



Addressing Electoral Conflict from a Comprehensive Perspective

January 2026



Duration:

Length:	29 months
Start Date:	December 2022
End Date:	May 2025

Budget:

TOTAL:	\$ 2 million
UNDP	\$999,763.60
UNFPA	\$500,118.00
UN Women	\$500,118.00

Implementing Agencies and Partners:

Implementing Agencies: UNFPA, UN Women, UNDP

National counterpart: Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE)

CONTEXT

Electoral processes in Guatemala have historically been marked by high levels of polarization, institutional distrust and recurrent episodes of electoral violence, particularly at the local level. These dynamics have undermined democratic legitimacy and limited the substantive participation of historically excluded groups, including women, youth and Indigenous Peoples, who face structural barriers and differentiated risks of political violence.

Prior to the PBF intervention, the electoral system lacked a comprehensive architecture for conflict prevention throughout the full electoral cycle. Limitations existed in inter-institutional coordination, prospective risk analysis and the integration of human rights, gender and youth approaches, reducing the State's capacity to anticipate, prevent and manage electoral conflict.

OBJECTIVES

To strengthen the capacity of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal and inter-institutional mechanisms to prevent and respond comprehensively to electoral conflict, promoting peaceful, inclusive and democratic electoral processes, with particular emphasis on the substantive participation of women and youth and on the prevention of political violence.

KEY IMPACT AND RESULTS

A PBF initiative, implemented by UNFPA, UNWOMEN, UNDP, focused on preventing electoral conflicts, which concluded in 2025, created an effective architecture for preventing and addressing violence within the electoral cycle, leading to an 82% reduction in incidents on election day in 2023 and a 60% reduction in the post-electoral period compared to the previous 2019 elections.

This was achieved by working with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal and inter-institutional security and prevention mechanisms at the national and departmental levels, and in high-risk municipalities, to create capacity for risk analysis, early warning mechanisms, and a coordinated response with security and justice institutions, as well as with national and international observation missions and the media.

This project also created the first Registry of Political Violence Against Women, a tool for centralizing and analyzing data on political violence against women, a key resource for designing preventative action for future elections.

CATALYTIC EFFECTS

Non-financial catalytic effects The project generated a significant non-financial catalytic effect by removing institutional barriers and strengthening coordination among key actors within the electoral system to address electoral violence from a democratic and human rights-based perspective.

Technical support to the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Electoral Conflict and the Inter-Institutional Mechanism for Electoral Security enabled effective articulation between both spaces and their strategic alignment with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal. This coordination overcame previous fragmentation and created the conditions for a coherent and preventive institutional response to electoral conflict, with the backing of senior public officials and the full bench of TSE magistrates.

Furthermore, engagement with youth had a catalytic effect by positioning them as legitimate actors in civic and electoral participation. As a result, the TSE formally recognized the importance of youth inclusion in democratic governance processes, laying the groundwork for their sustained participation in future electoral cycles and reform processes.

Voices from the Field

"The actions promoted enabled a more peaceful, inclusive and equitable electoral process, strengthening trust in institutions and democracy."

Officials of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, Guatemala.

"I used to think that only men could speak with the TSE. Today I felt that my voice matters. No one had ever asked me how I feel when I am removed from an electoral list or used just to fill a quota. Now I know that this is also violence, and I will no longer remain silent."

Participant in a territorial dialogue, Quiché.

"This project was key to empowering young people because we were providing information on social media and creating a safe space for them to participate in electoral observation missions. We promoted a process with more peace. Let's remember this because, as youth, we are transforming Guatemala and strengthening democracy."

Kimberly Barrios, Vice President of Young Artists for Social Justice –JAXJS–, Guatemala.

