

STRENGTHENING THE RIGHTS OF THE WAYÚU (SRW) *Through Improved Coordination of the Formal Justice System and Indigenous Justice in La Guajira, Colombia*



The Wayúu people in La Guajira, Colombia

On July 1st, Partners Colombia initiated the Project **Strengthening the Rights of the Wayúu (SRW) Through Improved Coordination of the Formal Justice System and Indigenous Justice in La Guajira, Colombia** funded by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. The program will improve access to justice for Colombia's indigenous Wayúu population. Both traditional Wayúu legal practices and the formal justice system will be engaged through: (1) providing greater awareness of indigenous rights among State and traditional justice operators; and, (2) increasing legal and psycho-social services offered by the State to victims within the Wayúu communities.

The project will closely coordinate with Colombia's Ministry of Justice, the Municipalities of Riohacha, Uribia and Barrancas, the Department of La Guajira, the Regional Justice House coordinators, the local association of Wayúu AKUAIPA WAIMAKAT, and the Cerrejón Coal mine. All of these institutions have offered their commitment to work with Partners for Democratic Change (Partners). As part of Partners' commitment to participatory project implementation and sustainability, the project team will also build the capacity of the Wayúu to advocate for improved legal services through leadership development and application of the PDC Cooperative Advocacy methodology.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE PROGRAM (AJP)

A series of meetings are being held for coordination in the implementation of the Partners-Colombia's **Access to Justice Program (AJP)** is a project designed to strengthen justice services in Colombia by ensuring access to legal services, helping to establish a functioning justice system, and reducing impunity—specifically for people residing in rural, marginalized regions of Colombia heavily affected by violence.

The program's five core components are:

- (1) Justice Reform
- (2) Court Administration and Management
- (3) Justice Houses
- (4) Alternative Dispute Resolution, which will be implemented by Partners for Democratic Change through Partners Colombia
- (5) Public Defense