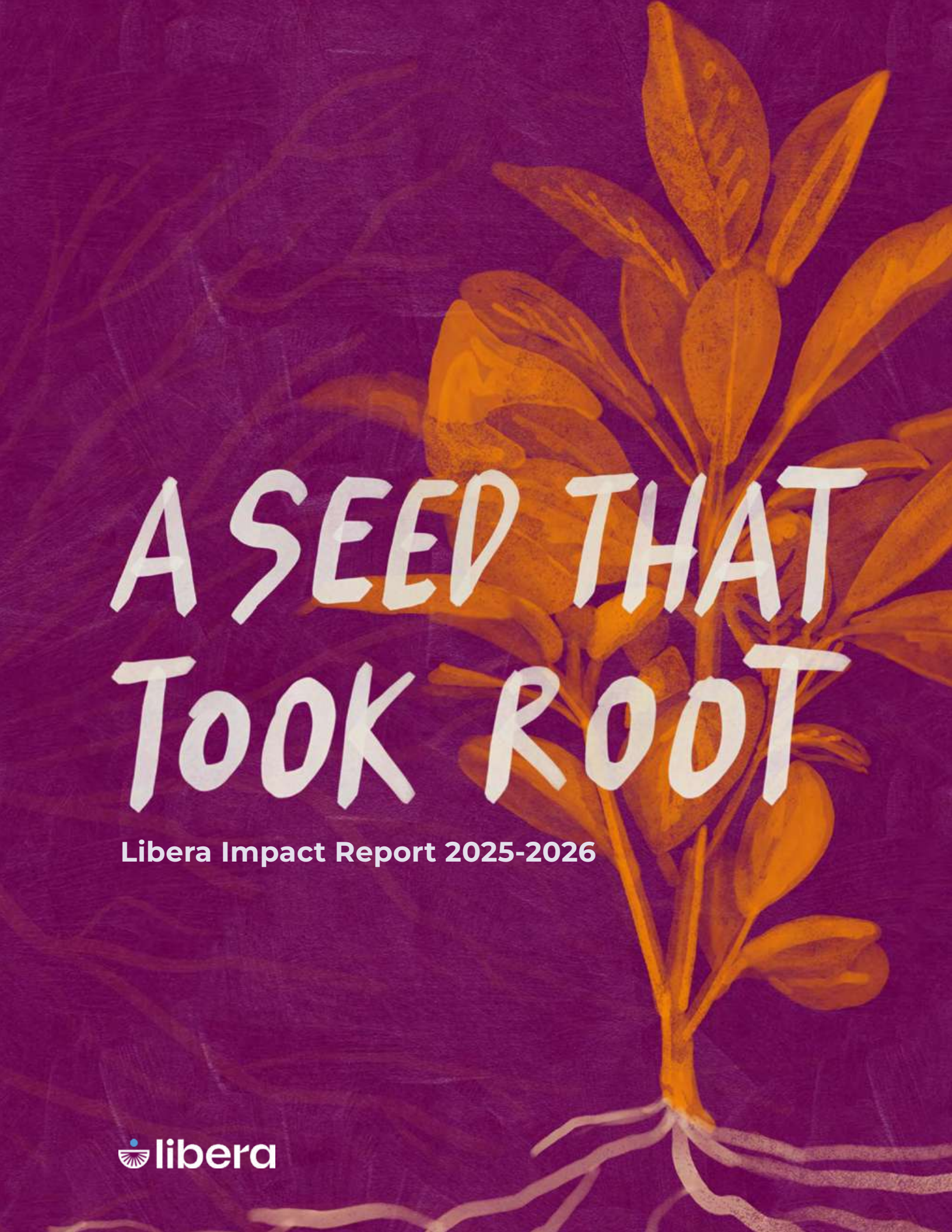


Libera Impact Report 2025-2026

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A SEED THAT TOOK ROOT

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A Letter from our Founder and Executive Director

There are moments in our lives that define us. One that I often share when people ask how I started working for reproductive justice is the following:

My great-aunt, a *Griô*[1], a free spirit, loving and caring woman, is the reason why I love to hear personal stories from around the world related to our work. She once visited us at my mother's house and told us how impressed she was with the new doctor at the community clinic. "I told him my stomach hurt, and he touched it. It was the first time a doctor touched and examined me". She was 62.

She was talking about a new doctor from Cuba, part of the program *More Doctors*, a partnership between PAHO and the Brazilian and Cuban governments to bring doctors to "unwanted" areas of the country, places where Brazilian doctors did not want to serve or live. As I listened to her, I felt as though I had been punched in my stomach: the **first time** she had ever received a proper medical examination.

As a Brazilian who grew up in a favela of São Paulo, my neighbors often spoke about **dignity**, especially in conversations about police violence and economic justice. At the same time, Brazilians wish one another good health on every celebratory occasion. We grow up hearing: "We wish you health, because if you have health, you can do anything." I connected the ideas of dignity and health for the first time that day listening to my great-aunt..

Libera was born from this profound belief: health is the foundation of a truly dignified life. Health means more than healthcare or the absence of disease: it means having the material, social, economic, and political conditions needed to make free choices in safe and just collective environments.

At Libera, we focus on abortion decriminalization because criminalization is a mechanism of state violence and control, one that operates in deeply classist and racist ways. Restricting abortion denies the fundamental truth that people, not governments or institutions, are the ethical agents entitled to make decisions about their own lives.

As we mark Libera's first year working in the intersections of health, justice, and democracy and reflect on our extraordinary accomplishments while navigating political instability, funding crises, and personal losses, I want to express my deepest gratitude to our staff for trusting in my leadership and for going the extra mile to build a new organization; our partners, for daring to believe reproductive dignity is the pathway; and our communities, the source of my courage, my inspiration, and my political imagination.

As Ochy Curiel reminds us, **"Decolonization is understanding all of this and acting on it to transform it."**

As we enter our second year, this is our commitment: to understand, to act, and to transform.

Together.



Ana Barreto, Founder and Executive Director



1. In Brazil, a Griô (the Brazilianized spelling of the West African word griot) refers to a guardian of oral history, traditional knowledge, and Afro-Brazilian culture.



MAINLAND

It all began with planting an intention: the intention to exist. And when we moved from that intention to the actual planting of a seed, we began to grow—like plants—in two directions. For months we obeyed the force of gravity and put down roots downwards—weaving together ideas, efforts, pillars, values, charting the course to follow, and forging our way through resistance and opportunities. And finally, when we overcame the barrier of the earth and began to grow upwards—seeking the light—we blossomed. Patiently, we grew and bore fruit.

We are the story of a seed that took root because it knew how to stand on solid ground. We are **Libera.**

Libera means *free.*

Free of coercion. *Free* of control. *Free* of punishment.

But for millions of women, girls, and people with the capacity to get pregnant around the world, that freedom remains out of reach. In too many places, decisions about their reproductive pathway, their overall health, and their future continue to be determined by laws, institutions, and narratives that restrict autonomy, criminalize choices, and create fertile ground for authoritarianism that limits access to rights and deepens historical inequalities.

In a context of democratic backsliding, growing authoritarianism, hyper-vigilance of organized civil society, and coordinated attacks against the right of all people to live with dignity and enjoy their rights and their sexual and reproductive health, Libera strengthens the broad ecosystem of civil society in the Americas and West Africa to bolster the infrastructure that sustains reproductive health and democracy over time.

We were born for this.

We are a feminist organization founded in 2025 with a new vision, governance, and political identity that finds its inspiration in Pan-African feminist theory, the ancestral indigenous knowledge of *Buen Vivir*, as well as the knowledge and practices of the communities we serve. We build upon the legacy of 53 years of Planned Parenthood Global - the international arm of Planned Parenthood Federation of America - to advance our own proposal, centered on a new concept: **reproductive dignity.**

We are driven by the need to eliminate the criminalization of abortion, a form of State control that uses punishment and fear to limit freedom and disproportionately affects those who face greater inequalities.

Our work stems from a decolonial perspective that recognizes that current inequalities are the result of historical systems of oppression that continue to disproportionately affect women, girls, and racialized communities. We believe that those who experience the consequences of abortion criminalization possess the knowledge, experience, and leadership necessary to transform it.

We work from the Global South and alongside the Global South, our source of knowledge, leadership, imagination, and political action to transform systems of criminalization into systems of care, justice, and reproductive dignity.

Our Vision

Libera envisions a world where every person has complete freedom to shape their life and future, free from violence and coercion.

In this world, the communities most affected by injustices shape the systems that govern their realities, thereby affirming their rights and dignity.

Reproductive dignity as a starting point

At the core of every seed lies a tiny plant-in-the-making, waiting to awaken and grow when the soil and the environment provide the right conditions. At the heart of Libera's seed lay a concept that took shape and gained momentum during this inaugural year: **Reproductive Dignity.**

At the heart of who we are and what we do, this holistic approach to human well-being recognizes that autonomy over one's body does not depend solely on access to health services. Freedom and autonomy also require the social, economic, and political conditions that enable them.

Reproductive dignity affirms that all these conditions are connected. There can be no reproductive freedom where violence, war, genocide, racism, or systems that punish and exploit instead of protect, exist. That is why we connect health, justice, land, politics and collective imaginaries as inseparable dimensions of a dignified life.

This framework was developed in collaboration with over 100 leaders from Africa and Latin America through dialogue, partnership, and shared learning. It emerged from the territories where struggles for justice and dignity take place and continues to evolve alongside them.

Inspired by self-determination and ancestral knowledge such as *Buen Vivir*, reproductive dignity understands that individual well-being is deeply linked to collective well-being, and that the relationships between the body, territory, and community are inseparable.

"From the beginning, Libera autonomously and independently established the framework of reproductive dignity as a guide for our work, and that has given us clarity. It is our conceptual and strategic compass."
–Reina Uzcátegui, Regional Leader for Latin America, Libera

"Libera has a profoundly collective vision. For a long time, the right to choose has been discussed as an individual right. The reproductive dignity approach also highlights that dignity is not experienced in abstract or individually, but rather by connecting different dimensions and collectively"
–Marianny Sánchez, Director of Communications and Narrative Change, Libera

Trust as a foundation

Libera was born from the conviction that the most profound transformations cannot be imposed from the outside. They require relationships based on trust, belonging, collective learning, and recognition of the leadership that already exists within communities.

We support organizations that have spent decades defending the rights of women and girls on the ground, challenging state control and the structural inequalities that prevent people from living with dignity. Our role is to work beside them, connect them across borders, and create the conditions for their impact to reach further.

Trust begins by recognizing the autonomy of our staff and the organizations with which we work:

> "Libera breaks down vertical structures and seeks governance based on the autonomy of those who work here and the autonomy of the organizations supported in the territories. This is intentional."
> **–Reina Uzcátegui, Regional Leader for Latin America, Libera**

This translates into supporting the priorities defined by the organizations themselves, rather than imposing our own:

> "At Libera we demonstrate that we don't have a hidden agenda. What we want to do is simply support them (the partner organizations). These are their objectives, and the common interest is that all women have the right to sexual and reproductive health."
> **–Amy Sakho, Director of Legal Defense and Dignity for Africa, Libera**

Trust is also reflected in the flexibility of the funds we leverage for our partner organizations:

> "Libera's added value also lies in its funding flexibility. This type of funding allows organizations to be sustainable because it covers many line items in their operations that other donors do not allow (...) Partners value Libera's funding flexibility and ongoing technical partnership. Our learning and reporting model is also much appreciated."
> **–Fatou Mboup, Operations Specialist, Libera.**

In this report, we share how that conviction gained momentum during Libera's first year.





WE PLANT SEEDS:

HOW WE MAKE CHANGE POSSIBLE

Our first year

Libera's first year was, above all, a year of taking root. After a process of strategic reflection, the programs formerly supported under Planned Parenthood Global separated into this new venture, which required infrastructure and a renewed vision for the future. Much of the work happened beneath the surface, building on that less visible, damp, and dense side, like fertile soil, where roots take hold. It was the year of building the pillars of the organization.

While we were building networks, resuming collaborative work with partner organizations and movements, redefining our place within the ecosystem of human rights organizations in Latin America and West Africa, we were also building the foundations of who we are. We collectively defined our mission, vision, values, theory of change, strategic plan, learning framework, and partnerships.

This process made it possible to translate a shared conviction into a concrete way of working.

Our mission reflects this commitment

Libera's mission is to build collective power and strategies that move communities from reproductive criminalization to reproductive dignity



Our work is built from the ground up

During this first year, we nurtured and strengthened alliances with **20 organizations** in Guatemala, Ecuador, Peru, and Brazil, in Latin America, and in Senegal, Benin, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast, in West Africa. Our role as a strategic ally combines flexible funding, knowledge exchange, and ongoing support. Decisions are built together and evolve through dialogue, learning, and continuous adaptation.

Long-term, trust-based partnerships are the foundation from which change occurs. We work together with organizations that lead the processes locally, contributing deep knowledge of the context, legitimacy, and relationships built with their communities.

"It's about providing financial resources, knowledge exchange, time, and openness to learning from each other with our partners and collectively creating according to different scenarios. we work together from beginning to end."
–Marianny Sánchez, Director of Communications and Narrative Change, Libera.

"Libera ensures support throughout the project. This collaborative approach has strengthened trust between the partners."
–Amy Sakho, Director of Legal Defense and Dignity for Africa, Libera.

"We are not outside watching how the ecosystem works; we are part of it."
–Linda Valencia, Director of Programs for Latin America, Libera.

South-South exchanges connect these learnings between territories and regions, opening new possibilities for adaptation and innovation.

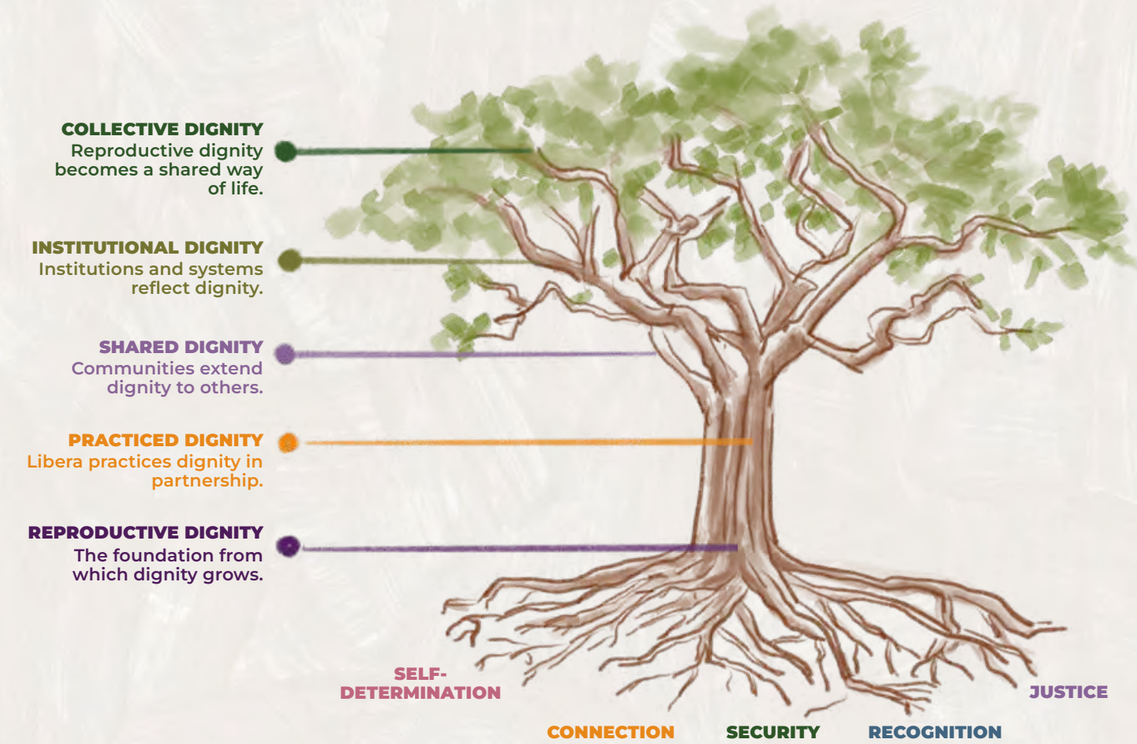
To transcend from the individual to the systemic: Our theory of dignity

It can take anywhere from one month to five years for plants to grow and bear fruit. Nature reminds us that change takes time, and that major changes are achieved one small step at a time.

That is also why we believe that lasting change begins with how we build it.

Our theory of dignity synthesizes the change we want to see in the world and is based on a shared conviction: Dignity grows when people experience it, extend it to others, and together reshape the conditions that allow it to flourish.

We understand reproductive dignity as having five deeply interconnected dimensions. **Self-determination** that allows people to make decisions about their bodies, their lives, and their futures. **Respect** that recognizes and values their knowledge, identities, experiences, and decisions. **Connection** which fosters the relationships of trust and care necessary to strengthen autonomy and well-being. **Security** that allows for decisions to be made free from coercion, violence, discrimination, and punishment. **Justice** that requires equitable and accountable systems and institutions that protect the dignity of all people.



How do we put that vision into practice?

These dimensions cut across our four areas of work and take shape in approaches that reinforce each other.

- **Services that dignify:** Strengthening networks of leaders, companions, professionals, and community organizations that accompany people on safe pathways to reproductive care and support.

- **Justice that heals:** Promoting restorative legal representation and advocacy that puts survivors at the center, documents injustices, and uses the lessons learned from each process to contribute to broader transformations in justice systems.

- **Policies that transform:** Articulating transformative impact and strengthening the structure of civil society, together with feminist movements and allied organizations, to expand the capacity of communities to confront systems, laws, and policies that restrict their rights and dignity.

- **Narratives that liberate:** Driving narratives that recognize and humanize lived experience, Indigenous and ancestral knowledge, and the experience of communities, along with legal and scientific evidence, to challenge hegemonic discourses and promote changes in social norms.

Our program areas aim to help communities build power, expand care and support networks, transform attitudes, and strengthen their capacity to defend reproductive dignity and demand accountability.

At a systemic level, this collective power contributes to questioning and reducing inequalities, and strengthening protections for freedom, decriminalizing reproductive decisions, and ensuring that policies, institutions and narratives increasingly reflect the priorities and solutions of communities.

The following pages show how these strategies came to life during our first year, along with the organizations and people who made them possible.



SERVICES THAT DIGNIFY

16.305

People received services, referrals, or information about safe abortion in Latin America.





97%

Effectiveness of the community-based medication abortion protocol. A model that integrates community support, cultural relevance, ancestral knowledge, and clinical care.

500

Comprehensive care kits distributed in Guatemala



During this first year, **Services that Dignify** strengthened community ecosystems capable of providing comprehensive, culturally relevant, and stigma-free care.

Instead of being limited to a clinical intervention, the model integrates knowledge from traditional medicine and conventional medicine to offer continuous care focused on the needs of each woman.

> “We are not imposing a health system, but rather uniting two health systems: the ancestral system and the conventional one. The solutions do not come only from us, but also from the voices of community healthcare providers.”
>
> **–Linda Valencia, Director of Programs for Latin America, Libera**

A midwife accompanies the process with knowledge passed down through generations, as well as updated clinical protocols, recognizing warning signs, and coordinating with hospitals when necessary.

The support does not end with the initial care provided.

It includes home visits, accompaniment, guidance on nutrition, aftercare, traditional practices such as herbal baths or temazcal, and daily support that allows for physical, emotional, and spiritual recovery.

Health is no longer understood solely as the absence of disease, but is conceived as an integral process of well-being, where the body, the community, culture and autonomy are all part of the same care.

This approach has a direct and measurable consequence. The community-based protocol for medication abortion support has a 97% effectiveness rate. This means that women can complete their process safely within their own community, without needing to go to an external health service that could report them to authorities.

An ecosystem built from the communities. Asociación de Comadronas Tradicionales Huehuetecas LUNA (Huehueteca Traditional Midwives Association LUNA), Guatemala

This model emerged from partners in Guatemala, and our support helped it to consolidate.

This year, we supported the strengthening of a consortium of six community organizations that, with a presence in nine departments of the country —Huehuetenango, Quiché, Sololá, Retalhuleu, San Marcos, Jalapa, Izabal, Petén and Guatemala City— reactivated 50 service points.

> “We are in priority communities where women do not have access to health services. We are in the most remote part of this country.”
>
> **–Luisa Morales, Director of LUNA**

In many rural and indigenous communities, the challenge of physical distance to a hospital is compounded by language barriers, discrimination, stigma, and a lack of trust in a health system that in many cases criminalizes rather than cares.

Instead of strengthening only isolated services, we began to build a **community ecosystem** of care that brings together six territory-based organizations, midwives, health promoters, medical staff, allied hospitals, accompanying organizations, and public system actors so that women can access comprehensive, culturally relevant care based on reproductive dignity.

The participating organizations stopped working in isolation. The consortium allowed them to share knowledge, strengthen capacities, coordinate resources among organizations, and build a much more comprehensive response for women living in rural and indigenous communities where the State’s presence is insufficient or nonexistent.

> “We couldn’t address sexual and reproductive health in isolation, but rather in a holistic way.”
>
> **–Luisa Morales, Director of LUNA**

We support this process by providing flexible funding, technical strengthening, protocol updates, and permanent spaces for joint learning.

The result is a community-based model capable of offering safe care even in contexts where criminalization continues to represent a daily risk for women and health providers.

Knowledge that travels between communities

The learning built in Guatemala began to be shared with other countries.

During this period, organizations in Peru began an exchange with Guatemalan organizations to adapt the model to new contexts. In July, representatives from the Federación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas, Artesanas, Indígenas, Nativas y Asalariadas del Perú (Fenmucarinap) visited communities, spoke with midwives, and learned firsthand how this care ecosystem works.

They traveled to understand which principles could be adapted to their own territories and to develop their own response. This exchange of knowledge between communities reflects one of our core commitments.

In the words of Linda Valencia, Libera’s Director of Programs for Latin America: “This approach also recognizes something fundamental for Libera: reproductive dignity implies valuing different knowledge and takes into account culturally appropriate practices.”

JUSTICE THAT HEALS

1 State of the art document developed on Reproductive Dignity of Women in Homelessness, for evidence-based decision making.



25 Women accompanied in their legal defense against criminalization in Guatemala



1 Adaptive methodology designed for legal defense pilot in Peru, where 2 women received legal support.

4 Associations of women lawyers strengthened in West Africa.

75 Lawyers strengthened their capabilities in strategic litigation in Senegal, Benin, Burkina Faso, and Ivory Coast.

We understand that justice begins long before a sentence or a court decision. It begins when a person understands their rights and has real power to make informed decisions about their own body and life. During this first year, that conviction guided how we worked and understood the criminalization of abortion and the denial of reproductive dignity to people in situations of exclusion..

These violations are not isolated failures of the justice system. They are part of an institutional infrastructure that interconnects laws, norms, and practices and reproduces patterns of exclusion and control that disproportionately affect impoverished people, migrants, racialized people, people with disabilities, or people experiencing homelessness.

From a perspective of reproductive dignity, restorative justice, and survivor-centered care, we work alongside allied organizations to support legal processes, strengthen capacities, and produce evidence that contributes to transforming these structures.

"Survivors have rights, and those rights should be respected. At Libera, we believe in processes that dignify people and are healing processes."

–Patricia Vargas, Director of Dignity and Legal Defense for Latin America, Libera.

In practice, this means humanizing legal defense and democratizing the law through a person-centered approach. We strive to ensure that clients are heard, understand each stage of the process, and can make informed decisions. This support aims to help them regain trust, rebuild autonomy, and create conditions for resilience, the development of life plans, and comprehensive reparations.

LATIN AMERICA

The legal defense ecosystem based on Reproductive Dignity is a model replicable in the region

This year, we provided legal accompaniment to 25 women criminalized for abortion, together with organizations on the ground in Guatemala, and we expanded our legal defense ecosystem to Peru, where we launched a pilot program providing legal support to two women. In each case, we sought to acknowledge the human dimension of navigating a legal process marked by fear, imposed shame, and a lack of trust in institutions.

The knowledge gained strengthened the exchange between organizations that are part of the legal ecosystem of both countries and laid the foundations for continuing to build a regional approach to justice focused on reproductive dignity and adaptable to the needs of each context.

Reproductive dignity where there was none before. Organización para el Desarrollo Integral y Sostenible de Oriente y Guatemala ODISOG (Organization for Integral and Sustainable Development of the East), Guatemala.

The criminalization of poverty is one of the main barriers to guaranteeing reproductive dignity.

This year allowed us to expand on a fundamental question: **What happens to the reproductive dignity of people whose rights are not even visible to justice systems?**

That question gave rise to our alliance with the Organization for Integral and Sustainable Development of the East (ODISOG), in Guatemala.

Together we embarked on a participatory process to understand how women experiencing homelessness navigate their reproductive dignity, a reality practically absent from both available evidence and public policies. In the words of Patricia Vargas, Director of Dignity and Legal Defense for Latin America at Libera: “You cannot fight for a right if you don’t know (you have it) or if the lawyer remains the only one with access to guarantee that right”.

Hundreds of women experiencing homelessness live in the urban area of Guatemala City. For many, sexual violence was one of the reasons for fleeing their homes and continues to be part of their daily lives, even as the price of a place to sleep or basic protection.

> “They ceased to be women. Nobody believes that a woman in these contexts has the same biological needs, the same health needs as any other woman.”
>
> **–Ricardo Hernández, Director of ODISOG**

Through in-depth interviews and a shared methodological approach, we began to document stories marked by sexual violence, pregnancies and motherhood at risk, exclusion, and lack of access to health services.

The stories reveal that the lack of rights begins long before a person reaches the streets; it begins with the multiple forms of violence they experience from childhood:

> “I got my period when I was thirteen, and no one had ever explained what menstruation was to me beforehand; I learned on my own. They told me something like it was ‘a period,’ something that happens when you develop, but a girl needs it explained carefully, not half-heartedly. I learned as best I could, by watching, feeling, and enduring shame. On the streets and in poverty, even your own body becomes something you have to deal with without help.”
>
> **–Documented story, woman experiencing homelessness, Guatemala.**

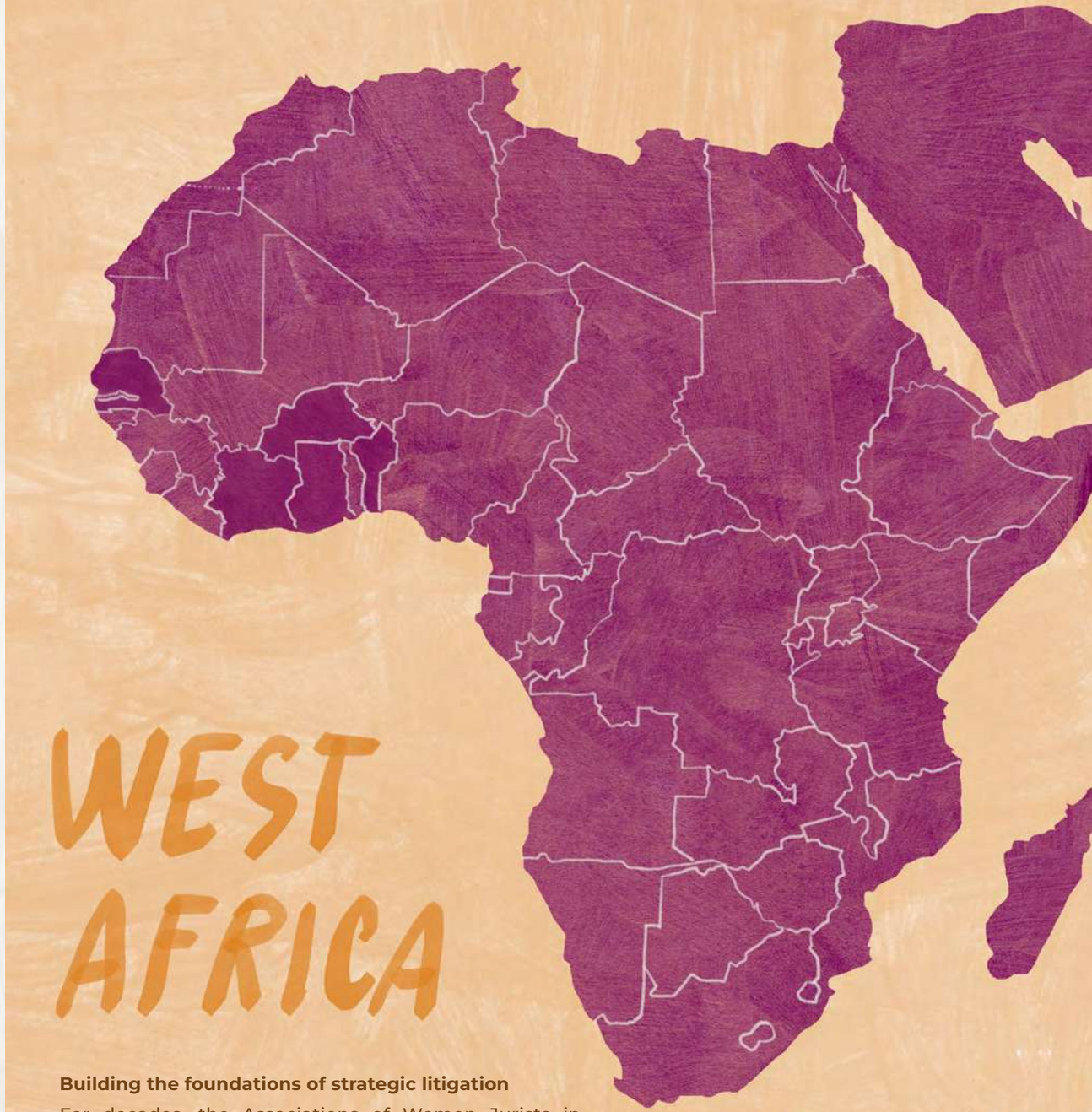
> “When I’m menstruating, I clean myself, because nobody needs to know what’s happening to me. I use a rag, and I change it every two or three hours. You take care of your dignity as best you can, even though the world doesn’t always give you water, soap, privacy, or respect.”
>
> **–Documented story, woman experiencing homelessness, Guatemala**

The collaborative work gave rise to the **First state of the art on Reproductive Dignity of Women experiencing homelessness in Guatemala.**

The document offers a new tool to make these experiences visible to public institutions, civil society and other key actors, to generate and guide future strategies and to expand the limits from which we think about reproductive justice and dignity.

For ODISOG, the process also provided new tools to deepen the work that the organization had already been doing for years with these communities.

> "We learned a language that allows us to make these realities visible in a more solid way, with greater support. Methodological and technical, without losing the closeness with the people (...) Listening to their experiences allowed us to understand that reproductive dignity is deeply linked to access to health, autonomy and recognition as subjects of rights."
>
> **–Ricardo Hernández, Director of ODISOG.**



Building the foundations of strategic litigation

For decades, the Associations of Women Jurists in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, and Senegal have defended women's rights using the tools available within their national judicial systems. But often, those systems reached their limits. When national avenues were exhausted, survivors were still left without redress.

It was from this reality that we began to strengthen a regional process to bolster strategic litigation as a new tool for accessing justice in different contexts.

Although the participating organizations had decades of experience defending women's rights, most had never brought cases before regional or international courts.

"We used to be afraid of engaging in strategic litigation. Now everyone's talking about it. For many organizations, it's been a revelation: we didn't know we could do it."

–Amy Sakho, Director of Legal Defense and Dignity for West Africa, Africa, Libera

The first step was to strengthen capacities. This year, 75 lawyers from four countries participated in training processes on strategic litigation and began to build a regional community that today shares experiences, strategies, and lessons learned beyond the initial project.

The network we helped build is beginning to flower. Along with ODAS, we are creating a community of practice around strategic litigation for all of Francophone Africa.

We also created a flexible legal aid fund managed by our partner organizations. In many cases, the main obstacle to accessing justice was financial. Survivors withdrew their claims because they could not cover expenses such as transportation to the doctor, obtaining medical certificates, or other basic costs that the system never addresses. The flexible legal aid fund covers precisely those invisible, but vital, expenses to guarantee access to justice and sustain the cases.

As part of the strategic litigation process in the region, a case is already before the Court of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), while others are progressing through the appeals and preparation stages for their submission.

The first precedent in Francophone Africa. Association des Juristes Sénégalaises AJS (Association of Jurists of Senegal), Senegal

The Association of Jurists of Senegal has existed for over 50 years and has spent decades defending women's rights in the country's courts. This year, it took an unprecedented step in its history by appealing for the first time to the Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in a case related to sexual and reproductive rights.

"Our organization has existed for over 50 years and we had solid experience in defending women's rights, but we didn't have specific action in the field of strategic litigation. Thanks to the support of this project, we were able to familiarize ourselves with this approach."

–Oulimata Sène, Strategic litigation project coordinator, Association of Jurists of Senegal

This precedent is the first of its kind in all of Francophone Africa and lays the groundwork for organizations in Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, and Benin to follow the same path.

For the AJS, the process also transformed its way of working. In a joint training session in Ivory Coast, legal associations from four countries sat down together to define what reproductive dignity means in their own societies: which concepts work, which do not, and how to discuss these issues from their own cultural frameworks.



> "Unlike other partners, Libera has not limited itself to the role of a simple donor. The organization ensured support throughout the project, allowed us to participate in activities, and gave us technical support when needed. This collaborative approach has strengthened trust between the partners."
>
> **–Oulimata Sène, Strategic litigation project coordinator, Association of Jurists of Senegal**

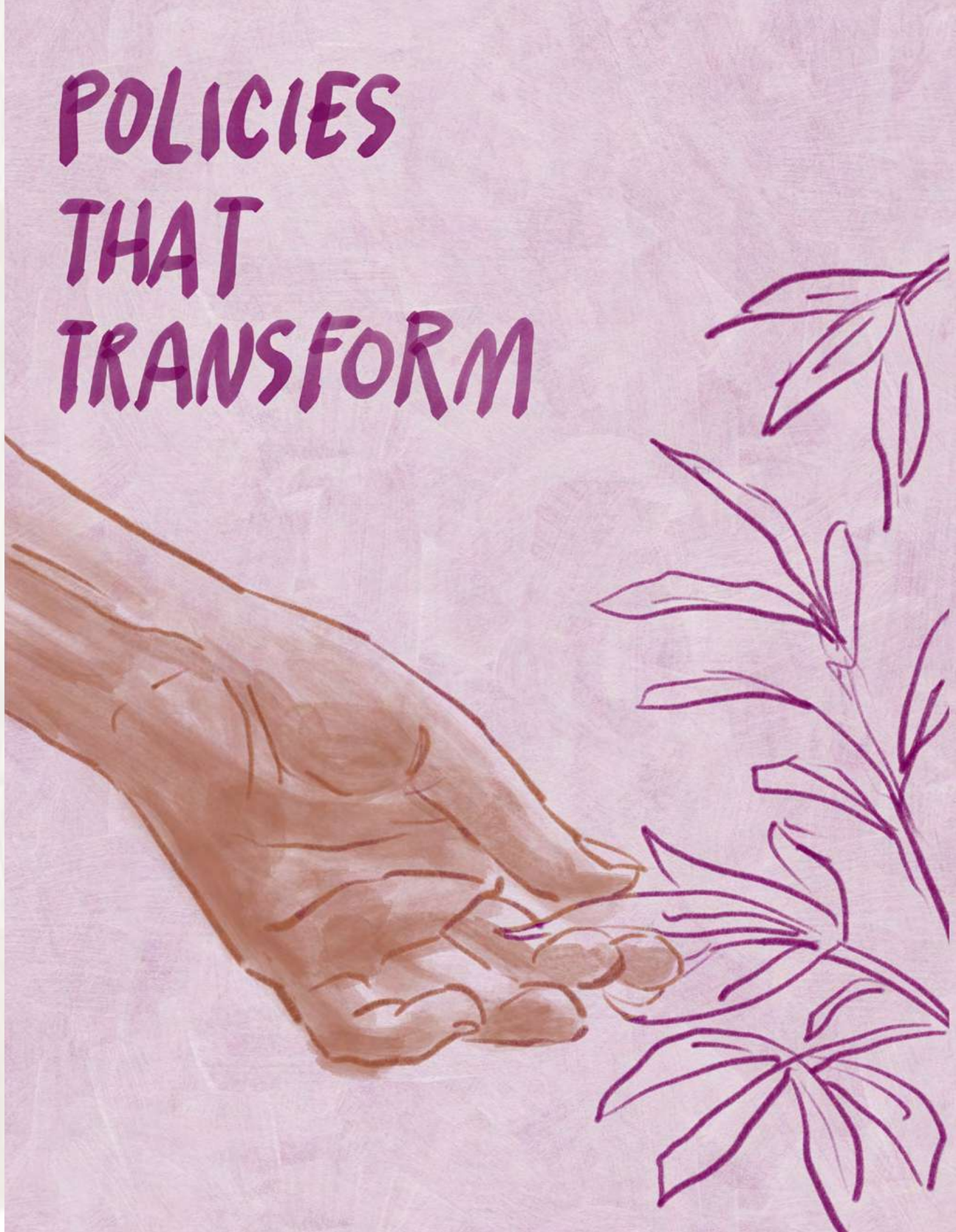
When national law closes all doors. Association des femmes juristes de Côte d'Ivoire AJF-CI, (Association of Women Jurists), Ivory Coast.

For years, the Association of Women Jurists of Côte d'Ivoire has supported women survivors in their pursuit of justice. Faced with persistent barriers at the national level, the organization began exploring regional justice mechanisms for the first time as a way to advance toward the recognition of state responsibility and comprehensive reparations, and decided to prepare, for the first time in its history, a case before the ECOWAS Court of Justice.

> "We recognize that we cannot solve this problem at the national level and that we are obliged to take the cases to international jurisdictions."
>
> **–Agathe Blanc, Strategic litigation project coordinator, Association of Women Jurists (AFJ-CI)**

The process also made it possible to form a multi-sectoral technical group, establish legal assistance mechanisms for survivors, and incorporate dialogue with public institutions as part of a broader advocacy strategy.

> "By working with strategic litigation, we take a step forward. We go beyond simply imposing sanctions. Now we are confronting the State, a State that must recognize that women's reproductive dignity has been violated and that it is necessary to restore it."
>
> **–Agathe Blanc, Strategic litigation project coordinator, Association of Women Jurists Ivory Coast (AFJ-CI)**





14 **Organizations joined the Democracy and Reproductive Dignity coalition to strengthen advocacy before the Inter-American Court.**

2 **Contributions submitted to international human rights systems.**



2 **National advocacy processes supported in Guatemala and Ecuador.**

2 **Regional investigations carried out**

We seek to strengthen an ongoing process in which evidence, partnerships, dialogue, and strategies strengthen each other. That is the approach that guided the work of Policies that Transform during Libera's first year.

The evidence we build at Libera comes from survivors, their testimonies, their life processes.

This year, we co-organized a week-long workshop with survivors of forced motherhood and internationally renowned writers to, alongside qualitative evidence, build literary narratives that can speak to new audiences about the long-term impacts of sexual violence and forced motherhood on girls, advance public understanding, and humanize justice.

"Normally, evidence is built with academia. We want to generate processes where the collection of information, taking care of the research paths, is with the people. We are building evidence with the communities."

–Paulina Ponce, Director of Advocacy for Latin America, Libera

In Guatemala, we supported the development of a proposed law on humane care during childbirth and abortion, built together with midwives, birth attendants, and health professionals.

In Ecuador, we support a process aimed at incorporating obstetric violence as a legal category that has an administrative responsibility and has a roadmap to influence various government spaces.

At the same time, we helped take the lessons learned from the comprehensive strategy "They are Girls, Not Mothers" to international spaces through contributions to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, and supported organizations on the ground to follow up with national authorities on the implementation of international rulings.

Democracy and reproductive dignity. Observatorio de Derechos y Justicia ODJ (Observatory of Rights and Justice), Ecuador.

"Democracy is a precondition for other rights. In democratically weakened governments with authoritarian tendencies, sexual and reproductive rights are among the first to be affected and attacked."

–Paula Cantos, Director of ODJ

In Latin America, authoritarian regimes are growing stronger, democratic spaces are shrinking, and anti-rights actors are advancing with coordinated agendas to reverse decades of progress in the rights of women, girls, and people with the capacity to gestate. This translates into laws that criminalize, policies that exclude, and institutions that persecute rather than protect.

Together with the Observatory of Rights and Justice (ODJ) of Ecuador, we presented a contribution that incorporated the concept of reproductive dignity into regional discourse for the first time and showed how democratic deterioration has concrete consequences on the lives and rights of women, girls, and people capable of pregnancy.

In total, we analyzed approximately 190 submissions to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, identifying arguments, actors, and potential alliances. This systematization allowed us to understand the regional landscape of the debate, recognize organizations with shared concerns, and open new conversations beyond the consultative process.

In parallel withInter-American Court of Human Rights public hearings in Brasilia, we convened a meeting between organizations from various sectors and countries in the region working on democracy, racial justice, judicial independence, technology, environmental rights, and sexual and reproductive rights. What brought them together was not a single agenda, but a shared concern about the democratic backsliding in the region and its effects on human rights, as well as the possibility of forging bonds to collectively defend democracy.

> “We felt that this wasn’t going to be resolved with just one audience. We needed to stay connected, share information, and build collective responses.”
> **–Paula Cantos, Director of ODJ**

That meeting marked the beginning of a new regional coalition.

What was initially conceived as a space for exchange has transformed into a network that now brings together organizations from different countries to share information, coordinate advocacy efforts, and respond collectively to the challenges facing democratic systems in Latin America.

The coalition continues to meet monthly and has already promoted joint actions before the Inter-American System and the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS).

NARRATIVES THAT LIBERATE



350.000+

Views of educational content on sexual violence, forced motherhood, and life projects



32 **Latin American media outlets disseminated content from the “They Are Girls, Not Mothers” campaign.**



12 **Content creators added their voices to the “They are Girls, Not Mothers” campaign.**

3 **West African media highlighted regional work on strategic litigation and reproductive dignity.**

In its first year, **Narratives that liberate** adopted an approach that understands communication as a strategic tool to influence and change policies and social and cultural norms.

“A legal victory on paper is important, but it still represents an initial stage. For it to truly be a victory, it would have to positively impact the lives of the survivors and other girls in these countries.”

–Marianny Sánchez, Director of Communications and Narrative Change, Libera

Latin America

In Latin America, Narratives that Liberate took shape in a new stage of the the “They Are Girls, Not Mothers” campaign, a regional initiative built over more than a decade to make visible forced motherhood as a consequence of sexual violence and barriers systemic that girls face in accessing justice and decent health in the region.

From its inception, Son Niñas, No Madres (They Are Girls, Not Mothers) was built as a collective effort. Since the time of Planned Parenthood Global, as one of the campaign’s founding organizations, we have supported the coalition’s organizations through comprehensive work that integrated evidence, communication, advocacy, and strategic litigation. With the creation of Libera, this support continued into a new phase, focused on promoting the implementation of international decisions reached between 2023 and 2025 and transforming those victories into concrete changes for girls.

The story of Fatima shows the path traveled and, at the same time, why the work continues.

The story of Fatima shows the path traveled and, at the same time, why the work continues.

When a story becomes a movement. Mujeres Transformando el Mundo, MTM (Women Transforming the World), Guatemala

For more than fifteen years, Fatima waited for justice.

After surviving sexual violence as a child, she reported what happened and sought answers from the Guatemalan justice system. However, the evidence was hidden, institutions failed her and the process was marked by years of waiting.

Throughout this journey, Mujeres Transformando El Mundo (MTM) -Women Changing the World- accompanied Fatima through the legal process and provided her with psychosocial and social support. As she learned about her rights and explored the possibility of taking her case to the international arena, Fatima actively participated in decisions about the process and how she wanted to share her story.

“She was a very active part; to this day she has been very much in control of her story, she has been involved in the decisions that have been made.”

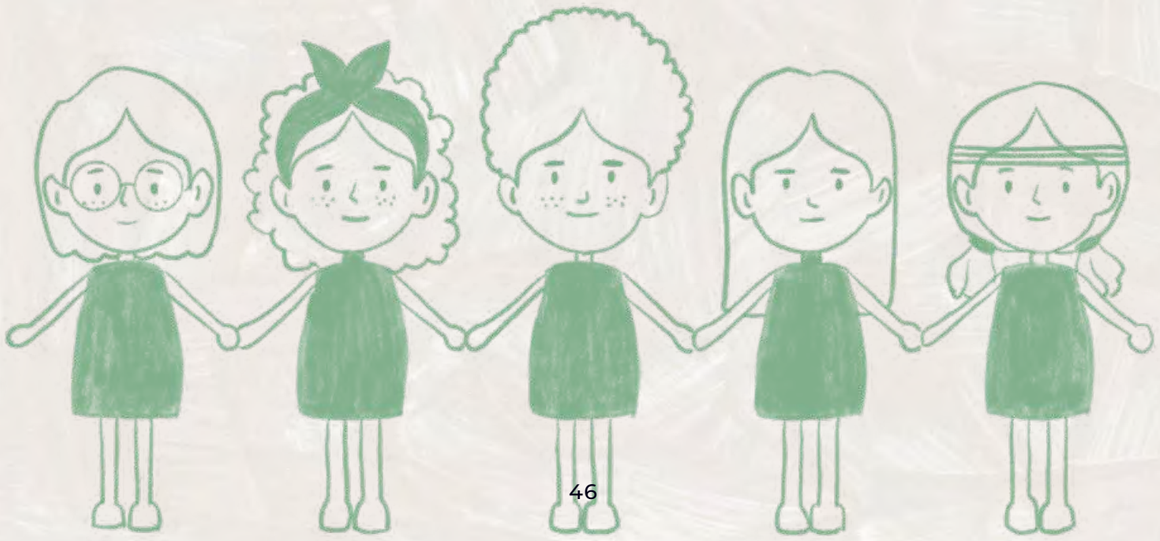
–Marcia Zavala, Communication Coordinator, MTM.

Taking this case to the international level involved building new skills. MTM found in the collective work and support of Libera's knowledge that complemented their experience in the Guatemalan context.

> "It was truly a great support, because at MTM we didn't have the experience of handling a case at an international level. It was crucial for the preparation and also for the support given to Fatima during the process."
>
> **–Marcia Zavala, Communication Coordinator, MTM.**

This support aims to ensure that communication priorities originate from within the organizations themselves. In Guatemala, MTM identified the key issues to promote and, from there, worked with Libera on strategies and materials to bring them into the public conversation.

> "At Mujeres Transformando El Mundo, we identified a specific topic we wanted to promote, we discussed it with our colleagues at Libera [...] and they supported us both in strengthening the content and in the technical aspects."
>
> **–Marcia Zavala, Communication Coordinator, MTM.**



Fatima's case reached the international level as the "They Are Girls Not Mothers" campaign added voices from non-traditional actors to the campaign, elevated her story as representative of a regional problem in both independent and traditional media, and offered tools for citizens to join in transforming the scenario of vulnerability to which girls are exposed in the region.

In 2025, the United Nations Human Rights Committee recognized the responsibility of the State of Guatemala and ordered comprehensive reparation measures and guarantees of non-repetition.

> "When that resolution came out and I could tell Fatima, 'We did it,' it was a moment of great satisfaction and emotion, even though we knew it was the beginning of another kind of challenge."
>
> **–Marcia Zavala, Communication Coordinator, MTM.**

Leveraging a Victory

The decision marked a victory and opened a new chapter. The challenge is to ensure that reparations and guarantees of non-repetition translate into concrete changes capable of protecting other girls. And that cannot be achieved simply by obtaining a UN condemnation.

Libera's current work with MTM also includes dialogue with the institutions responsible for implementing the sentences, to strengthen health care protocols and comprehensive sexuality education, promote prevention actions and improve the response of justice operators to sexual violence against girls and young people.

On the first anniversary of the decision, we worked with MTM on content and infographics to communicate its scope and keep the issue present beyond the legal victory, preparing the ground and positioning the topic.

> "I see a lot of people who really connect with it, especially with the campaign and the slogan 'Girls Not Mothers' [...] It makes sense to them and they join in, they are interested in the issue and they support it."
>
> **–Marcia Zavala, Communication Coordinator, MTM.**



In contexts where these conversations continue to encounter strong resistance from the public and institutions, opening them up is also part of the change. As Marcia summarizes, “we’ve gone to stir things up.”

At the same time, from the Son Niñas, No Madres coalition, we continue to build the next steps of a regional process that has matured over the years and has been strengthened thanks to the exchange of experiences between organizations from different countries.

In this new stage, we are launching the sixth phase of the campaign, called “Leveraging a Victory,” which introduces Victoria; a 12-year-old girl from El Salvador who, with the curiosity typical of girls, begins to wonder what the convictions for forced motherhood obtained through the strategic litigation process that accompanied the campaign mean, both for the survivors whose cases were decided, and for herself as a Latin American girl.

Built through a co-creation process with the nine founding and co-litigant organizations of the coalition, this new stage seeks to support the implementation of the rulings obtained between 2023 and 2025 and promote guarantees of non-repetition.

“Victoria’s arrival in the Son Niñas, No Madres universe gives us the opportunity to translate the legal language of sentences, reparations, and non-repetition measures into formats that are more accessible and useful for young and child audiences. This is crucial in times of conflicting hegemonic narratives that seek to return girls and women to traditional roles linked to reproductive function.”

–Marianny Sánchez, Director of Communications and Narrative Change, Libera.

West Africa

Libera’s collective approach to narrative change began to develop in West Africa, where we supported a new regional strategic litigation strategy.

Before designing a campaign, we initiated a listening process with organizations in Senegal, Ivory Coast, Benin, and Burkina Faso to understand how narratives about therapeutic abortion are constructed and what messages can contribute to expanding social support for sexual and reproductive rights, within the framework of the Maputo Protocol.

This process made it possible to identify opportunities to co-create a regional campaign with national adaptations, respecting the cultural, political and social particularities of each territory together with those who know these realities deeply, anchored in the defense that no woman has to die from a pregnancy.



VOICES OF THE HARVEST

The voices that made this first year possible

This year, organizations on the ground, feminist movements, associations of women jurists, survivors and allies shared more than projects with Libera, and our collaborations grew.

They shared their knowledge, trust, and the common conviction that reproductive dignity can only be built together with those who defend it every day from their territories, embodying it in their own lives and struggles. Our roots intertwined so that we could bear fruit together.

These are some of their voices:

"Support based on trust, knowledge sharing, and flexibility can enable an organization to transform sustainably over time."

–Oulimata Sène, Association of Jurists of Senegal

"Libera was the first organization that believed in us, that took the time to listen to us and work with us. Libera is very open and willing to adapt to the situation or project."

– Ricardo Hernández, ODISOG, Guatemala

"Libera truly has a vision of a single, strong, and united Africa. It is not just one-off support in a country; it contributes to the well-being, the protection of rights, and the reproductive dignity of women and girls in West Africa and the region."

–Agathe Blanc, Association of Women Jurists of Ivory Coast

"What we value most is knowing that they (Libera) are there, that they support us and that they haven't left us alone."

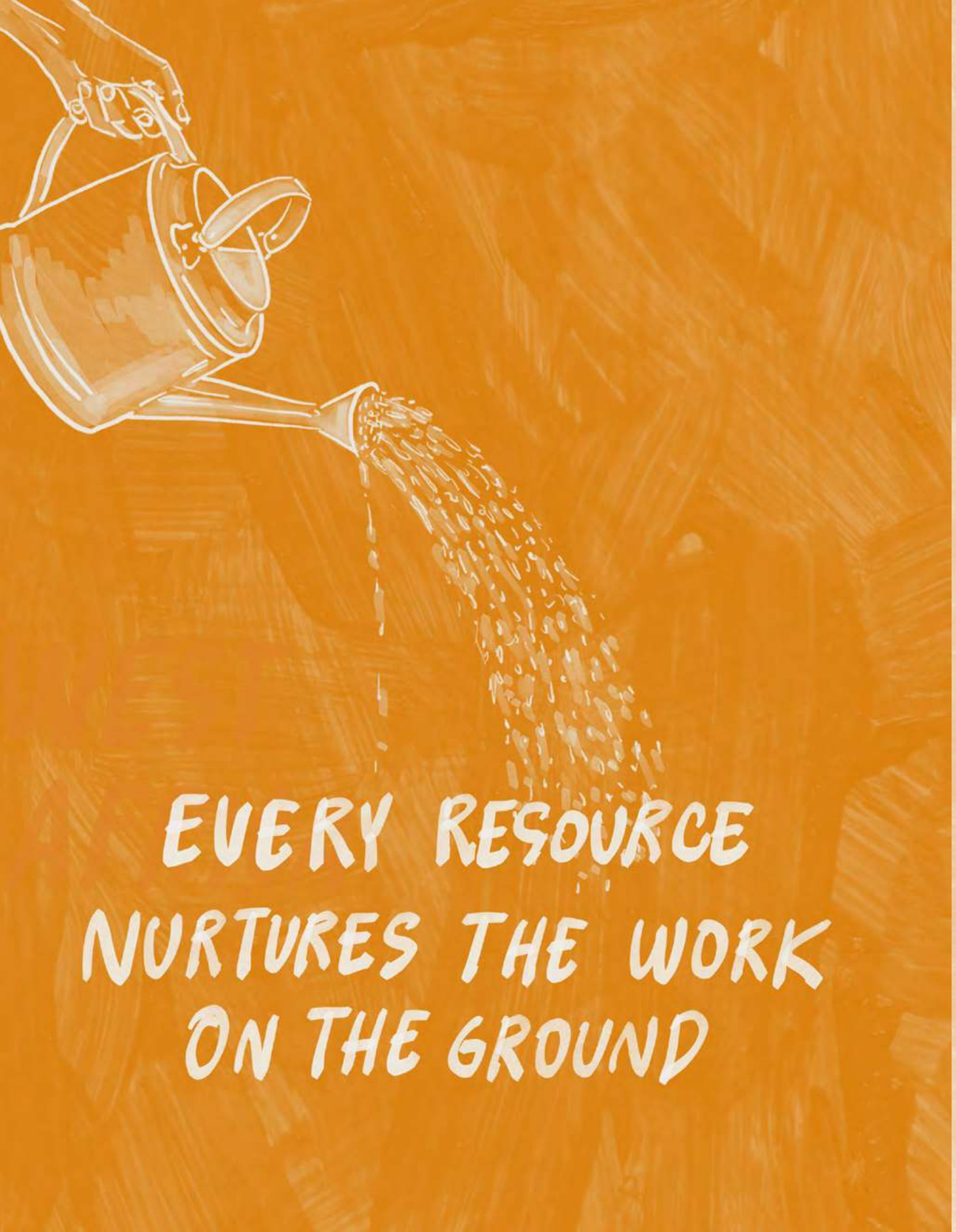
–Luisa Morales, Luna Association

"It's very bold to be an organization focused specifically on the Global South, working not only on abortion issues or services, but thinking beyond that."

–Paula Cantos, Observatory of Rights and Justice, Ecuador

"I greatly appreciate that there are still those who support these issues and see the need to change reality, and the experience and knowledge they share with us."

–Marcia, Women Transforming the World, Guatemala



EVERY RESOURCE NURTURES THE WORK ON THE GROUND



Even in the most fertile soil, seeds need nourishment, water, and constant care to take root, grow, and flourish. This first year we grew our work through an investment of:

USD $3,191,036

For the period of 2025-2026,

88% of our resources were allocated directly to programs.

12% was allocated to support the institutional infrastructure necessary to accompany these processes and build a solid organization for the long term.

We project a

37% increase in revenue during the second year. As we continue to grow, our commitment is focused on also increasing the resources allocated directly to program work.

During this period, we envision reducing operating expenses to **9%**, allowing us to allocate **91%** to programs and actions directly linked to our mission.



WHAT CONTINUES TO GERMINATE



Some seeds have already taken root. Some have grown into fruit that we can now see, hold, and share. And yet, the work of transformation does not end with one harvest. Within every fruit are new seeds, carrying the possibility of what comes next.

Our commitment is to continue this journey. In a context of increasing pressure on human rights, we will continue strengthening the capacity of organizations and communities to respond to changing realities, sustain the progress achieved, and open and expand pathways toward reproductive dignity.

We aspire to promote South-South exchanges, connecting experiences and learning between organizations, territories, and regions, allowing us to build on what we have learned and enrich strategies in diverse contexts, documenting and sharing that learning along the way.

We know that transforming deeply entrenched systems requires time, perseverance, and lasting partnerships, and we will continue to build that path together with the organizations and communities that make it possible.

Nothing we share here would have been possible without the partner and allied organizations that trusted in building this path together with Libera.

We are deeply grateful to the survivors who decided to share their stories; to the community, feminist advocates, and women lawyers' organizations that are leading the change on the ground, to our team; and to the donors and institutions that supported us.

This report marks the beginning of a two-way story: one deepening its roots and the other stretching upward. Our progress is marked by the significant growth underway, and we envision our future in full bloom.





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