

Gina Rico Méndez, PhD
Developmental Evaluator
Democracy International – Colombia Office
E-mail: ginapaolarm@gmail.com
Tel: 57.305.4819548

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Monitoring and Evaluation / Project Design, Management and Oversight.** Highly analytical with knowledge of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Held mid-senior level and team leadership positions working with multi-cultural teams on all aspects of project management from idea stage through implementation to evaluation and completion.
- **Public Administration, Governance, and Institutional Analysis.** Extensive knowledge and experience conducting institutional analysis in Latin America, North America, and Africa. Areas of expertise include: public policy, public administration, governance, food security, agriculture, rural development and technological change.
- **Policy Analyst** with keen understanding of systems-level policy development and implementation; aware of global, national, and local dynamics affecting agriculture, environmental sustainability, and food security.
- **Fluent in both English and Spanish**, with experience delivering oral presentations to a variety of audiences, conducting research workshops and preparing written reports.

CURRENT APPOINTMENTS

- Dec. 2018-date **Developmental Evaluator**, key personnel for the project “Complexity-Aware Monitoring and Evaluation of the Reconciliation Activity in Colombia”.
Democracy International, Colombia Office.
Funded by USAID.
- Sep. 2018-date **Consultant**, for the project “Feed the Future Analytic Literature Review: Harnessing the Potential for Rural Youth-Inclusive Agri-Food Systems Livelihoods – A Landscape Analysis”. *Led by University of Illinois.*
Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University.
Funded by USAID - Bureau of Food Security.

EDUCATION

- 2016 **PhD Public Policy and Administration**
Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS (USA)
Dissertation: *Governing the Rurals: Food Security and Governance in the 21st Century*
Funded by Fulbright.
- 2010 **MA Habitat (Human Settlement Studies)**
Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá (Colombia)
Thesis: *Cerros Orientales. Discurso y poder en la construcción social del hábitat de los barrios El Triángulo, Corinto y Manantial y la urbanización San Jerónimo del Yuste.*
Thesis Awarded Merit
- 2008 **BA Political Science**
Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá (Colombia)
Best Graduate of the Year

EMPLOYMENT/PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Oct. 2018-Apr. 2019 **Consultant – Data Analysis**
“Feed the Future Soybean Innovation Lab-Gender Impacts Team-Led by University of Illinois”. *Led by University of Illinois.*
Social Science Research Center - Mississippi State University.
Funded by USAID.
- Aug. 2016-Jul. 2018 **Postdoctoral Research Associate**
Social Science Research Center - Mississippi State University
- Project activity
- Co-Principal Investigator** for the project “Study Abroad and Spanish Language for Precision Agriculture”.
Funded by U.S. Department of State.
June 2017-June 2018
- Co-Principal Investigator** for the evaluation project “Assessing Government Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers”.
Funded by Alcorn State University.
June 2017-January 2018
- Research Scientist** for the evaluation of gender components of the project “Feed the Future Soybean Innovation Lab-Gender Impacts Team” in Ghana. *Led by University of Illinois*
Funded by USAID.
July - December 2017
- Feb. 2013-Jul. 2016 **Research Associate**
Social Science Research Center - Mississippi State University
Starkville, MS
- Project activity
- Research Associate** for the evaluation project “Assessing FWS Employee Attitudes and Beliefs toward the Strategic Habitat Conservation Business Model”.
Funded by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
October 2013 – October 2014
- Researcher** for the project “Are intelligent communities more likely to be civically engaged? Evidence from Mississippi Counties”.
Funded by Intelligent Communities Institute, Extension Service, Mississippi State University.
February – November 2015
- Research Associate** for the evaluation of the project “Empowering Mentors to Promote Women's Retention (EMPOWR)”.
Women’s Foundation of Mississippi.
May – July 2015
- Research Associate** for the project “W.K. Kellogg Foundation Data Project”.
Funded by W.K. Kellogg Foundation.
February - March 2015
- Sep. 2011–Jul. 2012 **Planning Specialist**
Planning and Development Office - Universidad Central
Bogotá (Colombia)

Employment/Professional Experience [cont'd]

Sep. 2010-Sep. 2011 **Social and Economic Impact Analyst**
United Nations Development Program & Colombian National Planning Department
Bucaramanga (Colombia)

Aug. 2008-Oct. 2010 **Graduate Research Assistant**
Faculty of Arts
Universidad Nacional de Colombia – Bogotá (Colombia)

Project activity

Principal Investigator for the Master's thesis funded-research: "El Discurso Ambiental como generador de Prácticas de Poder en la Construcción Social del Hábitat en Bogotá".
Research Division, Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
August 2009-August 2010.

Dec. 2005–Nov. 2006 **Intern: Policy Analyst**
Office of Natural Resources
Bogotá's Fiscal Comptroller General Office, Bogotá (Colombia)

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Nichols C. Reid, Wright Lynn D., Bainbridge Scott J., Cosby Arthur, Hénaff Alain, Loftis Jon D., Cocquempot Lucie, Katragadda Sridhar, **Rico Méndez, G.**, Letortu Pauline, Le Dantec Nicolas, Resio Donald, Zarillo Gary. (2019). Collaborative Science to Enhance Coastal Resilience and Adaptation. *Frontiers in Marine Science*, 6(404).

Rico Méndez, G., Cosby, A. & Mohanty, S. (2018). Obamacare on Twitter: Online Political Participation and its Effects on Polarization. *Teorija in Praksa*, 55(2), pp. 419-444.

Hossfeld, L. & **Rico Méndez, G.** (2018). Looking for Food: Food Access, Food Insecurity, and the Food Environment in Rural Mississippi. *Family and Community Health*, 41(2), pp. S7-S14.

Rico Méndez, G. (2017). ZIDRES Law: Emergent Normative Foundation of State Legitimacy in Rural Areas in Colombia. *Ciudad Paz-ando*, 10(1), pp. 7-19.

Rico Méndez, G.P. (2011). Discurso y Poder en la Construcción del Hábitat. El caso de los cerros surorientales de Bogotá. *Revista Bitácora Urbano Territorial*, 2(19), pp. 123-137.

Books and Book Chapters

Cosby, A., **Rico Méndez, G.** & Khandekar, H. (2019). Data-Intensive Coasts: Alternatives for Human Adaptation to Climate Change. In L.D. Wright & C.R. Nichols (Eds.), *Tomorrow's Coasts: Complex and Impermanent*. Springer, pp. 319-339.

Rico Méndez, G. & Hossfeld, L. (2018). Transformaciones Críticas de la Ruralidad en Colombia y los desafíos institucionales para la Construcción de un Modelo Económico Incluyente. In R. García Duarte, J.A. Wilches Tinjacá, H.F. Guerrero Sierra, & M. Hernández Pérez (Eds.), *La Colombia del posacuerdo: Retos de un país excluido por el conflicto armado*. Bogotá, Colombia: Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, pp. 35-56.

- Rico Méndez, G.**, Stubbs-Richardson, M., Mohanty, S. & Cosby, A. (Forthcoming). Implications of Social Media on Disaster Response: Commentary on the Flint Twitterverse. In B. Stabile & T.T. Neaves (Eds.), *The Flint Water Crisis*. Washington, DC: Westphalia Press.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** (2015). Institucionalidad para la Paz o para la Guerra: Un Análisis de las Políticas para Colombia 1980-2010. In H. Guerrero Sierra & J. Wilches Tinjacá (Eds.), *Perspectivas Multidimensionales de la Paz en Colombia* (pp. 29-53). Bogotá: Universidad Santo Tomás-Grupo Editorial Ibáñez.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** (2013). *Cerros orientales. Discurso y poder en la construcción del hábitat de los barrios el Triángulo, Corinto y Manantial y la Urbanización San Jerónimo del Yuste*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia - Facultad de Artes.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** (2010). El discurso en la formulación de la política ambiental: El caso del corredor ecológico y recreativo de los Cerros Orientales de Bogotá (pp. 215-230). In C. Toro Pérez & B. Marquardt (Eds.) *Quince años de la política ambiental en Colombia*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
- Guevara Rivera, P.; Prieto, C. A. & **Rico Méndez, G.P.** (2007). África: Pobreza y Crisis Socioeconómica. In M. Wabgou (Comp. & Ed.), *Sistemas Políticos Africanos. Debates Contemporáneos en Colombia desde la Ciencia Política*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, GEA-CES.

Technical Reports and Other Publications

- Hossfeld, L., **Rico Méndez, G.** & Russell, K. (2018). *Assessing Government Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers*. Prepared for the USDA - Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Research Center, Alcorn State University.
- Ragsdale K, Read-Wahidi M, **Rico Mendez G**, Mubichi F, Quinhentos MDL, Findeis J & Keane R. (2017). *WEAI+: Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index Specialized for Smallholder Soybean Farmers*. Policy Brief prepared for the Feed the Future Soybean Innovation Lab.
- Rico Méndez, G.** (2017). *Food Security Narrative and its Effects on Land Governance: Case Study of Agricultural Policies for Oil Palm in Colombia*. 2017 World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty.
- Rico Méndez, G.** & Wilches, J. A. (2016, Sept. 12). *Los problemas del "sí" y el "no" para comunicar sus mensajes*. Razón Pública. Bogotá. Available at <http://razonpublica.com/index.php/conflicto-drogas-y-paz-temas-30/9708-los-problemas-del-si-y-el-no-para-comunicar-sus-mensajes.html>
- Wright, L.D., Nichols, C.R., Cosby, A.G., Danchuk, S., D'elia, C.F. & **Méndez, G.R.** (2016). *Trans-disciplinary Collaboration to Enhance Coastal Resilience: Envisioning a National Community Modeling Initiative*. Washington, DC: Coastal and Environmental Research Committee, Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA). 30 pp. Available at <http://scholarworks.uno.edu/resilience/2015/results/>
- Rico Méndez, G.** (2016). *Does land distribution affect poverty in Latin America? A cross-sectional analysis of Colombian municipalities*. 2016 World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty. Available at https://www.conftool.com/landandpoverty2016/index.php?page=browseSessions&form_session=423
- Rico Méndez, G.** & Farrell, B. (2015). *Does County Broadband Access Affect Civic Engagement?* White paper for the Intelligent Community Institute. Extension Service at Mississippi State University.
- Hanna, H., Gardner, S., & **Rico Méndez, G.P.** (2015). *Assessing U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Employee Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Strategic Habitat Conservation*. Prepared for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Martínez, J., Marín Cárdenas, J. Y., Terán Cárdenas, L.F., Real, Miranda, M. C., Gómez, Gallo, J. D., & **Rico Méndez, G.P.** (2006). *Informe Obligatorio sobre el Estado de los Recursos Naturales y del Ambiente de Bogotá, D.C. 2005*. Contraloría de Bogotá.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

- Rico Méndez, G.**, Read-Wahidi, M. R., & Ragsdale, K. (March, 2019). Harnessing the Potential for Rural Youth-Inclusive Agri-Food Systems Livelihoods: A Landscape Analysis. Submitted Oral Presentation. 20th Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty: Catalyzing Innovations, Washington, D.C.
- Rico Méndez, G.**, Ragsdale, K., Lower, K. & Read-Wahidi, M. R. (March, 2019). Customary Land Tenure Systems and Gendered Land Rights in Ghana's Northern Region: Results from Phase II Gender Equity and Land Tenure Focus Groups. Submitted Oral Presentation. 20th Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty: Catalyzing Innovations, Washington, D.C.
- Lower, K., Ragsdale, K., Read-Wahidi, M.R., **Rico Méndez, G.**, Yarbrough, T., Asigbee, M., Atiim, P., Kolbila, R. (March, 2019). Exploring Gender and Women's Land Tenure: Focus Groups with Men and Women Farmers in Ghana's Northern Region. Submitted Oral Presentation. 79th Society for Applied Anthropology Annual Meeting, Portland, OR.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.**, Ragsdale, K. & Read-Wahidi, M. R. (March, 2018). Exploring Gender-Biased Customary Land Tenure Systems in Ghana: Results from Focus Groups with Men and Women Farmers in the Northern Region. Presented at the 19th Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty: Land Governance in an Interconnected World, Washington, DC.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** & Medina Frias, G. (March, 2018). Agricultural Policies in Colombia: The Dilemma between Food Security and Commodity-Export Agriculture (Case Study of Tolima, Colombia). Presented at the 19th Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty: Land Governance in an Interconnected World, Washington, DC.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** (September, 2017). Cadenas de Valor Emblemáticas: Tenencia de la Tierra y Seguridad Alimentaria. Presented at the Workshop: Transitions, sponsored by Science International Colombia and Ford Foundation, Villa de Leyva, Colombia.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** (July, 2017). Big Data and Social Media: Big Questions for Democracy. Presented at Delta Regional Forum: Population Health, Development, and Entrepreneurial Problem Solving, Clarksdale, MS.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** (June, 2017). The Hunger Frames: The Role of Global Institutions Framing the Narrative of Food Security (A Big Data Policy Analysis). Presented at the Seminar on Big Data and Security, Split, Croatia (Online presentation).
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** (March, 2017). Food Security Narrative and its Effects on Land Governance: Case Study of Agricultural Policies for Oil Palm in Colombia. Presented at the 18th Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty: Responsible Land Governance: Towards an Evidence Based Approach, Washington, DC.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** (March, 2016). Does Land Distribution Affect Poverty in Latin America? A cross-Sectional Analysis of Colombian Municipalities. Presented at the 17th Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty: Scaling up Responsible Land Governance, Washington, DC.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** & Farrell, B. (March, 2016). Does County Broadband Access Affect Civic Engagement? A Look at Mississippi County Access Rates and Voter Turnout. Presented at the American Society for Public Administration Annual Conference, Seattle, WA.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** (July, 2015). Big Data Politics and Policies: Issues Concerning the Interaction Between Societal and Computational Systems. Presented at the Big Data for the Social and Policy Sciences Workshop, Dubrovnik, Croatia.
- Rico Méndez, G.P.** & Shoup, B. (March, 2015). The Intractable Distance: Political Underpinnings of State Formation and Consolidation. Presented at the Annual Midwest Political Science Association Conference, Chicago, IL.

Conference Papers [cont'd]

Rico Méndez, G.P., Cosby, A. & Mohanty, S. (October, 2014). The Rise of Polarization? Social Media Perceptions of the Affordable Care Act. Presented at the Russell Sage Foundation Journal Conference: Big Data in Political Economy, New York, NY.

Rico Méndez, G.P. (September, 2014). Effects of Public Capital Investment on Poverty in Colombian Municipalities. Presented at the Southeastern Conference of Public Administration, Atlanta, GA.

Rico Méndez, G.P. (September, 2009). El Discurso en la Formulación de la Política Ambiental: El Caso del Corredor Ecológico y Recreativo de los Cerros Orientales de Bogotá. Presented at the 3rd International Symposium on Policy Analysis and Evaluation in Colombia: Fifteen Years of Environmental Policy in Colombia (3er Coloquio Internacional Análisis y Evaluación de las Políticas Públicas en Colombia: Quince años de la Política Ambiental en Colombia), Bogotá, Colombia.

Rico Méndez, G.P. (October, 2007). Evaluación de la Política Pública Ambiental de Bogotá. Presented at the 1st International Symposium on Policy Analysis and Evaluation in Colombia: Experiences, Theories and Methods in Debate (Primer Coloquio Internacional Análisis y Evaluación de las Políticas Públicas en Colombia: Experiencias, Teorías y Métodos en Debate), Bogotá, Colombia.

Rico Méndez, G.P. (September, 2006). Análisis de la Política Exterior Colombiana 2002-2008. VII Meeting and 1st Congress of Students of Political Science (VII Encuentro y I Congreso de Estudiantes de Ciencia Política y Carreras Afines), Cali, Colombia.

TRAINING WORKSHOPS ORGANIZED AND FACILITATED

Ragsdale, K. **Rico Méndez, G.**, Read-Wahidi, M. R., & Asigbee, M. (May, 2019). *USAID Feed the Future Lab Soybean Innovation Lab: Why Gender and Land Matter in Rural Ghana and the World. Importance of Closing the Gender Gap in Agricultural Development*. Webinar <https://www.agrilinks.org/event/webinar-usaid-soybean-innovation-lab-and-partners-gender-land-matter-rural-ghana-and-world>

Rico Méndez G. & Guzmán, S. (April 21-28, 2018). *Precision Agriculture in the United States*. Faculty-led Study Abroad for SENA-Regional Magdalena students and faculty to the United States (Starkville, MS, Stoneville, MS, Memphis, TN and Atlanta, GA). USDoS – 100,000 Strong in the Americas. In partnership with SENA – Centro Acuícola y Agroindustrial de Gaira (Magdalena).

Rico Méndez G. & Guzmán, S. (March 10-18, 2018). *Colombia: Agriculture, Language and Culture*. Faculty-led Study Abroad for Mississippi State University Students to Colombia (Bogotá, Santa Marta and Zona Bananera). USDoS – 100,000 Strong in the Americas. In partnership with SENA – Centro Acuícola y Agroindustrial de Gaira (Magdalena).

Ragsdale K, Read-Wahidi MR, **Rico Méndez G**, Reid A. (August 24-25, 2017). *Feed the Future Lab Soybean Innovation Lab: WEAI+ Wave II: Ghana Enumerator Training Workshop I (Saboba District/Chereponi District)*. USAID. Yendi, Ghana.

Ragsdale K, Read-Wahidi MR, **Rico Méndez G**, Reid A. (August 29-30, 2017). *Feed the Future Lab Soybean Innovation Lab: WEAI+ Wave II: Ghana Enumerator Training Workshop II (Tolon District/Karaga District)*. USAID. Tamale, Ghana.

Rico Méndez G. (July, 2017). *Big Data and Social Media: The role of data analytics*. Workshop prepared for participants in the Seminar Big Data and Security (Online workshop). University of Split, Croatia.

Rico Méndez G. (January, 2017). *Tecnologías de la Información y las Comunicaciones: Herramientas para el Aula (Data-Intensive Technologies: Tools for the Classroom)*. Workshop prepared for faculty of Political Science and International Relations Department at the Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education. Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education. Monterrey, Mexico.

PARTICIPATION IN SHORT-TERM EVENTS

- Dec. 2016 International Symposium on Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Improved Nutrition (INVITED).
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) & World Health Organization (WHO).
Rome (Italy)
- Sep. 2017 Workshop: Transitions in Colombia (INVITED).
Sponsored by Science International Colombia and Ford Foundation.
Villa de Leyva (Colombia)

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

- Mar. 2017 **Google Earth Engine for Advanced Analysis - Workshop**
World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty: Responsible Land Governance: Towards Evidence-Based Approach
Washington, D.C.
- Sep. 2016 **Economic Assessment of Local Foods – Practical Tools and Advice for Local Food Practitioners Workshop**
Food Distribution Research Society Annual Conference
New Orleans (LA)
- Jul. 2015 **Big Data for the Social and Policy Sciences Workshop**
Mississippi State University and University of Zagreb.
Dubrovnik (Croatia)
- Jun. - Aug. 2014 **Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models Certificate**
Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research Summer Program (ICPSR)
University of Michigan - Institute for Social Research
Ann Arbor (MI)
- Jun. - Jul. 2012 **Intermediate Level English Course**
University at Buffalo – English Language Institute.
Buffalo (NY)
- Mar. – Jun. 2008 **Diploma Social Control of Public Utilities in Bogota**
Universidad Nacional de Colombia – Centro de Investigaciones para el Desarrollo
Bogotá (Colombia)

HONORS & AWARDS

- 2016 Research Fellow
Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University
- 2016 Research Fellow
Myrlie Evers Williams Institute for the Elimination of Health Disparities
Mississippi State University and University of Mississippi Medical Center
- 2014-2016 Fulbright Scholar
Awarded by Fulbright to complete doctoral studies between 2012-2016
- 2015 Research Award
Intelligent Community Institute, Extension Service, Mississippi State University
- 2014 Member of the Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society
Pi Alpha Alpha – Honor Society for Public Affairs and Administration

Honors & Awards [cont'd]

2014 ASPA Founder's Fellow
American Society for Public Administration, ASPA

2010 Thesis awarded academic merit.
Faculty of Arts, Universidad Nacional de Colombia

2008-2010 Outstanding Graduate Students Program Scholarship
Office of the Academic Vice-rector, Universidad Nacional de Colombia

2008 Valedictorian - Best Student of the Year, Political Science
Awarded Graduate Studies Scholarship
Provost Office, Universidad Nacional de Colombia

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC SERVICE

Sep. 2018 Reviewer to select participants in the *Hubert H. Humphrey Scholarship Program*
Fulbright Colombia

Oct. 2018 Reviewer to select participants in the *Fulbright Scholar Program Visiting Scholar*
Fulbright Colombia

May 2017 Reviewer for *Colciencias Nexo Global Colombia Competition #15*.
Partners of the Americas, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, Colciencias, and U.S.
Department of State

2015 Seminar Coordinator *Annual Seminar on Big Data in Croatia*
Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University, University of Zagreb, George Mason
University, and University of Split.

2017 Seminar Coordinator *Annual Seminar on Big Data in Croatia*.
Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University, University of Zagreb, George Mason
University, and University of Split.

2017-2018 Co-founder and coordinator
Oktibbeha County Food Policy Council.

SKILLS

- Demonstrated experience in monitoring and evaluation, policy and institutional analysis.
- Highly analytical thinking with demonstrated talent for identifying, scrutinizing, improving, and streamlining complex work and research processes.
- Knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.
- Software packages: Microsoft Office, SPSS, Stata, R, MAXQDA, Gephi, and ArcMap.
- Proven adaptability to differing cultural and business environments.
- Possess excellent verbal and written skills both in English and Spanish languages.