Furthermore, an external consultant carries out field interviews with local judges, people in the communities and local institutions, which serve as the main input for the participative evaluation.

**Impact analysis**

The program seeks to maximise its impact on the access to justice by targeting the poorest municipalities. The following table provides data on the attended municipalities in this respect:

The results of the program have surpassed the expectations. The program currently involves 400 RJFs and 37 local judges. In January 2004, 400 remote and poor communities had benefited from the program. 12,462 cases had been remitted to judges and 15,520 people had received legal advice. 2,303 mediations in cases of violence, 1,892 mediations in cases of family violence and 6,594 mediations in property disputes had been carried out.

It has been estimated that 40 percent of the population living in the communities covered by the program resort to the judicial Facilitator as a mechanism for conflict resolution, saving time and economic resources. The reports of the National Police, Local Courts and the District Attorney’s Office indicate that crime has gone down by 10 percent in those communities since the introduction of the program.

As another result, the presence of the facilitators has increased people’s trust in the justice system in the attended communities.

Moreover, the role of the civil society has been strengthened as a result of the promotion of links between different organisations of the civil society within the framework of the program.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Rural population (percent)</th>
<th>Rural population in poverty (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jalapa</td>
<td>41,756</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murra</td>
<td>11,017</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Jicaro</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan del Río Coco</td>
<td>15,261</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San José de los Remates</td>
<td>7,646</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teustepe</td>
<td>21,299</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Pedro de Lóvago</td>
<td>7,125</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acoyapa</td>
<td>16,882</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villa Sandino</td>
<td>20,543</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santo Tomás</td>
<td>15,997</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muy Muy</td>
<td>13,069</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Dionisio</td>
<td>16,003</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esquipulas</td>
<td>14,746</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waspán ***</td>
<td>35,082</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Cabezas ***</td>
<td>39,771</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Rama</td>
<td>54,337</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mueye de los Bueyes</td>
<td>23,252</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nueva Guinea</td>
<td>79,259</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Carlos</td>
<td>28,733</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morritos</td>
<td>6,093</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Almendro</td>
<td>11,795</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Miguelito</td>
<td>13,534</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco del Norte</td>
<td>5,98</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cua Bocay</td>
<td>57,599</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Tortuguero</td>
<td>9,402</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Ayote</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz del Río Grande</td>
<td>13,642</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Dalia</td>
<td>43,887</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Libertad</td>
<td>9,814</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matiguás</td>
<td>38,584</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paiwas</td>
<td>32,911</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pantasma</td>
<td>29,735</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rancho Grande</td>
<td>17,077</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Río Blanco</td>
<td>26,203</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santo Domingo</td>
<td>12,543</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waslala</td>
<td>32,924</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiwili</td>
<td>51,985</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Municipalities where indigenous communities are present.
Policy coherence

The RJF Program is well in line with the reinforced strategy to reduce poverty (ERCERP). The program targets peripheral sectors, with special focus on rural communities, women and indigenous groups. That implies an investment in human capital of the poor, which contributes to breaking the vicious circle of poverty.

The RJF Program is also coherent with the National Plan of Development¹, where decentralisation and local participation are seen as basic conditions for local development and poverty reduction.

Driving Factors.

The RJF Program is now in the consolidation phase and many factors point toward continuity and sustainability of the activities.

Commitments and economic policy

In relation to this specific program, the five-year Operational Plan of the Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ) establishes the RJFs as a highly prioritised long term strategy and the CSJ has opened an attention office of the RJF, which assures the technical sustainability of the Program. The financial sustainability is achieved through the integration of its administration into the budget of the judicial power.

The national development plan, where the reduction of poverty constitutes the main axe, takes the justice aspects and good governance into consideration.

The reinforced strategy of poverty reduction (ERCERP) aims at improving the allocation of resources and increasing the active participation of the civil society, particularly the poor. Within the framework of this strategy, the government impels the fight against corruption, filing suits to public officials guilty of such crimes.

Institutional innovation

The program has facilitated the access to justice by providing judicial services to people living in rural areas through an innovative institutional arrangement—the RJF.

The institutionalisation of the RJF program responds to the priorities and needs of the communities, as well as to the strategic development approach of the Supreme Court. The Criminal Code of Procedures (CPP) recognises the Judicial Facilitators as “auxiliary staff” in the administration of justice (Art. 423 CPP). This is an important acknowledgement of the need to

¹ In the last Consultative Group organized by the government of Nicaragua and the International Community in October 2003, the Government presented a National Development Plan that intends to complement the Poverty Reduction Strategy (ERCERP), strengthening pro-growth strategies and objectives.
improve the access to justice and of the communities’ capacity to actively participate in that process.

Facilitators are chosen by their communities and must work on a voluntary basis. Voluntary people who work for the benefit of their community thereby represent the rural judicial facilitator figure. In this sense, the Program has changed the attitude towards social assistance in rural areas, where people traditionally have conditioned their participation in similar projects to either payments or contributions in kind.

Learning and Experiment
The first period of the project (1997-2002) represented an experimental phase and was carried out in a difficult political context. The rule of law was just beginning to develop, the post-war political climate was one of polarisation\(^2\) and there was an on going change of the executive and legislative administration. Despite these difficulties, the Program has achieved significant results. First after evaluating the results and concluding that the program had been successful, the program was extended and the RFJ was institutionalised.

The working method shows that the program can be applied to groups or ethnic communities that preserve their customs and ancestral values, as in the case of the indigenous communities of the North Atlantic region. Due to their social and economic organisation, these communities present poverty levels far superior to the national average, whereby they must be given priority.

Given the results, NGOs are interested in expanding the project to other municipalities of the country. Furthermore, they suggest that the number of RJFs per community (that conforms a municipality) be higher than 10, with the aim of benefiting poor social groups.

The facilitation program of justice could be successfully applied in countries that have experienced similar armed conflicts and where groups of people suffer from poor access to justice.

External catalysts
The reform of the Criminal Code implemented in the country provided the RJF with a legal and institutional role.

The Swedish contribution to the Program fulfils a catalytic function, which spurs further action by the government, the Supreme Court and the people living in remote communities. The Swedish contribution in this field was therefore a valid intervention in support of the reduction of poverty.

Besides the support of the government entities, the country counts with lots of NGOs that target vulnerable sectors and areas of extreme poverty.

\(^2\) The war conflict ended in 1990 and thousands of army soldiers and irregular combatants were demobilized during the first quarter of the decade. Several of them live in the same communities.
Lessons learned

The Rural Judicial Facilitator figure has provided access to justice to the most remote communities and could be applied in other countries where the population is concentrated to rural areas and where access to justice is hampered by long distances and by lack of financial means in poor communities.

Despite the scantiness of resources, the rural population can communicate more directly with the judicial system due to the program. This destroys myths about the difficulties to access the judicial system and prevents conflicts. Also, the program bring judges and people closer together, breaking a historic distance between them and reducing the unequal power balance between state public officials and the people they serve.

The program’s working method can be applied to different social sectors, including indigenous groups, without violating their customs, values, culture and traditions. This has been shown in the implementation of the program in the Atlantic region.

The Program’s working method has allowed for an integration process of government institutions, NGOs and the civil society, with the objective to expand the Program to other areas.

The RJF Program significantly contributed to the reduction of crimes and violence by promoting a civil culture in the communities owing to the process of mediation.

The Rural Judicial Facilitators could be recognised by the judicial systems in many other countries, facilitating access to justice in the poorest communities and decreasing crime rates by solving minor conflicts.

The RJF Program achieves its objectives by promoting citizens’ participation in the administration of justice, which allows high levels of efficiency and the exploitation of resources that benefit the communities with scant resources.
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Methodology for the participation of the NGOs in the RJF Program. Supreme Court of justice.

Project impact in the access to the administration of justice, period 1997-2001

Strengthened Strategy of Poverty Reduction (ERCERP)

Government of Nicaragua.

National Plan of Development

Government of Nicaragua

Reading and different presentations of the Post degree course on Political Management, Programs and Social Projects.

Central American University (UCA)

Base Line of the Rural Judicial Facilitators Program 2003 OAS

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