

Execution report of the tree planting project

January 21, 2025.

1. Project

"Tree planting program to create living areas in the land released territories intervened by CCBL"

Place: Municipality of Urrao, Department of Antioquia.

Responsible: CCBL ECO CAMPAIGN initiative, and CCBL Coordination of Operations in Urrao.

Reported execution period: September to December 2024

2. Summary

The project aimed to mitigate the environmental impacts of land release CCBL interventions and build climate resilience in communities affected by explosive ordnance contamination. Key activities included planting 1,180 trees in diverse locations such as educational centers, village parks, and private properties. Native and endangered species were prioritized to support ecological restoration, biodiversity, and watershed protection. Challenges included developing a strategy within the CCBL ECO CAMPAIGN initiative to motivate and technically support local communities in creating and registering private protected areas, known as natural reserves of civil society. Lessons emphasized the importance of community involvement, climatic alignment, and inter-institutional collaboration. The project's success in Urrao serves as a replicable model for other regions, demonstrating how ecological restoration can complement land release activities and strengthen community resilience. Recommendations include develop and implement strategies to engage businesses and the local community in conservation efforts, leveraging Law 2173 of 2021 when implemented, and creating private nature reserves as funding and restoration tools, and improve and replicate the strategy to other municipalities such as Montelibano and/or Cumaribo, with communities affected by contamination by explosive ordnances and in community areas that face risks due to climate change and environmental degradation.

3. Project objective

To mitigate the environmental impacts of land release interventions and enhance the climate resilience of communities affected by explosive ordnance contamination, planting tree to establish sustainable living areas in the land released territories.

4. Methodology

1. **Commitment of authorities and search for planting areas:** Identification of priority areas, with the help of local authorities, including a school and a rural educational center, a village sidewalk park, a property surrounding a water source, and a private land.
2. **Choice of species:** Use of native species such as pink cedar (*Cedrela odorata*) and oak (*Quercus humboldtii*), among others.
3. **Environmental awareness:** Workshops for the community on planting and care techniques, and on snake recognition.
4. **Preparation and planting days:** Participatory planting with tutoring, application of organic amendments and marking of species.

5. **Monitoring and reporting:** Monitoring and maintenance agreements with the local community, and monitoring by CCBL planned during the 1st half of 2025 to evaluate the condition of the trees and ensure their survival.
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5. Outputs

- **Trees planted:** 1062.
 - **Trees given to families, to plant on their properties:** 100
 - **Planted species:** tall cedar (*Cedrela montana*): 90; guamo (*Inga sp.*): 228; elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*): 60; camargo (*Verbesina arborea*): 120; other species of ecological importance such as tack and black almond: 564.
 - **Coverage:** areas suitable for plant enrichment in a college and a rural school, the central green area of a town center, a property with a water source, and an area under restoration within a private property.
 - **Engagement:** 120 people, including women victims of violence, farmers, young people, teachers, representatives of the local authorities, a forestry technician, and demining staff.
 - **Initial survivor rate:** It is estimated at 80%, to be monitored during the 1st quarter of 2025.
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6. Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges

- Law 2173 of 2021, through which ecological restoration is promoted with the planting of trees, stimulating environmental awareness, the responsibility of companies and the commitment of local authorities, and creation of living areas, even without effective implementation.
- Organizational change, from a scheme in which demining personnel planted 200 trees on a single private property at the end of land release, to a process in which demining staff work together with the authorities and the local community to select properties, carry out several planting days and plant nearly 1,200 trees.
- The design of a strategy is identified as an opportunity for the CCBL ECO CAMPAIGN Initiative to motivate and technically support local communities in the creation and registration of protected areas within their properties called natural reserves of civil society, and thus obtain the benefits granted by law.
- A scheme is pending to be designed by CCBL ECO CAMPAIGN Initiative, that allows linking local and national companies and their environmental responsibility, in compliance with Law 2017 of 2021, and/or the creation or natural reserves of civil society.
- Replicate the experience in the municipalities of Montelibano, Córdoba and/or Cumaribo, Vichada, in 2025.

Lessons Learned

- **Community involvement enhances commitment:** Engaging local communities early in the project design and implementation stages significantly increases their sense of ownership and the sustainability of the initiative
- **Adaptation to Local conditions is essential:** Aligning project activities with the climatic calendar, local environmental conditions, and community agendas is critical for the success of planting and conservation efforts

- Coordination among stakeholders: Collaboration between demining personnel, local authorities, and community members creates synergies that enhance both the scale and impact of restoration projects
 - Strategic Planning for Broader Impact: Developing mechanisms to link private and public sectors, such as compliance with environmental laws, can amplify funding opportunities and support conservation goals
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7. Impact and Sustainability

The Project helps with the regeneration of the local ecosystem, protection of biodiversity and a water source that is key for the town and productive farms, enables a pedagogical space with the educational community and the local population, and supports a farmer in its intention to create a protected civil society area on its property. This should contribute to the resilience of communities affected by explosive ordnance contamination. Monitoring agreements were established with local actors to guarantee the maintenance of the trees.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

The project successfully achieved its stated objectives, establishing a solid foundation for replicating the model in other municipalities as a complement to land release efforts and to strengthen the climate resilience of communities affected by explosive ordnance contamination. The following recommendations are proposed, to advance from CCBL ECO CAMPAIGN Initiative:

- Design a strategy to enable business participation in complying with Law 2173 of 2021 when effectively implemented, and to serve as a source of funding.
 - Develop a strategy to motivate and support the local community in the process of creating private nature reserves.
 - Complement the awareness and training process targeted at the local community, focusing on promoting restoration and conservation through tree planting.
 - Extend the strategy to other areas within the municipality that face significant environmental degradation.
 - Increase the involvement of local authorities to diversify funding sources.
 - Improve and replicate the strategy to other municipalities such as Montelibano and/or Cumaribo, with communities affected by contamination by explosive ordnances and in community areas that face risks due to climate change and environmental degradation.
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9. Annexes

- Sowing technical sheet by site (5 in total; all in Spanish), with location, species identification, description of actions, and photographic record.