



WOMEN'S
REFUGEE
COMMISSION



Save the Children®

RAISE Project Colombia

Women's Refugee Commission and
Profamilia

July-August 2012



RAISE

Reproductive
Health Access,
Information
and Services
in Emergencies

REPORT FOR COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTORS

WHO ARE WE?

The Women's Refugee Commission is an advocacy organization based in New York, United States (U.S.). It advocates for changes in laws, policies and programs to improve the lives and protect the rights of refugee and internally displaced women, children and young people.

Profamilia Colombia brings services, products, education and information to the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalized of the Colombian population.

WHY DID WE COME TO Colombia?

We visited Colombia to learn more about Profamilia's mobile health brigades and the adolescent-led peer education network since we heard about the good work they were doing for internally displaced populations in Colombia. We wanted to find out more about the services that Profamilia has provided to adolescents and what the staff and clients think about their services. The information we collected will be part of our report on adolescent sexual and reproductive health programs around the world.

ADOLESCENT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Everyone, including adolescents, has the right to access information and services that they need to take care of their bodies. Adolescent girls and boys 10-19 years of age need special attention and sexual and reproductive health information and care that meet their needs. This includes the right to learn how to prevent sexually transmitted infections, like HIV, and access to pregnancy prevention methods, like condoms and pills, if they are not ready to have children.

WHAT DID WE DO DURING OUR VISIT?

We visited Cali and Aguablanca, two clinics located within the Coastal region of Colombia between July and August 2012. We spent time talking with staff and adolescent clients about services previously provided in this area, by Profamilia, through the mobile health brigades and adolescent-led peer education. We also had group discussions with 10 outreach workers and 9 girls.

WHAT DID WE LEARN DURING OUR VISIT?

Profamilia has worked for over 25 years to deliver comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services for all persons, and specifically adolescents in Colombia. Profamilia established itself at six health clinics located within the Coastal region most affected by conflict and displacement. Like its other clinics across Colombia, Profamilia worked to deliver youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health care, including family planning counseling and HIV/STI testing and treatment, at these clinics. Profamilia also informed crisis-affected adolescents in these areas, about their sexual and reproductive health and rights, through activities conducted at clinics, through mobile health brigades and within adolescent-led community education.

We learned from this visit that one aspect that adolescents liked most about the services provided through Profamilia was the trust and confidence they had in the providers and services. Confidentiality was of highest importance. Perhaps confidence with Profamilia's programs is the result of the way the programs are developed and implemented. Adolescents contributed to the design and implementation of the community education programs. Therefore, they remained actively involved in the program. Adolescents were encouraged to provide feedback about which educational elements are most relevant for their peers and how to adapt the information depending on the age and experience of the peer group.

Profamilia also recruited and trained clinic and mobile health brigade staff to be sensitive and attentive to the specific needs of adolescents. Based on the feedback from adolescents, this is something which was noted and appreciated.

WHAT WILL WE DO NOW?

We are writing a report about sexual and reproductive health programs for adolescents affected by conflict and disaster and the information we gathered about the RAISE Project in Colombia will be included in that report. The report will highlight best practices and challenges of these types of programs. We hope that by bringing attention to the good work done by organizations like RAISE and Profamilia, these types of programs will receive more funding and can improve the sexual and reproductive health services that they provide to adolescents all over the world.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Profamilia has six clinics located within the Coastal region of Colombia: Buenaventura, Cali (including Aguablanca), Pasto, Quibdo, Popayan and Tumaco. They are open daily from 10:00 to 19:00hrs.

To learn more about the Women's Refugee Commission's advocacy on behalf of displaced women, children and youth, visit www.womensrefugeecommission.org or contact us at info@wrcommission.org.

This report was written by Noreen Giga.



Women's Refugee Commission | 122 East 42nd Street | New York, NY 10168-1289

212.551.3115 | info@wrcommission.org | womensrefugeecommission.org Nov. 2012