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- The WE PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES Monitoring System, guarantee the sustainability of the intervention, thanks to a database of companies and a resumes bank of the participants, so that as soon as a job opportunity arises it is communicated to the young people. In addition, the Professional team maintains constant communication through a closed group in a social network and through, periodic phone calls.

We attached to this Letter of Recommendation, some documents, photographic records, videos and publications, which account the work done by CEDECUR with the young people and women, especially with the project WE PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES, to contribute with quality educational opportunities, inclusive and equitable, to help to make a progress in overcoming inequalities, gender discrimination and violence in the Municipality of Santiago de Cali.

Sincerely,

ARMANDO ARISTIZABAL RAMÍREZ

Asesor Participación Ciudadana – Alcaldía de Cali



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Santiago de Cali, April 2016

CEDECUR RECOMMENDATION LETTER

**Section of Education for Inclusion and Gender Equality
Division for Inclusion, Peace and Sustainable Development
Education Sector
UNESCO**

Dear Sir or Madam

On behalf of the Municipality of Santiago de Cali, Valle del Cauca, Colombia, I introduce you the Center of Education and Research for Urban and Rural Community Development, CEDECUR, a non-governmental organization that was established in April 21, 1982, of which the Municipality is a founder entity. CEDECUR was created in the context of a call made by the local government to public agencies, business sector, institutions of civil society and community-based organizations to work, jointly, for overcoming poverty and the development of the city.

Since its inception, the Municipality has recognized the special emphasis that CEDECUR has made to promote the young people and women, recognizing them as the most dynamic population groups and change agents by excellence. During its first intervention in one of the greatest exclusion zones of the Municipality of Santiago de Cali, the Aguablanca District, CEDECUR built its own model of intervention that is systematized in the book Integral Development Model for Urban Communities, which has been useful for many social organizations and training of professionals in the social sector. CEDECUR model has been



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successful in different areas of training, such as socioeconomic and cultural processes in which we are seeking their advice and participation as a partner, where the application of differential focus and gender approach has been clear.

We highlight processes such as project of Women and Local Power (1994-2002), which strengthened literacy, leadership and organizational development of women, based on that, CEDECUR created Equalization Program for Elementary School (2003-2007), where about five hundred of girls and women, low socioeconomic status, gain access and remain in education and continue their studies, and even professional studies and today they work actively in driving the development of their communities.

In 2011, considering the extensive experience of CEDECUR in citizen and organizational training processes of children and teenagers, was invited to be part of the Civic Committee of Citizen Culture for Cali, 5C, an initiative of the Municipality to improve mobility, a process that is still been developing through the project Humanizer Public Space, where CEDECUR, in partnership with other organizations of civil society, educate around one hundred (100) teenagers from poor neighborhoods, per year, in personal development, leadership, democracy, respect for difference and participation, so they can act as agents of civic education in their own communities and in the public space of the city as well as in the formation of groups hotbeds of civic culture.

In 2015, CEDECUR developed a pilot project: GAME IN SIGHT, a dynamic and flexible pedagogical strategy, which broke with the vertical and rigid model that still characterizes public education in Colombia; with the participation of fifteen (15) girls mostly aged between 14 and 15 years, in coordination with an institution of formal education of the 14 Commune -a very excluded area of the city-, project through which was strengthened their self-esteem and identity, their life project was expanded and their mathematical skills increased with the application and the agile handling of the four basic operations in solving problems; more interest in reading as a source of knowledge and pleasure and management of software such as Excel and PowerPoint; improved attention, concentration and thinking critically. CEDECUR plans to give continuity to this pilot experience outstanding personal and academic results obtained during the project for these young people.

The project, that the Municipality of Santiago de Cali wants to put into your consideration is WE PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES, project that CEDECUR has been developing since 2013, in partnership with the Fanalca Foundation and the support of EMpower-The Emerging



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Markets Foundation, through which has occupationally qualified hundred and nine (109) young people from low socioeconomic status, of which 50% are women, average age of 17 to 22 years; with the aim of improving their inclusion in the labor market, which contributes to adolescent girls' and young women's acquisition of knowledge and skills to help smooth transition from school to work and to lead a fulfilling life.

WE PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES project helps two goals of sustainable development: *“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities”* and *“Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”*; which aims to contribute to The UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education for all, for the following reasons:

- It is offering full scholarship in certificates and quality training programs for work in the areas of occupation most demanded in the labor market, linking them to successful companies for practices, which is expanding the possibilities of formal hiring in good jobs and with that, the formation of skills for employability.
- Training programs offered break with assigning gender roles, integrating, equitable, women in unconventional technical occupations such as mechanics of Motor Vehicles, Food and Beverage Services, especially as Barman's and protection services, as security guards.
- Provides an integral training process, where the mainstreaming of personal development workshops, help all of them to strengthen their life projects, which added to gender approach, it has meant in those women a extending of their life expectancy, counteracting the environment offer that encourages relationships at early ages and early pregnancies, as happens to many of these young people in these sectors.
- These scholarships, which includes the payment of tuition fees and monthly payment, transport, materials and provision of uniforms for the process of theoretical and practical training and business practices, are highly expected by young men and women, for whom It ends up being a challenge to be able to access to a scholarship, due to the selection process, which are required to have completed their secondary education, that is the reason why, they strive to meet this requirement, that incentives to remain in the education system.



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- It is significant that in occupational areas such as Motor Vehicle Mechanics -such as Auxiliary of Motorcycle Mechanics of 2 and 4 times-, the percentage of employability of women is 80%, i.e. the same companies where students have made their practices, hire them to continue as employees. In the case of occupational area of Food and Beverage services -as Kitchen, Bar and Table Attendants-, for the fluctuating characteristics of the sector, the percentage of employability has been lower, 50%.
- The project makes impact with the families of these young girls through home visits, in which there are talks to transform the cultural patterns that favor the perpetuation of gender discrimination. In the same way, it is working on the process of restoration of rights and expansion of support networks for young mothers to have services, such as the nursery.
- In mixed training groups, the project influence for relationships between young men and women to be transformed into relations of equality, without discriminatory treatment, violence free, through the process of empowerment of young girls.
- WE PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES project has had a significant impact on the companies where these girls practiced and they have been hired, so they are placed in different kinds of jobs, not only Customer Service, such as Motorcycle mechanic shop, where they have been assigned for the arrangement of the machines directly; thus, it has been moving forward in eliminating gender discriminatory patterns in circles of most patriarchal influence.
- Another strength of the project is that not only enables the young people to acquire a job, but as individual or group entrepreneurs too, so they can offer their services independently and thus they can generate immediate income even if there are no job offers. In addition, there had offered workshops on financial education, through Bankomunales methodology, which CEDECUR develops with nearly 100 community banks throughout the Municipality of Santiago de Cali, since 2013.