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Symbolic and Material Justice: The Case of Displaced Persons in Chocó, Colombia

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Sociology

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Abstract

This research examines the causes and impacts of victimization as experienced by rural populations displaced by conflict living in Quibdó, Colombia. It draws upon Bourdieu's social theory to understand how the distribution of various forms of capital structure the lives of the displaced. A brief history of the conflict in Colombia is presented, which is broken into five periods, from 1946 to 2014 when the fieldwork was conducted. A description of the context of Quibdó and the department it is in, Chocó, is also provided. Particular attention is paid to the role of symbolic, economic, and cultural capital in the experiences of victimization, gendered vulnerabilities, and concepts of justice for the displaced. I argue that both symbolic and material forms of justice are needed to redress the harms caused by the conflict, to end victimization, and to prevent future vulnerability. I also elaborate on some of the fundamental links between transitional justice and development. My contributions are both substantive and theoretical; they are substantive by providing a context-based discussion of the priorities of some of the most vulnerable people in the world, poor displaced people living in Quibdó; and, they are theoretical as I look at the overall social framework within which victims' social positions and associated vulnerabilities can be identified and better understood.

Keywords

material justice, symbolic justice, international development, transitional justice, peace, gender, inequality, Chocó, Colombia, internally displaced persons, armed conflict, guerrillas, paramilitaries, Bourdieu, victimization.

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List of Abbreviations

AUC – United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia)

CIA – Central Intelligence Agency

COP – Colombian Peso

ELN – National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional)

EPL – Popular Liberation Army (Ejército Popular de Liberación)

FARC – Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia)

HDI – Human Development Index

MPI – Multidimensional Poverty Index

IDP – Internally Displaced Persons

INCORA – The Colombian Institute for Agrarian Reform (Instituto Colombiano de Reforma Agraria)

M-19 – 19th of April Movement (Movimiento 19 de Abril)

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

UCDP – Uppsala Conflict Data Program

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNHCR – United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UP – Patriotic Union (Unión Patriótica)

USAID – The United States Agency for International Development

Chapter 1

1 Introduction

Issues related to refugee migration have been increasing in recent years. Stories of African and Middle Eastern refugees risking their lives to journey to various parts of Europe in hopes of finding a better life and escaping unimaginable hardship from both conflict and economic deprivation have abounded. As heartbreaking as many of these stories are, the reality is that the vast majority of people impacted by war, famine, and poverty remain in their countries of origin; many losing their lives and many of the most vulnerable living as internally displaced persons (IDPs). So my question is: what happens to the people that are left behind?

In 2016 there were 36.62 million IDPs globally; the most in the world were the 7.4 million that were in Colombia (an increase from 6.04 million IDPs in Colombia in 2014), more than in even Syria or Iraq (UNHCR 2017). Many IDPs live in isolated regions of the world where little of their experiences are known to the outside world—places like the jungles of Congo, or the deserts of Sudan and Afghanistan, or in the case of my research the tropical forests of Colombia. In a world characterised by interconnectedness, these isolated communities often go unnoticed or at least unaccounted for in any substantial way in political participation and policy implementation. Understanding their challenges and everyday realities is necessary to develop strategies that could adequately address their most pressing needs.

I have a deep-seated personal conviction that we should care about these populations and try to address the challenges people face in their every day lives. There are a couple of proverbs that capture the notion well: “Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate: For the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them” (Proverbs 22:22-23); and “Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard” (Proverbs 21:13).

The sad reality, however, is that the projects of transitional justice and development have fallen very short of creating a better world: a world with less inequality, more peace, and

greater justice. Perhaps this is a debatable point that will be contingent on whom you ask or what data they are relying on. In any case the results are patchy. What is clear, however, is that many people wake up in the morning and find themselves, despite dominant discourses of improving global levels of human development, to be somehow on the losing side of the balance. My research is a modest contribution to the efforts of policy makers, researchers, civil society, and everyday people to find ways to improve the quality of life of the world's most vulnerable populations, giving insight into the possibilities and boundaries of those ambitions.

My research took place in Colombia, a country with one of the longest-lasting civil conflicts in modern times. The conflict has claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands and displaced millions. The world 'displaced' does not quite capture what is happening. Some have been forced to flee for their lives, sometimes in the middle of the night without being able to bring any of their belongings with them. Others have had the advantage of being able to act ahead and flee their homes and communities out of fear of what was to come, a very real fear that was generated by stories of atrocities in neighbouring areas or by direct threats to themselves and family members. Violence and terror coloured the experiences of many of the displaced that I interacted with during my fieldwork. Here, I want to tell a part of their stories, as a way to pay tribute to the millions of people that by similar trials have developed resilience in the face of adversity.

I will not pretend that everyone suffers equally from conflict. It is the poor that bear a disproportionate amount of the suffering that results from armed conflict and violence. Those with more economic and social capital are better situated to move their families and re-establish their lives in other places if need be. Meanwhile, my research focuses on some of the poorest, most marginalized populations in Colombia, IDPs living in Quibdó, Chocó. As the poorest department in the country with low levels of infrastructure development, travelling to this area allowed me to glimpse into the lives of some of the people that have been left behind in their countries of origin, close to conflict and in the midst of economic deprivation. In 2014 I conducted ethnographic observations, interviewed 50 people, and held two group interviews asking participants questions about their lives, displacements, futures, hopes of improving their lives, and concepts of justice.

As a way to better understand the stories of my participants and their communities, my research engages with a number of issues including inequality, conflict, development, justice, and gender. My work considers how these issues converge in the daily-lived realities of my study population and their experiences of victimization. Using a Bourdieuan analytical framework I will explore how the social positions and structural realities shape their experiences and expectations.

1.1 Overview

In the next chapter, I review the literature related to my topic, specifically four issues: the relationship between inequality and conflict; transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction; development; and gender. This helps to contextualize my research project and act as a point of departure for the contributions I make to academic and policy debates in these areas.

In Chapter 3, I present the methodology I used to conduct my research. I explain my particular interest in conflict and the displaced as well as why I chose to do my work in Quibdó. I describe the qualitative methodology I used in detail, discussing how I collected and analysed data. Finally, I reflect on potential biases and limitations of my research.

In Chapter 4, I provide an overview of my analytical framework that acts as the backbone of my research. The framework is based on Pierre Bourdieu's social theory and a model of inequality I developed. I discuss the role of social positions and capital in forming the fields within which people's experiences take place and how their lives are structured by habitus. Overall, I argue the social world is multifaceted and relational.

In Chapter 5, I describe the national context within which my research took place. I argue that symbolic and economic inequalities have been central to Colombian experiences of conflict. This involves engaging with the history of the Colombian conflict, which I summarize in five historical periods from the beginning of what is called *La Violencia* in 1946 to the year I conducted my research, in 2014. This helps situate the results of my research within their national, and global contexts.

Similarly in Chapter 6, I describe the particular context of the department of Chocó and city of Quibdó where my interviews took place. I analyse differences in terms of the distribution and value of cultural and economic capital between rural and urban fields, in order to provide a basis for understanding the lived realities of the displaced.

In Chapter 7, I discuss the victimization of Chocó's displaced in both rural and urban settings. First, I discuss the activities of armed groups in rural settings. Second, I discuss insecurity and gang activity in the urban setting. I argue that the experiences of victimization of the rural poor in both settings reflect their marginalized social positions, characterised by low levels of symbolic and economic capital.

In Chapter 8, I look at the gendered aspects of the experiences of the displaced in Chocó. On the one hand, I highlight some of the ways in which vulnerabilities in conflict and displacement differ by gender. On the other hand, I emphasize that experiences are interconnected and that people share some common hardships regardless of gender. I argue that the vulnerabilities experienced by different groups of civilian rural poor based on gender are actually manifestations of the same power relations that structure the political and economic fields in Chocó.

In Chapter 9, I explore punishment, truth, and forgiveness as forms of symbolic justice and discuss their roles in helping people move past experiences of trauma and violence. I examine the diversity of views participants held related to the importance of punishment and truth. This leads into a discussion on the role of forgiveness for participants. The topic of forgiveness brings out some of the tensions between restorative and retributive justice. I argue that a restorative justice approach is best for fostering reconciliation, but that each mechanism has the potential to contribute to symbolic justice.

In Chapter 10, I look at the role of material forms of justice in establishing the conditions through which the displaced can have their dignity recognized and respected. The need to make provisions for the material basis of their lives with education, employment/income, housing, and health care are priorities for the displaced. I argue that in Chocó material justice is fundamental, without which all other forms of justice are weak.

In Chapter 11, I present my analysis and discussion of my research. This involves summarising the experiences of the displaced in Chocó and Colombia. I also argue that in order to meet the needs of victims of conflict, both symbolic and material forms of justice are necessary. Next, I discuss some of the consequences of the conflict in Colombia as well as some of the transitional justice measure that have been put in place. Finally, I highlight the broader implications of my research for the linkages between the fields of transitional justice and development.

1.2 Conclusion

Overall my aim is to better understand the lived realities of people displaced by conflict living in Chocó, especially as it relates to improving quality of life and justice. I show the possibilities and boundaries experienced by some of the worlds' most vulnerable in terms of exercising agency and achieving justice. In doing so, I contribute to the academic literature in the fields of inequality/conflict, transitional justice, and development. My contributions are substantive, providing context-grounded explanations for some of the ways that victimization and inequalities interact, what constitutes peace, and how dignity can be respected; the differentiated impacts of conflict by gender; and the feasibility of some justice measures. My contributions are also theoretical, as I provide an overall theoretical framework to understand victimization, poverty, and justice. I show how people's social positions impact their experiences of victimization in rural and urban settings, and that they define gendered vulnerabilities. I also show how the marginalized social positions of the displaced in Chocó and the overall national context impact the need for symbolic and material forms of justice.

As you can see, my research engages with a complex mix of literatures and issues. This is necessary in order to understand the ways in which these issues converge in the lives of the displaced participants. This blend of issues is a unique feature of my research and shows important connections that I hope will help in the elaboration of policies related to transitional justice and development.

Chapter 2

2 Literature Review

This study requires engaging with a number of different academic fields because it deals with the complex subject of people displaced by conflict in Colombia. The lives of the people who participated in this study are impacted and shaped by various intersecting issues such as poverty, conflict, gender, race, geography, and language. For the purposes of this research project I have identified four major issues that help provide contextual and theoretical foundations from which insights into the lives of people displaced by conflict living in Chocó, Colombia can be reached: the relationship between inequality and armed conflict; transitional justice; development; and gender. In this chapter I review literature related to these four issues as a way to set the stage for the research project that follows.

The issues set forth in this literature overlap at times, but each also makes their own precise contribution to my research. The people displaced by conflict living in Quibdó have faced conflict, poverty, re-victimization, isolation, and gendered vulnerabilities. It is my goal that this literature review would help flush out some of the key points for each issue and situate my research within current academic discourse.

First, I look at some of the basic tenets in the relationship between inequality and armed conflict. Next, I review the related literature on greed and grievance theories of armed conflict. This leads me to a general overview of the topic of transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction. Fourth, I outline the main processes and mechanisms associated with transitional justice. Fifth, I argue that a restorative justice approach to transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction is best for fostering reconciliation. Next, I consider trends in the history of development and related literature. Seventh, I look at how a gendered lens is beneficial for this research. Finally, I outline the overall arguments, gaps and problems in the literature that my research addresses.

2.1 Relationship Between Inequality and Armed Conflict

The relationship between inequality and armed conflict is interactional and complex. According to the literature, the relationship is interactional in that inequality can contribute to armed conflict, while armed conflict can create and exacerbate inequalities, depending on the context. The relationship is complex in the sense that both inequalities and armed conflict are multidimensional. In this section I discuss how the relationship takes shape in the literature.

First, let me start by looking at some of the tools used in the literature to measure inequality. Two of the most widely used include the Gini Coefficient and the Lorenz Curve. The Lorenz Curve plots income distribution, while a Gini Coefficient is the space between the line of perfect equality and the actual Lorenz curve. They are “aggregate inequality measures and can vary anywhere from 0 (perfect equality) to 1 (perfect inequality)” (Todaro & Smith 2012:160). The Gini coefficient, for example, can be used to measure national income gaps that can then be compared across countries (World Bank 2013). However, the degrees of cultural and social inequalities are not necessarily easily quantifiable. The Gini Coefficient and the Lorenz Curve cannot take a large number of variables into consideration at the same time, and therefore more complex measures of social well-being such as the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) have been created¹. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) collects data and analyses both these indexes. They consist of multiple variables (such as education, life expectancy, and economic provisioning) that are formed into an index that attempts to measure the complex nature of development and poverty within and between countries (Todaro & Smith 2012). In this way it is often possible to measure the degree of multiple types of inequality and compare values across countries.

¹ The HDI measures a country’s level of development via indicators related to life expectancy, education, and gross national income (UNDP 2017b). The MPI measures a country’s level of poverty via indicators related to nutrition, child mortality, and standards of living (such as water, electricity, toilet, cooking fuel, etc.) (UNDP 2017c).

In terms of violent conflict, it is very common in the poorest countries in the world, with many of them having recently experienced or currently experiencing civil war. According to data collected from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) in 2014, the year I conducted my fieldwork, there were 129 ongoing conflicts around the world. By combining data from the UCDP and the HDI, I can see that 29 percent of the countries with the highest levels of income inequality in 2014 were experiencing armed conflict or had experienced it in the last ten years (Gleditsch et al. 2002; Themnér & Wallensteen 2012; & United Nations Development Program 2013a). These include countries such as Yemen, Senegal, Nigeria, and Congo, which all have ongoing conflicts (Themnér & Wallensteen 2012). In contrast, about half as many (thirteen percent) of the countries with relatively low levels of income inequality have experienced conflict in the last ten years (see Figure 1). Meanwhile, 50 percent of the countries with the highest levels of income inequality have experienced armed conflict in their own territory since 1992, in comparison with the 21 percent of countries with the lowest levels of inequality (Gleditsch et al. 2002; Themnér & Wallensteen 2012; United Nations Development Program 2013a). We find similar results (see Figure 2) when we look at educational inequality by country. The countries with high levels of educational inequality have almost twice the chances of experiencing conflict. Accordingly, the data point to the existence of some kind of relationship between inequality and armed conflict.

Figure 1: Percentage of Countries with Conflict by Level of Income Inequality

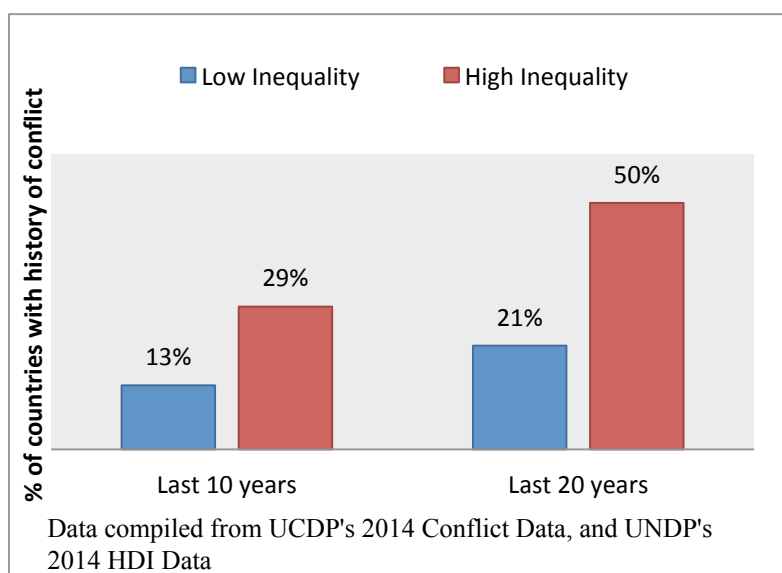
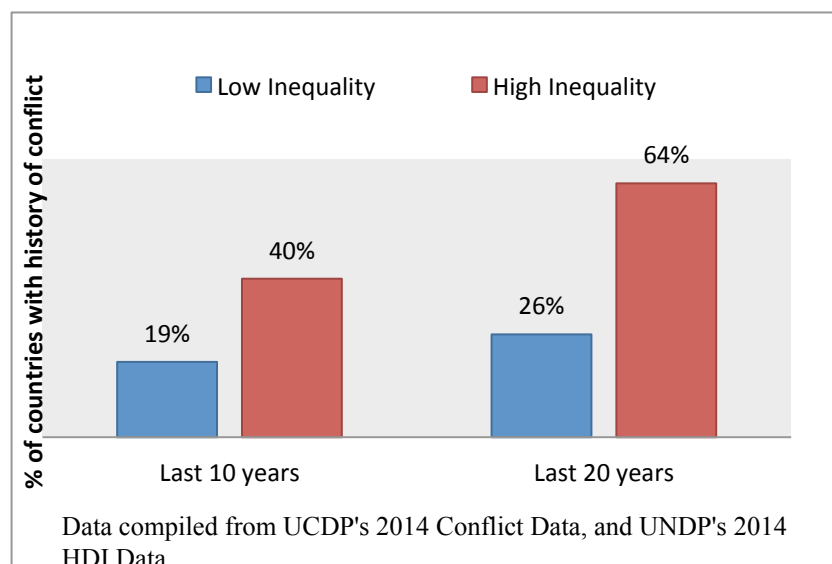


Figure 2: Percentage of Countries with Conflict by Level of Educational Inequality



There is no shortage of countries that have high levels of inequality and have recently experienced armed conflict. In addition to the countries mentioned above, countries such as the Central African Republic, Haiti, and Afghanistan all fit this description. However, to claim that inequality alone causes armed conflict would be ignore to cases such as Malawi and Benin, which have high levels of inequality but have no recent history of armed conflict. The relationship, therefore, is by no means straightforward.

The exploration of the relationship between inequality and conflict is not new; we can trace the discussion back over a hundred years. Consider, for instance, how some of the founding fathers of sociology, Marx and Durkheim, engaged in this discussion. For Marx, class inequality and alienation would eventually lead to violent revolution [Marx & Engels [1887] 1967). In contrast, for Durkheim, inequality, especially in the division of labour, could be positive and productive (when free from anomalies) and lead to social solidarity (Durkheim [1893] 1960). At the heart of these discussions was a preoccupation with the nature of inequality and how it relates to social well-being.

2.2 Greed and Grievance

More recent research on civil war has focused on the role of grievances and greed in mobilization (see Bensted 2011; Koubi & Böhmelt 2014; Keen 2012; Hoeffler 2011; and

Simmons 2014). Grievance theory emphasizes the role of injustices and inequalities that motivate people to engage in rebellion (Collier & Hoeffler 2004). In contrast, greed theory emphasizes the importance of profit seeking, especially economic gain, as a reason people engage in rebellion that can lead to civil war (Collier & Hoeffler 2004). People may mistake the extent of both grievances and potential profit of civil war. If a group engages in rebellion on a misconception of grievances, new grievances are likely to arise, fuelling the conflict (Collier & Hoeffler 2004). In the case of potential profit, if a group has overestimated the profit of engaging in rebellion, the conflict is likely to subside (Collier & Hoeffler 2004).

In 1999, Collier argued that the potential for economic profit was much more important than grievances in predicting civil conflict. This, he stated, represented a break in the discourse on motivation for civil conflict that had been dominated by grievance theory (Collier 1999). He argues that greed theory was most applicable in societies where there is a high proportion of commodity exports, young men, and low-income earning potential (Collier 1999). Later, he supported and elaborated his argument with a quantitative study emphasising the role of greed in motivating rebellion leading to civil conflict (Collier & Hoeffler 2004).

As his work gained momentum, Collier became more influential in the international community. For instance, he worked for a time as the director of Development Research Group at the World Bank, where he led a research team to write *Breaking the Conflict Trap* (Collier et al. 2003). This book reinforced and elaborated upon Collier's earlier claims. It argues that economic factors are more important than religion and ethnicity to the propensity towards conflict than typically understood (Collier et al. 2003). The central claim of the book is that "War retards development, but conversely, development retards war" (Collier et al. 2003: 1). Accordingly, societies can get caught in a trap of conflict whereby development decreases and conflict is self-perpetuated (Collier et al. 2003). It advocates active measures by the international community to intervene in civil wars (Collier et al. 2003).

Collier's work had a significant impact on international policies related to civil war. This was especially true at the United Nations where a shift in policy towards addressing the income generation capacity of rebel groups reflected, in part, the popularity of the greed theory (Cater 2003). For example, there were attempts at reducing trade in conflict goods and targeting sanctions towards certain commodities, such as diamonds, in conflict stricken areas (Cater 2003). This provides an easy solution for policy makers, as the struggle over economic resources is easier to address than the complex nature of identity-based justification for conflict (Cater 2003).

In 2007 Collier wrote another book, *The Bottom Billion*, where he tackles issues related to the countries at the bottom of global development. He maintains that countries with low-incomes, slow growth, and primary commodity dependence have a much higher likelihood of conflict becoming a trap that they cannot escape from. He points out that a country with a weak economy also tends to have a weak government, which makes rebellion easier. Again he emphasises the idea that young men with low income earning potential are much more likely to join rebel groups in the hopes of gaining profits of some kind (Collier 2007).

More recently, work by Collier and his colleagues has moved away from the motivation argument for civil war. Instead, they focus on the feasibility of rebellion being a key factor in the likelihood of civil conflict arising (Collier et al. 2009). Nevertheless, he argues that rebel groups often use the discourse of grievances to gain support, but that their commitment to social justice is not necessarily reliable (Collier 2007). According to his research, the evidence that political or economic grievances fuel civil conflict is limited at best (Collier 2007). He even discredits the idea that a history of violence is necessarily connected to a present conflict (Collier 2007). Grievances, he says, unfortunately often exist but that they do not necessarily lead to armed conflict (Collier 2007).

Collier's claims and influence led to a greater focus and debate within academia on the grievance versus greed paradigms. Some of Collier's arguments are seen as particularly problematic. For one, the focus on the role of rebels in conflict is seen as neglecting the

role of the state and other actors that can also cause conflict (Ballentine & Nitzschke 2005). Another issue that arises with Collier's arguments relates to his use of a quantitative methodology. His methodology is flawed in three primary ways. Firstly, the general correlations that can be generated by statistical methods are only capable of capturing part of the picture of social reality (Ballentine & Sherman 2003). Secondly, Collier leaves out of his analysis some important factors that influence conflict, such as charismatic leadership, governance, and resource management mechanisms (Bensted 2011). Thirdly, Collier, according to Bensted, relies on specific indices of greed and grievance, intentionally leaving out other indices that are more difficult to explain (2011). Accordingly, while Collier's methods are useful in helping to identify some important variables and general trends (Ballentine & Sherman 2003), they fall short of explaining the dynamic nature of the relationship between inequality and armed conflict.

Frances Stewart is another voice that made significant contributions to the greed/grievance discussion, with her emphasis being on the role of grievance in conflict. She coined the term horizontal inequalities to refer to: "inequalities in economic, social or political dimensions or cultural status between culturally defined groups" or groups with different shared identities (Stewart 2008: 3). For the purposes of this research, I use the term *group-based inequalities* in reference to this definition as this term more clearly conveys the meaning intended. Group-based inequalities are important to consider because wars happen between groups and not just between individuals.

Stewart's main thesis is that poverty and group-based political, social, and economic inequalities are key in explaining the origins of conflict (Stewart 2002). This is in part because differences in culture alone do not explain conflict, as people in many societies live with diversity (Stewart 2008). It is rather when cultural differences are accompanied by major economic and/or political causes that they can lead to conflict (Stewart 2008). Stewart claims that social identity conflicts have exploded since the end of the Cold War era. This is a result of a diminishing number of ideological conflicts, with socialism "no longer seem[ing] to be a serious alternative" coupled with a significant decrease in the potential for gaining outside funding for socialist causes (Stewart 2008: 7).

Stewart argues that identities must have strong social significance for people to be willing to fight for them (Stewart 2008). For instance, group affiliations can be based on the sometimes overlapping, categories of religion, race, ethnicity, tribes or clans, etc. (Stewart 2008). Identities can be self-created or imposed by others (i.e., the state) (Stewart 2008). History and social context determine how people can shift their identities (Stewart 2008).

According to Stewart, there are four types of group-based inequalities: political, economic, social, and cultural (2008). Causal connections between different inequalities and grievances are often multidimensional (Stewart 2008). The types of inequalities over which there are grievances differ depending on the context, but according to her, large-scale group mobilization is unlikely to happen without serious grievances (Stewart 2008). She does, however, make reference to Collier, acknowledging that personal motivation can play a part in motivating people to participate in conflict, but maintains that people are often primarily motivated by their group identity (Stewart 2008).

Stewart builds the complexity of her argument by acknowledging two realities: first, there are mediating factors between group-based inequalities and conflict; and second group-based inequalities are not the only source of conflict. In the first place, contextual factors such as political conditions, cultural demographic conditions, and economic conditions mediate the relationship between group-inequalities and conflict (Stewart 2008). In the second place, other factors such as economic incentives can also play a role in causing conflict. (Stewart 2008).

Stewart et al. (2008) in the book *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies* make three primary claims in support of the importance of grievance in conflict. Firstly, they claim that conflict is more likely where there are significant political and/or economic group-based inequalities. Secondly, they argue that the existence of political and economic group-based inequalities feeds political mobilization. Finally, they state that the status of cultural group-based inequalities can play an important role in provoking conflict or promoting peace. Given these findings

they argue that the international community has given too little attention to the role of group-based inequalities in conflict related policies.

Another contributor to this line of debate is Hoeffler, a former student and now close colleague of Collier, who argues that greed continues to be an important factor driving conflict (2011). Accordingly, she argues that there is not a lot of empirical evidence that individual inequalities drive violence, but that there is some evidence that group-based inequalities do (Hoeffler 2011). Her emphasis is that private incentives are important for people deciding to join rebellions, which is key to understanding conflict onset (Hoeffler 2011). She claims that overall there is stronger evidence that poor economic opportunities, low incomes, and past history of violence lead to conflict than do grievances (Hoeffler 2011).

Recently, Keen (2012) compared Collier's and Stewart's positions on the relative importance of greed and grievance respectively in motivating conflict. While both Collier and Stewart acknowledge the importance of both factors, they each put emphasis on one, as I discussed above. The dichotomy, like so many others, fails to take adequate account of the linkages between these theories. Keen, argues that Collier's position on the one hand oversimplifies the causes of conflict. This makes Collier's work convenient from a policy creating perspective, but also acts as a way for political power structures to delegitimize struggles that threaten them (Keen 2012). Keen (2012) argues that Stewart recognizes more of the complexity of civil war and the various factors that can influence their onset, nature, and duration. What comes out of this discussion is a recognition of the complex nature of civil conflict that makes any understanding of the relationship they have to economic, political, or social factors (including inequality) very context dependent, and liable to change over time.

Today it is understood that economic incentives interact with socio-economic and political grievances in different ways that can lead to violence, depending on the context (Berdal 2005). The role of economic factors in conflict is not always straight forward, because they are highly dynamic and context-dependent (Berdal 2005). In this way, conflicts cannot be understood only in terms of economics, but they likewise cannot be

understood without reference to economics (Berdal 2005). Similarly, conflicts also cannot be understood apart from the political, ideological, and historical divisions that shape the context (Berdal 2005). For example, a recent study on the topic links low income earning capacity to the risk of civil war, yet it is careful to point out that group-based inequalities are an important grievance related factor (Koubi & Böhmelt 2014).

Understanding the relationship between inequality and armed conflict must be done taking its interactional and multidimensional nature into consideration. An adequate analysis of peoples' experiences of armed conflict must therefore be grounded in particular political and economic contexts, taking the nature of a wide range of potential inequalities into account. Given that the origins and causes of the perpetuation of armed conflicts are complex attempts at peace and justice must also be complex.

2.3 Transitional Justice and Related Mechanisms

This leads me to consider the second issue in this research, namely transitional justice. Given the prevalence of violent conflict around the world since the end of the Cold War, in many countries issues of transitional justice dominate the political and social agenda. Transitional justice provides a general framework within which we can better understand the process of moving from conflict to peace. This body of literature looks at how justice is understood and operationalized in light of political transition. During and in the aftermath of conflict and violence, the question of what constitutes justice and how to redress harms are central in both private as well as public discourse and experiences.

Transitional justice deals with redressing harms caused by atrocities. Teitel describes it as justice in time of political change with legal responses to harms (2000). Transitional justice according to Teitel refers to short periods of time during which political change is happening (2000), or as some put it, "periods of instability and flux" (Kim & Sikkink 2010). This position is contested by some who argue that transitional justice is a process that can take many years (Shaw & Waldorf 2010; De Brito, Gonzales-Eriquez & Aguilar 2001; Langer et al 2012b), and that it is not bound to a particular moment (McEvoy & McGregor 2008). For instance, Brown et al (2008) argue that post-conflict reconstruction should be seen as a "process that involves the achievement of a number of peace

milestones”, as countries can move forward and backwards on the spectrum of transition (pg. 4).

One of the major aims of transitional justice is reconciliation (see, for example: Teitel 2000; Minow 2002; Boraine 2000a; de Greiff 2012; and Finnström 2010). The most basic definition of what it means to reconcile is “to render no longer opposed” (Borneman 2002: 281). In many cases, however, groups that are in conflict do not have a positive relationship to return to, as implied in the word ‘reconciliation’. This dilemma can be dealt with by adopting a conceptualization of reconciliation that is based on a shared present and future, and not necessarily on a shared understanding of the past (Shaw & Waldorf 2010). Reconciliation refers to restoring or building relationships, accepting unwelcome truths, and shifting from conflict to harmony (Asmal 1997). Reconciliation can be measured ethically by looking at how the past is dealt with in the public sphere; what relationships between opposing groups are like; and whether there is one version of the past or many (Hayner 2011).

While there are many processes and mechanisms that could potentially be used as part of the transitional justice toolbox the ones that have been most used and discussed in the literature include truth commissions, amnesties, trials, reparations, purges, apologies, and memory projects. Here I briefly define each as well as look at their potential benefits and drawbacks in light of some of the goals of transitional justice including: accountability, justice, and reconciliation.

First of all, truth commissions are one of the mechanisms most closely associated with transitional justice because of the highly-publicised Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa in the aftermath of Apartheid. Since that time many countries have implemented some version of a truth commission to deal with histories of atrocity. According to Hayner (2011), a specialist on the subject, truth commissions have several goals including establishing truth, assisting victims, promoting justice, advancing reforms, and facilitating reconciliation. Truth commissions create ‘relational truth,’ which creates a space where different perspectives can confront one another and work towards a common understanding (Llwellyn 2008). In terms of benefits, truth commissions can

have a therapeutic virtue through truth telling (Minow 2000); are usually victim centered; can address broad themes; and can even allow people to change the beliefs and views of society and institutions (Cobián & Reátegui 2009). However, truth commissions have also been criticized for fostering impunity or letting perpetrators off too easily; for the negative consequences that speaking out can have, especially for women (Ross 2010); and finally, for producing certain type of truth that can be biased and political (Maier 2000).

A second mechanism associated with transitional justice is the granting of amnesties. Amnesties basically give those guilty of committing atrocities protection from criminal or civil consequences of their actions. Amnesties can be total or partial, automatic or individual, and conditional or not (Greenawalt 2000). Blanket amnesties are largely condemned by the international community (Kritz 1995), and can lead to people taking the law into their own hands (Ntsebeza 2000). In general, amnesties are usually justified on the grounds that they allow a society to move forward towards peace and reconciliation by avoiding a continuation of conflict. Teitel argues, for instance, that they are an exercise of state sovereignty and thereby signal a move towards the rule of law (2000). In contrast, they have also been highly criticized as promoting impunity and potentially leaving victims vulnerable and feeling neglected (Greenawalt 2000).

Trials and associated punishments are a third mechanism used as part of transitional justice efforts. Trials are official legal criminal or civil actions at the local, national, or international levels. On the one hand, trials and punishments aim to make people accountable; deter others from following the same course of action (De Brito, Gonzalez-Eriquez, & Aguilar 2001); and act as an acknowledgement of wrongs committed (Minow 2002). They also give victims an opportunity to confront those who have done them harm and offer a public forum for the “moral duty” of witnesses (Stover 2004). On the other hand, trials may not always be impartial, and can therefore be used by the powerful to serve their purposes or be an expression of victor’s justice (Teitel 2000). Similarly, trials are not always effective because of weak judicial systems that may not be willing or able to process high numbers of cases or to keep perpetrators accountable through prison sentences or other means (Müller 2001). Furthermore, evidence may be lost or

insufficient because of how much time passes between when crimes were committed and when trials take place. Perpetrators may also be too old or sick to stand trial (González-Eriquer 2001). Nevertheless, as Minow concludes, although trials may not be perfect, they are better than nothing (2002).

Reparations are another tool that is often used as part of transitional justice efforts. Reparations are material or moral measures that are given to victims as acknowledgement and compensation for wrongs done to them (Roht-Arriaza & Orlovsky 2009). They relate to legal entitlement and repair for harm and should be given by those who caused the harm (Roht-Arriaza & Orlovsky 2009). Reparations are often the “most tangible and visible expression of both acknowledgement and change” (Roht-Arriaza & Orlovsky 2009:137). In terms of benefits they are said to help build civic trust, promote citizen engagement, and re-balance power (Roht-Arriaza & Orlovsky 2009). However, they cannot bring victims back to the state they were at before the harm was done (Roht-Arriaza & Orlovsky 2009), and they cannot therefore fully address harms (Minow 2002). There may also be problems identifying and accessing victims, or finding sufficient resources for reparations to be more than trivial amounts (Roht-Arriaza 2004).

Some other mechanisms that are used as part of transitional justice processes but that are not a key part of this research are purges, memory projects and apologies. Firstly, purges (also called lustration or vetting) are various administrative procedures for getting rid of people affiliated with an old regime from public positions. They aim to break from the past and bring a fresh start, but they tend to lack due process. Secondly, memory projects are also part of transitional justice and refer to the variety of methods used to remember the past such as museums, monuments, street names, holidays, etc. These projects can be implemented at the local level and can be long lasting so that victims are not forgotten. Nevertheless, memory projects can be selective (Longman & Rutagengwa 2004), and they do not guarantee that the full truth is made known (Adler 2001). Finally, apologies are also used as part of the transitional justice process. Apologies are official acknowledgements and apologies for what has been done usually on the part of the government. This has been an increasing trend with states more willing to acknowledge guilt (Galanter 2002; Barkan 2000). Though this is a way to acknowledge harm has been

done, it may be too easy of a way for states to sidestep accountability.

Through these mechanisms transitional justice is related to human rights; as these mechanisms often directly or indirectly give official recognition to peoples' experiences with human rights violations or attempt to bring perpetrators of such violations to justice. They are different, however, in that they are about normative change and attempts to address the causal factors related to the harms done (Arthur 2009). Several authors, for instance, argue that transitional justice is usually tied to democratization (see de Brito et al. 2001; Olsen et al. 2010; de Greiff 2012; Lundy & McGovern 2008). It is not just about a change of government, but rather about a deepening or consolidation of democracy (De Brito et al. 2001). Democratisation in this context means "progress in various political, legal, institutional, cultural ideological, social and economic arenas that make a minimally functioning democracy more 'democratic'" (De Brito, Gonzalez-Eriquez, & Aguilar 2001: 29). This is important to transitional justice because democratic governments are more likely to admit guilt (Barkan 2000); they are perceived pragmatically as the best type of government by some (Huyse et al. 2003); they are generally thought to be less likely to go to war against one another (Kritz 1995), and therefore to be more peaceful.

Transitional justice is also tied to democratization because it promotes the rule of law; and it is through the rule of law de Greiff (2012) argues that political participation happens. The rule of law facilitates democratization insofar as the existence and enforcement of freedom of political participation laws are a necessary precursor to it. The rule of law is also about having a fair system of justice, treating individuals in light of evidence, and redressing past harms in the context of pre-existing norms (Stover & Weinstein 2004). This can seem as somewhat of a contradiction as transitional justice processes sometimes uses illiberal means, such as purges, to reach liberal ends (Teitel 2000).

2.4 Retributive vs Restorative Justice

There is a major tension in transitional justice between retributive justice and restorative justice, as illustrated by the wide variety of mechanisms discussed above. At the heart of

the tension between these two types of justice is the question: how exactly can reconciliation be fostered through transitional justice? Drawing on the literature in this field, I argue that restorative justice offers an ethically superior means of helping societies move through post-conflict periods and that better fosters reconciliation.

First, I consider retributive justice, which “essentially refers to the repair of justice through unilateral imposition of punishment” (Wenzel, Okimoto, Feather, Platow 2008: 375). The focus of retributive justice is punishment, or a situation where perpetrators of crimes receive their ‘just deserts’—in other words, to bring about consequences to perpetrators for the harm they have caused. Ideally in the context on transitional justice, this means that people who have committed wrongs, especially by violating humanitarian law or by committing gross human rights violations, are held accountable through mechanisms such as trials that lead to punishment or purges. One philosopher goes so far as to argue that there is a kind of retributive hatred that can be therapeutic to victims in extreme cases (Murphy 1988). Another aim of retributive justice is to restore the rule of law and the confidence of the people in the local or national authority.

Retributive justice has limitations, as it can be used by the powerful to gain advantages, satisfy personal grudges, or to exercise ‘victor’s justice’. This happens when laws are enforced unevenly or when retribution causes deeper scars in a society. This was what happened in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide, for example, where local courts were set up to deal with crimes, but laws were not evenly enforced and staff were not properly trained (Karekezi, Nshimiyimana, & Mutamba 2004). This meant that many innocent people were put in prison, while other people enjoyed impunity.

Retributive justice has several other serious problems that limit its ability to foster reconciliation or to create a more just society after conflict. Firstly, the reasoning for using retributive justice appeals to ideas of fairness motivated by revenge or deterrence. Yet, revenge and deterrence are morally ambiguous when they are emotionally driven (Govier 2002). Govier (2002) argued that this is because emotions do not necessarily yield to ideas of fairness and proportionality. A person or group could seek retributive justice, for example, not because they believed it was the right thing to do, but because

they desired to see those who made them suffer, suffer as well. Accordingly, there is moral ambiguity in seeking to harm others, even if it is in response to harm done to oneself (Govier 2002). Self-satisfaction through revenge is not a sound basis for moral action and is therefore unlikely to foster reconciliation. Similarly, deterrence is also not a good justification for retributive justice because deterrence is about preventing future harms, while creating present harms (Govier 2002). Furthermore, it is difficult at best, or impossible to prove the effectiveness of deterrence (de Brito 1997).

If we distinguish revenge from retaliation, where retaliation is not as emotionally driven (Govier 2002), we still encounter problems. This is because retaliation tends to take place in political contexts where it is likely to lead to escalation, brutality, and the suffering of innocent people (Govier 2002). This was at the heart of Minow's book *Breaking the Cycles of Hatred* (2002). As Minow argues, revenge cannot be fulfilled; it simply continues a cycle of hatred. In other words, "No just response can be administered in kind. For by retaliating, you become what you hate" (Minow 2002: 17). Revenge, retaliation or deterrence underpins appeals to retributive justice, and these do not necessarily lead to a more just society or reconciliation.

In contrast, restorative justice "means the repair of justice through reaffirming a shared value-consensus in a bilateral process" (Wenzel, Okimoto, Feather, Platow 2008: 375). In the case of armed conflict, however, restorative justice is likely multilateral, not simply bilateral. Restorative justice is a process by which all parties in a conflict participate in working towards an outcome. Participation of victims and the communities impacted by violence is central to the restorative justice process (Bloomfield & Barnes 2003); while victims are central to the process, wrongdoers are also involved (Llewellyn 2008). The emphasis of restorative justice is on creating an equitable society in which there is mutual respect, care, and dignity (Llewellyn 2008).

There are, however, two major limitations of restorative justice. The first relates to the potential it has of leaving victims extremely unsatisfied with the impunity that could be enjoyed by perpetrators if pardons are granted or punishments otherwise avoided. This dissatisfaction, for example, was evident with some of the victims of Apartheid who did

not agree with the national strategy in South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and wanted to see harsher punishments for the people who had destroyed their lives and the lives of their loved ones (Hayner 2011). The second limitation of restorative justice relates to the degree of cooperation required from those involved in a particular conflict. The degree of voluntary participation might vary by group or by individual.

Overall, restorative justice is best suited to reach the goal of reconciliation because it aims to bring people together from different perspectives to try to build a common peaceful future without requiring the labelling of people into fixed categories. Meanwhile, retributive justice requires a much clearer distinction between victims and perpetrators in order for punishment to be assigned. For the victims of massive human rights violations, there may however be nothing that is adequate to redress mass violence (Minow 2000). Nevertheless, Minow argues that it is worse to do nothing than do something that is inadequate. Doing nothing could result in individuals seeking revenge, or perpetuating the same harm that existed before (Minow 2002).

Unless all members in a conflict are involved in the peace and justice process, including victims and perpetrators, it is difficult to know if the concerns of all groups are being adequately addressed. This is problematic for retributive justice as victims (whether they are also perpetrators or not) are not always central to the legal system, but rather the rights of accused and the role of the state often are central (Govier 2002). As Hayner put it "the function of the judicial system, first and foremost, is to investigate the specific acts of accused perpetrators" (2011: 22). The rights of the accused in trials are central in international law, and often in domestic laws, in that they usually have procedural rights of due process that victims do not. This is particularly problematic in the wake of conflict where eyewitness testimony may be the most significant or sometimes only evidence of crimes (Vu 2007). Trials can re-victimize people, especially in cases of intensive cross-examinations (Hayner 2011; Stover 2004); or sensitive subjects such as mass murders or sexual violence. This means that there are no guarantees that the needs of victims will be addressed through retributive justice. In comparison, restorative justice allows for greater complexity in the experiences of people to be taken into account, through mechanisms

such as truth commissions, because having a meaningful voice in the process is not reliant on identification as a victim or as a perpetrator (Hayner 2011). Restorative justice does not necessarily require the assignment of guilt, which can be difficult to establish in the chaotic context of armed conflict. Rather, restorative justice looks for ways for society to move forward in a positive direction, without excluding particular ways in which different groups might understand the past. This is crucial for reconciliation to occur, as concerns that are ignored or marginalized could lead to violent conflict later.

2.5 Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Reconstruction

Within the Transitional Justice literature, a major point of contention relates to what should be included in terms of processes and mechanisms, as well as in terms of in what situations is it appropriate to apply transitional justice. Those who advocate a more narrow understanding of transitional justice argue that if you stretch it too much, it loses its meaning (see Teitel, de Greiff 2009, Arthur 2009). Arthur (2009), for example, argues that it is not useful to conflate the notion of historical justice with that of transitional justice, when no real transition is taking place. Furthermore, de Greiff states that transitional justice is overloaded if it tries to include all social and economic crimes. This overload would be particularly problematic in the aftermath of conflict where there may be limited resources, and therefore a need to prioritize the most pressing problems (de Greiff 2009).

In contrast, others argue that transitional justice should be understood more broadly (see Olsen et al. 2010; Ndulo & Duthie 2009; and Hitchcock & Babchuk 2010). In the first place, this means that the approaches, processes, and tools of transitional justice can be used in a wide variety of cases. One definition of transitional justice, for example, states that it is “the array of processes designed to address past human rights violations following periods of political turmoil, state repression, or armed conflict.” (Olsen et al. 2010: 11). It leaves the questions of when the transition took place and what mechanisms were used open for analysis and an inessential part of the definition.

The United Nations Security Council adopts a broad definition of transitional justice as comprising “...the full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society’s

attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation” (United Nations Security Council 2004:4). According to this understanding, transitional justice is defined by the issues it deals with (the aftermath of atrocities) rather than a specific set of processes or a particular period of time. In 2011, the United Nations elaborated on the topic recognizing the need to address the root causes of conflict, naming social and economic inequalities in particular (United Nations Security Council 2011).

Transitional justice intersects with many different areas (i.e., development, security reform, judicial reform, institutional reform, etc.) that it cannot be contained. I argue therefore, that socioeconomic or societal development issues should be included in transitional justice processes. Including such issues may dilute the significance of transitional justice, as it is difficult to measure impact of growth or distribution (de Greiff 2009). Unless people’s material conditions change after massive human rights abuses, however, transitional justice efforts can be empty events (de Greiff 2009). Mass atrocities break social norms and limit the amount of agency people can exercise, which in turn impacts the possibility of development (de Greiff 2009). Transitional justice aims to rebuild norms through recognition, civic trust, and democratization (de Greiff 2009). Trust is crucial for fostering growth and investments both at the micro and the macro level. Distributive justice can help the rebuilding of trust through increasing socioeconomic equality and quality of life. Insofar as transitional justice can help rebuild trust, it has a direct impact on development (de Greiff 2009).

A minimalist definition of distributive justice is about reducing absolute poverty, while a maximalist one includes reducing inequality (Addison 2009). I adopt the maximalist definition and argue that this type of distributive justice is central to the interests of marginalized populations that are often most impacted by violence. Some transitional justice scholars go so far as to argue that distributive justice in the form of greater socioeconomic equality is true justice (de Greiff 2009; Duthie 2009). Accordingly, distributive justice is about greater economic, political, social, and cultural equality. Distributive justice can come in many forms such as land restoration, reparations (material or financial), as well as development and community assistance (de Greiff

2009). Distributive justice puts people, especially victims, on a more level economic and social playing field. This is something that other forms of transitional justice often fail to address (Okello 2010).

Provisions for distributive justice measures tend to be discussed in relation to post-conflict reconstruction, where post-conflict reconstruction refers to the physical and economic rebuilding that takes place after violent conflict (Roht-Arriaza & Orlovsky 2009). The discussion in previous sections on the relationship between inequalities and armed conflict in many ways is the foundation for understanding the role of post-conflict reconstruction. Theoretically, understanding the causes of conflict and why they are sustained should provide insight into approaches for ending said conflict and therefore lead to appropriate measures of post-conflict reconstruction. Langer et al. (2012a) did that very thing by extending Stewart's (who contributed to the volume) discussion of the relationship between group-based inequalities and armed conflict to include issues of post-conflict reconstruction in the book *Horizontal Inequalities and Post-Conflict Development*. Building on the literature discussed in the previous section, Langer et al. recognize that economic and social identities change over time, so the factors that are relevant during the conflict might not be the same afterwards (2012b). In the book they recognize that post-conflict countries are often fragile and at risk of relapsing into conflict (Langer et al. 2012b). For this reason, some argue that policies adopted in the aftermath of conflict must address some of the root causes of the conflict, of which group-based inequalities are a part (Langer et al. 2012b).

One take-away from Langer et al.'s book is that there has been attention to the need for power-sharing at the political level, but there has been less attention to economic power sharing in post-conflict reconstruction (2012b). This lack of attention to economic factors is the result of four factors. Firstly, conflict resolution is focused primarily on being a political process and economic factors are thought of as secondary (Langer et al. 2012b). Secondly, the Washington consensus laissez-faire approach to macro-economic policies and trade is widely accepted, with little attention given to poverty reduction (Langer et al. 2012b). Thirdly, "there is an assumption that political power-sharing will lead to positive economic consequences" (Langer et al. 2012b: 8), which is only partially true. Finally,

policies are often too short-sighted, given the long-term goals of post-conflict reconstruction (Langer et al. 2012b).

The overall aim of this body of literature is to see the extent to which socio-economic group-based inequalities have been addressed in post-conflict economic policies (Langer et al. 2012b). Langer et al. (2012b) consider both official policies implemented in the aftermath of conflict and how group-based inequalities are impacted by other contextual factors that mediate between policies and their impact. Based on a number of case studies they conclude that the impacts of post-conflict reconstruction have varied by context with some areas experiencing an increase and some a decrease in group-based inequalities. Even in places where policies to address group-based inequalities have been adopted during the post-conflict phase, their effectiveness has only been partial, with some important issues neglected, or other inequalities emerging.

Taken together transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction broadly try to address political, economic, social, and cultural restructuring and redressing of related harms caused by violent conflict and atrocities.

2.6 History of Development

The third associated issue in my research revolves around questions of development. Development deals with general groups of people, while transitional justice deals with specific people (those involved or impacted by violence) (Ames Cobián & Reátegui 2009). The interests of distributive justice and development, however, overlap especially in the immediate aftermath of conflict (Roht-Arriaza & Orlovsky 2009). Both fields converge in their goal of improving human development when conceived of as a holistic concept of well-being where people are able to achieve full citizenship (Ames Cobián & Reátegui 2009). Distributive justice is the link between transitional justice and development. Below, therefore, I review the history of development theory and practice, pointing out global trends up until the present day.

Development is a contested concept with competing paradigms that are constantly changing. There are, however, broad ideas that can be identified historically that have

shaped development discourse and practice. Some scholars argue that development goes back to the 18th century and the rise of industrial capitalism (Leys 2005). During this time a sense of “world history” and progress emerged (Leys 2005). It was in 1823 that the foundations for the Monroe Doctrine, for instance, were first introduced by the United States (Sexton 2011). It was declared that the U.S. would not interfere in European wars and that the European powers (such as France, Russia, and Spain) should not try to colonize or otherwise interfere in the North, South, or Central America (Monroe 1823). The influence of this doctrine shaped U.S. policy and involvement in the affairs of Latin American countries for over a century (Smith 1994).

Development in the modern sense of the word, however, was shaped in the aftermath of World War II by the Cold War and the associated ideological tensions between communism and capitalism (Rai 2011a). Post-colonialism also had a significant imprint on development in these early stages (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). Since World War II four major periods in the history of development literature can be identified: economic growth/modernization (1950s & 1960s), dependency theory (1970s), neo-liberalism (1980s); and, anti-development & critical alternative development (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004).

In the 1950s and 1960s, development discourse was characterized by ideas of economic growth and the structural tradition (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). During this period the anti-colonial movement and nationalism as well as the Cold War divide between East and West were central to discourse and practice (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). Modernization theory dominated during this period, whereby development meant bridging the gap between rich and poor countries (Hettne 2002). Closing the gap meant that poor countries tried to imitate the rich ones (Hettne 2002). In the aftermath of World War II, world leaders such as U.S. President Truman were concerned with bringing peace and prosperity to the world (Escobar 1995). This meant there was an emphasis on industrialization, technology, education, and material production (Escobar 1995). Furthermore, key events such as the Marshall Plan and Bretton Woods (Rai 2011a) were important in shaping theory and practice during this time. These events led to the establishment of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. At the

time, these institutions focused on state sovereignty and intervention in the economy to promote growth.

One of the most prominent theories of modernization was Rostow's ([1960] 2014) non-communist theory in the 1960s of the five stages of growth: traditional, preconditions for take-off, take-off, drive to maturity, and high mass consumption. It was thought that societies at first experienced greater inequality but eventually lower inequality (Rostow [1960] 2014). According to Rostow, there are first *traditional societies* which have limited productive capacity. The second stage is the *preconditions for takeoff* and include that modern science is used for new productive functions in agriculture and industry as well as politically building a centralized government. Third, *the takeoff* refers to a situation where new industries are rapidly expanding with high profits that are reinvested. Fourth, the *drive to maturity* happens when modern technology is adopted in all economic activity. Finally, the *age of high mass consumption* has real income per capita rising, the labour force becomes more urban, and more people start working in offices or skilled factory jobs. This can lead to the emergence of the welfare state and it is unclear what would come next (Rostow [1960] 2014).

Late in the 1970s, there was a worldwide economic production crisis that led to criticisms of the development project (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). From the Left this came in the form of a belief in the need for revolutionary change, and from the Right the criticism related to wanting there to be fewer gains for workers because they came at the expense of capital and the propertied class (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). The Left developed what is known as dependency theory, which advocated for systematic change and was rival to modernization theory. Dependency theory claims that the development of some countries relies on the underdevelopment of other countries (Gunder Frank 1973). It is argued that traditional views of development like Rostow's failed to take into account the history of development namely that colonization largely wiped out previous histories (Gunder Frank 1973). Looking at the structure of development could help reveal the causes of underdevelopment and show how it was underdevelopment that financed capitalism (Gunder Frank 1973).

It was during this period that more discussion around the inclusion of women and indigenous people in development processes started to happen. Boserup's (1971) seminal work *Women in Economic Development*, for instance, mapped differences and changes to the role of women's economic contributions in the domestic sphere and in wage labour in Latin America, South East Asia, Africa, India, and Arab countries. Subscribing to a modernization approach to development, she advocates for women's education and policies that reduce the cost of employing women (such as provisions for child care and maternity leave) in order to enable women to participate more fully in wage labour. In terms of the inclusion of indigenous people, the First Convocation of American Indian Scholars took place at Princeton University in 1970 (Cook-Lynn 1997). This event set in motion the discipline of Native American Studies, which aimed to defend indigenous nationhood and focussed on the oral traditions and knowledge of indigenous people (Cook-Lynn 1997). Along similar lines, a collection of essays on cultural ecology edited by Cox (1973) was released that dealt with the history of indigenous economic history and how contact with Europeans had altered their ways of life in Canada.

Another influential development theory that arose in the 1970s was Wallerstein's world-systems analysis (2004). This theory argues that there is one world-system that exists—the capitalist world-economy—which has one division of labour and multiple cultural systems (Wallerstein 1974). The unit of social analysis in capitalist development, therefore, is the world-economy not nation-states (Wallerstein 2000). The main feature of the world-economy is the “production for sale in a market in which the object is to realize the maximum profit” (Wallerstein 2000: 83). It divides the world into core, periphery, and semi-periphery countries (Wallerstein 1974). Core countries are the most powerful, wealthy and economically diverse in the system. They tend to have strong governments and focus on producing manufactured goods. Periphery nations, in contrast, tend to have less power, weaker governments, be poorer, and be less economically diverse. The main basis of the economy in periphery nations is raw materials, which are exported to core nations (Wallerstein 2004). Semi-periphery countries are in between the two, with both a manufacturing economy and the processing of raw materials (Wallerstein 2004). Wallerstein argues that the strength of state machineries in core countries relies on the weakness of state-machineries in the periphery countries (Wallerstein 1974). Meanwhile,

the semi-periphery countries play an important economic and political role to avoid polarization (Wallerstein 1974).

The financial and economic crisis of the 1970s and the need to restructure the world economy set the stage for the rise of neo-liberalism in the 1980s (Overbeek & van der Pijl 1993). Neoliberalism refers here to the “theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade.” (Harvey 2005: 2). According to this perspective the state should not be involved in regulating the market; the state’s primary job is to maintain the institutional framework to make neo-liberalism possible (Harvey 2005).

In an attempt to increase material wealth of their countries and solve problems related to inflation and the economy, world leaders such as Deng Xiaoping in China, Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom, as well as Paul Volcker and Ronald Reagan in the United States, adopted neo-liberal approaches to the economy in the 1980s (Harvey 2005). In the early 1990s, socialism disintegrated as Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and their Third World allies began to be reintegrated into the world economy (Overbeek & van der Pijl 1993). Neoliberalism in the form of the privatization of state-controlled economy and political liberalization swept the former socialist countries (Overbeek & van der Pijl 1993). The new global norms became free international competition, free markets, and the aim of increasing wealth (Overbeek & van der Pijl 1993).

In terms of development policy during this period, some argued that inequality was necessary for eventual economic growth (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). Others started to advocate for more participation of the poor themselves in development if real change was to be made (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). Having failed to close the development gap, leaders at world institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF started to advocate and enforce structural adjustment programs (SAPs) (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). SAPs were also a response to a debt crisis that came from the oil crisis of the 1970s (Rai 2011a). These programs were primarily aimed at liberalizing the economy and removing the state

as the main actor in the economy (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). Eventually, however, it was seen that the negative consequences of these programs were more long-term than anticipated and disproportionately impacted the vulnerable (poor, women, youth, etc.) (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). Having seen the negative consequences of SAPs, international institutions tried to make reforms by promoting decentralization, prioritizing the interests of the extremely poor (especially by the World Bank), and the incorporation of NGOs and civil society (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). Later in the 1990s, the tendency to include NGOs expanded to include the private sector (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). Ideas such as equity, participation, sustainability, human face, and social inclusion became more popular in development theory (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004).

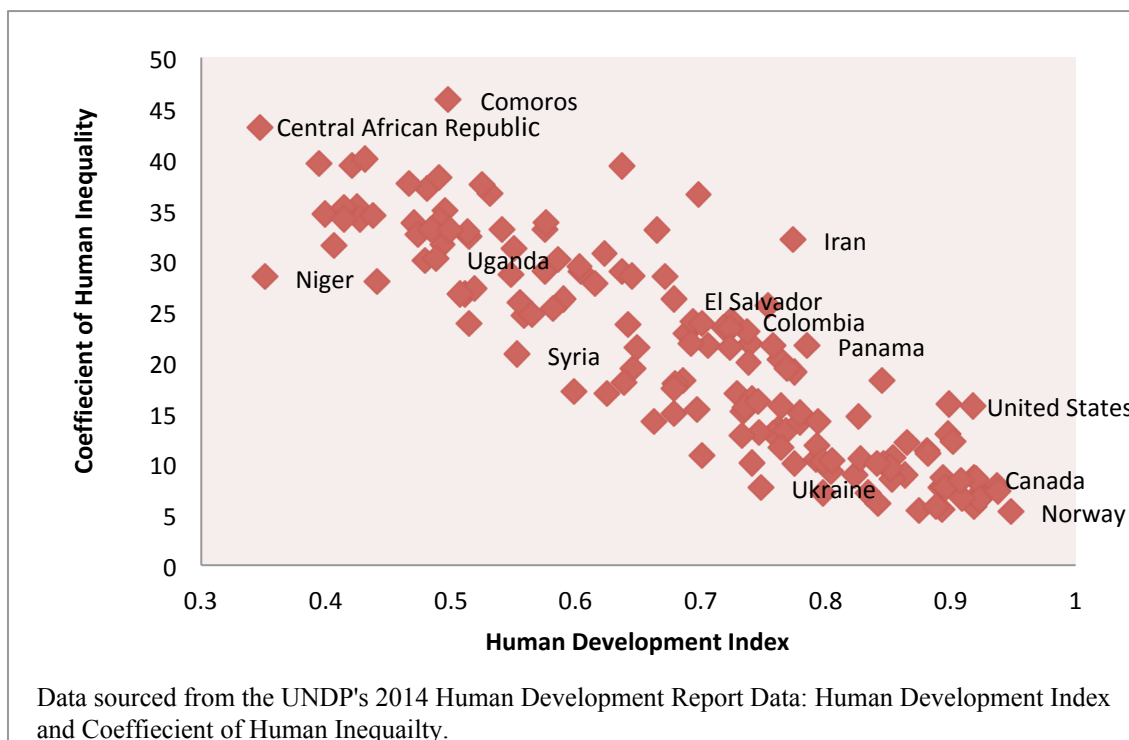
Recently, postmodernist and post-structuralist approaches focus on how subaltern people have been silenced (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). They question the idea of progress even being achievable (Rai 2011b). They have led to anti-development and critical alternative development theories. Anti-development argues that development created a space where only certain things could be said (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). Arturo Escobar, a prominent thinker in the anti-development school, argues that the development project of improving standards of living has failed miserably (Escobar 1995). He states that the discourse of development provides a way of controlling and further marginalizing poor populations (Escobar 1995). Solutions and ways forward for communities, he argues, should be grounded locally in collective action of the poor themselves who have the power to change their circumstances (Escobar 1995).

Critical development, in turn, focuses on the need to empower the poor and the impact that development discourse has on thoughts and ideas that shape what is possible to do (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004). It focuses on the intersection of culture and the economy as well as questions of agency and dominance. One theorist in this tradition counters the idea of natural progress and states that development has been Eurocentric and a way that the West has been able to dominate others (Tucker 1999). Similarly, other theorists such as Sardar (1999) and de Sousa Santos (1999) recognize the importance of including a variety of voices and alternatives to social order that are not imposed by the West in order to improve the material condition of marginalized populations. Furthermore, another

promoter of the critical development perspective is Friedmann (1992) who argues rebellion against the central state will not bring development; rather integrating people better into democracy will bring better results. Some are critical of both approaches because they do not pay enough attention to real power structures (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004).

The meaning of the term ‘development’ has changed over time. Development as a purely economic term has given way to a more holistic concept. Social change is understood as development during the process of decolonization (Ferguson 2005). One writer puts it this way: “development is fundamentally about changing how people conduct their lives, and the very claim to technical knowledge is itself a political act” (Cooper & Packard 2005:133). Accordingly, development work is about social change, and can be about social change in a particular direction. The direction of social change is not necessarily one that promotes the overall interests of the vulnerable people it espouses to serve. Today, the mainstream definition of development is that of “human development” as given by the United Nations: “. . . a process of enlarging people’s choices. The most critical ones are to lead a long and healthy life, to be educated, and to enjoy a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and self-respect” (UNDP 1990: 10). Development in this sense is not solely concerned with economic factors but rather is interested in dealing with overall quality of life for the whole population (Ames Cobián & Reátegui 2009). In this way, the concept of development relates to improving quality of life (usually targeting vulnerable or marginalized populations), whether that is by economic, social, political, or cultural means. The Human Development Index, for example takes a large number of different variables into consideration to determine development. As can be seen in distributions of data points in Figure 3, the dichotomy of developing versus developed countries is insufficient as development is more accurately characterized as a continuum with a widespread distribution of both inequality and measures of human development. Similarly, Hans Rosling (2009) points out that a country’s level of development depends largely on what variables are being taken into consideration.

Figure 3: Country Inequality by Human Development Index²



2.7 Gender

The final issue I discuss is gender, which cuts across all the topics discussed in this thesis. A gendered lens allows me to take into account the ways that men, women, boys, and girls are differentially impacted by poverty, inequalities, and armed conflict. Below I give a brief overview of the literature on the topic of gender, and argue that adopting a gendered lens is useful for better understanding the lived realities of people displaced by conflict and living in poverty. Firstly, I consider the unique nature of gender as a site of struggle and inequality because of its pervasiveness and relation to the structure of

² The Coefficient of Human Inequality: “is a simple average of inequalities in health, education and income. The average is calculated by an unweighted arithmetic mean of estimated inequalities in these dimensions. When all inequalities are of a similar magnitude, the coefficient of human inequality and the loss in HDI differ negligibly, when inequalities differ in magnitude, the loss in HDI tends to be higher than the coefficient of human inequality” (UNDP 2017a).

societies. Secondly, I outline why it is important to understand the role of family in society and the dichotomy of private/public life.

The significance of gender especially lies in the social interactions and the activities of males and females and the unequal distribution of power, social inclusion, decision-making, resources, and opportunities. A gendered lens is used to access subaltern and marginalized perspectives (Guérin, Guétat-Bernard & Verschuur 2014). There are two aspects of gender inequality that make it particularly important for the present analysis: how prevalent gender inequality is; and how this type of inequality relates to the structure of society. Gender inequalities are widespread, impacting people across countries and societies (Kabeer 2015). Kabeer (2015) argues that gender inequality is often ingrained in the structure of societies in much the same way as capitalism or class is. From this perspective we understand that individual lives are “products of larger structures and historical legacies” (Boris 2014: 200). This means that any policies meant to address gender inequalities must also look at the political and economic power imbalances that sustain them.

In the 2000s, the family became the most pertinent unit of social analysis for government intervention (Destremau & Lautier 2014: 91). The family is central to power structures, especially during crisis (Belkhir 2007). Within the family resources are not necessarily distributed equally or cordially; rather, the home can be a profoundly contested space (Rai 2011b). Breaking down the household into its various members and understanding how poverty, or other social factors, impacts them differently is one of the first steps in adopting a gendered lens (Kabeer 2015).

It is also important to understand the relation between public and private spaces. This has meant looking into how inequalities can come from both the private and public spaces, as well as by interactions between the two spaces. Therefore, inequalities cannot simply be dealt with by enforcing laws and programs that target the labour market or other public domains (Chant 2011). The International Labour Organization, for example, was one of the first to consider women in development by looking at the role of reproductive labour for household (private) and national economies (public) (Boris 2014). Recognizing the

connection between the private and the public can have important policy implications. For example, the strategy of having women-only development projects may not be very effective in facilitating empowerment when those projects might in fact be privately negotiated with men (Cleaver 2002). There is a need to break down the dichotomy between public/private and formal/informal. Tadros (2014) argues that these categories are not very meaningful in terms of political empowerment because much political action takes place in the private and informal arenas, not just public places. It is by looking at the roles in the private, informal arenas that gendered exclusion can be more clearly seen (Tadros 2014).

2.8 Gender and Development

There is a particular branch of gender studies that deals with development issues. This branch has helped me better understand people's experiences in the aftermath of conflict as they struggle with meeting their basic needs and improving the lives of their families. Below, I consider the discourse surrounding gender and development, both in terms of what it is and some related problems. I then detail the importance of incorporating men into gender and development discourse and practice.

There has been a great deal written about gender and development, yet some claim that it has not been given enough attention (Guérin, Guétat-Bernard & Verschuur 2014). The concept of gender and development emerged following discourse related to another branch of study women and development. Discourse within women and development studies had focused more on women's inclusion, while gender and development discourse began to focus on gender relations and emancipation (Rai 2011b). It is through gender and development studies that people examine the intersectionality of inequalities and the resulting "structural relations of domination and exploitation" (Destremau, Blandine & Lautier 2014: 94). In this way it allows for insight into how inequalities are differentially experienced based on gender.

Since the 1990s, gender issues have been more central to the fight against poverty, and the fight against poverty has been more central to development theory and practice (Destremau, Blandine & Lautier 2014). A prevailing argument in gender and

development discourse is that women are disproportionately impacted by poverty and face a number of barriers in terms of health, education, and labour (Destremau, Blandine & Lautier 2014). These connections between gender and poverty are related to the concept of the ‘feminization of poverty’. Some of the main assumptions of the feminization of poverty are that women have higher incidence of poverty, depth and severity of poverty, and more barriers to escaping poverty, as well as more persistent and longer-term poverty (Chant 2011).

There are three main problems with the feminization of poverty literature as well as gender and development discourse in general. Firstly, some claim that the idea of “the poor woman” has been used for economic and political ends, and the notion of gender has been trivialized, obscuring forms of domination (Destremau, Blandine & Lautier 2014). Secondly, some have challenged the main assumptions of the feminization of poverty, arguing that, in development, discourse and policies have been uncritical despite the boldness of their claims (Chant 2011). Thirdly, and relatedly, development literature has often conflated women’s poverty with gender inequality (Kabeer 2015). It has at times been assumed that dealing with gender inequality means dealing with poverty (Kabeer 2015). Policies sometimes aim to connect gender and poverty in order to deal with two problems together (Chant 2011). This, however, is not always appropriate. For example, a policy may deal with gender equality on the level of human rights and not necessarily have any impact on socio-economic realities. It is important to recognize the interconnectedness of gender and poverty related issues, but equally important to realise the ways in which they are distinct in terms of content and consequences. All three problems require the careful analyst to look at the underlying structures in particular societies in order to better understand the context and role of gender in shaping experiences.

Another problem with the gender and development literature relates to a lack of attention to men and trends that can negatively impact them. I want to explore this problem in more detail, because by dealing with it some of the problems mentioned above may also be addressed. Cleaver (2002) is one academic who examines some of the biases in the gender and development literature and the failure to incorporate men into the discourse.

One bias that Cleaver (2002) challenges, for example, is the idea that men are simply obstacles to women's development or that women can only develop if men give up power. Similarly, Silberschmidt (2001) argues that it is an oversimplification to see women's inequalities as resulting from men being the problem and women victims; but this bias is deeply ingrained in the gender and development discourse.

Men need to be included in the social analysis of poverty and development for several reasons. Firstly, empowerment can liberate both men and women (Cleaver 2002). Gender is experienced relationally, and therefore one needs to look at the inequalities and vulnerabilities of both men and women in order to improve circumstances (Silberschmidt 2001). Masculinities are contested, negotiated and always reconstructed depending on power relations (Silberschmidt 2001). Secondly, men also have gendered vulnerabilities. For instance, men have specific vulnerabilities related to HIV (Cleaver 2002) and shorter life expectancies, while women have higher rates of disease (Sen & Ostlin 2011). Thirdly, people's lives, in both rural and urban centers, are often characterized by poverty and economic hardship (Silberschmidt 2001). Meanwhile, men are expected to be providers but are finding themselves unable to do so (Silberschmidt 2001). There is, thereby, a contradiction between the material basis of men's authority and the normative responsibilities they have, because the material basis (providing for the family) is increasingly difficult to secure (Silberschmidt 2001).

Men, women, boys, and girls will have differentiated experiences of poverty, inequality and conflict; yet they are all interconnected through social relationships and community structures. A gendered lens, therefore, does not simply involve focussing on women, but rather focussing on how gender impacts people's experiences and vulnerabilities.

2.9 Conclusion

This research project aims to better understand the lived realities of people displaced by conflict living in Chocó. The project intersects with a broad set of literatures and the four issues I have outlined above (the relationship between inequality and armed conflict, transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction, development, and gender) have been crucial in understanding the context and experiences of my study population. This project

has emerged as a result of engaging with these literatures and as a way to further the depth of analysis available to understand conflict, displacement, justice, development, gender, and the people most vulnerable in affected communities.

In my research I am interested in each body of literature as they relate to the role of inequalities in shaping the experiences of victims of conflict, especially the displaced. In terms of the relationship between inequality and armed conflict, the main argument in the literature is that both greed and grievances are important for explaining conflict; but that grievances, particularly in the form of group-based inequalities, are more important. In the transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction literature, in turn, there is a focus on how to redress harms caused by conflict and atrocities as well as attempting to prevent a relapse into violence. One of the central problems in this literature is related to the question of whether or not inequalities need to be addressed in order for justice to exist. Meanwhile, throughout the history of development discourse the main problem has been how to improve the quality of life and standards of living of the poor given the inequalities that exist in the world. The debates surrounding how this should be done are reflected in the different approaches outlined above. Finally, in the gender literature, a central problem relates to how men, women, boys, and girls experience social reality, and therefore inequalities, differently.

The point of departure for my research stems from these issues and can be summarized in this statement:

The majority of armed conflicts today occur in countries at low levels of development. Poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment may not in themselves cause armed conflict and human rights abuses, but they can be contributing or enabling factors. Moreover, armed conflict and authoritarianism, and the humanitarian disasters and massive human rights abuses that often accompany them, can have an immensely negative and long-lasting impact on development.”
(Duthie 2009)

It is the way that inequalities intersect between the issues of conflict, transitional justice, development, and gender in the context of victimization that is the focus of my research.

My research aims to explore the ways that inequalities have shaped victimization and concepts of justice for participants. I explore the extent to which the reduction of inequalities should be central to transitional justice processes, and therefore signal the importance of development initiatives. I also contribute to the gender literature by discussing how vulnerabilities are experienced by gender and what this says about the larger structural realities in Chocó. In these ways my research both engages with and elaborates upon the literature related to the four issues explored in this chapter: inequality/conflict, transitional justice, development, and gender.

The focus of my research is people displaced by the internal armed conflict in Colombia who are living in the department of Chocó. The conflict in this area is characterized by the participation of multiple armed groups and the remoteness of the populations involved. My research questions are as follows. First, how do the displaced exercise agency, and what is the role of inequalities in shaping what is possible for them in terms of improving quality of life? Second, how do the displaced understand justice and how can it best be achieved in the context of Chocó?

Chapter 3

3 Methodology

My research is a qualitative analysis of the experiences of people displaced by conflict living in Chocó, Colombia. Adopting the framework of Bourdieu's social theory (see Chapter 4 for more discussion), I recognize that it is not possible to be completely objective while conducting research, but also that subjective experience in and of itself is not sufficient to describe social phenomenon. My methodological approach therefore has been two-fold. On the one hand, I have aimed to give voice to the perspectives and priorities of the participants in this research related to improving quality of life and justice. On the other hand, I have aimed to move beyond subjective views of individual participants and uncover some of the structural realities that underlie them, utilizing the analytical framework that I will explain in the next chapter.

This chapter is a means for explaining in detail the methodology I used to pursue these two goals. In the first section, I describe how I chose my research question topic and location. Next, I detail how I conducted and organized my primary research. In the third section, I discuss how I analysed the interview data and ethnographic observations gained to reach the conclusions you will find in the following chapters. In the fourth section, I discuss the ways in which my own position and views have impacted the research process. Finally, I discuss some of the limitations of my methodology. My overall aim here is to shed light on the processes, contextual, and personal factors that influenced the development of this research project.

3.1 Topic and Location of Fieldwork

First, I would like to explain why I chose the topics of quality of life and justice for people that have been displaced by conflict. I have long been interested in armed conflicts and the catastrophic human and natural impacts that they can have. There have been an alarming number of conflicts around the world in the last century, and this has corresponded to a high number of refugees, internally displaced persons, and other conflict migrants (see UCDP 2017 and UNHCR 2017). Armed conflict in many ways is a

display of human society at its worst. Therefore, I believe that if we can understand conflict, we can better understand how to heal and move forward to create better societies that respect the dignity and worth of their members. I am particularly interested in the victims who are marginalized by conflicts. I wanted my work to give voice to people that are often unheard in mainstream academia, media, and political spheres. My hope is that research of this nature can help to inform better policy.

The process of choosing a location for my research involved thinking in terms of safety, personal interest, and feasibility. Many places that have ongoing conflict or have recently ended armed conflict did not meet my own personal standards of safety for me as a researcher or for my participants. Although Chocó, at the time of research was involved in ongoing conflict, it was relatively secure in the capital city of Quibdó. I could safely travel to and reside in Quibdó for the purposes of carrying out research on the conflict. Similarly, people in Quibdó could participate openly so long as some measures to protect confidentiality were employed. I elaborate more on the context of Quibdó in Chapter 5.

Furthermore, I was drawn to Chocó mainly because of its colonial history of slavery and cultural makeup of predominantly Afro-Colombians, which resulted in persistent cultural similarities between Chocó and parts of Africa. Having spent several months volunteering in Burkina Faso and Mali in the past, I was curious what African culture looked like in South America. My personal interest in doing research in Chocó was also encouraged by the fact that the people of Chocó and their experiences have not been discussed significantly in academia. This seemed to me an opportunity to shed light on an area of the world that most people outside of the region, and to a greater extent outside of Colombia had little knowledge about. Indeed, Holloway argues that in qualitative research an unexamined topic is more interesting and appropriate (2011).

Lastly, there were several logistical factors that made this location feasible for me. First, my husband is from Colombia and his father is originally from Quibdó. As a result we have family in the city that could help get me oriented. Second, doing research in this area was economically feasible given limited funds because flights were not too expensive and I was able to spend part of my time staying with family members. Third, I

speak fluent Spanish, so doing work in a Hispanic area was a good fit for me. In Chocó, everyone, with the exception of some members of Indigenous communities, speaks Spanish. Given the safety situation, my personal interests, and the feasibility of the location, Quibdó was a good location for me to conduct my research.

3.2 Data Collection

Once I had chosen my topic and location I needed to arrange the logistics of conducting interviews and ethnographic observations, for which I made one preliminary trip to Quibdó. This first trip lasted two weeks in June and July of 2014. My aim was to see the place where I had been planning to do my research and to learn more about it. I did not conduct any systematic research during this preliminary field trip, but organized some logistics and became familiar with the local context. For example, I spoke informally with people I met, including community members and leaders of certain organizations that worked with the displaced. This enabled me to gain a better understanding of the issues faced by my potential study population and helped me prepare for actually conducting the research. Upon receiving my Ethics Approval from Western's Non-Medical Ethics Review – Full Board in September of 2014 (see Appendix I), I returned to Quibdó for four and a half weeks in October and November of 2014. During this time I conducted ethnographic observations and completed 50 individual interviews and 2 focus groups.

In terms of ethnographic observations, I spent time in various communities where the displaced lived and worked in and near Quibdó. As part of my observations I sat with people on their front porches, visited peoples' homes, walked through markets and streets, sat in cafes, and shopped in stores. By befriending local residents I was able to gain access to some areas of the city that I would have otherwise been unable to visit due to security concerns. I also attended some meetings and activities of local associations and women's groups. In particular, two informal meetings with groups of women displaced by conflict were held where I had opportunities to ask questions and listen to stories. These experiences allowed me to listen to local residents discuss amongst themselves some of their daily concerns. As a result I was better able to understand the

daily lives, customs, social norms, and challenges faced by the study population. I took daily notes of my experiences throughout my stay in Quibdó.

My study also involved face-to-face semi-structured interviews with 50 people from and around Quibdó. The open-ended or semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for some standardization across the interviews, while at the same time allowing issues important to the participants to emerge. The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed me to uncover new and unanticipated insights from the participants. The types of questions were the same for everyone, but they varied slightly to accommodate differences in class, education, and occupation (see interview guides Appendices C, D, and E). This method allowed for in-depth examinations of subjective experiences and opinions.

There were two groups that I recruited people from for interviews. The first group consisted of people that had been displaced by conflict and were living in or near Quibdó. In total I interviewed forty-one people displaced by conflict—thirty-one women and ten men. The higher number of women recruited was done intentionally in order to focus in on some of the struggles faced particularly by women. The second group I recruited from were key informants involved in the lives of the displaced in Quibdó, such as representatives from organizations, state agencies, community leaders, religious leaders, as well as business leaders. I interviewed nine key informants—seven women and two men. Overall, in order to participate in my study interviewees had to be displaced by conflict or work closely with that population in or near Quibdó.

I used a modified snowball/referral method of recruitment. My husband's uncle Elias Cordoba lived and worked in Quibdó. He was well known in the political, academic and NGO communities in Quibdó. Mr. Cordoba initially helped me make contact with some local leaders and organizations. Prior to beginning the research project, through Mr. Cordoba's help and my own networking I was able to make contact with several local organizations that work with displaced women from Chocó including Women and Life (Mujer y Vida), Departmental Network of Women from Chocó (Red Departamental de Mujeres Chocoanas) and Claretian University Foundation (Fundacion Universitaria

Claretiana). These organizations helped inform some members and their affiliates of the research project and solicited them to consider participating. People could then contact me to arrange a time to meet. In this way I was able to make initial contact with some people that were interested in participating in my study and began the interviews.

The longer I was in Quibdó, however, I began to recruit more participants by spending time in the neighbourhoods, in markets, and by word of mouth. As I spent time in public places, walking the streets, in cafes or in markets, I would meet people that had been displaced by conflict. If I thought it was appropriate, given our conversation, I would tell them about my research and ask if they would be interested in participating. People in Colombia, and especially in Chocó, are very friendly, so it was not difficult to talk with people, even if they were strangers. As I spent time talking with people about my research, a lot of interest was generated. I became known in the community and people that met the inclusion criteria were able to approach me to participate. Furthermore, I gave my local contact information to every participant in case they knew of any neighbours, friends, or relatives that might like to participate in the study. Potential participants were then able to contact me by phone, email, or in person, via one of the organizations mentioned above, or another participant. At this point, the inclusion criteria were employed. The vast majority of my participants I either met in public places or they approached me about my research having heard about it from a friend or family member.

Using these recruitment methods, I was able to interview both displaced people that were actively involved in political or social advocacy work and those who were not involved directly or extensively with organizations. I found this mix beneficial because it allowed me to gain a better understanding of some of the collective issues of the displaced as well as some of the day-to-day struggles people faced without tying them directly to a political agenda. By political agenda, I am mostly referring to people that belonged to particular NGOs that might want certain aspects of the lives of the displaced or priorities to be emphasized over others in accordance with that NGO's objectives (i.e. women's issues, Indigenous issues, training, crafts, etc.).

I conducted two group interviews with people displaced by conflict. Both groups were made up only of women and within both people knew one another already from working in the same organizations together. The aim of the focus groups was to generate discussion on ideas amongst participants in a way that might not be possible in individual interviews. I had planned on doing more focus groups, but as I discuss later individual interviews turned out to generate more information and be more comfortable for participants.

I presented all potential interviewees with a letter of information concerning the study and asked them to give their verbal consent if they wished to proceed with the interview. During this time I put an emphasis on the fact that participation was voluntary. The letter was translated into Spanish (see Appendices A and B). If an interviewee was illiterate, I read the letter of information aloud to the participant as well as answered any questions s/he may have had. If given permission by each respondent, I audio recorded the interview. I took detailed notes at every interview as audio recording was not always possible and the quality of the recordings could not be guaranteed given background noise.

I conducted all my interviews in Spanish. I only used a translator in a limited way in the first five interviews as I was adjusting to the local accent and terminologies. The translator would only translate during interviews upon request. Interviews lasted between 30 minutes and two hours. The average interview time was approximately 40 minutes. Interviews that had been recorded were transcribed in the months that followed my fieldwork. In total, 28 interviews were fully transcribed by people I hired in Colombia and Canada. The other 22 interviews were analyzed based on interview and field notes. The translator and transcribers were required to sign a non-disclosure and confidentiality agreement (see Appendices G and F).

At the beginning of individual interviews I asked participants questions related to gender, ethnicity, civil status, neighbourhood, religion, occupation as well as some other basic information (see Appendix F: Survey of Basic Information Spanish). I also collected the first name and the initial of the last name of participants in this study. This was done in

order to be traceable to actual people, which is standard practice for ethnographic observations. All participants were subsequently given pseudonyms that I use throughout this study. This was a very important step in the process as interviews discussed sensitive issues and safety was a concern for several participants and their family members. Participants were assured in this way that their identities would be confidential and were able to more openly discuss sensitive issues.

After collecting basic information on displaced participants, I began asking a variety of questions that fit into four categories. First, I asked people about their experiences of displacement, questions such as: What was life like in your communities before displacement? What happened when you were displaced? What was life like when you arrived in Quibdó? Second, I asked questions related to the priorities and challenges they faced as people displaced by conflict, such as: What is life in your neighbourhood like? How would you like to change your conditions of life? Third, I asked questions related to the peace process and justice such as: Is peace possible? Should the guilty be punished? Fourth, I asked questions related to their affiliations and concepts of responsibility, questions such as: What do you think the government should do in order to ensure the wellbeing of your community? Are you a member of an organization? If so, please tell me about the organization. I asked key informants similar questions during interviews, not about their personal experiences in displacement, but rather about their experiences in working with people from that population. For more details on the types of questions I asked participants, please see the interview guides in Appendices C, D, and E.

3.3 Data Analysis

Once I finished my fieldwork and the transcriptions of interviews were completed, I began to analyse the data. Interviews and field-notes were crosschecked for validity and examined for patterns and insights concerning the project objectives and purpose.

I identified patterns and grouped quotes and notes into themes. The main themes emerged around the analytical framework that I use in this research, which I describe in the next chapter. These themes included how the experiences of the displaced related to their structural positions in Colombian society, namely, victimization, gender relations,

symbolic justice, and material justice. Given my concern for finding out more about the role of inequalities in the various views and experiences of participants, I had organized my interview questions in such a way that I would learn more about participants' experiences of displacement, their gender relations, their concepts of justice, as well as their perspectives on how their quality of life could be improved.

The first theme of victimization seems obvious in retrospect, as I asked participants to talk about their experiences of displacement. The second theme of gender relations I had intentionally investigated to understand the ways in which conflict and poverty are differentially experienced. What came as a surprise was the extent to which peoples' experiences were interconnected and the ways in which they understood gender relations, as I discuss in Chapter 8. The third theme related to the role of transitional justice came about in part by design and was further shaped by the interview and analysis process. Given my interest in the transitional justice literature I had asked questions specifically about reparations, punishment, truth, and forgiveness; therefore it is only natural that participants discussed these issues. Originally, I saw these issues as stand-alone themes that impacted the lives of people displaced by conflict. Given my analytical framework, it became apparent that many of the transitional justice mechanisms and issues I discussed with participants related to the concept of symbolic justice. The fourth theme of material justice was informed by my analytical framework and came about because I asked questions about how participants could improve their quality of life. I did not, however, know what those priorities would be or what the link between those priorities and concepts of justice would be at the time of interviews.

There were certainly issues that participants discussed in interviews that related to different themes that I did not include in this research. For example, participants discussed issues related to responsibility and the roles of various stakeholders such as NGOs and the international community. Originally, I had thought these issues would be more important to participants' concepts of justice, but they turned out to be minimal as the research progressed. Therefore, certain issues, though I may briefly touch upon them at various times in this research, were not central to my analysis in the same way that the four themes mentioned above have been.

I organized and coded, where possible, key responses, circumstances, and characteristics of my participants. The coding was done by hand as I reviewed each interview either by reading transcripts or my interview notes. For each participant I coded their basic information such as gender, age, ethnicity, occupation, neighbourhood, salary, religion, etc. I also created a code based on reoccurring issues and themes. For example, I coded some information about their displacement when available such as when they were displaced, where they were displaced from, if relatives had been killed during displacement, if they had been directly or indirectly threatened, if they had talked about rape or recruitment to armed groups, and key factors about life in their community prior to displacement. I also coded the priority areas each participant identified as important to improve their quality of life (education, housing, income, health care, etc.). Participants' responses related to notions of responsibility for the conflict and roles of internal and external actors were also coded. Finally, I coded issues related to transitional justice, such as if they had received reparations as well as views on punishment, truth, and forgiveness.

Once I had finished coding all interviews I looked for any gaps and tried to go back to interviews that I was missing information on. Some participants discussed particular topics more in depth than others and not all participants expressed their views on all the topics that were coded. I also used keyword searches in my transcripts to identify participant responses related to key themes as my writing progressed.

3.4 Profile of Study Participants

A variety of perspectives were captured in those who were interviewed for my study. In the tables below I outline some of the basic information on my participants, including gender, ethnicity, civil status, age, occupation, and income that I collected. Table 1 shows basic information about my displaced participants (41 of the 50 interviews I conducted), excluding key informants. Amongst displaced participants there were ten males and thirty-one females; thirty-seven identified as Afro-Colombians and four as Indigenous. This division reflects the ethnic makeup of Chocó more generally, with 82% of the

people being Afro-Colombian and 12% Indigenous (DANE 2005).³ I had participants between the ages of eighteen and seventy-four, and the average age of participants was forty-four years old.

Table 1: Basic Information on Displaced Participants

Characteristics	Participants (n= 41)
Gender	
Male	10
Female	31
Ethnicity	
Afro-Colombian	37
Indigenous	4
Marital Status	
Single	19
Married	7
Liberal Union	13
Widowed	2
Divorced	0
Age	
18-24	7
25-32	4
33-40	7
41-48	10
49-56	5
57-64	5
65-74	3

Table 1 also shows that the largest group of displaced participants (nineteen) were single, while seven were married, thirteen were in liberal unions, two were widowed, and none were divorced. I should note here that this category of civil status is not completely reflective of the entirety of peoples' experiences and identities. For instance, some

³ I should note here that a few of the interviewees that identified as Afro-Colombian might have had Spanish and/or Indigenous heritage in addition to Afro-Colombian heritage, even though they identified themselves as Afro-Colombians. This was more likely to be the case with key informants, however, as the displaced people that came from rural communities had lived in quite isolated in **mono-ethnic** groups.

participants had been widowed or married in the past and subsequently entered into new relationships. At the time of interview, they may have only identified as their most recent civil status. Another consideration in terms of civil status was that many of the people that were single had at one point been in a very long-term liberal union, yet they did not identify themselves as divorced or widowed because the union was not performed legally. A liberal union refers to a man and woman that live together but are not officially married. Fortunately, I was able to delve more into the multilayered nature of these identities through the interview process.

Table 2 shows that the majority of participants in this study were displaced between 1995 and 2004 (32 of 39 displaced participants). This time period coincides with historical periods when large displacements took place as a result of intensified fighting between armed groups in Chocó. I also had the opportunity to interview some people that were more recently displaced: four displaced between 2005-2009 and five displaced between 2010-2014.

Table 2: Year Participants were Displaced

Number Of Participants	Year Displaced
5	2010-2014
4	2005-2009
18	2000-2004
14	1995-1999

Of my participants that were displaced by conflict, the vast majority belonged to the poorest class of Colombian society, which is not surprising given their vulnerability to displacement and the fact that they lived in the poorest department of the country. As you can see in Table 3, many participants worked selling food (19.5%), doing advocacy work (17%), as general labourers (15%), housewives (12.25%), or unemployed (12.25%). Meanwhile there were also some student participants (10%), some disabled or sick (7%), some that did artisanal work (5%), and one teacher (2%). The menial and often precarious employment of most of the displaced participants in this study is reflected in Table 4 where I show monthly salaries. Eighty-seven percent of the displaced participants who were interviewed made 500,000 pesos or less a month. To contextualize this, the minimum monthly salary in Colombia at the time was around 616,000 pesos (Martínez

Table 3: Displaced Participants' Occupations

Occupation	#	%
Selling Food	8	19.5%
NGO/Community Advocacy	7	17%
General Labourer	6	15%
Housewife	5	12.25%
Unemployed	5	12.25%
Student	4	10%
Disabled or Sick	3	7%
Artisanal Work	2	5%
Teacher	1	2%
TOTAL	41	100%

Table 4: Displaced Participants' Monthly Income

Monthly Income	#	%
Not working	7	17%
under 200,000COP	9	21.5%
200,000-400,000COP	19	46.5%
over 400,000COP	6	14%
TOTAL	41	100%

2015), which would be US \$520 purchasing power parity (PPP)⁴ (World Bank 2016). You will also notice that only sixty-three percent of displaced participants actually made 300,000 pesos a month or less, which would be around US \$250 PPP or less. Only five displaced participants made over the minimum wage, with two making between 700,000 and 900,000 pesos a month and three making over 1,000,000 pesos a month. Clearly the

⁴ Purchasing Power Parity refers to “the rates of currency conversion that equalize the purchasing power of different currencies by eliminating the differences in price levels between countries. In their simplest form, PPPs are simply price relatives that show the ratio of the prices in national currencies of the same good or service in different countries. PPPs are also calculated for product groups and for each of the various levels of aggregation up to and including GDP” (OECD 2017). Conversion factor for 2014 was \$1 PPP = 1,184.53 COP.

displaced participants in this study represent the poorest segment of Colombia's society. In comparison, according to a 2012 survey the average monthly salary in Colombia was US \$692 PPP (BBC 2012).

I interviewed nine key informants—five worked for NGOs and four worked for government agencies. All the people who worked for NGOs worked directly with the displaced population, offering services or engaging in advocacy work with them. Of the people working in government agencies, two worked at the departmental level, one was from the city level, and one was from the Municipal Office for Attention to Victims. All of them either worked directly with the displaced or held key positions to influence policies that impacted their lives.

Table 5: Basic Information on Key Informant Participants

Characteristics	Participants (<i>n</i> = 9)
Gender	
Male	2
Female	7
Ethnicity	
Afro-Colombian	7
Other	2
Marital Status	
Single	3
Married	2
Liberal Union	2
Widowed	0
Divorced	2
Age	
18-24	0
25-32	0
33-40	1
41-48	4
49-56	1
57-64	3
65-74	0

Table 5 shows some of the basic information I collected on key informants (nine of the 50 interviews I conducted), excluding displaced participants. You will see that seven were Afro-Colombians and two identified as other ethnicities. The vast majority of

participants self-identified as Afro-Colombian, which is consistent with the ethnic makeup of Chocó. I have chosen not to identify the ethnicities of the two key informants that were not Afro-Colombian, as Quibdó is a small community and they may too easily be identifiable. In comparison with the displaced participants, the key informants' civil status was more even across categories with three single, two married, two in liberal unions, none widowed, and two divorced. Furthermore, all the key informants were between the ages of thirty-three and sixty-four; this reflects the fact that many of the key informants had been working with the displaced for years and were well established in their careers.

3.5 Reflexivity

Reflexivity has been an important part of the research process for me, as I have examined my own position and views to see how they may have impacted my work. Reflexivity refers to “the process of a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of researcher’s positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome” (Berger 2015). Holloway, for instance argues that critical analysis is essential when it comes to the relationship between the researcher and the participant (2011). Accordingly, in this section I want to explain three ways my position and views have impacted my research: firstly, my position as an outsider to the Colombian context; secondly, my position as a woman; and thirdly, the preconceived ideas that I had related to gender relations and justice.

The first and most significant issue I have had to reflect upon is the impact that being an outsider has had on my research. From formulating the research question, to conducting the fieldwork, to analysis of the data, I have been an outsider. In the field it was clear that I was neither from Colombia, nor was Spanish my native language. As a white Anglophone from Canada, I was clearly not from Quibdó. Furthermore, I occupied very different socio-economic and political positions than most of my participants: socio-economic in the sense that as noted above many of my participants made less than US \$250 a month, and relative to that standard I had significantly more social and economic capital. I had a different political position than my participants because I am from Canada where we have a greater access to political representation and I was perceived to have

more international influence. My position as an outsider in terms of culture, language, socio-economic position and perceived political power had a number of impacts on my research.

For one, being an outsider helped me look at my study population from a fresh perspective. I did not have many preconceived ideas about, for example, what their priorities would be in terms of quality of life and justice. My outsider status also allowed me to examine local practices and experiences from a point of view external to local understanding. This enabled me to be able to more clearly distinguish underlying structures that guided certain customs, experiences, and behaviours. I could identify how certain practices signalled social position. The fact that some of the displaced had initially been afraid to make a declaration at the city hall that they were victims of the conflict and therefore receive aid offers a pertinent example. On the surface, it appeared that these people were acting solely out of fear. However, this reaction to violence signalled their isolated and marginalized social position.

Another positive aspect of my outsider status is what Berger argues can be an empowering experience for participants (2015). In the case of my research I found that the interview process could be empowering for some participants in two ways. Firstly, it helped some participants affirm the validity of the struggles they had been through; it gave them comfort to know that someone cared about what had happened to them. For instance, a few participants seemed to use the interview session as a kind of therapy to speak about difficult truths to someone they would not have to see again. For these participants the fact that someone was interested in what they had been through was an encouragement. I remember one participant in particular who contacted me by phone and told me she desperately needed to talk to me. When I met with her she said she wanted to tell her story to try to heal and to make her story known to the outside world.

Secondly, the interview process was empowering for some in the sense that it put them in a position of power and knowledge relative to me, insofar as my research depended on their participation and the insight given in their responses. For some, especially the key informants or even the displaced that worked with local organizations, this was not a very

important aspect of the interview process. For several participants, however, the interview we had was the first time a professional had listened seriously to their experiences and thoughts on displacement. I noticed that it was the humblest participants, those who had little to no education or were relatively young, who were most enthusiastic about being able to answer the questions and discuss the issues that were so important to them. It may have given some of them a feeling that they had made a positive, if small, contribution towards peace and justice. Overall, my outsider status empowered some participants by facilitating a step in the process of healing or by putting them in the position of expert. This was reinforced by the fact that I did not personally know the people or situations that they were speaking about. This meant they could speak openly with me about their interpretations of events without worrying that I was biased.

In contrast, my lack of knowledge of local culture and practices was challenging in a number of ways. Firstly, as an outsider it can be difficult to formulate questions in a way that is perceived as relevant and understandable to the target population (Berger 2015). My experience in Quibdó reflected this reality. I formulated my interview guide before I went to conduct my fieldwork. When I arrived and conducted my first interview it became very clear that some of my questions could not be properly understood by participants. In my first five interviews I had my husband, Servio Cordoba, with me as a translator. He helped clarify the questions I was asking when participants did not understand them. As a result I decided to change my interview guide. I was staying with a Colombian woman who lived and worked in Quibdó. She went over the interview guide with me and helped me reword questions so that they would be better understood by potential participants. You can see the contrast between the first interview guide (Appendix C) and the second interview guide (Appendix E) in the appendices.

A related problem was my lack of knowledge of all the relevant laws, history, and processes associated with the displaced and the conflict in Chocó. Although I had striven to do as much research as possible before my fieldwork began, I found that participants would reference laws or well-known events in the region that I was unfamiliar with. This was especially true when I was speaking with key informants who were sometimes experts in the laws, policies, and histories related to the conflict in Chocó. I constantly

had to do more research on these issues as my study progressed. Initially I was not even familiar with where exactly within Quibdó the displaced were settled and why. It took some time to get familiar with the city and learn about settlement patterns and the characteristics of different neighbourhoods.

Likewise, as an outsider I was not always able to understand the masked implications of certain statements or sayings, a common problem that Berger (2015) points out. This in part reflected my lack of knowledge of local idioms and culture. For example, one participant said “parar bolas” which is literally translated “give me balls” but actually means “pay attention to me.”⁵ These types of sayings, which do not have an obvious literal meaning in the context they are said, were initially difficult to understand. During interviews if I did not understand something I would ask for clarification and write down the phrase to check it later if I still did not understand. Fortunately, my husband is Colombian and was able to understand all the sayings I could not. When I was reviewing my interview notes and transcriptions, he helped me translate the meaning of those sayings I did not understand properly.

On a similar note, my status as an outsider sometimes put distance between my participants and me. Interestingly, this distance mainly manifested itself when I did my two group interviews. I believe that this was the case because I was not familiar with group dynamics and social expectations in Chocó culture. This fact made it difficult for me to know how to put participants at ease and encourage thoughtful sharing in a way that was not awkward. For instance, the first group interview that I conducted was near the beginning of my fieldwork in Quibdó. I met with a group of women that belonged to a working co-op. The group interview was my second time meeting the women, and I had therefore not had much time to build rapport. During the group interview, participants were hesitant to answer questions, and when they did answer they tended to be very short. As I moved forward with the group interview a couple of participants dominated the discussion. I decided partway through to end the group interview and ask if anyone

⁵ This saying was derived from an old law that make it illegal for underage people to play billiards, so when young people would come to ask for the balls, they were asking people to pay attention to them.

was interested in participating in individual interviews. A couple of people from the group volunteered to have individual interviews. By and large the individual interviews went very smoothly. This I believe was attributable to three factors: there was no longer a social pressure to speak in certain ways in front of peers; I was able to focus in on the people that had a genuine interest in participating; and, I was able to speak one on one about who I was and connect with participants more personally.

I also had challenges because of my outsider status with my second group interview, which consisted of some female members of a local organization, but for different reasons. When I first approached some individuals in the organization about my research they were hesitant to speak with me because they feared that I would not acknowledge their contributions to my research; that I would simply take what they said and use it for my own benefit, such as selling a book. They said that this had happened to them in the past with other foreign researchers that came to speak with them. It was only after reassuring them that I would acknowledge their contributions that they agreed to speak with me, and even then they did not agree to be recorded. This group interview, though it started off a bit tense, was very fruitful by giving me insight into some issues that had not arisen in other interviews. The contrast with the first group interview was in the fact that the participants here were professional and had discussed at length amongst themselves some of the questions I was asking about. Participants spoke with passion and elaborated more as the interview proceeded. In this case my outsider status made breaking the ice difficult, but I was eventually able to gain some trust to move forward. In any case, my status as an outsider was most evident during these two group interviews where participants displayed much less of a willingness to speak openly with me about personal experiences. Perhaps part of the reason for this was because people generally did not want to speak openly in front of peers, but it also certainly had to do with my limitations in navigating the local culture.

My outsider status also impacted recruitment for individual interviews. On the one hand, some other participants may have been initially interested in participating in the hopes that I would be able to help them more concretely in some way. This reflected the fact that I was a relatively wealthy outsider and because the topic of the research related to

improving quality of life. In Chocó the vast majority of foreigners are working for organizations that provide assistance to the local population in the form of aid or development. This led to a perception that I could somehow help participants economically. This was a difficult position to be in, as I had a desire to help, especially as people shared heart-breaking stories and circumstances with me. I knew, however, that I really was not able to offer any substantial help for two main reasons: firstly, because of ethical considerations related to coercion in research and my desire not to bias participants before they spoke with me to give certain answers they thought I wanted to hear, and secondly, because I barely had enough means to cover my costs for the research activities themselves, let alone offer any real assistance to participants. I dealt with this challenge by making it very clear before interviews began that they would not benefit directly from participating (you can see how I addressed this in Appendix A, the letter of information). In this way participants did have a clear understanding of the nature and potential outcome of my research before they agreed to participate. I did, however, recognize the value of participants taking the time to speak with me and for some having travelled to meet me. I therefore, made provisions to pay for participants' transportation costs related to the interview and I gave each participant a thank you gift of two pounds of lentils. I decided to give participants a thank you gift based on advice from local contacts who told me this would be an appropriate gesture.

On the other hand, recruitment was also impacted for some by a perception that by participating in my research their voices would be heard by a larger more powerful audience. To a certain extent, I hope that this is in fact true. With this aim, I have presented my preliminary findings at conferences and hope to publish my results and recommendations soon. However, sometimes I wondered if the perceived impact of my work in terms of the Canadian government or the United Nations was over-estimated. Most of the people I interviewed have been extremely marginalized by the Colombian government, in terms of services, infrastructure, and enforcement of laws. It is likely that some people were motivated in part to participate in my research because of my perceived influence. It was not possible to change peoples' general perceptions of me prior to meeting, but it was possible to mitigate expectations through honest discussion.

This again was dealt with before interviews by discussing the purpose of my research and the possible benefits, as outlined in the letter of information (Appendices A and B).

Despite my outsider status, I do have some personal connections with Chocó that I believe helped me relate better to many participants. This helped me gain what Bucerius calls “trusted outsider” status in the eyes of some of my participants (2013). My husband’s father was originally from Chocó. My personal connection in this regard often came up during conversations before interviews began and in some cases gave participants a sense that I was more invested and connected to the local population. Although as time went on I relied more on my own connections that I made living and interacting with people, there is no doubt that this initial contact helped to get my research off the ground in the early days of my fieldwork.

Another way that my personal position impacted my research was as a female. In the first place, most of the participants in this research were female, as I have already noted: thirty-nine from individual interviews and all the participants in the two group interviews. For these interviews, being a woman helped facilitate openness and put some people at ease. Although there were many areas where I differed from my participants, I got the sense that this common ground of being a woman was important for some. It was important perhaps mostly because some felt that I could relate to some of the experiences that they had had. This made it easier to discuss sensitive issues such as violence they had experienced and gang activities; which have largely been perpetrated by males. Another reason that this common ground was important for some was because patriarchal practices in Chocó would have changed the power dynamics of interviews had they been conducted by a male.

I also interviewed eleven male participants as part of my research. On the one hand, because I was female I think that I was perceived as non-threatening to my male participants. I think this made them more comfortable speaking with me about their experiences and perspectives. On the other hand, the fact that I was female probably limited their willingness to share deeply sensitive experiences with me. For instance, male participants were less likely to display emotional vulnerability to me during

interviews than the female participants. This could have been a result of a cultural tendency for males not to display as much emotion. However, had interviews been conducted by a male, these participants may have opened up more about certain experiences or points of views. For instance, when I asked questions about gender relations, most male participants were quick to say that they thought women deserved equal treatment and status. I am not saying they did not believe this, but I am saying that the fact that a female was asking them likely impacted the way in which they responded and elaborated on these types of questions.

The third issue that I want to reflect upon in this section relates to personal views I held that could have impacted my research process. Every researcher comes with certain personal views and opinions that if you are not careful can impact responses and findings. Throughout the research process I have tried to be aware of some of those views and limit their influence in my interviews and findings. Here I discuss two topics where I held preconceived ideas: gender relations and concepts of justice. Though it was my interest in these topics that initially contributed to me choosing the topic of research that I did, I had to make sure I checked them throughout the research and analysis process.

Firstly, I came into this research with some preconceived ideas about gender relations. These ideas have developed as I have read a lot of material discussing the vulnerabilities of women throughout my studies (through courses related to feminist theory or that specifically discussed the issues of marginalised women in poor regions of the world), by volunteering for several months with a women's organization in Burkina Faso, and through having worked at a shelter for abused women in Canada for a period of time. As a result I held a somewhat antagonistic view of gender relations, seeing women and girls usually being the most vulnerable and victimized. I think this came across in the initial ways that I asked questions about gender relations (see the interview guides in Appendices C, D, and E). When several participants responded with a sense of solidarity between genders, I reflected on my preconceived ideas and changed how I asked questions about gendered impacts. In the analysis process I noticed that I had a tendency to overemphasize issues that participants discussed that fit into the narrative of antagonistic gender relations I had in my head. I therefore made a conscious effort to

ensure that I did not neglect the evidence and discussions I had with participants that displayed a more harmonious view of gender relations in Chocó. The interview and analysis process made me more aware of the bias I had in this regard and challenged me to be more open minded about people's experiences. You will find some of my findings on gender relations discussed to a greater extent in Chapter 8.

Secondly, before I began my research I had strong views about what constituted justice. My concept of justice, and what is right and wrong for that matter, is based on the Bible and my identity as a Christian. I believe in the sovereignty of God over issues of punishment, and that our judgements in regards to people's characters and motives are bound to be biased by our own selfishness. I went into this research with a keen awareness of the fact that my participants would likely hold very different views on these topics than I did. More than that, I was interested in what those differences would look like and the justification behind certain views. As a result, from the beginning of the research I made a conscious effort to ask open-ended questions to enable participants to share their views and not be influenced by what I thought. I asked participants about a variety of transitional justice mechanisms, as I discuss more in Chapter 9. However, this did not prevent me from being shocked by a few responses from participants. For instance, I remember one time when a participant told me that all those that committed crimes should be killed. She then laughed about it. I had to resist the urge to say "that's not funny," realizing that it was my role to allow my participants to express what they genuinely thought and felt about the questions I was asking. Even though my beliefs related to justice have been a part of how I have understood my research, I did take special care to ensure that I accurately represented views as participants described them to me, not based on my own personal convictions of justice.

3.6 Limitations

Although my research provided me with a lot of useful information, there were some limitations that I want to mention. Firstly, I was not always able to record interviews. This was in part due to the fact that not everyone wanted to be recorded, and in part because the location of interviews was sometimes not conducive to recording. For instance, several participants that agreed to be interviewed were working or living in busy

and loud locations. This meant that audio quality was not good enough to make transcriptions. Although I did take extensive notes for every interview I conducted, the richness of having transcriptions is obviously superior. This problem would have been difficult to avoid, as many people would not have felt comfortable being interviewed in a more private location or many simply did not have the time or interest to meet me somewhere more private.

Another limitation of my research methodology related to my original intention to capture the perspectives of mostly female participants. Although I did succeed in interviewing a number of women (thirty-nine in total), as my research moved forward it became clear that having greater representation from men would have been useful. This is especially true because of the fact that although people may experience different vulnerabilities based on gender, their experiences are interconnected, as I discuss more in Chapter 8. Nevertheless, I was able to discuss the male perspective on some of the issues (with eleven male interviewees), and my female participants also discussed the experiences of their male relatives and friends. This helped provide a more balanced view of the displaced experiences of conflict, poverty, and adaptation.

The final limitation that I think is worth noting relates to another aspect of recruitment to interviews. Although I do think that I was able to capture a lot of the diversity of views by interviewing fifty participants, had I had more time in Quibdó I would have liked to recruit people from particular populations. Firstly, I would have targeted people that had been more recently displaced. As I mentioned earlier in Table 2, the majority of participants in this study were displaced between 1995 and 2004, one of the periods during which fighting between armed groups in the region was intense. The fact that most of my participants were displaced during this time period was also in part because that population was more settled and therefore easier to access. Secondly, I would have liked to have interviewed more people from Indigenous communities that had been displaced. These participants were more difficult to access because they tended to live on the outskirts of town in closed communities. Furthermore, many of the displaced from Indigenous communities did not speak Spanish, so a translator would need to be employed, which might pose ethical problems as only members of their community

would be available to translate. Working with the more recently displaced and the Indigenous populations would have required more time, money, and better transportation, which unfortunately was not feasible.

3.7 Conclusion

Overall, the methodology that I employed enabled me to investigate the experiences and views of my study population. The general topic of my research was chosen because of personal interest, while the location and particular target population was chosen for a combination of interest, safety, and feasibility related reasons. In my research I chose to use ethnographic observations and semi-structured interviews with participants in order to shed some light on the challenges faced by those displaced by conflict living in Quibdó, Colombia. After transcribing interviews where possible, I coded by hand and analyzed my data. Throughout my research I have remained reflexive about the impact my position (especially as an outsider and a woman) and views (especially related to gender relations and justice) have had on the interview and analysis process. I have taken special care to be aware of my biases and to take corrective measures if I have overemphasised an issue or neglected a perspective.

With the information collected I have been able to paint a picture of the daily-lived realities of my study population. Although I would have liked to have recruited more men, recently displaced, and Indigenous people, the fifty interviews I was able to conduct along with the ethnographic observations provided me with rich descriptive and analytical data. In the following chapters you will find the insights that emerged as a result of my research. Because the displaced from Chocó remain largely unexamined by academia, this research design sought to shed light on the particular challenges, inequalities, social pressures, and structures that shape the lives of this population.

Chapter 4

4 Analytical Framework

In this chapter I look at Pierre Bourdieu's social theory and elaborate on the key aspects of inequality through the lens of a model I developed. I argue that inequality is best understood as being multifaceted, and relational. It is multifaceted in that there are several types of inequality. It is relational in that inequalities are socially defined and the various types of inequality interact through social relations. This position helps me to ground my analysis of participants' experiences in armed conflict and their displacement that is the focus of my research. Indeed, properly analysing the experiences of my participants involves paying special attention to the concepts of inequality and social positions. This perspective allows me to situate participants' experiences and views in the larger social structures of Colombian society. Furthermore, Bourdieu's social theory and the model I developed provide a way for me to explain participants' experiences of displacement and how they conceptualize victimization, gender relations, symbolic justice, and material justice.

4.1 The Objective/Subjective divide

One of my goals in this research project echoes Bourdieu's goal of finding the invariant and how symbols are used to structure society (Bourdieu 1991). The principles of Bourdieu's theory transcend particular societies (Bourdieu 1991). His notions of social and symbolic space help me to understand deeper structural realities that impact the decisions and social positions of the displaced in my study. Social space is defined according to habitus, fields, and capital, concepts I explain below.

According to Bourdieu both subjectivism and objectivism are inadequate for intellectual inquiry (Bourdieu [1980a] 1991). On the one hand, subjectivism is more problematic because it assumes that the immediate experience and knowledge of the social world is sufficient (Bourdieu [1980a] 1991). In addition, Bourdieu argues that subjectivism is inadequate because it fails to recognize that the way people act reflects learnt behaviours and ideas from socially produced structures (Bourdieu [1980a] 1991). Objectivism, on

the other hand, tries to put personal experience on the side; something that Bourdieu argues is not really possible (Bourdieu [1980a] 1991). He broke from objectivism in that he did not agree that structures simply impose actions on us, but rather that social structures are internalized (Bourdieu [1975] 1991). His main argument is that subjectivism and objectivism are interrelated and influence one another, and that social actors have some knowledge of their world (Bourdieu [1981] 1991).

4.2 Habitus

Bourdieu uses the concept of habitus to transcend the subjectivist/objectivist divide (Thompson 1991). Habitus is “a system of structured and structuring dispositions which is constituted by practice and constantly aimed at practical... functions” (Bourdieu 1989: 42). Habitus is produced by social conditioning within a class of positions (Bourdieu 1991). The concept of habitus provides an analytic way of avoiding false assumptions: that people act solely based on external forces; and that people’s actions are free and performed with full understanding (Bourdieu 2000). Bourdieu assumes that there is a connection between action and interest that is not usually conscious, as habitus predisposes people to act in certain ways to promote their interests (Thompson 1991).

This theoretical position represents one of the ways in which Bourdieu breaks from Marxian theory. Bourdieu argues that it is not possible to be objective because of the symbolic struggles that are taking place over defining the social world (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991). In this way, symbolic conflict exists in everyday life (Bourdieu [1984a] 1991). Accordingly, it is not possible to be without ideology. Bourdieu argues that though one may be able to identify and move past some ideologies, we cannot live without taken-for-granted ideas because habitus is socially constructed (Bourdieu 2000).

Actors occupy “positions” in social space relative to one another and base their claims of social status on these positions (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991.). Position taking can be based on a number of behaviours that maintain and signal their positions to others. Habitus connects position within a structure with practices (Bourdieu [1980b] 1991). This is what explains unity in lifestyle (persons, goods, and practices) between people with similar positions in the overall social structure (Bourdieu 1991). Habitus is the basis of how

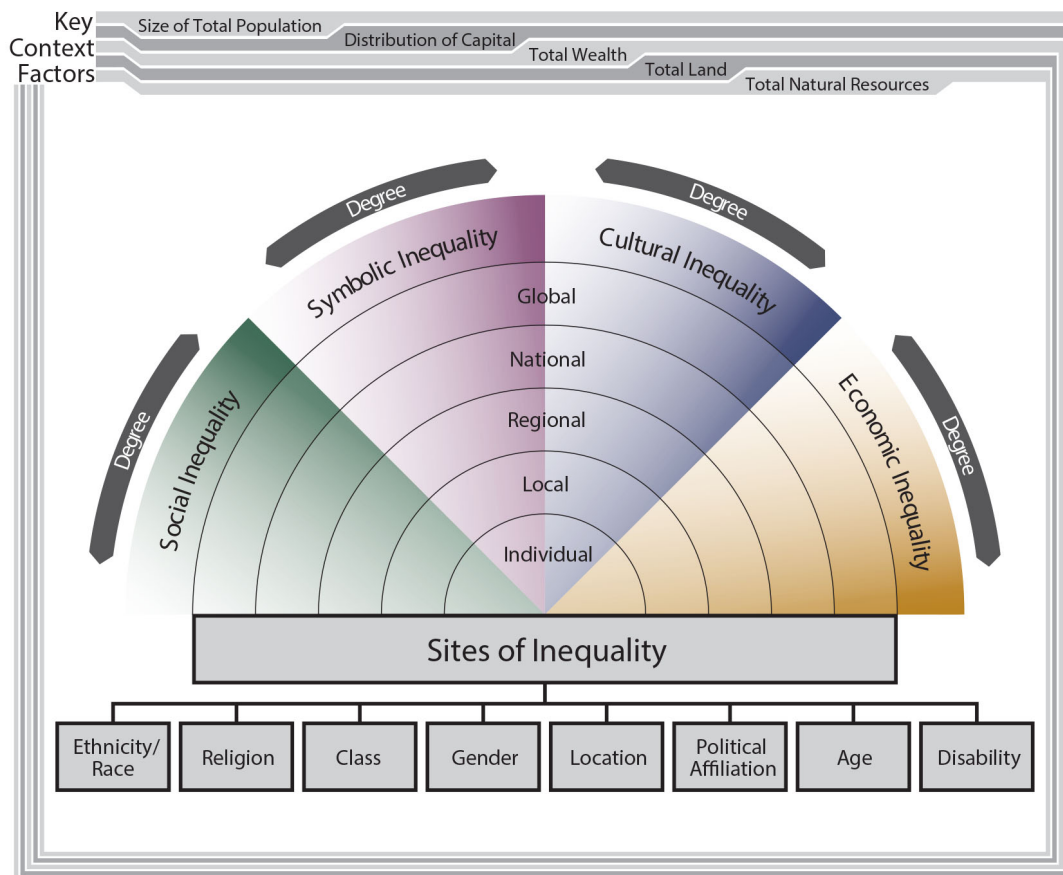
people make distinctions between what is good or bad, right or wrong, distinguished or vulgar (Bourdieu 1991). This becomes a symbolic language that people can interpret differently based on their social position (Bourdieu 1991).

4.3 Fields

Here is where we turn to the importance of understanding fields. Fields are independent spaces where different ‘games’ with specific rules are played, such as a political field or a religious field (Bourdieu 1983). The boundaries of fields are contested and they are defined relationally (Swartz 1997). Accordingly, fields are sites of domination and resistance. A field is a site of struggle in which the players must believe in the value of what is being struggled over (maintaining or changing the distribution of capital) (Bourdieu [1984a] 1991). Particular actions or practices are a result of an interaction between habitus and fields (Thompson 1991). Yet, habitus can operate in fields other than where it was formed (Thompson 1991). People can therefore use their resources to adapt to new circumstances and social rules. This is because fields are structured in their most basic sense by capital (Bourdieu [1975] 1991). Capital only exists within a field and it derives its meaning from the social (Thompson 1991). Within fields it is possible to convert one type of capital into another (Thompson 1991). People try to convert, accumulate, and reproduce capital to maintain or improve their social positions (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991). In this way inequalities are most easily identifiable within a particular field, though the social positions they point to can be compared between fields.

Fields are structured by the varying amounts of capital that people have access to. The factors identified that can shape a field are represented below in Figure 4 as the Key Context Factors. These include the size of total population, distribution of capital amongst population, total wealth; total land, and total natural resources. These context factors give information about the proportion of people in a given society as well as the limits of certain types of capital accumulation.

Figure 4: Model of the Constitutive Parts of Inequality



4.4 Capital

In Figure 4, I have named the four types of capital that relate to possible inequalities, namely social, symbolic, cultural, and economic forms of capital. Capital can take objectified forms (i.e. material possessions) or incorporated forms that can be legally guaranteed (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991). For Bourdieu, *social capital* refers to the social network people are connected to (Bourdieu 1986). Social capital connects people to others, potentially giving them access to additional symbolic, cultural, or economic capital. For example, if a person has a friend who becomes a Senator, through their network that person now has greater access to symbolic capital. *Symbolic capital* refers to the recognition, as legitimate or important, a person or entity receives from others (Bourdieu [1980a] 2012). Symbolic authority allows actors to impose a particular vision of the social world (Bourdieu [1982] 1991). *Cultural capital* relates to differences in the value given to qualities, practices, skills, and knowledge (Thompson 1991). Cultural

capital can be incorporated and legally recognized (Bourdieu 1984b), as is the case with educational credentials. It can also refer to learnt ideas, policies and symbols or the extent to which cultural practices (such as dress, food, or holidays) are widely accepted in a society (Stewart 2008). *Economic capital* is material wealth that comes in such forms as money, property, stocks, etc. (Thompson 1991). The corresponding type of inequality is measurable, for example, through differences in levels of income or property ownership (Stewart 2008).

The various types of capital order social space by the distribution of their weight and volume, which correspond to social positions actors occupy in a particular field (Bourdieu 1991). Capital volume positions people in social space and refers to how much or little of a particular type of capital a person has relative to others. Capital weight refers to how different types of capital compare in value to one another (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991). In other words, individuals or groups can possess varying quantities and qualities of capital in each of these categories, which correspond to different possible inequalities with a given society. This is what I refer to in Figure 4 as ‘Degree of Inequality’.

Bourdieu argues that social space is constructed based primarily on economic and cultural capital (1991). The more similar people are in these two regards within a society, the more similar they are to one another (or vice versa) (Bourdieu 1991). Accordingly, people are situated in social space relative to others in the same field based on their practices and the goods they have (Bourdieu 1991).

4.5 Inequality

In my model, each form of capital is represented by its related inequality. The best way to understand inequality is to contrast it with the concept of equality. There are various ways in which the term equality can be understood. Equality can refer to equality of opportunity or means, whereby people or groups in a given context have the right to access and use resources to the same extent as others in the same context. Perfect equality according to this definition would be if everyone in a given context had the exact same access to and capacity to use each different type of resource. Equality can also refer to the moral position of persons having the same intrinsic worth and dignity (Friday 2004). This

meaning of equality is tied to normative claims about how we ought to treat people with respect as a key part of justice (Miller 1999). In this research I am interested in both of these understandings of equality and how they are interrelated.

My position is that all people exist in a social setting that is inherently unequal, to varying degrees, in terms of the distribution of the various forms of capital. This is evident in the inequalities that exist between and within states, as was shown in Figure 3 in Chapter 2, where the Coefficient of Human Inequality and the Human Development Index of countries were plotted. The moral philosopher Honneth (2007) addresses this issue in his discussion of the conditions necessary for justice. He argues that it is possible to create formal procedures of justice whereby people have freedom. However, Honneth argues that the transformation of social structures in order to create the material conditions in which people have equitable access to the social, cultural, and education capital necessary for justice may be difficult, if not impossible, to establish. Taking this as a point of departure, I want to understand the rules by which differences in access and use of resources within and between social groups are determined. This provides me with a way of identifying and explaining the social position of participants in this research.

In my model, therefore, perfect equality would be if everyone had the exact same quantity and quality of a particular type of capital (social, symbolic, cultural, economic). On the other hand, perfect inequality would be if one group had all of one particular type of capital and another group had none. Most real-world situations fall somewhere on the continuum between perfect equality and perfect inequality.

In my model you can see that inequalities also happen at various levels, including interpersonal, local, regional, national, and global. This is an important consideration, as it allows for distinguishing the level of analysis. As Stewart (2008) argues, geographic location can be a key determinant of whether or not conflict happens and the impact of inequalities. Each of these levels is progressively larger in terms of space and their corresponding populations. These categories are theoretical groupings for analytical purposes; real differences between the levels will vary by context. Here, the local refers to people in geographically limited spaces such as villages, towns, or cities. Similarly I

intend the regional to refer to people in a larger geographical area that is somehow environmentally, politically, or culturally interconnected. The national refers to people within a country. The global refers to inequalities that impact people across national boundaries.

4.6 Social Groups and Classes

In Figure 4, you will notice that the ‘Sites of Inequality’ relates to the identities through which people experience inequalities within a given context. There are different categories of sites of inequality, but the most prominent in sociological literature and the most pertinent to this research are ethnicity/race, religion, class, gender, location, political affiliation, age, and disability. Inequalities can be experienced through any one category or they can be experienced through multiple layers of them. For example, in the 1980s the notion of ‘double colonization’ developed and it referred to the layers of oppression experienced by women under patriarchy and imperialism (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin 1995). In that case, women experienced inequality through their gender and race. This notion of multiple layers of identity and experience corresponds to intersectionality theory, whereby proper social analysis requires the considering how “people occupy multiple demographic categories,” and in particular the ways in which these categories can intersect (Bright et al. 2016: 60). The sites of inequality therefore refer to different social or physical categories a person might fit into which constitutes the primary way they experiences and understand different forms of inequality.

The sites of inequality are related to Bourdieu’s ideas of how to distinguish between social groups. Bourdieu differentiates himself again from Marx in that he argues that social classes do not necessarily exist in substance, meaning they are not real groups with clearly definable numbers and limits; rather social space exists wherein classes can virtually exist as “something to be done” (Bourdieu 1991: 637). People with similar social positions are more likely to form identifiable groups, but what actually exists is a ‘space of relations’ (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991: 232). Identity as a member of a particular social group does not necessarily translate to that group being a mobilized group for a struggle (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991). It is rather a theoretical way of understanding social distinctions based on divisions of social space. This is how I intend the sites of inequality

to be understood.

Groups with similar social positions may be more likely to mobilize in the political sense, but is not inevitable (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991). Moving from the Marxian class-in-itself to class-for-itself as it matures over time is not inevitable and neither is an awakening of the consciousness (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991). People may be more likely to mobilize because of similarities in social positions, but also direct competition might be an obstacle to mobilization (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991). Furthermore, people can misrecognize their social position. Misrecognition can be understood as “partial personal or distorted views” (Anderson 2016: 694). This happens through habitus when a person assigns meaning to their social position or particular practices that differ from how they are understood in their social context (Bourdieu 2000). It is, thereby, possible for people to mobilize that are both close in social space, and relatively distant (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991).

This leads to another break with Marx, namely that the social field is defined by much more than economics (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991). The dominant social group aims to set the principles of hierarchization, desiring that the capital to which it owes its position to be at the top of the hierarchy (Bourdieu [1984a] 1991). Symbolic systems are defined based on the relationship between those who exercise power and those that submit to it; belief in the rules and the value of potential gains are central to them being able to function (Bourdieu [1984a] 1991). Symbols help reproduce the social world because they make consensus on meaning possible (Bourdieu [1984a] 1991). Habitus is embodied knowledge that allows people to improvise within social structures; it is how people understand the world (Bourdieu [1978] 2013 & Anderson 2016). Social groups are therefore defined according to habitus (Bourdieu [1984b] 1991). Habitus points to the social positions of individuals and groups and the relations between them, and thereby makes it possible to identify structural inequalities.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that inequality is multifaceted and relational. Firstly, inequality is multifaceted as the amount, type, and relative weight of a person or group’s capital determines their position in social hierarchies. Secondly, peoples’ experiences of

inequality are relationally defined as they are grounded in fields and their meanings are understood relative to others within the same field. In this research I use the concepts of the various types of capital and fields to explain how the local and national contexts in Chocó and Colombia are structured. The model I developed here also helps me to identify the different analytical levels, and some of the key context factors that have shaped conflict in Colombia. In this way I am able to situate the discussion of participants' victimization, gender relations, concepts of justice, and material needs in a theoretical framework that connects their experiences to the larger structures that shape their lives. This analytical framework, thereby, provides a foundation for understanding the lived realities of people displaced by conflict living in Chocó.

Chapter 5

5 National Context: Colombia's Civil War

Colombia's civil war has a long history that is reflected in the current complexity of the situation on the ground. What began as a high casualty conflict in the 1940s in Colombia, diminished over time into a low intensity-insurgency in the 1960s and 1970s (Chernick 2003). By the 1980s, however, the violence had again escalated (Chernick 2003), and in 2014 (the year I conducted my field work), Colombia had a staggering 6.04 million internally displaced people (UNHRC 2017). The situation is complex because of the long history of the conflict that has changed in character over time, the number of stakeholders involved, and the roles of symbolic and material inequalities in causing and perpetuating the conflict.

In this chapter I outline a brief history and the context of Colombia's long struggle with armed conflict. In order to do this, I start by defining armed conflict and the main components of the concept. Next, I give an overview of the three themes that stand out in this history: namely, the diversity of stakeholders, symbolic inequality, and material inequality. This sets up the basis of my examination of five historical periods in Colombia's conflict: *La Violencia* 1946-1958, National Front and Guerrilla Group Forming 1958-1978, Expansion Drugs and a New Constitution 1978-1996, Humanitarian Crisis 1996-2005, and when AUC Demobilizes, FARC Retreats, and Peace Talks 2005-2014. These periods have been constructed for analytical purposes only, and in reality their characteristics overlap. Therefore after I summarize each of these time periods I provide an overview analysis of the conflict at the national level based on the themes mentioned above.

5.1 Key Aspects of Armed Conflict

Before I begin my overview of the context of Colombia and Chocó I want to establish what armed conflict is. For the purposes of this research I am using a modified version of the definition of armed conflict developed by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program: “a

contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties... results in at least 25 battle-related deaths” (Themnér et al. 2014:1). There are four major aspects of armed conflict that can help us understand this complex term: type, participation, intensity, and duration.

The Uppsala Conflict Data Program identifies four types of armed conflict that are useful for the present analysis: extrasystemic, interstate, internal, and internationalized internal. Extrasystemic armed conflict “occurs between a state and a non-state group outside its own territory,” and is generally about territorial control (Themnér et al. 2014: 9). Armed conflicts between two or more states are termed interstate. Internal armed conflicts are “between the government of a state and one or more internal opposition group(s) without intervention from other states” (Themnér et al. 2014: 9). In contrast, internationalized internal armed conflict is internal armed conflict but with intervention from other states.

Another associated aspect of armed conflict is related to three questions about participation: Who is participating? Why are they participating? And how, or in what capacity, are they participating? Firstly, there are many possible groups that can participate in armed conflict: governments; non-state armed groups within a country and external to a country; superpowers; international institutions (such as the United Nations Peacekeepers); companies; and governments from other countries. Participating groups can vary in size, capacity, as well as level of engagement. Secondly, groups can have various reasons for participating in armed conflict such as humanitarian reasons, economic interest, political interest, shared culture, etc. Finally, these groups can participate directly in the conflict by supplying arms or other military aid, or indirectly by providing incentives, funding, or legitimacy to armed groups. The ‘who, why and how’ of participation helps us better understand the nature of an armed conflict, as I explain more later in this chapter.

In addition to participation, intensity is also a defining aspect of armed conflict. I consider the two main measures of intensity to be based on population and environmental impacts, direct or indirect. Intensity can be measured by population impact by total or relative: death, displacement, loss of property, destruction of property, and damage to

infrastructure resulting from armed conflict. By environmental impact, I mean the extent of damage or destruction to natural resources and ecosystems in terms of both severity and area of impact.

Conflict onset and duration also shape the nature of an armed conflict. Conflict onset refers to when a conflict begins, while duration refers to how long it lasts. Conflicts can have multiple onset times. This is the case, for example, when new actors enter a conflict and significantly alter the nature of the conflict, or when conflicts start and stop repetitively. This has been the case, for example, with armed conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir that has stopped and started since Partition (Themnér et al. 2012). Furthermore, armed conflict can vary greatly in terms of duration, from only a few days to years or decades. For example, they can be as short as the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War of 1967 (Wright 2006) or as long or longer than the Karen Conflict in Myanmar that has lasted 66 years (Themnér et al. 2012). Tracking the onset and duration of armed conflict can help to identify possible historical conditions that could have contributed to the existence and perpetuation of a conflict.

In addition to the above-mentioned points there are other contextual factors that can significantly alter the nature of an armed conflict. While this list is not exhaustive, some of what I consider the most important factors include the following: relative strength of the economy, access to weapons, technological sophistication of weapons, local cultural practices, media coverage, and control over land and resources. These are worth mentioning because they help us to understand what is happening on the ground before, during, and after an armed conflict. Questions about type of conflict, participation, intensity, duration, and context are crucial for being able to understand the relationship between armed conflict and inequality. Ultimately by addressing these questions below I aim to highlight the ways in which Colombian society, and specifically those in Chocó, have been impacted by conflict.

5.2 Thematic Overview

As I move through the historical analysis of Colombia's conflict, you will see that it has changed significantly over time and that these changes have added layers of complexity to the conflict. There are, however, three major themes that can be traced through the history of the conflict that contribute to better understanding the nature of the conflict and how it relates to my research of displaced victims in Chocó. Firstly, there are many stakeholders, directly and indirectly involved in the conflict, that have influenced the nature of the fields in which conflict has taken place. Secondly, symbolic inequality has played a central role in the conflict and people's experiences of victimization. Thirdly, material inequalities, as seen in the struggle to control resources and land, have remained at the forefront of the conflict over time.

The fields where conflict has taken place have been complicated by the diversity of stakeholders both internal and external to Colombia that have given shape to them. This includes multiple guerrillas, multiple paramilitary groups, drug-traffickers, the military, government institutions, foreign governments and religious institutions, local elites, multinational corporations, and various rural communities.

The struggles over symbolic and economic capital, resulting from vast inequalities in these areas, have persisted throughout the history of Colombia's conflict. As I discuss below, the conflict began with controversy between the rural poor and rich landowners in remote areas of Colombia and today it persists in remote areas of the country, disproportionately impacting Colombia's poor. One participant expressed this reality saying: "One of the causes of the Colombian conflict: inequality. The rich have everything [they need] to live, the poor can hardly live" (Isabel 64). She elaborated later saying:

The cause of the conflict is inequality between poor and rich... Poor and rich, lack of equity [and] of justice. Colombia has a few rich [people] and the majority of people are poor. And this is why the groups formed, because when people are okay they do not have a reason to get armed in groups to protect themselves. This

is why these groups that are called guerrillas today started to emerge. But they deviated from their objectives because it was [originally] a social initiative, more than an armed one; but later it became a mess. The causes of the conflict are [related to] the inequality that exists [in] Colombia (Isabel 64).

In the history of the conflict I show that symbolic inequalities in the form of differences in political participation and inclusion have persisted throughout the conflict. There is a struggle over how the social world is defined, whose voices are heard, and whose interests are reflected in policy implementation.

Meanwhile, Colombia remains one of the most economically unequal countries in the world. According to World Bank data, out of the countries for which data were available in 2014, Colombia had the highest levels of household income inequality as measured by the GINI index with a score of 53.5 (0 being perfect equality and 100 being perfect inequality). This score is a decrease from previous years, but Colombia is still amongst the countries with the highest scores of income inequality in the world, only surpassed by countries such as South Africa, Haiti, and Botswana (World Bank 2017).

Issues of agrarian reform have motivated protests, violence and the forming of armed groups since the beginning of Colombia's conflict. People are interested in the territory because of the associated resources and their potential to produce lucrative crops. Competition for access to resources including timber, pharmaceutical products, and gold provide motivation for armed groups to continue seeking territorial control (Wouters 2001). Many remote regions of Colombia are very fertile, and illegal crops can be grown in abundance with little worry about outside interference.

In the history of the conflict in Colombia, struggles over the unequal distribution of symbolic and economic capital have been key features of each period outlined. At the center of political action throughout Colombia's history is a reoccurring problem of marked material and land ownership related inequalities especially between rural and urban areas of the country and between the rich dominant class and poor. Fighting has revolved around political participation, decision-making, and the control over territory.

5.3 *La Violencia*: 1946-1958

Conflicts do not suddenly begin without a history and a context, and Colombia is no exception. Many scholars begin the story of Colombia's history of conflict with a period known as *La Violencia* that took place between 1946 and 1958. However, that period was preceded in the 1920s and 1930s by conflict between landowners and peasants (Hylton 2003), as well as with violence between political parties (Bailey 1967). As early as 1849 Colombia experienced The Liberal Revolution where there were violent clashes between the peasants and conservative landowners (Hylton 2003). Even before that there was a long history of violence in Colombia traceable to colonial times (Bailey 1967). Indeed, colonization left many lasting marks on Colombian society. For instance, for many years the only recognized land titles were those granted by the Spanish Crown (Thomson 2011). Given that agrarian change and violent conflict are closely linked in Colombia, the issue of legitimacy over land ownership is highly relevant (Thomson 2011).

Nevertheless, for the purposes of understanding the current conflict, *La Violencia* is a good starting point because it shows the nature of tensions and grievances that have persisted through time. This period is also significant in Colombian history because of the extent of violence and its duration.

During *La Violencia* the Colombian political field was dominated by violence between two parties, the Liberals and Conservatives. The Liberals had traditionally been connected to the merchant elites and opposed to clerical and military powers (Hylton 2003). The conservatives, in contrast, had had close connections with the colonial rulers and the Catholic Church (Hylton 2003). After sixteen years of being in power the Liberal party became split between moderate and reformists, which led to the Conservatives winning the national elections in 1946 (Bailey 1967).

The establishment of a Conservative government led to violence on both sides. Tensions were amplified by the fact that members of the State's bureaucracy, justice system, and military were affiliated with one of the two parties (Historical Memory Group 2016). In order to inflict violence, the Liberals, who controlled much of the state bureaucracy, formed guerrilla bands; and the Conservatives who now controlled the government used

the police and military (Bailey 1967).

A major event during this time period was the assassination of a presidential candidate, Liberal leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitan on April 9th 1948 in Bogotá, which resulted in mass urban riots (Hylton 2003). The nature of these protests was chaotic and involved two days of looting, killings, and rapes in the capital city of Bogotá (Bailey 1967). These protests were a culmination of tensions that had been building in the country since the 1930s (Hylton 2003). Bipartisan violence subsequently spread throughout a large part of the country. There was a decline in rural salaries. Agrarian workers, popular urban movements (Historical Memory Group 2016), and unions were violently repressed (Thomson 2011).

As the bipartisan conflict escalated armed groups were involved increasingly in brutal crimes such as entire villages being slaughtered, people of all ages raped, and infants being cut to pieces (Guzman Campos et al. 1962). During this period around 200,000 people lost their lives (Franz 2016). Furthermore, according to some estimates hundreds of thousands of people were forcibly put in exile; nearly 400,000 plots of land were lost (Historical Memory Group 2016); and around 600,000 people were injured (Bailey 1967). Houses were burned and terror was maintained to dissuade people from returning to their land (Historical Memory Group 2016). As is often the case in times of conflict, it is not possible to know precisely how much damage was inflicted and how many lives were lost during this period, as accurate records were not systematically kept (Bailey 1967). Records were not kept properly because the people involved in perpetuating the violence were either the ones responsible for keeping the record, or had an interest in destroying the records (Bailey 1967).

The violence became so chaotic that it motivated political change (Historical Memory Group 2016). In 1953 General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla led a successful military coup. Violence subsided somewhat during his presidency as a result of general amnesties, but economically the country continued to suffer (Bailey 1967).

5.4 National Front & Emergence of Armed Groups: 1958-1978

It was in 1958 that the violence and political situation in the country led to a power sharing arrangement known as the National Front. In this arrangement the Liberal and Conservative parties took turns controlling the presidency and had equal elective seats and bureaucratic appointments (Bushnell 1993). These rules were written into the Constitution to make clear that they could not easily be changed (Bushnell 1993). In the new constitution the Liberals accepted the Catholic Church as the official religion, and the Conservatives for their part accepted some state planning and more political participation (Fals Borda 1969). These arrangements were meant to relieve tensions, diminish violence, and to overthrow Rojas Pinilla (Bailey 1967). In this way the ruling class was able to unite, but because the system was based on compromise it was difficult for any real social change to take place (Fals Borda 1969).

This time period was characterised by extreme inequality in land distribution and poverty in rural areas that fuelled the agrarian crisis (Historical Memory Group 2016). In the 1960s, there was mass rural to urban migration as people sought to flee La Violencia, which had disproportionately impacted the poor (Fals Borda 1969). Migration was also motivated by displacement as a result of expanding large-scale agricultural projects (Bushnell 1993). In general, this did not result in higher standards of living for Colombia's poor. In 1970, for example, in the urban sector the poorest half of the population was receiving just under 16% of total income earned amongst the urban population, and in the rural sector two-thirds of the population was living in absolute poverty (Bushnell 1993).

Attempts at agrarian reform on the part of the National Front were flawed and limited. Reforms introduced in 1961 were meant to give peasant farmers more access to land through resettlement or, in extreme cases, by subdividing existing estates (Bushnell 1993). The Colombian Institute for Agrarian Reform (Instituto Colombiano de Reforma Agraria – INCORA) was established. Although over 250,000 families received land titles under INCORA, the efforts were not transformative of the rural sector (Bushnell 1993).

One factor was that while some families gained legal rights over land, others lost rights due to the expansion of large-scale agricultural projects (Bushnell 1993). Furthermore, rural economies were often controlled by local elites who were not willing to give up their power (Galli 1981).

Meanwhile, the National Front tried to introduce social policies to address inequalities. For instance, women's property rights, civil rights, parental rights, and political rights were increased under the National Front, including establishing women's voting rights in the Constitution (Bushnell 1993). Another social policy during this time aimed at improving education, as there were significant educational disparities between rural and urban populations (Bushnell 1993). The National Front devoted money, with the help of U.S. funds through the Alliance of Progress, towards improving education, and school attendance thereby increased (Bushnell 1993). The National Front also built some roads, reducing isolation of some communities, but at the same time raising knowledge and expectations of better quality of life for the population (Bushnell 1993).

Encouraged by World-Bank policies that supported big agribusiness, there was a focus on developing commercial export crops such as palm, soya and cotton. This led in the 1960s to rising food prices, increased rural-urban migration, and greater unemployment (Thomson 2011). In the 1970s, international funding targeted modernization of the rural economy (Galli 1981). This was a time of rapid urban growth, secularization of society, and industrialization (Historical Memory Group 2016). Trade was seen as the major pillar of economic growth (Galli 1981). Coffee was the main export, but because of price fluctuations international institutions encouraged diversification of the economy (Galli 1981).

The middle class became more politically active and protests against the bipartisan system became more frequent (Historical Memory Group 2016). Violence persisted in various regions as social and economic rehabilitation programs failed (Historical Memory Group 2016). These efforts failed because of new outbreaks of violence, inadequate attention to victims, lack of state influence in areas most impacted by violence, controversy about programs directly supporting armed groups, and controversies over the

nature of violence (criminal versus legitimate political and economic grievances) (Historical Memory Group 2016). This situation, in combination with new emerging guerrilla groups, made it impossible for the National Front to establish peace. This led the government to return to using repressive policies (Historical Memory Group 2016).

The national bipartisan system of government during this time period did not allow for the participation of other political groups (Hartzell 1994), with the exception of some participation on the local and regional level (Historical Memory Group 2016). The international context of the Cold War gave justification for excluding communist-sympathizing groups from political life (Historical Memory Group 2016). Given the closed nature of the political system in Colombia, it should not be a surprise that those who sought political participation and found no legal means to acquire it resorted to armed insurgency (Hylton 2003). Furthermore, the National Front's focus on military repression also contributed to the radicalization and resorting to arms for some political groups (Historical Memory Group 2016).

As a result, guerrilla groups such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – FARC), founded in 1964, the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional – ELN), founded in 1962, and the Popular Liberation Army (Ejército Popular de Liberación – EPL), founded in 1967, came into existence (Hylton 2003). FARC was a peasant movement that had ties to the orthodox pro-Moscow Communist Colombian party (Bushnell 1993). The ELN was inspired by the Cuban Revolution, but lacked roots in a peasant movement (Bushnell 1993). The EPL, for its part was Maoist inspired (Bushnell 1993). Furthermore, in 1970 the guerrilla group 19th of April Movement (Movimiento 19 de Abril – M-19) was born (Boudon 2001). This group differed from other guerrillas in that its main aim was to open democratic participation beyond the two traditional parties, rather than being affiliated to any Marxist ideology (Boudon 2001).

In the 1960s and 1970s, the guerrilla groups operated mostly in remote areas, and therefore were not very visible on the national level (Historical Memory Group 2016). The National Front justified restricting rights and freedoms by declaring almost perpetual

states of emergencies to deal with protests or guerrilla activities. The National Front often kept the country under a state of siege (Bushnell 1993). This gave the government power to “limit public assemblies, censor the press, and restrict other basic liberties,” powers which some argue were not often used (Bushnell 1993). The siege also meant that people could be tried in summary military courts, which did happen with greater frequency (Bushnell 1993). The military courts were accused of abuses, including torture (Bushnell 1993).

According to Hristov (2014), “Paramilitary groups were first created in the 1960s as part of US-Colombian counter-insurgency projects (with the support of sectors of the local elite)” (pg. 4). Over time, in the 1970s, the State began working more with self-defence groups affiliated with agrarian elites such as cattle ranchers and drug traffickers to protect economic interests from guerrilla advances (Aviles 2006). These groups received weapons, munitions, training, and support from the military (Historical Memory Group 2016). The military encouraged businessmen and landowners to arm via self-defense groups, which eventually turned into paramilitary groups (Thomson 2011).

Over the years of the National Front government, violence, though ongoing, diminished and changed somewhat in character. This change was marked by a moving away from primarily bipartisan motivated violence to guerrilla movements (Bushnell 1993). Amnesties, strategic military assaults, and development assistance were used to try to reduce violence and to win the trust of the rural population (Bushnell 1993).

Although the bipartisan regime officially ended in 1974, the power sharing of administrative appointments continued until the 1980s (Hartzell 1994). There was politically a relatively smooth transition from the end of the National Front to the next liberal leader who was elected (Hartzell 1994). However, in 1977 economic tensions led to a mass urban protest in the form of a civic strike supported by various trade unions. The civic strike temporarily paralysed the economy and there were violent clashes with police (Bushnell 1993). The crisis in the cities was fuelled by inflation and, in the rural areas, by the priority that was given to capitalist agriculture through subsidies and protection from foreign competition (Historical Memory Group 2016). The strike also

revealed tensions between the military and the government about its autonomy (Historical Memory Group 2016).

5.5 Expansion, Drugs and a New Constitution: 1978-1996

While the National Front enjoyed growth and economic stability, the first administration that was transitioning to a more open political system after the strike, experienced high inflation and an economic slow down (Historical Memory Group 2016). This led to growing social unrest. After a relative easing of tensions between 1972 and 1977, violence again spread significantly across Colombia following the 1977 strike (Sherman 2015). In the rural areas there was more and more inequality in terms of territorial and economic integration as agricultural frontiers expanded and illegal activities, especially drug-trafficking, spread.

The Colombia economy went through a major shift in the 1980s from coffee production, to mining and coca production; throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the Colombian agro-industry grew as did international demand for Colombia's gold, emeralds, coal, and oil (Historical Memory Group 2016). In the 1990s, the government embraced neoliberalism by removing non-tariff barriers, gradually reducing agricultural tariffs, deregulating the financial market, and increasing agricultural imports (Thomson 2011). Meanwhile the government continued to support large-scale commercial agricultural operations (Thomson 2011). These changes made the role of the peripheral areas more important and also provided economic support for illegal groups.

In terms of the conflict, guerrilla, paramilitary, and drug trafficking all expanded during this time period, despite a shift in some administrative policies from repression to attempts at peace negotiations (Historical Memory Group 2016). This led to tensions between the central government and military bodies who wanted to work autonomously to fight the guerrilla threat (Historical Memory Group 2016).

The administration of President Julio César Turbay Ayala (1978-1982) put into place the National Security Statute of 1978 (Avilés 2006). The administration claimed that this legislation was needed to address the crimes of kidnapping, drug trafficking, extortion

and terrorism, which were becoming more frequent (CIA 1978). In practice, the statute gave more power to the armed forces and restricted civil rights (Avilés 2006). For example, the military was given power to judge civilians, and in 1980 alone there were more than 8,000 people arrested for political reasons (Avilés 2006). The military, however, was accused of participating in various abuses including torture (Avilés 2006). The military justified their anti-communist policies by claiming they were necessary to maintain social order (Historical Memory Group 2016).

President Belisario Betancur Cuartas (1982-1986) attempted to negotiate peace with the three main guerrilla groups (Sherman 2016). There was a great deal of controversy that surrounded the peace negotiations. The elites from peripheral areas and the Armed Forces did not like the changes in policy that were taking place. Furthermore not enough attention was given to political, economic, and social structural reforms that were needed to address the core reasons that the guerrilla groups existed (Historical Memory Group 2016). During the peace process FARC, ELN, and EPL all expanded. M-19 also chose military means to accomplish its political goals, and in November 1985 dramatically seized the Palace of Justice (Sherman 2015).

As part of this attempted peace process the Patriotic Union (Unión Patriótica – UP) was established, which was intended to be a political party through which the left, especially FARC, could legally express its political grievances (Historical Memory Group 2016). The military saw electoral advances of the left as a threat of revolution, which created tensions between the military and government (Historical Memory Group 2016). Paramilitary groups grew as local and regional leaders felt abandoned when they were left out of the central government's negotiations and did not want democratic participation to increase (Historical Memory Group 2016). The first elections after the UP was established were in 1986 and fourteen people were elected to public positions (Campos 2003). They were subsequently murdered one by one (Campos 2003). There was a systematic plan put in place to kill all the leaders of the UP, as well as their sympathizers and supporters (Campos 2003). Several presidential candidates were killed (Campos 2003). 'Death squads' developed, and between 1986 and 1991, 2300 members of the UP were killed (Sherman 2016).

The peace negotiations collapsed as the guerrillas returned to their insurgencies and abandoned the UP in 1987-1988 (Campos 2003). Some people on the left decided that the only way to respond to the murders was to join the rebel groups, because it was impossible through the legal and political system to make any changes or challenge the crimes that were being committed (Campos 2003). This led to growing conflict between guerrillas and paramilitary groups (Sherman 2016).

By 1989, the paramilitaries operated both offensively and defensively, with similarities in practices to the guerrillas', such as collecting tributes, forced displacements, and atrocities (Cubides C. 2001). The armed forces and the paramilitaries blurred the lines between the military guerrilla activities and the political and social activities of trade unions, peasant farmers and others on the left, treating them all as criminal (Historical Memory Group 2016). In the 1980s and 1990s, parts of the armed forces, police, and judiciary collaborated with paramilitaries to stamp out or intimidate anyone that might work with guerrillas (Hristov 2014). Hence, as the state was trying to encourage democracy, the military was becoming more authoritarian.

Unlike many of the previous presidencies, the Virgilio Barco Vargas administration (1986-1990) officially recognized that the extreme poverty experienced by a large segment of Colombia's society was the country's most pressing problem (Palacios 2006). They focused on infrastructure development in remote areas, such as health care and education reform (Palacios 2006). Limited agrarian reform was attempted, and this was all meant to undermine guerrillas' social bases while at the same time increasing the presence of the armed forces and police (Historical Memory Group 2016). Democratic reforms were put in place, such as the first election of mayors in 1988 (Gomez-Suarez & Newman 2013). There was an attempt to decentralize the political and administrative bodies of the country and thereby strengthen the state presence in remote areas (Historical Memory Group 2016).

Another dimension that is important to understand for this time period was the role of drug trafficking. In the 1970s the marijuana industry started to grow in Colombia as foreign-trained young elites returned to Colombia bringing the hippy culture with them

(Simons 2004). Drugs increasingly entered into the prison systems and eventually became an export industry (Simons 2004). Over time the marijuana trade developed into the cocaine trade, which was much more lucrative (Simons 2004). From the late 1970s to the early 1980s, the cocaine industry exploded as international demand (especially in the US) for the drug rose (Simons 2004). Drug traffickers bought large plots of land (one million hectares in the 1980s) and developed major illicit drug operations, with their own illegal armed groups to protect them (Historical Memory Group 2016). The drug traffickers had a significant influence in the Colombian economy (Simons 2004). The industry had been organized into powerful cartels by the late 1980s, controlled by people like Pablo Escobar and Jorge Luis Ochoa (Simons 2004).

The extent of the power of the drug cartels is hard to underestimate. For example, in 1987 alone the Colombian-based cartels were said to have sold over \$20 billion (USD) worth of cocaine to North America and Europe (Filippone 1994). As the industry grew, its corrupting influence spread through the military, police, judiciary, politicians, and business classes (Simons 2004). The drug traffickers promoted a culture of easy money and violence (Historical Memory Group 2016).

The drug traffickers and guerrillas had a complex relationship that was sometimes antagonistic and sometimes cooperative. The illegal drug industry took advantage of the fact that there were large impoverished populations in the rural areas (Thomson 2011). Drug traffickers were willing to give resources to armed groups and work with rural communities if it advanced their interests. FARC only reluctantly accepted coca production because there were no other alternatives for income for rural peasants (Thomson 2011). In this way, the FARC was often dealing with local coca growers while the drug cartels controlled cocaine processing and distribution (Sherman 2015). FARC was strengthened by new income from drug industry and the guerrilla connections with cocaine increased over time (Thomson 2011).

The military, paramilitary, and self-defence groups also developed alliances with the drug traffickers. This gave financial backing to the paramilitary groups and allowed them to grow and control larger regions (Historical Memory Group 2016). The paramilitary

activities combined with the drug trafficking activities meant that ownership of land became more concentrated in rural areas (Thomson 2011).

As the crisis grew and reports indicated that the paramilitaries killed more civilians than guerrillas, the laws that had legalized paramilitary and self-defence groups were repealed in 1989 and penalties were established for supporting or forming such groups (Cubides C. 2001). However, a few years later in 1991 a new law was introduced that again made them legal (Brittain 2010). Furthermore, in 1993 laws were introduced that gave self-defence groups the power to protect large landowners (Brittain 2010). Throughout the 1990s, it is estimated that the paramilitaries killed between 3,000 and 4,000 civilians a year; most of the victims were perceived to be supporting the guerrillas in some fashion (Aviles 2006).

The State was weakened as it dealt with terror from the drug traffickers and the armed conflict in rural areas (Historical Memory Group 2016). In the late 1980s, a demobilization deal was formed with M-19, which thereby regained its social support (Aviles 2006). They received amnesties and were able to participate in political life, even being elected members of the Constituent Assembly (Historical Memory Group 2016). The EPL also demobilized in order to use social and political means to advance their objectives (Palacios 2006). It was not, however, until the early 1990s that the government was really able to crack down on drug trafficking and break up the powerful cartels (Simons 2004).

A Constituent Assembly was formed in 1990 that was meant to review the existing constitution; instead, it created a new one (Palacios 2006). The new Constitution was drafted and adopted in 1991 and changed how the government operated. It put an end to any remnants from the National Front system of government and provided the institutional foundations for decentralization, though in reality decentralization was limited (Historical Memory Group 2016). Tensions between the government and the armed forces eased as the military was subordinated to the civilian government through institutional changes (Historical Memory Group 2016). Furthermore, the rights of individuals and groups were broadened with specific attention to improving human rights

and recognizing cultural diversity within the country (Palacios 2006). For example, the rights of children were proclaimed to surpass the rights of others, despite the fact that the poverty experienced by many of their families would not allow them to enjoy the benefits of such rights (Palacios 2006).

Similarly, through the new constitution Indigenous peoples' rights were ratified, collective territory ownership rights of Afro-Colombian communities were acknowledged, and limited legal land reform took place (Velasco 2014). The reforms, however, were not evenly implemented and the situation was complicated by the armed conflict (Velasco 2011a). In many cases, Afro-Colombians were forcibly displaced and peasants forced to sell their properties at low prices (Oslender 2007). Armed groups appropriated the natural resources held under collective land rights by indigenous nations and Afro-Colombian communities (Velasco 2014).

Meanwhile, the legitimacy of the government was undermined by extremely high rates of electoral abstention and the brutal crimes that armed groups continued to perpetuate (Palacios 2006). Peace talks between 1991-1992 with FARC, ELN, and dissident EPL factions failed (Palacios 2006). Guerrilla groups continued their strategies of taking over the territories left by other demobilized groups (Palacios 2006).

The constitution impacted the drug industry particularly in its prohibition of extradition, though this proved to only be temporary (Palacios 2006). Nevertheless, it helped facilitate a judicial system that could effectively deal with the drug traffickers (Historical Memory Group 2016). The killing by government agencies of Pablo Escobar in 1993 marked a symbolic end of an era of drugs, politics and terror (Palacios 2006). This led to the eventual dismantling of the powerful Medellin Cartel and the Cali Cartel between 1994-1995.

5.6 Humanitarian Crisis: 1996-2002

The next time period that I consider, from 1996 to 2002, was characterised by the expansion and consolidation of both the paramilitaries and the guerrillas. Fighting involved massacres, assassinations, forced displacements, and kidnapping. Armed agents

used intimidation rather than persuasion to get the support of the civilian population (Historical Memory Group 2016). It was during this time period that the conflict reached its height in terms of severity and social impact.

In the early 1990s the economy had been strong, but this changed in the late 1990s as the economy went into crisis. An economic state of emergency was declared in 1997 as Colombia had a \$2.6 billion budget deficit (Simons 2004). Colombia's debt had almost doubled between 1995 and 1999 (Presidency of the Republic 1999). A collapse in the coffee and banana markets severely impacted the economy (Simons 2004).

Unemployment and food prices rose dramatically (Simons 2004). Many people turned to the drug trade as a source of income and for livelihoods (Presidency of the Republic 1999).

At the same time, the Colombian economy opened to foreign competition, which had a devastating impact on the rural economy (Historical Memory Group). Physical imports and exports such as wood, fish, agricultural materials, building materials, minerals, ores, and fossil fuels rose significantly from the late 1990s onwards (Vallejo et al. 2011). Similarly, Foreign Direct Investment increased during this period to become one of the country's main sources of financing for the economy (Moyano Buitrago & Gil Leon 2015).

The ongoing conflict had a huge influence on the rural economy. Many people were displaced and land was concentrated in the hands of fewer people (Thomson 2011). Large agro-industry projects like palm oil were established and protected by paramilitaries and the armed forces (Grajales 2011). Palm oil offered paramilitaries opportunity for profit and money laundering, thanks to the priority treatment the industry received through government policies such as subsidies (Grajales 2011). Tens of thousands of hectares of cultivatable land were abandoned in the wake of violent conflict (Grajales 2011). Land grabbing took place on a large scale, often legitimized by government agencies when they recognised land ownership of the new occupants (Grajales 2011). The peasant-farmer economy decreased dramatically as many turned to cattle farming or moved to urban areas (Thomson 2011).

During this time period the paramilitaries re-emerged and grew. The government used these groups as a way to fight the guerrilla movements that were making advances and forcing the military to withdraw (Brittain 2010). The Colombian Armed Forces were later found to have been providing significant amounts of support to these groups, such as information, training, and supplies. In addition, the paramilitaries reorganized to overcome internal divisions, especially under the leadership of Carlos Castaño (Grajeles 2011). Accordingly, in 1997 the paramilitaries became a nationally coordinated effort under the banner of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia – AUC) (Grajales 2011). All this despite the fact that in that same year it became illegal for civilians to use military weapons (Grajeles 2011).

The paramilitaries grew, with the AUC boasting approximately 15,000 troops in 2002 (Shiraz 2014). Paramilitaries became so influential that they infiltrated political life. In the early 2000s, AUC representatives filled hundreds of positions on the local level and dozens on the national level (Historical Memory Group 2016). The regional elites supported the paramilitaries, as they felt abandoned by the state to the guerrilla aggression, and they also wanted to prevent the erosion of their economic and political interests (Historical Memory Group 2016).

Beginning around 1997, the paramilitaries were responsible for the majority of civilian deaths in Colombia as they targeted trade union leaders, communists, peasant leaders, and human rights workers (Aviles 2006). Between 1986 and 2003 almost 4,000 trade union members were assassinated, in most cases by paramilitaries (Aviles 2006). This was beneficial to transnational corporations that were operating in affected areas, as they no longer had to deal with difficult trade union leaders and enjoyed greater security (Aviles 2006). Paramilitaries were also known for killing and displacing anyone thought to sympathise with the guerrillas (Simons 2004). As time went on the paramilitaries engaged in more and more brutal killings and even torture (Shiraz 2014). As they continued to perpetuate massacres and assassinations, thousands of people were displaced and the guerrillas were forced to retreat from certain areas, especially northern parts of Colombia (Aviles 2006).

Meanwhile, FARC and ELN both grew significantly during this period. On the one hand, the FARC's expansion was most significant as it went from around 6,000 combatants in 1991 to over 25,000 in 2002 (Brittain 2010). There is some controversy about the actual number of combatants, with several sources claiming it to be closer to 18,000 FARC combatants in 2002 (see Hylton 2003 & Aviles 2006). In either case the fact remains that FARC experienced substantial growth during this period. This growth accompanied repressive state policies both economic, in the form of neoliberal policies, and political, in the form of military action and exclusion (Brittain 2010). The FARC controlled vast areas of rural Colombia in this period with an estimated 105 to 117 fronts and a presence in 1,000 municipalities around 2000 (Brittain 2010). FARC began to operate at the national level. In 2000, FARC adopted a strategy of attacking isolated areas, using bombs in urban areas, and kidnapping (Historical Memory Group 2016). At this time, it also became common for them to use kidnapping and intimidation targeting Colombia's political and economic elites (Historical Memory Group 2016).

On the other hand, the ELN's expansion was more modest but they were still making a significant impact with their attacks on military and police (Historical Memory Group 2016). It is estimated that the ELN had 800 combatants in 1986 and 4,500 in 2001 (Nasi 2009). The ELN, however, was fragmented internally and also had to retreat given the paramilitary and Armed Forces military actions (Historical Memory Group 2016).

The paramilitaries and guerrillas were responsible during this time for dozens and dozens of massacres and displacing thousands of people (Simons 2004). It was estimated that in 1996 around 500 people were displaced per day (Simons 2004). At the time, *El Tiempo* newspaper published a survey indicating that amongst people displaced by the conflict, 35 percent had been displaced by paramilitaries, 29 percent by guerrillas, and fourteen percent by the army (Simons 2004). As people moved into the urban areas, their living conditions were terrible, with residents lacking sanitation, health care, education, and income (Simons 2004).

In 1997, the paramilitaries and guerrillas succeeded in disturbing municipal elections through intimidation, threats, and murders (Simons 2004). At least 50 candidates were

murdered and 2000 candidates withdrew because of threats (Simons 2004). In some areas barely anyone participated in voting because of fear of violence (Simons 2004).

As FARC expanded, clashes between them and the paramilitaries escalated. Each tried to secure its control over certain regions. In 1998 the fight between paramilitaries and guerrillas spread to urban areas and became more open than it had been in the past (Historical Memory Group 2016). The conflict expanded geographically. Paramilitaries controlled parts of the North of Colombia while FARC controlled parts of the South (Historical Memory Group 2016). As the conflict intensified it reached its height in 2002 with almost 3,500 battle-related deaths and almost a million internally displaced persons (UCDP 2017 & UNHRC 2017).

Another factor that continued to play a role in the conflict during this time was the drug trade. Poor rural communities relied heavily on coca production for their livelihoods (Brittain 2010). In 1995-1996 there were protests from the peasant farmers who farmed coca, that centered around aerial spray campaigns and the need to acknowledge the social problems that created the coca industry in the first place (Historical Memory Group 2016). Despite government crackdowns, Colombia was still supplying 80 percent of the world's cocaine in the late 1990s (Simons 2004), and by 2002 it was the world's largest producer of coca (Historical Memory Group 2016). During this time period, paramilitaries and other criminal groups were still highly involved in the drug trade, directly working in the industry and also providing protection to drug-traffickers.

FARC's involvement in the drug industry in the areas where it had control manifested in three main ways. Firstly, it levied a tax on anyone but peasants who were involved in industries including the drug industry, the profits from which were given back to community based groups (Brittain 2010). Secondly, FARC acted as an arbitrator between intermediaries in the drug industry and rural peasants (Brittain 2010). They ensured that fair wages were paid for labour and fair prices for coca crops (Brittain 2010). Thirdly, they protected supply lines and laboratories (Simons 2004).

The military's position was strengthened during this time by its ability to use helicopters and planes (Historical Memory Group 2016). Their capacity was further reinforced by

military aid provided from the US under Plan Colombia in 2000. Plan Colombia was a complex strategy that targeted drug trafficking, financial and economic restructuring, peace seeking, as well as improving national defence and the rule of law (Presidency of the Republic 1999). It focused primarily on military aid and not as much on social development initiatives to deal with the underlying causes of illicit trading (Historical Memory Group 2016). The plan became more militarized over time, especially with the election of conservative President Álvaro Uribe Vélez in 2002 (Franz 2016). There has been controversy over whether the plan was successful or not in reducing drug-related violence or improving security, with some saying it was and others saying it worsened the humanitarian crisis (Franz 2016).

Meanwhile, President Andrés Pastrana Arango (1998-2002) tried to negotiate with FARC and implemented a demilitarized zone (Hoskin & Murillo 2001). The FARC took advantage of the demilitarized zone to reinforce its position and networks. Progress in peace was hindered by a number of factors including FARC's insistence on an exchange of prisoners and the fact that the government was trying to negotiate peace while carrying out intensive counter-insurgency activities (Hoskin & Murillo 2001). Additionally, the paramilitaries exerted pressure to end the negotiations by kidnapping prominent political leaders (Historical Memory Group 2016).

Another reason the peace process was hampered related to US-Colombia relations. Firstly, an event in March 1999 when FARC kidnapped and assassinated some American citizens that were working in an indigenous community, which changed the attitude of the US towards the negotiations (Historical Memory Group 2016). Secondly, Plan Patriota was the militarized part of Plan Colombia, and in 2000 it involved deploying approximately sixteen thousand soldiers to fight FARC in parts of the country (Nasi 2009). Thirdly, with the attacks of September 11th 2001, the US became much less tolerant of perceived terrorist activities and put more pressure on the Colombian government to increase military spending (Aviles 2006). Though this event did not change the nature of the conflict in Colombia other than in rhetoric (now a 'war on terror' rather than a counterinsurgency or drug war), it did lead to its intensification as the US no longer favoured seeking peace (Jones 2009). The peace talks officially ended in 2002

when FARC hijacked a plane and kidnapped a Colombian senator (Chernick 2009).

The ELN was also involved in a peace process during this time. First in 1998 there was a conference organized largely by civil society in Germany to encourage dialogue between the government and ELN (Valencia 2009). The main result of this process was a declaration by ELN that they would not kidnap pregnant women or people over seventy-five years old (Valencia 2009). They did not agree to discontinue kidnapping altogether, as they boldly stated that without another source of income they needed to kidnap to fund themselves (Valencia 2009). This outcome received a lot of criticism, as many claimed that the participants in the conference were de facto accepting kidnapping (Valencia 2009).

In 2000, government-initiated peace talks with the ELN were attempted, although they took a secondary importance to the talks with FARC (Valencia 2009). These talks continued over the next couple of years, but no real progress was made. Firstly, this was because during the first round of talks the AUC attacked the ELN, which the ELN said could not have been done without Colombian military support (Valencia 2009). Secondly, ELN was not able to keep important commitments it had made. Violent acts were perpetuated by some of its factions, such as attacks on electric towers and pipelines, hijacking a plane, and kidnappings (Historical Memory Group 2016).

Overall, while the FARC, ELN, and the Colombian government gave lip service to peace during this process, in reality attacks from all sides were increasing in intensity and frequency (Hoskin & Murillo 2001). This period in the history of the conflict was characterized, therefore, by a growing conflict in terms of both the number of actors involved and the extent of damage inflicted. Guerrillas and paramilitary groups both expanded and engaged in violent conflict. Peace negotiations failed and human rights violations increased. Civilians, often poor rural peasants, were caught in the crossfire with thousands displaced and killed. Accordingly this period can properly be understood as being the height of the humanitarian crisis in the country.

5.7 AUC Demobilizes, FARC Retreats, and Peace Talks: 2002-2014

During the next historical period I consider, economic development in Colombia took a sharp turn towards embracing neoliberal policies. Hristov (2014) summarizes recent economic approaches in Colombia, writing:

Starting in 2002, neoliberal restructuring of the economy was especially accelerated under former President Uribe and comprised the privatization of public services and resources, deregulation of the labour market, increasing the presence of foreign enterprises (especially extractive industries), and drastic reduction of spending on social services. President Santos (2010-2014) had enthusiastically continued the neoliberal agenda (pg. 5).

Accordingly, the economic crisis that had been inherited from the Pastrana era was turned into economic growth. This growth, however, was not reaching the poorest segments of Colombian society, where material and social inequalities continued to increase. Extremely high inequality in terms of land distribution continued throughout this period (Thomson 2011).

Meanwhile, between 2002 and 2014 the conflict started to show signs of de-escalation. After Pastrana Arango's failed negotiations, President Uribe Vélez was elected for two terms (2002-2010) in a row. He took a different approach to the conflict that was uncompromisingly militarized (Thomson 2011). He initiated an intense military campaign to diminish the ELN and FARC, which were both already on the decline as a result of paramilitary confrontations (Sherman 2015). His military effort was helped in large part through billions of dollars of military aid from the US via Plan Patriota (Carroll 2011). Uribe refused to recognize the legitimacy of political grievances of the guerrillas and treated them as purely criminal narco-terrorists (Historical Memory Group 2016).

Between 1998 and 2010 the State more than doubled its military forces (Historical Memory Group 2016). Uribe's strategy gained significant momentum from public support, political elites, and the business class (Historical Memory Group 2016). Uribe

took up the task of fighting the guerrillas enthusiastically by restricting rights and freedoms in certain zones and giving the military more authority (Carroll 2011). In 2002, the number of arbitrary detentions rose by over 52% from the previous six years, to a total of 4,362 arbitrary detentions (Aviles 2006). The military strategy was successful in weakening both the ELN and FARC (Carroll 2011). Accordingly, there was a 75 percent reduction in kidnappings, and a 40 percent reduction in homicides between 2002 and 2008 (Carroll 2011). This meant that despite setbacks, Uribe Vélez was able to maintain a high degree of popularity in Colombia (Carroll 2011).

When the Pastrana-initiated peace negotiations ended, FARC responded with aggression, bombings, and political kidnappings in the urban areas (Historical Memory Group 2016). In the rural areas they attempted to fight the armed forces, but were forced to retreat. Throughout this period FARC continued to put pressure on local and regional leaders (Chernick 2009). Between 2001 and 2006, 287 rural mayors and city council members were assassinated (Chernick 2009).

During this time important members of FARC's leadership died both from natural causes and from military action; putting the FARC into crisis (Historical Memory Group 2016). The military pursuit of FARC threatened relations with neighbouring countries, such as Venezuela and Ecuador, as the government sought to chase FARC into its retreated positions outside of Colombia's borders (Historical Memory Group 2016). Meanwhile, the FARC's legitimacy suffered as they upheld this position and continued kidnapping and murders (Historical Memory Group 2016). Later military operations in 2008 and 2010 that liberated politically valuable prisoners from FARC were another blow to the group (Historical Memory Group 2016).

On the one hand, the aggressive military tactics had positive consequences in areas from which the guerrillas retreated, as sabotage decreased and travel on highways was made safer (Historical Memory Group 2016). On the other hand, the consequences were negative for the areas to which FARC retreated, as displacements, intimidations, violence, and other illegal acts continued (Historical Memory Group 2016).

The Uribe Vélez administration suffered in terms of legitimacy because of scandals

related to bribery, parapolitics⁶, human rights abuses, and surveillance (Thomson 2011). According to CIA reports and other accounts, Uribe himself had deep ties with the former Medellin Cartel and the paramilitaries (Sherman 2015 & Hylton 2003). The government's approach also had costs in terms of taxes and the integrity of state institutions (Historical Memory Group 2016). For instance, a major scandal of atrocious human rights violations that took place during this period was that of 'false positives.' It is estimated that the military executed over 4,000 civilians between 2002 and 2008 (The Guardian 2016). Under pressure to produce results, the bodies of these civilians were then used by the military to show they had killed guerrillas in combat (The Guardian 2016). By 2008, the human rights situation in Colombia had reached a critical stage and was strongly condemned by the international community especially because of the impunity enjoyed by many in the military and paramilitaries (Carroll 2011). In terms of the paramilitaries, between 2002 and 2006 the Uribe administration negotiated a peace deal with the AUC that led to their official demobilization (Wienand & Tremaria 2017). The negotiations with the paramilitaries was a difficult process. One major problem in the process was that the paramilitaries continually violated ceasefire agreements, and some continued to operate even after official demobilization (Aviles 2006). Another one of the main obstacles to the peace process related to internal divisions within the paramilitaries that led to different interests at the negotiating table as well as open fighting between factions (Historical Memory Group 2016). The AUC had started to deteriorate in 2001 when its founding leader Carlos Castaño resigned (Historical Memory Group 2016). He was assassinated in 2004 after he publically said that the paramilitaries had been coopted by drug traffickers (Historical Memory Group 2016).

Overall, the paramilitary leaders wanted protection from extradition to the USA, rights on property illegally gained in the conflict, and reduced sentences (Historical Memory Group 2016). They wanted to be designated political criminals, but the judiciary refused

⁶ Parapolitics refers to alliances made between paramilitaries and politicians, which were at its height in Colombia between 1998 and 2007 (Escobar Arango 2013).

to do this (Historical Memory Group 2016). Despite their efforts, harsher sentences were imposed, more obligations for testifying were made (such as having to confess all crimes), and extraditions to the US did take place (Historical Memory Group 2016). According to a report by Human Rights Watch, however, the terms of the demobilization were more likely to fuel Colombia's conflict (2005). They argued that:

such demobilizations have yielded virtually no truth or reparation for victims and have failed to hold most paramilitaries accountable for atrocities. With the economic power of these groups intact, they remain capable of continued violence even while their forces have partially disarmed. Their already substantial political control, backed by intimidation and bribery, is not only intact but also gaining new vigor (Human Rights Watch 2005:2).

Though several prominent political figures with ties to the paramilitaries were imprisoned or removed from office in the wake of the demobilization, their replacements were often equally friendly and connected to paramilitary groups (Grajales 2011). Furthermore, the demobilization did little to impact the economic networks of the paramilitaries, and much of the land they had illegally acquired was never returned to its original owners (Grajales 2011). An alternate mode of funding operations for paramilitaries, for example was the mining industry, which grew all throughout the 1990s and 2000s (Historical Memory Group 2016).

The lack of accountability and failure to address the underlying causes of the paramilitaries did lead to their regrouping and re-emerging after official demobilization. Paramilitary groups increased from 2006 onwards, especially in former AUC strongholds. In 2006, the degree to which the paramilitaries had infiltrated the state through local and regional politicians, as well as links they had with businessmen, the military and politicians, came to be public knowledge (Historical Memory Group 2016).

Meanwhile, these paramilitary groups continued to be fragmented internally and have different logics based on region (Historical Memory Group 2016). For instance, some paramilitary groups were involved more in drug-trafficking; some were more involved in the war against guerrillas; and some collaborated with the guerrillas in areas of mutual

profit (Historical Memory Group 2016). Paramilitaries could be divided into several groups: those that rearmed after the official demobilization; those that were not part of the negotiations or demobilization; those that developed out of drug-trafficking interests; and those that had participated in negotiations and demobilized (Historical Memory Group 2016). In 2007 there was estimated to be 34 of these groups operating in the country (Historical Memory Group 2016). In some areas these groups maintained connections with the Armed Forces while their main sources of funding were the drug trade and mining (Historical Memory Group 2016).

When Juan Manuel Santos Calderón became President in 2010, he adopted a different approach to the conflict. He sought a political solution to end the cycle of violence and recognition of the rights of victims. In 2011, Law 1448 of *Victims and Land Restitution* was ratified by Santos and it came into force in 2012 (Montoya Londoño & Vallejo Mejía 2016). The objectives of the law were to:

establish a set of judicial, administrative, social and economic measures, individual and collective, that will benefit the victims... within a framework of transitional justice, that makes it possible for them to enjoy their rights to truth, justice and reparation with a guarantee of non-repetition, so as to recognize their status as victims and dignified (improved) through the realization of their constitutional rights (*Victims and Land Restitution Law*, Article 1, page 9).

This law was a historic step both because it officially recognized the existence of an armed conflict in Colombia and because it gave recognition to some victims of human rights violations and outlined their rights to reparation (Amnesty International 2012). The rights outlined in the law have been difficult to implement for three main reasons. Firstly, when the law came into force Colombia was still experiencing armed conflict, so more victims were being generated on a regular basis. Secondly, and related to the first issue, there is significant resistance from various parties to restore land illegally gained. Thirdly, there is a lack of institutional capacity and resources needed to ensure lands are restored and reparations happen.

In October 2012, Santos announced peace talks with FARC, most of which took place in

Havana Cuba (WOLA 2017). Earlier that same year, FARC announced that it would no longer kidnap people for ransom (CNN 2012). The years that followed were spotted by intermittent unilateral ceasefires on the part of FARC and attacks (WOLA 2017).

Fighting was still ongoing in the country when I conducted my fieldwork in 2014, especially considering that other guerrilla groups, paramilitaries, and drug-traffickers that are active across Colombia were not a part of the negotiations process.

5.8 Diversity of Stakeholders and Inequalities

Colombia's conflict has a long complicated history. It has been marked by violence, economic changes, neoliberalism, and the concentration of land and resources to the detriment of the most marginalized communities. In this section I want to elaborate on three key themes in the history of the conflict that arise from the review of the historical periods outlined above. The first theme relates to the diversity of stakeholders involved in the conflict. The second theme is related to the persistence of symbolic inequalities that exist largely experienced by people through their class, location, and political affiliation in Colombia. The third theme relates to material inequalities between social groups in Colombian.

5.8.1 Diversity of Stakeholders

The nature of the conflict in Colombia has been shaped in part by the diversity of internal and external stakeholders interacting and competing in the social space where conflict happens. In the previous section, as I moved through the different historical periods I outlined some of the main internal stakeholders in Colombia, namely, poor rural populations, multiple guerrilla groups, multiple paramilitaries, drug traffickers, the national armed forces, government institutions, and economic and political elites.

These stakeholders are diverse within themselves and vary greatly by region. There have been, for example, multiple guerrilla, paramilitary, and drug-trafficking groups over time. The main guerrilla groups have been FARC, ELN, EPL, and M-19. Similarly, though many of the paramilitary groups at one time were organized under the banner of the AUC, they represented a variety of groups and their distinctiveness became more

apparent in the wake of the AUC's official demobilization. Even within a particular guerrilla group or paramilitary group, there has been extensive internal fragmentation based on interests or ideology. This was especially true, for example, of the ELN in the 1970s and 1980s as well as the AUC in the 2000s. Overall, the nature of conflict on the local level has been shaped in large part by which specific armed groups (guerrillas, paramilitaries, drug traffickers, or armed forces) were present in a region and the extent of their influence.

There have also been other internal and external actors that have shaped the social space and the impact of conflict on poor rural populations in Colombia. Some of these stakeholders can significantly influence conflict in ways that are not always perceptible to local populations. Here I would like to highlight the role of local elites, business interests, the U.S. government and affiliated international institutions, and the Catholic Church.

Despite widespread violence, Colombia has had the highest level of sustained economic growth in all of Latin America (Hristov 2014). National and international business interests have been key driving factors in violence. This is in part because Colombia has a strong export sector (Thomson 2011). Both internal elites and external transnational companies have played key roles in promoting the interests of large business over the interests of rural populations (Hristov 2014). There is a large presence of transnational companies involved in timber, mining, and pharmaceuticals (Wouters 2001). There are several Canadian and US-based companies, for example, that work in Colombia. Paramilitaries have played a key role in promoting domestic and foreign investments. Transnational companies and local elites have paid paramilitary groups for protection and have used the lands they have violently taken (Thomson 2011). The control of land and resources that has fuelled the conflict has, in large part, been driven by the interests of local elites and international businesses (often enjoying the military and political cooperation of the Colombian government and its institutions).

In addition, foreign governments and institutions have also been involved in Colombia's conflict. Currently both Canada and the US, for example, have free-trade agreements with Colombia and are on friendly political terms (Hristov 2014). Colombia has always

worked closely with international stakeholders. Shortly after Colombia declared independence from Spain in 1810, the foundations of U.S. involvement in Latin America were laid with the beginnings of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 (Sexton 2011). Though this doctrine was originally conceived of as defensive, over time it was used to justify U.S. intervention in Latin America (Livingstone 2009). Since that time the U.S. has been involved in Colombian political affairs both directly and through the international institutions it sponsored.

In every historical period outlined above, the U.S. has played a pivotal role in the conflict. During La Violence, for instance, Rojas Pinilla received military assistance and food aid from the U.S. government (Galli 1981). Additionally, in 1949 Colombia received an agricultural loan from the World Bank, and it was the first nation to receive a World Bank mission to study its economy that same year (Galli 1981). Funding was accordingly provided to strengthen the urban economy and industry, to the neglect of the rural sector (Galli 1981). This only fed tensions in the country.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the involvement of the U.S. in Colombian affairs increased (Thomson 2011). The National Front political coalition received support from U.S. governmental agencies (Historical Memory Group 2016). The Colombian government worked closely with the U.S. government on counterinsurgency efforts during this period (Galli 1981). The National Front also received money through the U.S. led Alliance of Progress for social programs, which was a propaganda based program meant to deter Communist ideology inspired by the Cuban Revolution and encourage progressive capitalism (Bushnell 1993). The World Bank, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Inter-American Development Bank were also major contributors to the government, providing \$2 billion USD in loans between 1961-1972 (Galli 1981). These institutions in turn examined Colombia's foreign exchange practices and influenced the direction of development (Galli 1981). Throughout the 1960s and 1970s the Colombian economy relied heavily on external financing (Galli 1981).

U.S. involvement in Colombia only increased in the 1980s and 1990s, as up to 100 military advisors were sent to Colombia (Simons 2004). U.S. involvement became

closely tied to the drug trade, as it was estimated that Colombia supplied 75% of cocaine in the U.S. in 1980 (Simons 2004). The U.S. had an interest in both fighting the drug trade and the leftist movements (Simons 2004). The 'war on drugs' was used as a pretext for the U.S. to increase its military presence in Latin America and to fight the guerrillas in Colombia (Livingstone 2009). The close ties between the U.S. and Colombia during this time influenced policies and the behaviour of armed groups. This led, for example, to the use of terror by drug traffickers as they attempted to avoid extradition to the U.S. (Simons 2004). The drug traffickers, which were by that point well organized criminal mafias, were adamantly opposed to the extraditions (Simons 2004). Judges and their families were threatened, and in 1985-1986 alone fourteen judges were killed in connection with this issue (Simons 2004). Threats to and assassinations of politicians and members of the judiciary by drug traffickers continued into the 1990s (Simons 2004).

In 2000 American involvement in Colombia took the form of Plan Colombia, which the U.S. military and security officials largely created under the Clinton Administration (Livingstone 2009). Plan Colombia had both anti-drug and counterinsurgency components. Through Plan Colombia, the U.S. government influenced military action in the country as well as some forms of social policy. At every stage of the history of the conflict, the U. S. has been involved in some way in military action, social policy, and even peace negotiations in Colombia. It has justified its involvement through various means such as Communist counter-insurgency in the 1960s-1980s, the War on Drugs in the 1980s and 1990s, and finally, the War on Terror from 2001 onwards (Hristov 2014).

Another major stakeholder in Colombia's conflict has been the Catholic Church. It has played an important role in the conflict from its origins. At various stages it has provided moral support to government initiatives, such as supporting the conservative anti-liberal and anti-communist stance during La Violencia (Historical Memory Group 2016). During the National Front regime the Catholic Church began to focus on a social doctrine of helping the poor, which grew into liberation theology (Bushnell 1993). The Church thereby started to move away from its close connections with the Conservative party and some clergy became involved in leftist causes (Bushnell 1993). Most famously, the academic and Catholic priest Camilo Torres joined the ELN and was killed in his first

combat in 1966 (Broderick 1975). According to 2014 estimates, 79% of the population in Colombia is Catholic (CIA 2017). From social programs, which I will discuss in Chapter 8, to overt political pressure, the moral and political influence of the church continues to be felt in Colombian society. For instance, Pope Francis publically advocated for the peace negotiations between FARC and the government to reach an agreement, even calling the President directly on at least two occasions (Kraul 2017). Correspondingly, in December 2017 Pope Francis (and former U.S. President Obama) was featured on the government's peace negotiation team page (Gobierno de Colombia 2017).

5.8.2 Symbolic Inequality

In terms of the second theme, symbolic inequalities have shaped the conflict in Colombia. There has been a constant struggle over how the social world is defined, and the rules by which people need to submit. One way this has manifested is that the rural poor have often lacked the possibility of having free political participation because of violence and institutional shortcomings. The symbolic struggle over political representation and defining the terms and meaning of social relations began long before La Violencia, but can be most clearly seen in the polarization that took place during that period between the Liberals and Conservatives. Over time this struggle shifted in character as political elites ruled the country and the poor, especially rural populations, were further marginalized and excluded from political decision-making. The importance of this issue is highlighted by the fact that political participation has been a key issue in all peace negotiations that have taken place throughout Colombia's history.

Even though the foundations for decentralization (and thereby greater political participation) were laid with the adoption of the new constitution in 1991, the political landscape of Colombia was not immediately changed. In the years leading up to 2014, when I conducted my fieldwork, guerrilla groups, especially the FARC and ELN, continued in the struggle for political legitimacy at the national level. Their ability to impose their vision of the social world in Colombia beyond the confines of the remote regions they have controlled depends in large part on their ability to negotiate political participation on the national stage. The need for their voices to be heard at the national level is also a priority for some marginalized rural populations who desire to have

political participation and meaningful representation in decision-making (especially related to development policies and land use) without the fear of violence.

5.8.3 Material Inequality

The struggle over political legitimacy has been closely related to material inequalities. The distribution of material wealth in Colombia, in terms of money and property in particular, has been significantly uneven throughout its history. While the rural (and some segments of the urban) poor have had barely enough resources to meet their daily needs, elites in the country have been able to control large businesses (mining, illegal crops, agri-businesses) earning substantial profits. As the economic profit to be gained from illicit crops, mining, and large agri-businesses (such as palm oil and coffee plantations) has shifted and grown, there has been motivation to concentrate land in fewer hands and to control territory. One example of the importance of resources in Colombia's conflict can be seen in the global financial crisis of 2008, when the price in gold increased rapidly as countries scrambled to protect themselves from a weak American dollar (Idrobo, Mejía & Tribin 2013). This led to a gold rush in Colombia, through which both legal and illegal mining increased dramatically (Idrobo, Mejía & Tribin 2013). Gold mining soon after replaced cocaine production as a source of income for armed groups (Willis 2013).

Whether or not the genuine motivation for guerrilla groups was and remained producing greater economic and cultural equality in Colombia may be debatable, but what is clear is that the material conditions of the country have facilitated the perpetuation of the conflict. On the one hand they have provided legitimacy for guerrilla groups to fight in the name of the rural poor. On the other hand the material conditions of the abundance of valuable natural resources in Colombia have given armed groups, local elites, and international business interests motivation to fight to control territory.

The constitutional changes of 1991 brought changes to laws on collective ethnic land rights meant to protect Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities. These changes, however, did not succeed in protecting these groups. The new collective land rights gave armed groups and companies with interests in the area specific obstacles that needed to be overcome in order for their business interests to succeed; and thereafter displacements

for these communities increased. In this way the struggle over material forms of capital has led to displacement and violence. Communities that have been displaced or controlled by an external armed group have lost their ability to manage the resources around them. As various armed groups have competed to control territory and resources, the rural poor have often been caught in the middle suffering from terror, displacement, and murder.

5.9 Conclusion

The history of Colombia's conflict is quite complex. Over time, the stakeholders and their roles have changed, the location of the conflict has sometimes changed, and there have been changes as to which industries are most relevant for perpetuating and financing conflict. Despite the complexity of the context and the changes that have taken place, there are some basic elements that have remained the same. Colombia's conflict, and society more generally, have been structured in part by struggles over symbolic and economic capital. So while the stakeholders may have had different interests at various times, those interests were ultimately structured by this struggle and shaped by the unequal distribution of symbolic and economic capital in Colombian society. An important characteristic of this inequality is not only the space between the rich and poor, but also that the poor have had so little symbolic and economic capital that it has at times been a challenge for them to survive, not only because they have so little capital to begin with, but also because what little they have had has often been violently taken away from them to profit elites and transnational corporations.

The deprivation experienced by the rural poor, the competition over profitable resources, interventions of the U.S., neoliberal economic policies that benefit elites and international business interests, have all contributed to the perpetuation of the conflict. Understanding who the various stakeholders are and what their relations are to the forms of capital struggled over, helps to identify the social positions of the displaced who are the focus of this research.

Chapter 6

6 Local Context: Quibdo, Chocó

My research took place in a specific area of Colombia that is rather isolated from the rest of the country. It is a region of the country with its own distinctive history, culture, and rules by which social space is ordered. In this chapter I begin by describing some of the cultural, historical, and socio-political context of the department of Chocó. Next, I describe the context of the capital city of Quibdo where I conducted my interviews. Finally, I provide an analysis of how cultural and economic capital structures the rural and urban fields in Chocó and thereby the lives of the participants in this research.

6.1 The Department of Chocó

The Department of Chocó runs along the Pacific coast of Colombia and connects in the north to the Atlantic Ocean. It has an area of 46,530 square kilometers (Gobernación de Chocó 2016), and a population of approximately 500,000 (DNP 2015). Chocó has an abundance of natural resources and is one of the places with the most biodiversity on the planet. The department is made up of primarily hot and extremely humid jungle. Road access is limited but an intricate system of rivers helps connect the various towns and villages. Flying over the Andes into Chocó you will see dense rainforest with pathways of rivers crisscrossing the landscape. From the sky you likely will not be able to see the villages that hide below, but rather the large spaces cleared for mining operations will stand out.

The main industries in the region are mining, forestry, fishing, agriculture, and animal husbandry (Gobernación de Chocó 2016). Gold mining and logging in particular have been extensively practiced in such a way that they have threatened the integrity of local ecosystems (Gobernación de Chocó 2016). Mining is not new to Chocó, as foreign settlers armed with weapons have been going to the region to extract gold since the beginning of Spanish colonization (Sharp 1976). Today gold, silver, and platinum continue to be mined in Chocó, sometimes with heavy social and environmental costs.

Chocó is isolated both geographically, by mountains and thick rain forest, and culturally from the rest of Colombia (Sharp 1976). The cultural isolation stems in part from the unique ethnic composition of Chocó, with 82% of the people being Afro-Colombian and 12% Indigenous. This is a high concentration of Afro-Colombians, given that they make up only 11% of the overall population of Colombia (DANE 2005). The reason that there are so many Afro-Colombians in Chocó is because of its history of slavery. During Spanish colonization, Africans were brought over to work as slaves in mines while the local indigenous populations worked as slaves primarily producing food and carrying cargo (Sharp 1976). Over time, colonizers replaced indigenous slaves with black ones because they were considered less rebellious and also the colonizers were more interested in converting them to Catholicism (Sharp 1976). It was not until 1851 that slavery was abolished in Colombia (Sharp 1976).

This history of colonization and slavery has shaped the culture and lived reality of the people from Chocó in several important ways. Firstly, during colonial times Chocó was even more isolated than it is today. Spanish presence in the area was very weak and it was difficult to enforce laws. Laws to protect the Indigenous population, for example, were rarely enforced (Sharp 1976). Similarly, today the state presence in Chocó is limited, which continues to impact the state's ability to enforce laws in general and specifically laws relating to victims of the conflict and collective land rights.

Secondly, given the climate and isolation, most colonizers only went to Chocó temporarily to exploit the mines, not to settle (Sharp 1976). The people that ended up settling in the region were in large majority, the descendants of the African slaves, as so many had been brought in to work the mines. It was easier in Chocó for slaves to obtain freedom either by paying for it or by escaping into the dense jungle (Sharp 1976). This history shaped not only the ethnic makeup of the population but also how the area was settled. In search of independence and freedom, many Afro-Colombians and Indigenous communities settled in remote areas along the rivers and lived off the land with little contact with the outside world. Today, technically 96% of the land in Chocó is part of Afro-Colombian or Indigenous community-held collective land rights. This has led to more displacements. For example, one participant described her experience saying:

“Precisely, displacements have become more frequent in the communities since we started working on the subject of collective land titles. Collective land titles are a threat to the power of companies that already had permits given to them by the State who had made concessions to use the land” (Moises, 62).

A third way that colonization shaped modern life in Chocó are lingering ethnic divisions. During colonization, divisions between ethnic groups were sharp. The colonizers, the Africans, and the Indigenous lived separately and were governed by different social rules and expectations. The Indigenous population was treated relatively better by colonizers because they were considered more similar to the colonizers and able to be converted (Sharp 1976).

Today in rural settings—and now also to a certain extent in urban areas because of displacement—the Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities live separately. Inter-marriage between these ethnic groups is still uncommon. Many rural indigenous communities have retained local languages and some religious practices. In Quibdó the ethnic divides are manifest at the riverside. A common practice of rural women and children is to wash their clothes and bathe in the river. During the day even in the central market area women and children can be seen washing in the river water. Afro-Colombian and Indigenous women and children, however, tend to wash their clothing and bathe only with those of their own ethnic group.

Perhaps the legacy of slavery has also contributed to the resilience and creativity demonstrated by the Chocóano population. Despite intense poverty and hostile armed groups, many communities continue to advocate for their rights, and people displaced by conflict find resourceful ways of dealing with hardship and surviving.

Inequality and poverty continue to be a lived reality for the vast majority of the population in Chocó. If Chocó were a country, it would likely place near the bottom of the world ranking in terms of human development. The percentage of people living in poverty in Chocó is 68% (DANE 2013), which would place it among the five countries with the highest rates of poverty in the world, comparable to such countries as Madagascar, Swaziland, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (UNDP 2013). At the

national level, Chocó is the region with the highest level of unmet basic needs in Colombia (OECD 2012); as such, it is the poorest department in Colombia (Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2015).

In Colombia in general, but especially in Chocó, rural areas lack infrastructure and services. Most people in rural communities live off the land and exploit local resources. There are few educational opportunities because rural communities are so isolated. Yet, despite the simplicity of life, several participants in this study described rural life as peaceful and good until armed groups entered the area. One participant, for example, when asked what life was like in his community before he was displaced said: “In the past, we lived a good and happy life, sharing with one another, that is the way we lived in the community where I lived. What we had was for everyone. There was no evil in peace” (Sergio, 67).

Part of the reason that conflict came into Chocó can be explained by the two main reasons the department is attractive for illegal armed groups in Colombia. Firstly, the land in Chocó is very rich in natural resources that illegal armed groups are interested in exploiting. Accordingly, one participant described the cause of the conflict in this way: “...the main cause is that they want to keep the territory. What happens is that this region of Chocó is very rich in minerals, like gold [and] platinum. For the communities here there are many sources of minerals, platinum, gold, also everything from wood to fishing too...” (Elena, 35). Illegal groups are particularly interested in mining of gold and platinum in Chocó. One participant, for example, said about the causes of the conflict: “The causes, it is because the subversive groups want to have control of the territory and they want to take the money that the mining companies make” (Karina, 24). Indeed, illegal mining has exploded in Chocó since the gold rush began after the 2008 global financial crisis. Driven by rises in the international price of gold, illegal mining has become a way of funding illegal armed groups in Colombia.

Another resource that has been particularly pertinent in fuelling the conflict in Chocó is growing illegal crops for drugs. One participant, for example, noted the role of illegal crops in Chocó saying, “...they are displaced by the planting of illicit crops which in turn

leads to extortion and that if you do not pay the extortion there is a threat and people start to leave the community. So, coca has generated a change in the relationship of groups within communities” (Nadia, 30). She later elaborated saying:

I consider that the most structural cause is that this zone is strategically located because the area of... for example the Alto Baudó is located on the banks of the river Baudó, there are jungles where there are good conditions for cultivating illegal crops. When there were no illicit crops, the problems experienced were very few, very few. The cultivation of illicit crops starts; laboratories are established within the territories of the black and indigenous communities. Besides this, there is also [the fact that] the Baudó river flows into the Pacific Ocean. This is very convenient because all the coca that is produced is processed into the Baudó region, they are directly sent into Panama, Mexico, and into Costa Rica, and they have a guaranteed market. And this not only the armed groups, but also the entire drug trafficking market, arms trafficking... [therefore] the loss of culture, loss of traditional activities are increasing in communities (Nadia, 30).

In these ways, the richness of Chocó’s natural resources and fertility of the land attracts and sustains illegal armed groups, especially through the exploitation of illegal crops and mining.

A second reason that Chocó is attractive to illegal armed groups in Colombia is related to its strategic location and geographic makeup. The department is connected to both Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, facilitating trade and communication. One participant elaborated on Chocó’s strategic location saying that a cause of the conflict was:

Another [cause] that is also very important is that many places are strategic locations. They are strategic because in them they can, say, hide or in the worst case they can leave. There are many alternative routes they can use, therefore we say that they are strategic places... It is a strategic place, to move, to enter, to leave, to communicate, for everything (Imelda, 46).

Similarly, another participant commented that:

And I also understand that in many regions there are corridors, places that connect with other departments. For these communities of Chocó, guerrillas can make their connections, their passages to reach other regions, other departments and thus be able to market and take their drugs that they sometimes have around here. In some of these, I do not know exactly which, but in some of these communities there are illicit crops and these communities connect with other departments... what they want is to take possession of the territory; that the communities leave the territory for them to stay, to settle in the territory and that is their interest: the communities' territories (Elena, 35).

Chocó's isolation and jungle provides good conditions for illegal armed groups to operate without outside interference. The lack of state presence means that illegal armed groups can operate relatively freely in Chocó. This is why one participant cited the lack of state presence as a cause of displacement, saying:

So the cause of displacement is lack of, or gaps in, the protection that the state should guarantee. It is a right, if I decide to safeguard, or I take other strategies, but when I decide to leave or take other strategies, such as confinement, or to resist in the territory, the State should equally guarantee to protect me or guarantee the conditions so that I rejected that decision (Julio, 41).

Along these lines, the weakness of the state in Chocó can be seen by an incident that happened while I was doing my research. In November of 2014 General Alzate Mora was kidnapped just kilometers outside of Quibdó by FARC members. The kidnapping of a general was a major event in Colombia but it was executed with relative ease due to the isolation and thick jungle cover the guerrillas had to disappear into. Lack of state presence means that illegal armed groups face little opposition to controlling territory in Chocó.

Conflict has been ongoing in this department since the 1990s when guerrilla and paramilitaries groups became active in the area, after being pushed out of other areas of the country. Participants spoke about encountering problems with several armed actors including ELN, FARC, paramilitaries, and the government. Illegal armed groups

terrorised local communities with massacres, assassinations, threats, rapes, and kidnapping in order to make them leave their territory. Today in Chocó there have been thousands of people, mostly from rural areas, that have been displaced by conflict (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 2013).

6.2 The City of Quibdó

Quibdó is the capital of Chocó, and as such is one of the main areas that the displaced flee to for safety. There is a greater state presence in Quibdó, relative to the rest of the department, with military and police visibly present, especially in the center of the city. According to the Municipal Office for Attention to Victims⁷ there are approximately 81,500 victims of the conflict in the capital city of Quibdó of a total population of around 150,000. These numbers are probably underestimated, as many people do not register as victims because of lack of knowledge or fear.

Picture 1: A main street in downtown Quibdó



⁷ Oficina Municipal Para Atención a Víctimas

Most of the stores, markets, hotels, and government services are concentrated in the downtown core of Quibdó. Under your feet you will find raised sidewalks beside open sewers, and above your head you will find a maze of electric wires bringing power to the local businesses. There is a central market along the riverbank of the Atrato where there is always loud music playing, fresh fish and plenty of plantains being sold. A large Catholic cathedral nearby is an iconic part of Quibdó's landscape and the church itself is very influential with the local population. In fact, the biggest festival in Chocó celebrates "San Pacho" which is the colloquial way of referring to the patron saint of Quibdó, St. Francis of Assisi.

Picture 2: View from the library of the cathedral and River Atrato



There are around ten neighbourhoods in Quibdó that sprawl out from the downtown core. Each neighbourhood has its own characteristics, but overall infrastructure is limited, and it tends to be more limited the further from the center you travel. Though most people

have access to electricity, many do not have running water. Power outages are a regular occurrence, and storms sometimes block cell phone signals and cafés' Internet access. There is no garbage pick up, so piles of garbage collect in the streets. Many of the streets are not paved or properly maintained. Public transportation consists mainly of rundown *colectivos* (vans with fixed routes but no fixed stops that transport people around town) and moto-taxis. Rules are more relaxed in Chocó. For instance, people can ride motorcycles or mopeds without a helmet or ride in a car without wearing a seat belt.

Picture 3: Aerial view of Quibdó



Overall, Chocó's isolation, climate, history of slavery, and ethnic makeup, continue to contribute to shaping local practices, attitudes, and culture. Life for much of the population is marked by poverty and the experiences of conflict. The abundant resources available in Chocó in combination with its geographically strategic location make it an ideal haven for illegal armed groups in Colombia. That in combination with the relatively sparse state presence in the department, means that armed groups have been able to control much of the rural areas, forcing large parts of the population into urban centers such as Quibdó or Rio Sucio. Though Quibdó is the most developed of the urban areas, it

has only very basic infrastructure, and services are by no means uniform across neighbourhoods or between social groups.

6.3 Rural Versus Urban Fields

As discussed in Chapter 4, Bourdieu argues that social space is constructed mainly based on cultural and economic capital. Therefore the way in which these types of capital were distributed structured the experiences of my study population. To better understand this reality, consider the fact that the displaced had been moved from one field (rural) to a new field (urban) that had a different set of rules. Here I explain some of the parameters of this new field based first on the role of cultural capital, and then on the role of economic capital.

In Chocó's rural communities the distribution of capital was different from the city. Firstly, this was reflected in bigger differences in capital volume between individuals in the city. In rural areas there were more similarities in terms of qualities and practices amongst community members such as those related to dress, communication, and levels of education. While differences existed in terms of skills and knowledge that were particularly valued in the rural setting, they were not as pronounced as in the urban environment. They were more pronounced in Quibdó because of the wider range of educational levels, travel experiences, and economic positions of urban dwellers. These differences were in turn reflected in the volume of cultural capital people were able to accumulate.

Secondly, the distribution of cultural capital was different in the urban context because people's relative position changed when they became displaced. The cultural capital that the displaced had developed in their rural communities often had little value in the city. Should a person from the city be dropped into a rural area, they would certainly have appreciated the knowledge of daily tasks, such as collecting water or food and protecting themselves from wildlife; but this knowledge was not very useful or valued in Quibdó. As the rules of the field changed, the distribution of cultural capital changed. Skills related to mining, fishing, and farming, for example that had been valued in the rural

context were not easily transferable to the urban setting where these types of work opportunities did not exist. Many people, who had high levels of cultural capital in the rural areas, might find themselves with little cultural capital useful for the urban field.

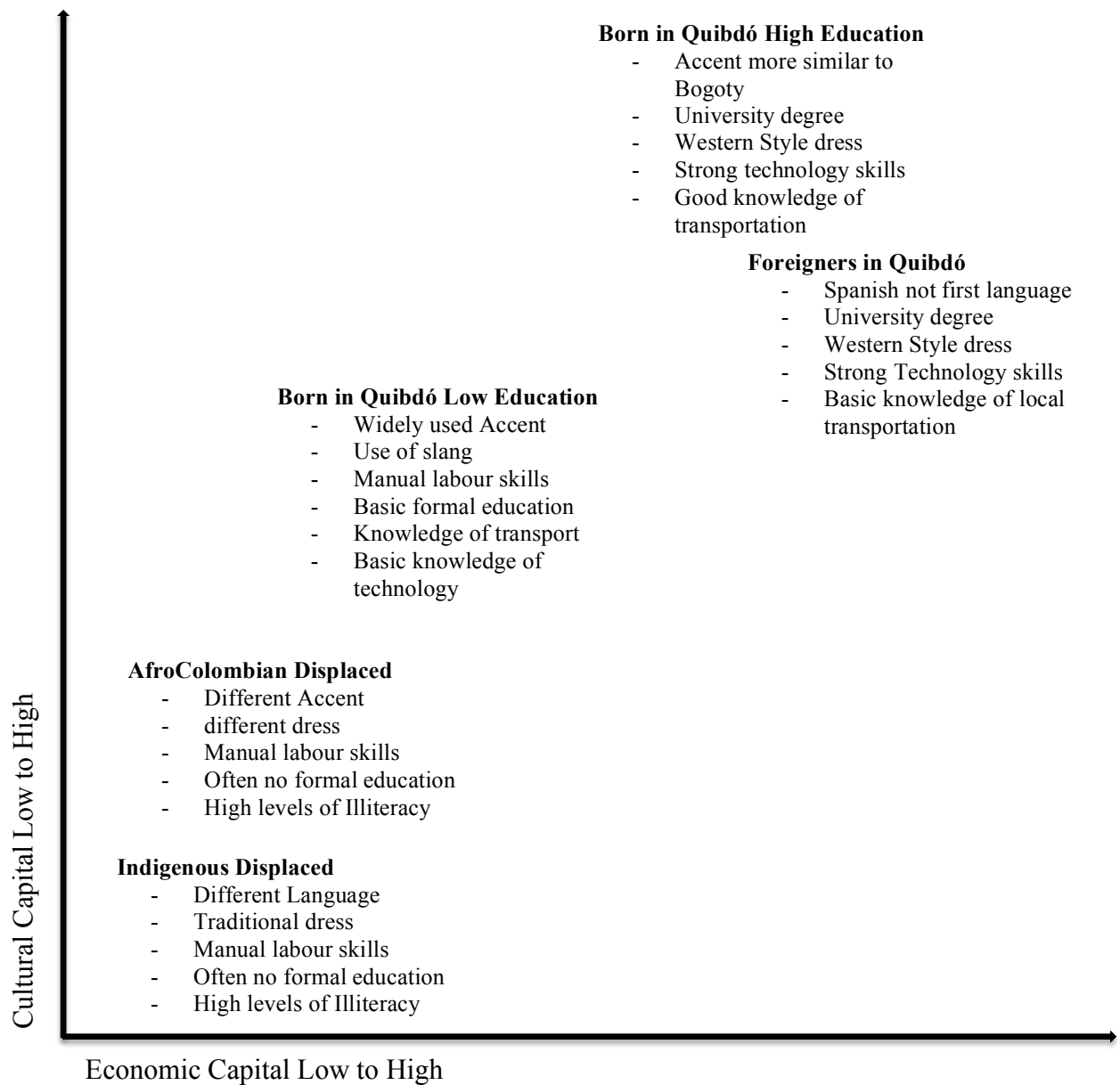
Differences in how people dressed and talked provided part of the basis for discrimination and stigmatization that some participants discussed. This was particularly true for some displaced indigenous communities that had their own languages and very distinct ways of dressing. Overall, without the cultural capital valued in the urban setting such as common speech, clothing, education, and knowledge about how to manoeuvre the city, many of the displaced found adapting to life in the city rather challenging. This is what led to, for example, the important role that education came to occupy for the displaced, as I discuss in Chapter 10.

Similarly, the distribution and role of economic capital was transformed for people who were displaced from the rural to urban field. People's possession of economic capital changed significantly when they were displaced. Most people had to abandon their property and possessions to flee to safety. They therefore arrived in Quibdó with very little, as they were not able to convert their rural economic capital (property and possessions) into the more liquid capital (money) needed to settle in the city. They arrived in Quibdó to find a place with a lot of economic poverty but also some people with significantly more wealth than they had previously encountered. This situation is not surprising given the overall distribution of capital in Colombian society. Rural populations in Colombia more generally have less symbolic and economic capital than those in the urban centers. When people transition forcibly from the rural to the urban environment, it is therefore likely that they will be at a further disadvantage relative to others who live in the urban areas.

Not only this, but the rules related to what forms of capital were valuable changed between the rural field and the urban field. In the rural field economic capital in the form of cash flow was not as crucial to everyday life if you had a home to live in and land on which to grow food. In the urban field, in contrast, cash was needed to a greater extent to pay expenses such as rent, transportation, other utility bills, and food. Another rule

change related to how economic capital was accumulated. In the rural setting people often made a living based on particular trades or resource exploitation. In the city people were not able to accumulate capital in this way because of the lack of income-generating opportunities, an issue that will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 10.

Figure 5: Distribution of Cultural and Economic Capital in Quibdó



In Figure 5, I outline the distribution of cultural and economic capital volume between some social groups in Quibdó. This I have done to highlight how the displaced fit into the overall social structure of the urban field. The groups I identify should not be understood as concretely defined in terms of membership, but rather as types specified for analytical purposes.

The first group that I identify are the Indigenous and they were the lowest in terms of social positions with the lowest volumes of both cultural and economic capital. Afro-Colombians are similarly placed but had slightly more cultural capital largely by virtue of the fact that they spoke Spanish, although with a different accent, and did not stand out as much because of differences in appearance and dress. I have also identified a category of people labeled 'Born in Quibdó Low Education'. This group of people was important to include because while they do not always have significantly higher volumes of economic capital than the displaced, they in general have much higher volumes of cultural capital having been raised in the urban environment. For this group skills such as navigating the transportation system or even using some forms of technology are taken for granted. Another category is 'Born in Quibdó High Education' which denoted people with the highest volumes of cultural capital and relatively high amounts of economic capital. These people tended to be large business owners or hold important positions at NGOs or with the local university. I also included 'Foreigners in Quibdó' speaking about people who are not from Colombia but living in the city. This I did to demonstrate how even though people might have large amounts of economic capital, they did not necessarily also have similar volumes of cultural capital. In some areas this group overlaps with even those 'Born in Quibdó Low Education' in terms of the value of their cultural capital in the local context. This shows that even within the relatively isolated urban field of Quibdó there are inequalities that exist between social groups and that the value of capital is defined relationally.

6.4 Conclusion

The context of the conflict in Chocó is similar to other parts of the country, in that it has an abundance of productive lands and resources combined with a lack of state presence.

Chocó is particularly attractive to armed groups because of its strategic location, remoteness, the abundance of mining possibilities, and the fertility of the land for producing illegal crops or other goods. As the poorest department in the country the people displaced in Quibdó represent some of the most marginalized social groups in Colombian society. With already limited infrastructure and services in Quibdó, the displaced were not well positioned to assimilate into life in the urban environment. Understanding the ways in which their lives are structured by cultural and economic capital helps to show the ways their lives were impacted by displacement and their concepts of justice, as I will as I discuss in the following chapters.

Chapter 7

7 Rural and Urban Experiences of Victimization

The people from rural regions of Chocó have experienced multiple layers of victimization. In the rural areas, the presence of armed groups has led to terror and displacement. In the urban areas, displaced populations continue to suffer because of violence and low standards of living. This meant that participants discussed issues of peace and justice simultaneously; to have justice they needed peace, and to have peace they needed justice. Peace was a precursor to all other forms of justice. In this chapter I explore the experiences of victimization that the displaced have had in both rural and urban settings. I argue that both realities reflect the structural positions held by rural populations in Chocó.

7.1 Rural Realities

When I conducted interviews, there was still ongoing conflict-related violence throughout Chocó. People were still being displaced and many were afraid to return to their communities because of the presence of armed groups. Many displaced persons had watched in horror as people they knew were murdered, loved ones disappeared, and children recruited into armed groups.

The InSight Crime Foundation explains that the FARC, ELN, criminal bands, and neo-paramilitaries all had a presence in Chocó (Gagne 2014). Participants confirmed this reality in discussing several illegal armed groups that were active in Chocó. One participant, for example, said they were displaced “When the armed groups arrived called paramilitaries and guerrillas, FARC [and] ELN; they started to run over (*atropellar*) the civilian population.” The EPL was also mentioned by some participants but only a few times and in incidents that had happened more than ten years prior to the interview.

The illegal armed groups that were mentioned and discussed the most by participants were the paramilitary groups. Participants did not distinguish between different paramilitary groups but likely referred to groups that have a presence in Chocó such as

Los Rastrojos and *Los Uraneños* neo-paramilitaries, or the so-called criminal bands (*bandas criminales – BACRIM*) (Gagne 2014). Similarly, *El Tiempo* (2016) identifies the presence of *Los Rastrojos*, *Los Uraneños* and the gang *Águilas Negras*. These groups represented a real problem for rural populations in Chocó, as evident by the many participants who spoke about being threatened by the paramilitaries. For example, a 54 year-old participant Cristal said that the father of her children had been threatened by the paramilitaries, and a male participant when asked who threatened members of his community responded: “More than anyone the paramilitaries” (Sergio, 67).

Being displaced or threatened by paramilitaries made the lives of the displaced even more complicated because some people would then assume they were guerrillas. Accordingly, one participant said: “For example, the [displaced] people that arrive here, they treat us like we are guerrillas because it was the paramilitaries that kicked us out [of our communities]. So they treat us like we are guerrillas. So that’s a stigma that causes harm” (Moises, 62).

Many participants also discussed the role of FARC and ELN in Chocó’s conflict and their displacement. When asked, for example, who the guilty were in the conflict one participant said “The guerrillas, the FARC” (Edgar, 72). Another participant spoke about being displaced by the ELN saying: “They killed people, robbed them of what they had. So I told them they were not guerrillas. I told the ELN that they weren’t guerrillas, because guerrillas do not take from the *campesino* what he has, so they killed me, almost killed me” (Erika 60). According to participants, both guerrilla groups had been responsible for atrocities and displacements.

Often the civilian population would get caught in the fighting between paramilitaries and guerrillas; as one participant commented:

There were guerrillas and then paramilitaries and there was conflict, and the civilian population was in the middle of the conflict as life depended on both... both groups. You could not be on one group’s side, you could not be friends with one group or make friends with the other; and then we were between the sword and the wall. So that’s also why I’m very afraid (Manuela, 46).

Similarly, another participant Nadia (aged 30) commented on how she had been displaced when the ELN and paramilitaries came to their community and started fighting.

The Colombian government itself has, also, played an important role in the conflict in Chocó. One participant, when asked who the guilty in the conflict were, said: “In this war the FARC, ELN, the state, and the paras” (Sara, 25). The state has been involved in fighting directly and indirectly. One participant put it this way:

But in a certain way the state, yes it is very responsible. It is guilty directly, not only because for a fight there needs to be two people, not just one... [but also] because of the lack of state presence. It has been heard that the paramilitaries were sponsored by the state itself. I do not know in what way, but it was sponsored by the state somehow. Yes they were sponsored by the state itself, and look at what the consequences have been (Ever, 36).

The displaced in Chocó had been victimized by armed conflict that originated outside of their communities; yet the national government has proved unable or unwilling to protect them and to ensure their rights were respected. The reality that the conflict was largely between actors from outside of Chocó is reflected in the fact that participants sometimes failed to distinguish even which type of group had displaced them, claiming that they (paramilitaries, guerrillas, the military) were all the same. There are certainly differences in how the groups operate and the regions and interests they represent, but for most of the participants all the armed groups represented interests foreign to the region.

One of the main complaints of participants in this study was the lack of enforcement of state policies. One participant explained this problem in relation to peace saying: “The theme of peace here is about the actual use [of land]... that we are not owners [only] on paper, but we can say that the territory is good for this, and that our initiatives are supported by the state” (Julio, 41). Along these lines another participant commented:

What I would say is that people, [because] we are still in conflict, many people are afraid to talk. They only talk when there is a degree of confidentiality, and they feel very disappointed by the government that has not helped them in the

way that the law formally requires (Emilia, 58).

The most pertinent example of this problem is related to the *Victim and Land Restitution Law*, which came into effect in June of 2011. This law recognized the rights of victims of the conflict to land restitution and humanitarian aid. One participant, however, described the implementation in this way:

Well at this moment eh eh, the Victims Law is meant to help the victims of the armed conflict, and it gives them a little humanitarian help... But that help, let's say, was [supposed to be] three times [a year] but here they are giving it [only] once a year, that's how it is... they say one thing and in the end they end up doing what they [want to] do (Manuela, 46).

Participants complained both about the lack of humanitarian aid and the lack of land restitution, which is not surprising given the fact that displacements were still happening at the time. Without proper enforcement, laws to help victims and prevent further conflict are not meaningful for people in affected communities.

For participants in this research, the overall responsibility of the conflict and any prospects of peace lay in the hands of armed groups and the state. The media coverage of the peace negotiations between the Colombian Government and the FARC that were underway in Havana while I was conducting interviews oriented people's thoughts on the future of the conflict. Reflecting on the negotiations, most expressed hope that they would succeed but also scepticism and fear that they would not. One participant expressed their hope saying: "The other is that the government itself finds some measures, some mechanisms so that one way or another the armed groups leave the territories and the communities can be in peace, as they have always been" (Elena, 35). Another participant expressed their doubts saying: "What can they do to have more peace? Even if the governor or the mayor says that there is peace, if those armed groups don't want to make peace, they won't do it" (Andrea, 47).

People wanted armed groups to put down their weapons, demobilize, and an end to the terror in the rural areas. One woman put it this way: "Well for me, I would like to hope

that there will be peace; that we wouldn't have violence; that there are no more killings; that no more people were kidnapped; that we live in peace" (Liliana, 35). While it may seem obvious that the victims of conflict desired to see it end, the terms and process of peace have been hotly debated in Colombia. One participant reflected on the complexity of what was involved in the peace process and said of the negotiations:

First of all, I celebrate this opportunity that has been given to Colombians, because I believe that we, and in Chocó, let us say, cannot endure more conflict. I believe that the armed conflict has already been exasperated here and [the fact] that these two groups are sitting together [to talk] is a step forward. Yes I believe, we have many expectations, we all have expectations in the Peace Process that it will be completed as fast as the National Government, specifically President Santos, wants to make people believe... In the regions, I think it's a very ambitious peace process, but it has not touched the structures of the country. A peace process must touch the structures in terms of land issues, social equity, [and] public policies (Nadia, 30).

Contentious issues related to the peace process have indeed caused delays. Since I conducted my fieldwork in 2014, a peace deal was signed between the Colombian Government and FARC in September 2016. In October 2016, a referendum was held on whether or not to accept the Peace Agreement. Overall, the peace deal failed in the referendum with 50.2% of the Colombian population rejecting the deal (BBC 2016). The strong desire for peace that was expressed by participants in this study, however, was reflected in the overwhelming number of people (80%) from Chocó who voted in favour of the peace deal (BBC 2016). Some of the major issues in the Peace Agreement that caused divisions in other parts of the country related to the nature of political participation, impunity that people could have by truth telling, money given for disarmament, lack of trust, and the fact that a broad concept of gender was promoted in the document.

After the failed referendum adjustments were made to the Peace Agreement and a new one was signed in November of 2016. This time the government did not hold a

referendum on the content but instead approved it through Congress and the House of Representatives. This led to the FARC officially disarming in June of 2017. This was a significant step for the country in general and for Chocó in particular, as FARC was one of the most discussed illegal armed groups amongst participants in this research. For the vast majority of my participants, a peace deal with FARC would likely have been a very welcome development, even if they did not agree with all the details of the terms.

There is no straight line, however, that can be drawn between reaching a peace agreement and a sustained reduction of victimization in rural Chocó, or in other areas of the country. The first obstacle, as mentioned above, is that there are several other illegal armed groups, apart from FARC, that are still active in Chocó such as ELN, paramilitaries, and criminal bands. One participant acknowledged this obstacle to peace saying: “With the power that the ELN is now demonstrating, the post-conflict [situation] is not going to come so fast” (Nadia, 30). Given this reality, the ongoing peace negotiations between the ELN and the national government (BBC 2017) will hopefully have positive consequences in Chocó. Yet how the government intends to dismantle the wide array of criminal and paramilitary groups in Chocó and elsewhere in the country remains to be seen.

The second problem, which is related to the first, is that unless the underlying structures that produce and sustain the illegal armed groups are dealt with, they are likely to remain key players in rural areas. For as long as there persists vast inequalities in terms of symbolic and economic capital between peripheral areas of the country and central ones and between elites and the poor, conflict is likely to continue. Should the main illegal groups be demobilized, other people may take up arms, or dissident factions of the same groups may continue fighting (as has happened in the past) under a new banner, as happened in the AUC demobilization. This will likely happen not because of the grievances of rural populations, but rather because of their vulnerability to exploitation. Rural communities need assurances, in the form of enforcement, that their political, economic, cultural and social rights will be respected. If the rights of rural populations are unprotected they remain vulnerable to exploitation by various stakeholders that have economic and political interests in the regions where they live and associated resources.

7.2 Urban Realities

For many participants in this study, victimization went beyond the confines of the rural zones. Having fled violence in the countryside, the displaced were often met with violence and insecurity in the places they settled. Dealing with this violence was as crucial to some of the displaced as dealing with the illegal armed groups in rural areas.

Participants cited *La Zona Norte* of Quibdó as the area of the city with the most concentration of displaced people and of crime. When you entered this part of town there is a spot where the pavement ended; beyond that spot it was said that gangs controlled the neighbourhoods. According to participants, armed robbery, murders, and sexual violence are prevalent in this area. One participant described the neighbourhood in this way:

Well, life in my neighbourhood, I live in *La Zona Norte*, so people say it's the worst place in Quibdó, because that's where the thieves are, where the house maids⁸ are, and where they kill each other, etc., etc. But here in *La Zona Norte* there are several neighbourhoods, like 7, like 7 neighbourhoods here in *La Zona Norte*. You can say that my neighbourhood is the calmest, here there are not so many murders but yes they do steal, that's how it is (Ruth, 19).

The violence that exists in Quibdó and other areas with high concentrations of displaced people leads to re-victimization and a perpetual insecurity and vulnerability. For example, one mother who lived in *La Zona Norte*, Cristal, described how a gang had shot and killed her fourteen-year-old son because he did not want to join them. This mother's other teenage son had to leave the department to avoid violence with the gangs. She described her feelings about the situation in this way:

Well, the truth is that, after this happened to me, that my son died, I have a lot of concern for my other children, a lot of insecurity, and the truth is that the

⁸ Being a maid was considered one of the least desirable jobs, and therefore when this participant mentioned them, she was reflecting how maids were generally perceived as amongst the lowest class of people in Quibdó.

insecurity is hard. The only thing I can do is leave everything in God's hands. But yes, I keep this concern with me. For example, my son, the only one who has stayed here out of my boys; I live with this fear, I cry, I cry, like when he goes out in the streets with his friends. He goes out there [and] I am here with this fear, with this concern, with this uneasiness (Cristal, 54).

Many participants were afraid to talk about the gangs in Quibdó, and either spoke in hushed tones when discussing them or a few even refused to answer related questions all together, demonstrating the reach of the threat of gang violence. The extent of this problem was expressed by one participant who said:

Crime remains... [there are] groups that form gangs only to steal and kill those they can. People that kill for money for 5,000, 50,000, or 500,000 pesos they kill someone. [So] that is not peace. There can be negotiations with the guerrillas, with the paramilitaries, yes, but with the other [gangs] there are no negotiations (Edgar, 72).

To a certain extent, urban violence is connected to what was happening in rural areas, as some participants and community members I interacted with said that illegal armed groups had indirect and direct connections with local gangs. They were indirect in the sense that the social consequences of armed conflict in Chocó have helped facilitate gang activity. One woman, for example, when asking about why these gangs existed in Quibdó said:

Well, I have always said that the gangs are caused by the same displacements. They are caused by fathers who have to go work in other towns and leave their children here without direction, and they [the children] meet other young people who do not give them good advice. Bad company. Well they end up in these gangs and even do drugs... (Karina, 24).

The precarious living situations of the displaced (including the lack of adequate housing and employment) also impacted youth involvement in gangs. Lack of employment in particular led young people to seek out other ways of earning a living and surviving. The

lack of employment was usually a consequence of the armed conflict, as people had lost their livelihoods when they were displaced. One participant described it this way:

The lack of employment, because sometimes, look that there are young people who do go to SENA⁹, they educate themselves, everything and then they do not get work and they stay there. I think because of the lack of employment there are so many criminals here, so many gangs. So many, because they leave [school] and these groups offer them money and the young people allow themselves to be convinced [to join them] (Cristal, 54).

In this way the social conditions of poverty and lack of opportunities contributed to young people joining gangs. In other words, the material and social marginalization of the people displaced from rural communities continued when they settled in urban area, especially impacting the youth. This helped produce conditions conducive to gang and other criminal activity. Gangs, in turn, made living in some neighbourhoods dangerous, neighbourhoods where the displaced were more likely to settle because of their lack of means to secure better housing.

Furthermore, there were direct links between gangs and illegal armed groups. According to some local human rights workers and various participants, illegal armed groups sometimes worked with and through gangs. They said that some gang members were also members of illegal armed groups. For instance, several study participants who were members of human rights advocating organizations had been threatened in Quibdó by gangs because of their role in denouncing the illegal acts of armed groups in rural areas. One participant described it this way:

When we are walking in the street or we are doing these tasks that we do, and we do not know at what time we can leave given that there have been many colleagues who have been killed, leaders and children of many leaders. My children, I have two, that I have had to take them out [of Quibdó] because they

⁹ SENA stands for “Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje” and is a type of national level college and trade school.

have also threatened me; and also they tell them that they need to be part of those criminal gangs and then if they don't join them, they'll kill them. That's what they say, so I have had to take [my children] out several times from here (Gloria, 31).

This coincides with what others have said about links between gangs and illegal armed groups in Colombia more generally. Hristov (2014), for example, claims that paramilitary groups in Colombia recruit from youth gangs. Furthermore, *El Tiempo* (2017) reported that the ELN and criminal gangs had entered into alliances related to kidnapping. In these ways, the social structures of control through violence that illegal armed groups employed over the most marginalized took on new forms in the urban environment, but they were not eliminated.

Unfortunately experiencing victimization in the urban environment was a common thread amongst the displaced participants in this research. The boundaries between rural and urban did not provide complete protection from the country's violence for this vulnerable population with little means to protect themselves and improve their quality of lives.

7.3 Conclusion

The displaced of Chocó, especially those from the poorest communities, have been victimized in both rural and urban settings. Their experiences were shaped directly by the armed conflict itself, and through the vulnerabilities they experience once they are displaced. In terms of specific motivations and the complexity of interests at play in the conflict, many participants were vague on the context of their displacement. The choices open to many people from rural communities in Chocó were between staying in areas of intense rural violence and moving to areas where there was insecurity and urban violence. Many people were forced to choose the uncertainty and instability of the urban setting in order to avoid a more certain and aggressive rural violence. This reality reflects the marginalized social positions that the rural populations occupy and the fact that displacement does not increase people's symbolic, economic, or cultural capital.

Rural communities and the poorest segments of urban populations in Chocó continue to be victimized through various forms of violence aimed at some form of social control.

Accordingly, if the social conditions (lack of political representation and material means) of the rural populations that are the most victimized in the conflict do not change, they will continue to be marginalized and likely experience violence or at least some form of exploitation wherever they settle. For this population to stop being disproportionately impacted by violence, armed groups in the region need to be dismantled and the state needs to fulfill its obligations to protect the rights of citizens. Moreover, the symbolic and material conditions necessary for people to freely engage in public and private life need to be created and maintained, an issue I discuss in the next chapter.

Chapter 8

8 Gendered Vulnerabilities

In this chapter, I look at some of the specifically gendered aspects of displacement. Up until this point, I have highlighted many of the struggles that people displaced by conflict face more generally. Here, I focus on the different vulnerabilities that arise in conflict and displacement for men, women, boys, and girls. The displaced in Chocó have gendered vulnerabilities, but these vulnerabilities are interactional and impact families and communities in dynamic ways. I argue that the different vulnerabilities are actually manifestations of the same relations of power that subordinate rural populations to armed actors.

In Chocó, men and women tend to have different roles in the domestic sphere. Men are typically the breadwinners who provide for the family, while women take care of the children and household. One participant described the roles in this way: “The role of the man in the house is to ensure food security for the family... And the role of women [is to] make sure the children are safe and cared for” (Sergio, 67). Similarly, another participant said: “I believe that men think more about work, and women think more about the house and the children’s education” (Emilia, 58). As a result of these roles, violence and displacement impacts people differently based on their age and gender.

In this chapter I, firstly, look at gendered vulnerabilities related to experiences of rural armed conflict. Secondly, I talk about gendered expectations and experiences in the post-displacement context. Finally, I show that the differential vulnerabilities and experiences of the displaced based on gender are actually manifestations of the same relations of power that structure Colombian society. In other words, inequalities related to symbolic and economic capital create and sustain the gendered vulnerabilities experienced by Chocó’s rural poor at the hands of armed groups.

8.1 Gendered Experiences of Armed Conflict

During the interviews I conducted, people often spoke about their entire family, and sometimes their entire community being displaced at the same time. There were many stories of threats coming to a particular community from an armed group, and everyone having to flee for their lives on the same day. One participant put it this way: “In some communities the displacement was complete because [if] someone stayed behind they knew they would be killed. Yes completely [displaced]” (Moises, 62). In this sense, the violence in Chocó impacted everyone regardless of gender or age. Yet men, women, boys, and girls tended to face different challenges living through that violence and uprooting.

If anyone stayed behind in the home community when people were displaced by conflict in Chocó it was usually the men. When asked if anyone stayed behind in her community when she was displaced, one participant, for instance, said: “The men stayed, the men of the families stayed... My father did stay, because he had to somehow save some of our things from the house and to see how things were going” (Karina, 24). Men sometimes stayed behind to get things organized; at other times to work; and in some rare cases to defend the community. In any case, living in an active conflict area meant that these men faced greater ongoing risks of violence from armed groups.

In addition, according to participants, men as community leaders, breadwinners, or property owners were more likely to be targeted by armed groups. Although men usually acted as leaders in the communities, sometimes women played that role as well. Several female participants in this study had been leaders in their communities before displacement. However, according to several participants and a group of women from the local organization COCOMACIA that worked directly with the rural communities in Chocó, the tradition of men being community leaders and decision makers was still strong.

Accordingly, participants reported that when an armed group wanted to control a territory, the community leaders, who were typically men, were often seen as real or perceived obstacles to them. One participant for instance, stated that one of the reasons

that displacements happened was because of “threats to leaders” (Nadia, 30). One example of this was a participant named Mario who was displaced because of his role as an Indigenous community leader. Mario even had to move from city to city when he was first displaced because he received threats from illegal armed groups, as he had been a community leader in a region where illegal groups wanted territorial control.

Similarly, men were more likely to receive threats and be of interest to armed groups because of their role as head of the family and property owners. There was one participant, for instance who told me that they had to leave their community because:

... my father had an engine, an engine... those that, that you use to move a boat, and then an illegal group asked him for the favour of moving them to another place. And so he couldn't because if he did he would get into trouble with the government, because they could say he was supporting them [the illegal group] too. So he did not want to go and they told him to leave; rather, a friend was the one who told him that they [the illegal group] were looking for him and that he was better off leaving (Emilse, 22).

In this way, armed groups often had an interest in using the property (boats, houses, animals, machinery, etc.) that were traditionally owned and controlled primarily by men. As a result of men's community and household leadership roles they tended to be targeted individually more by illegal armed groups. This targeting, according to participants, took the form of threats, assassinations, kidnappings, and exploitations.

Meanwhile, the greatest vulnerability of boys and young men in the conflict was related to being recruited to armed groups or gangs. While women and girls were recruited as well, according to several participants, males tended to be recruited much more frequently. For instance, speaking of her experiences leading up to displacement, one participant said: “My father still had not decided to leave the river as such, but the illegal groups went there, sometimes they took children, especially the boys, sometimes they fired shots” (Emilse, 22).

Participating in armed groups and related criminal activities increased the risks that boys and young men could be traumatized, injured, killed, or arrested. The reality that armed groups disproportionately targeted boys and men for recruitment, threats, assassinations, and violence was reflected in the fact that of the participants who had loved ones killed in the conflict, the vast majority of those killed were male.

Women and girls also faced their own set of vulnerabilities when it came to their experiences of violence and displacement. One major form of violence that disproportionately impacted women and girls was sexual violence. One participant, in discussing why displaced women stayed in Quibdó, described some of the different vulnerabilities saying:

It was better to stay here and not return to where they were raped, and experienced violence; [where] some children were killed, others taken. Some daughters [and] the older children had to be sent to different places so they would not be hurt; and [where they] took their land. They told us. They started to harass, sell, kill, or take women. When they didn't [do that] they would kill her husband or son or someone in her family so that she would give in and in the end the massacre took place... (Adriana, 57).

Similarly, many participants discussed how relatives or women and girls they knew had been raped or abused in Chocó by members of armed groups. For example, one participant told me about how her fourteen-year-old daughter had been raped back in her home community.

The use of sexual violence in conflict, and specifically in Chocó has been documented extensively elsewhere; with specific attention given to the various impacts of sexual violence, such as pregnancy, shame, and diseases.¹⁰ These issues, however, were not

¹⁰ See: Ruta Pacífica. 2017. “La Verdad de las Mujeres en Escena” Ruta Pacífica. Colombia. Available from: <https://www.rutapacifica.org.co/publicaciones/>; Wirtz A., Pham K., Glass N., Loochkartt S., Kidane T., Cuspoca D., Rubenstein L., Singh S. and Vu A. 2014. “Gender Based Violence in Conflict and Displacement: qualitative findings from displaced women in Colombia.” *Conflict and Health*. 2014(8): 10.

discussed at length in my interviews. Rather, the problem of sexual violence in general stood out as a way in which women and especially younger women and older girls were more vulnerable because of the conflict in Chocó. Sexual violence happened with greater frequency in conflict zones because of the uninhibited power that armed groups often had over rural populations to impose their will, and because of the lack of accountability.

Thus we see that violence brought different vulnerabilities to men, women, boys, and girls. In terms of violence, men and boys tended to be more frequently targeted for assassinations, threats, and recruitment. Meanwhile, women and girls were more vulnerable to sexual violence. In this way, some of the conflict-related vulnerabilities for men, women, boys, and girls differ in Chocó, yet their severity is potent regardless of gender.

8.2 Gendered Experiences in Post-Displacement Contexts

The strains of displacement also had gendered impacts in the home and work life of people once they settled in Quibdó. As discussed above, traditionally men's role was as provider for the family and women's role was taking care of the household and the children. In Chocó's rural setting there were certain social norms that had formed gendered roles and what was expected in the home and work life of men and women. When people were displaced they found themselves in a new social field. They did not, however, necessarily have the skills, knowledge, or resources to navigate that new social field. Gendered vulnerabilities shaped struggles to adapt to the urban realities of work and home life.

In the first place, there was a continued vulnerability to recruitment to armed groups for males, but in Quibdó this took the form of criminal gangs. The pressure to join gangs could be quite intense, particularly for male adolescents in Quibdó. According to some participants, boys tended to be bullied quite severely in schools and pressured to join illegal groups. Some boys related to participants lost their lives because of their refusal to participate in gang or criminal activities in Quibdó; others had to relocate to avoid a similar fate.

In the second place, the risk of sexual violence did not disappear for women and girls when the displaced arrived in Quibdó. One participant described the situation generally saying:

Yes, women are more abused, more sexually abused ... [because of] the mistreatment by her partner, mistreatment by her employer; if she is a woman who goes to work then sometimes they want to abuse her. Because she is a displaced woman, so they want to take advantage of sex work, that is, to give all services, to say the least (Isabel, 64).

One young woman, for instance, told me about how she and her friends had to be extra cautious returning home at night in Quibdó because of the risk of sexual violence. At night she could never take a moto-taxi with someone she did not know personally. The reality was that the problem was not only related to the insecurity of Quibdó, but moreover to the social vulnerability of young displaced women and girls in that environment. Firstly, their brothers, fathers, or other family members that might deter young sexual aggressors, might no longer be alive or with the family. Secondly, newly displaced females were unlikely to have the social connections or knowledge to secure safe transportation when needed. Thirdly, they were more likely to lack privacy in their living areas and to live in dangerous neighbourhoods where the threat of sexual violence was higher.

Another area in which the gendered vulnerabilities of the displaced could be seen was in how their work options changed drastically. One of the main ways in which this process was gendered was the greater availability of paid work opportunities for women in Quibdó. This was a point that participants repeated over and over in the interviews I conducted. One participant, for instance, commented that: “Here, women victims work more than their husbands, because women victims can wash, iron, and do anything they give them to do. However, men often do not have those options of work; well, neither do they think about how they could get that type of work” (Gladis, 44). Similarly, another participant put it this way: “There is a difference, because women can be out of work and we can get into a family home and work, even at least, even for food, but men do not

have that” (Jesica 64).

The changes in work opportunities had differential impacts on women and men in the post-displacement context. One of the easiest jobs for displaced women to get was working as maids in people’s homes. It was the easiest job to get because women had often cultivated the skills needed to do that type of work through the daily responsibilities they had in their own households. Working in homes, women did many tasks such as washing, cooking, cleaning, looking after children, and running errands for the family as needed. Furthermore, working in homes was also the easiest type of job to get because it was generally not paid well and the working conditions were poor. This meant that there was not a lot of competition from non-displaced people in Quibdó for working as domestic help in families.

Most maids or domestic helpers were not paid well, generally far below the minimum wage (which was around 616,000 pesos per month at the time). One participant Liliana, for example, made 250,000 pesos a month for working five days a week as a maid. She was considered well paid, but she told me that she and her two sons would not have been able to survive on that income. The father of her children, from whom she had separated, also gave her money. This money allowed her and her children to have enough to cover the costs of basic housing, food, and clothing. Another participant, whose discussion better reflects the payment displaced women receive as maids spoke about the time when her community was originally displaced and arrived in Quibdó in the late 1990s, saying:

Women were very enslaved—I included myself because I was also involved—we were very enslaved by our labour. Our labour was exploited. When they gave us a house or someone gave us work, it was our job to do all the domestic work for that home for just 30,000 or 40,000 pesos. You see we would work for 50,000 pesos a month in a family house doing all the home duties (Leila, 56).

Hence, while displaced women had some skills they could translate into economic capital, the payoff for intense labour was minimal.

Additionally, working as a maid was not a very appealing prospect for many participants.

They preferred independent work, because they were accustomed to working independently in their rural communities, but also because their experiences as maids could be degrading. One participant, for instance, described why she did not want to work as a maid in people's homes saying:

Sometimes in family homes there are people that humiliate you a lot, so I don't like working in a family home ... ah!! They scold you a lot when you do things, [they say] they don't like such-and-such, that you need to do other things... [all the while] they are sitting [doing nothing]. [They say] that you have to leave things where they are and so on, that you have to work, that they are paying you money... All this they say to you... that that's why they pay you, they pay you to work and to do those things (Andrea, 47).

Similarly, several women discussed how maids worked very long hours, especially when the house where they worked was in a different part of the city, as was often the case. This meant that women were spending less time working on home duties and raising children. This could be very disruptive for families, as children had to do without the usual support of their mothers and older sisters. Older siblings or fathers did not always quickly fill the gap that was left by the absence of women in the daily lives of families. A process of adjustment took place as people had to adapt to the new gender roles. In these ways, while women who have been displaced may have had better access to job opportunities in Quibdó, the jobs were often exploitative in terms of salary paid, treatment, and hours required.

Another way in which the work and home life of the displaced was shaped related to what several participants called 'macho' culture. Participants said things such as: "men have always been macho" (Gloria, 31), and, "men are also macho, some are macho" (Hector, 74). The participants who used the term 'macho' were referring to two general trends. Firstly, it referred to an idea that women did more domestic work than men taking care of the home and children. Secondly, the notion of 'macho' referred to the way that men sometimes dominated women by controlling funds and decision-making. One participant, for example, described the situation this way:

Well, I don't know, in the first place, men are so macho, right? Nowadays, men almost never allow themselves to dominate a woman, nor does a woman dominate a man, since women work. Here in Chocó things are very macho. And if the man works and the woman does not work, the man keeps the woman humiliated. You ask them for a thousand pesos and they ask 'what for,' right? But if you work you do not need to ask the man, then you want to sustain yourself and have nothing to do with it (Valentina, 46).

For some participants in this research macho culture impacted what it was possible to do. Several participants noted that this macho culture still existed but that things were changing in some places and that women were starting to have more options.

Similarly, some women participants also expressed how they had faced discrimination whereby they were considered incapable of doing particular jobs that they needed to do to survive, jobs that might traditionally be men's. One woman, for example, said:

Women and men, for example, here in Quibdó in construction... in the construction work; they had a construction course. There were men and women in it. And then the women were rejected because [they said] the work was very hard, that is, we were discriminated against because the work was very hard and [they thought] we were not able to do the work. So I think that if there is a difference that sometimes there is a competition against women when they think they are not capable, so in this way there is a preference for men (Blanca, 42).

Macho culture and discrimination did not significantly impact every female participant in this study, but they were issues for many women in Chocó. These issues could impact women's abilities to participate in decision-making, the work burdens they had in the home, their treatment in the workplace and at home, as well as access to specific types of job opportunities.

Displacement also had an impact on the role of men at work and in the family. As noted, men struggled to be able to find work and thereby fulfill their traditional role of provider for the family. One participant discussing why her family had experienced an

improvement in quality of life recently said:

Because my father stuck it out. For a person that didn't study it is difficult to get a job here, especially for a man. Although my mother was paid little money, she worked in a family home, and now my father is working. And now the government is giving more, the state is giving more help (Emilse, 22).

This participant was fortunate that her father was able to find work eventually. However, most men struggle to find a paying job in Quibdó. I remember interviewing Jorge, who was speaking about trying to get odd jobs in town to earn a bit of money. He sat in front of me with his shoulders slouched and seemed dejected as he told me about how he had to go home to his wife that evening empty handed.¹¹ For many men, gaining an income was a struggle they faced day to day; not only was it discouraging, but it could mean that families went without meeting their basic needs.

Without good possibilities of earning an income in Quibdó, many men left to work elsewhere. Some men returned to their former communities to work and sent back money to their family. This meant that they are opening themselves up to the dangers of the presence of armed groups in the rural areas. One participant, discussed how her father had to return to her former community to work:

And then he went back [to our community], he was forced to return where we had left because though they had hired him here they never actually paid him his salary, so he was forced to return there... And then he [my father] was forced to go back to the place we had left, and there he began to work... well, despite the fact that there were still massacres and all that and an illegal group still had control of the territory. Because here he did not find possibilities [to work] he had to return there... he started working there and sending us [money] to sustain ourselves: for nutrition, for food and my mom used to sell fruit here (Karina, 24).

¹¹ The distress that people experienced as a result of conflict and poor standards of living is similar to observations made by Fanon (1963) on some the psychological impacts of colonialism on people in Algeria.

Accordingly, some men went to other towns and cities to try to find work, which might be their former community or another location altogether. In either case it meant that families were separated for long periods of time. This supposedly temporary separation sometimes became long-term as men settled in a different location than the rest of their family. One participant, for instance, said:

Well, my husband when we got here, when we were displaced... he got bored with this city, it was very hard for him to live [and] to get a job, he got bored and left ... and he left for [another town]... And he left and I stayed here fighting for my children; [he said] that he was going to improve his life over there, to get organized and send back [money], and in a short time he took a wife there and stayed there and didn't come back... he got a woman there and stayed there... He did not come back ... [and now he does not help us] with anything. Nothing (Paola, 44).

This leads me to one of the most obvious ways that displacement had impacted traditional gender roles in Chocó: the emergence of female-headed households. The tendency for there to be households where the father or husband was no longer a part of family life had increased significantly according to participants. Men also were sometimes single parents, but this happened rarely. There were two main reasons that some men from displaced families were absent. The first was that men left to find work elsewhere. The second was that men were more likely to have been killed, kidnapped, or recruited to armed groups. One participant, for example, described the situation this way:

Yes, because there are families that are displaced, and sometimes it is the man who was killed; then women have to take all the responsibilities, then, sometimes it is harder for them. It is always more difficult to maintain a household for a woman that has not studied, because she always tends to have to go work in a family home, as opposed to a man who can do several jobs, like construction, spraying a lot, cleaning a lot (Emilse, 22).

Similarly, another participant said:

Yes, you see that sometimes men don't fulfill home obligations, sometimes they leave everything for women to do. Here there are more women [that are both] father and mother of the family because the man has abandoned them, they don't pay any attention to them... others are heads of the family because someone murdered their husband (Sergio, 67).

We can also imagine that while the stress of displacement may bring some families together, it could drive others apart. Whether it was because of violence, seeking work opportunities, or relationship discord, there were a disproportionate number of displaced families with the mother as the sole care provider.

The ways in which conflict breaks up families was stressful for everyone involved. Having to face life in a new place with very limited resources and without your husband or wife could add an extra layer of complexity to an already difficult situation. One participant, for instance, said that life was more difficult for some of the displaced because they were alone:

Here there are those that have better [conditions]. The difference is, for example, some have their husbands, their partner, it can be in liberal union¹² they have with themselves. Say, some have chainsaws, others have pumps to get gold. They go down to shake, to look for gold, to look for wood and bring it home. The wives, then, this way many have improved [their lives]. Others, who have nothing, do not improve (Cristal, 54).

When there was only one parent, girls and boys often suffered because they were being raised without one parent as a role model or for protection and direction. According to some participants, that made some children more vulnerable to dropping out of school and delinquency. Men in particular, because they were more frequently absent, missed out on the experiences of being with their families and watching their children grow. Women had more pressure to work and maintain the household. One participant, for

¹² A 'liberal union' is a rough translation of 'union libre' which means that a man and woman are a couple but they are not legally married.

instance, commented on the difficult reality of female-headed households saying:

I think so because... most of the families that are conformed here are mother heads-of-household. So I feel that they should be more prioritized for receiving help. You should not stop [helping] men, but you should help more mothers that are heads-of-household because they are the mother and father for their children, they are the ones who have all the responsibility in the house (Elena, 35).

The impacts of macho culture, discrimination, and difficulties in finding decent jobs mentioned above were intensified in situations where women had to fill the role of both parents. Rules surrounding gender roles could put strains on family relations, increase the work burden of women, place men at greater risk of violence, and lead to discouragement.

8.3 Relations of Power

As I have shown there were many ways in which displacement and violence impacted men, women, boys, and girls differently. These differences were attributable to gender norms and expectations within society in Chocó. Yet these differences were actually manifestations of the same relations of power that ordered various aspects of the lives of the displaced in Chocó. Here I argue that the relations of power are subjectively understood to a limited extent by participants in addition to being discernable in the distribution of capital. On the one hand, this meant that participants were able to see beyond their gendered differences to the commonalities of their experiences of conflict and violence. On the other hand, the gendered vulnerabilities can be understood in terms of the largely shared social positions of the displaced in terms of economic, symbolic, and cultural capital. Accordingly, the struggle to fight the gendered impacts of conflict and displacement sometimes expressed by participants was an attempt to subvert the dominant vision of the social world imposed by external actors on the lives of the displaced and rural poor.

Let me begin by considering how the displaced in Chocó understood their struggle collectively in the face of violence and oppression. In displacement, victims had to face

many of the same problems regardless of gender—problems such as lack of food, shelter, or clothing. One participant when asked if men and women faced different problems said “I don’t think so... I say no,” (Liliana, 35), while another participant said: “There is no difference because we all suffer the same scourge, there is no difference” (Leila, 56).

Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, it was not uncommon for entire communities to be displaced at once. As a result, families and communities often worked together to overcome challenges. One participant expressed this reality, addressing whether or not men and women faced different obstacles to improving their lives by saying:

No, here we worked all together and there hasn’t been a difference between us. Because even in some organizations of the displaced population the legal representatives are women... we work together, one helps another, another helps another (Sergio, 67).

In this way, many people displaced by conflict become interdependent as a way to cope with the ordeals of displacement and violence. They were often forced to rely on people of the opposite gender to survive, as was the case, for example, when women in a household were able to find work but men were not.

Furthermore, the impacts of the experiences of one gender were not isolated to that group. While men and boys may have had a greater risk of being killed, threatened or recruited to armed groups, this reality impacted the lives of women and girls. If a man was killed, for example, not only would that have emotional impacts on the wives, daughters, or other females in that man’s life, but it could have serious negative socio-economic consequences for them as well. Another example of the interconnectedness of vulnerabilities would be mothers who had to find ways to help their sons deal with harassment from gangs, as was the case for some participants. Furthermore, the higher risk of sexual violence that women and girls experience could impact the men and boys in their lives. There was for instance, an emotional burden associated with knowing your sister, daughter, mother, or wife was raped or otherwise harmed. This reality might also mean that fathers, uncles, brothers or sons must spend more time protecting the women and girls in their lives, which could take them away from other activities.

Correspondingly, several participants emphasized the importance of working with families and communities together to overcome the challenges of displacement, rather than with specific genders or age groups. One participant described the need to work with families to help victims, saying:

Well, how would I tell you about the issue of women's and men's problems, that's conjunctural. Here in the department, I can't tell you... more on the side of men, more on the side of women... because if we go on the intrafamily level we see that the victims, or the greater number of victims or percentage of victims, are women. But there is also a considerable percentage of men (Manuel, 43).

While there were several organizations in Quibdó that worked primarily with women displaced by conflict and a few that worked primarily with men, most organizations worked with both men and women. In these organizations men and women worked side by side to promote victim's rights and improve the living conditions of the displaced. One participant described the work of one such organization as follows:

What can I say, well there are some obstacles that can be, how can I describe it more clearly... I don't see an obstacle in the relationship between men and women because organizations work together. We are mostly mixed organizations... because women have supported the work of men, and men have supported the work for women. And we men have recognized the rights that have been denied to women to have their freedom to do their jobs [and] to fulfill their rights (Moises, 62).

Accordingly, many of the challenges the displaced faced were common to everyone and others that were shaped by gendered vulnerabilities had shared common impacts. The displaced themselves often saw similarities in the struggles they faced despite gendered differences. Furthermore, the challenges of one group (defined on the lines of gender) often impacted other groups through family and community relationships.

The differences in gendered vulnerabilities were manifestations of the same relations of power that subordinated the rural poor. The rural poor shared similar social positions

relative to others in Colombia, in that they lacked the possession of any significant amounts of all forms of capital with which to avoid the vulnerabilities mentioned above. For one, the vulnerability of rural boys and men to death, threats, and recruitments to armed groups points to their social position in Colombian society more generally. It was not all males that were vulnerable to these problems, but rather those that occupied similar social and geographic space in Chocó and in some other rural regions of the country. Similarly, it was rural women and girls in or from conflict areas that were most vulnerable to sexual violence. In both cases it was the lack of cultural, symbolic, and economic capital that put them in situations where they were exposed to violence and unable to protect themselves from associated gendered vulnerabilities. Whether within the isolated fields of rural Chocó and urban Quibdó, the perpetration of certain gendered violence had the same meaning and social function. The targeting of males by armed groups for threats, assassinations or recruitment, as well as the sexual abuse of females both functioned as a way to subordinate the rural populations to the authority of armed groups. Both were forms of terror aimed at increasing the symbolic and economic influence of armed actors and the interests they represented. It is a way for an armed actor to communicate that they could do whatever they wanted, and there was nothing that the local population could do to stop them. The armed groups could establish their authority and subordinate the rural population through terror and displacement. In this way the armed groups had greater symbolic capital in the form of social control, and greater economic capital by using the resources in the territories they controlled.

Likewise, in the context of displacement and settlement in Quibdó, the gendered vulnerabilities reflected the overall social positions of the displaced. Underlying the differences in men and women's ability to find work was a struggle to secure economic capital in the face of dire poverty. Women struggled in this way by being forced to accept difficult working situations, abuse, and low pay. Men struggled in this way by being unable to find work and having to move to other locations, increasing the risks of violence and breaking up the family. In both cases, the distribution of economic capital was such that the displaced remained in marginalized positions. The marginalization experienced by the displaced resulted from their social origins in poor rural

communities and also because of competition with local poor population in Quibdó over limited resources that exacerbated economic inequalities.

8.4 Conclusion

The reality of the shared struggle for symbolic and economic capital from a marginalized social position was at the heart of what united the displaced in their conceptions of gender relations. It is part of the reason that many participants when asked about the different priorities and experiences of men and women replied that differences were negligible or non-existent. It also helps to explain why many participants, while recognizing gendered vulnerabilities, did not conceive of these struggles as resulting from antagonism between genders. People did not always see the struggle over gendered vulnerabilities in the light of their social positions, but the participants who challenged the existence of gendered vulnerabilities were, consciously or not, engaged in a battle to redefine the structure of the social field in which they lived.

The conflict in Chocó and the resulting displacement of its citizens has had many negative impacts on men, women, boys, and girls. Some challenges have been shared by people regardless of gender and other challenges have been borne more heavily by particular groups defined on the basis of gender. The differences in impacts and vulnerabilities, however, are manifestations of the same relations of power. These power relations function in rural areas to subordinate the civilian population to the authority of armed groups and in the urban areas to maintain the distribution of capital whereby the displaced are positioned at the bottom, especially in terms of cultural and economic capital.

Chapter 9

9 Symbolic Forms of Justice

The situation on the ground in Chocó requires attention to symbolic forms of justice. Symbolic capital relates to the power to define reality, to say what is right and wrong, good and bad, important or not. Symbolic forms of justice are important because inequalities in the distribution of symbolic capital have contributed to the victimization of many people from rural communities. Traditional transitional-justice-associated mechanisms such as trials, truth commissions, purges, memory projects, and amnesties address questions of symbolic justice. They attempt, in one way or another, to change the distribution of symbolic capital by empowering certain groups of people and subordinating others. Through the legal system, public exposure or some type of social inclusion or recognition of harms caused, these mechanisms politically disempower some (those found guilty of harms, or purged from positions of influence) and publicly legitimize the grievances of some groups (such as victims or groups previously left out of legal or political systems).

When I conducted my fieldwork, efforts were already being made to prepare the population for a post-conflict situation. Workshops on transitional justice were being offered to local leaders in communities through Quibdó's City Hall. According to one participant this training was intended to help prepare the population to move from conflict to peace. During interviews I asked participants open-ended questions about what they thought constituted justice. The answers they provided are reflected in this chapter and in the next one. I also asked specific questions about punishment, truth, and forgiveness. I argue that these are forms of symbolic justice because they address issues of authority, social power, and legitimacy (of participation, of experiences, and of rights).

I chose to focus on punishment, truth, and forgiveness for two main reasons. Firstly, trials (and related punishments) and truth processes are mechanisms that are often used in the context of transitional justice. Secondly, all three topics were of interest to participants, as discussions on justice tended to gravitate towards them. Other mechanisms such as

purges, memory projects, or amnesties, could also contribute to symbolic justice. These processes, however, were not the focus of my research. They did not come up when I asked open-ended questions to participants about the nature of justice, and I did not include specific questions related to these mechanisms. Future research on the topic would benefit from a more inclusive analysis of the mechanisms related to symbolic justice. I did, however, discuss the role of reparations in the lives of participants, a topic I will discuss more in the next chapter.

In this chapter, I first explore participants' views of the conflict as they relate to questions of punishment and then of truth. Next, I outline participant views on forgiveness. Finally, I show that mechanisms that promote truth telling are most likely to foster reconciliation, thereby providing a way of partially levelling the symbolic inequalities that have persisted throughout Colombia's history.

9.1 Punishment

Punishment is one of the main tools used in times of political transition. Punishment may come in the form of fines, prison time, physical pain, or sometimes even death. Most often punishment is determined through some kind of legal or community-based judicial process.

Punishment is part of the retributive justice paradigm. According to this paradigm, those who commit crimes should receive proportional consequences in the form of some kind of punishment. As I discussed in Chapter 2, views on the merits of this type of justice are divided. Not surprisingly then, punishment was a somewhat controversial issue for participants. The discussions around punishment I had with the people displaced by conflict in Chocó highlight the controversies and difficulties at the heart of the retributive justice debate. Participants fell into one of three categories. Seventy-three percent of participants believed that perpetrators of violent crimes should be punished by paying money, by going to prison, or in a few cases with the death penalty. Seventeen percent were of the opinion that punishment of the guilty was not necessary or sometimes not even desirable. Finally, ten percent of people were simply unsure about whether or not the guilty should be punished and did not elaborate on the topic. In this section I consider

the first two groups in detail.

The vast majority of participants that were asked if the guilty in the conflict should be punished responded that some kind of punishment was warranted for those guilty of crimes in Colombia's conflict. For instance one participant said:

For justice to be done, they [the perpetrators] are never going to pay for what they did because they cannot bring back the dead, or peace, nor can they bring back the hope that many people have now lost. Nothing can give life back even if you had all the money of the world; but at least there must be a process of submitting to justice (Nadia, 30).

The particular form of justice that most people thought appropriate for those guilty of crimes in the conflict was prison time. When asked what type of punishment the guilty should have, one participant for example said: "I believe in prison time so that it is a tormented life and that they reflect and try to change" (Caesar, 22). Many, however, thought that the ultimate decision about how to punish people should be left to the government and the justice system. One participant when asked if the guilty should be punished responded yes, but when asked about what type of punishment said: "Well I don't know. What kind of punishment I don't know. That's a decision that will be taken by those that have to do with that kind of thing; the president or the government. What I know is that they need to have some kind of punishment" (Valentina, 46).

Overall, the participants in this group mostly agreed that prison time was an appropriate punishment but that the death penalty was not. For instance, one participant Mario argued that prison was the best option because killing was not a solution and killing the guilty would just create more problems. In contrast, there were two people that thought prison was not severe enough and that some of the guilty deserved the death penalty. One such participant said:

A punishment? Well the guilty; if for example you come here and take my life from me without authorization to take it, you must be punished in one way or another... the one who kills has to be killed, that is the death penalty. And if not,

why is it that I win with killing you, for example, and I stay alive and you died? You died; the one who loses life loses everything. The one who loses their life loses everything (Hector, 74).

Though there were only two people that openly supported the death penalty, it is important to acknowledge the fact that opinions were not homogenous on the subject of punishment.

A second group of participants believed that punishment for the guilty was beyond the responsibility of the government. Several participants appealed to God as the ultimate judge that would repay the guilty for their crimes. For instance one participant said: “In my opinion let God punish. God can do everything, that God takes care of that, because who are we to judge others” (Jesica, 64). Along the same lines another participant said:

For the guilty, I believe that the only one to punish is God. The only one suitable to punish is God because to punish would be divine justice. Because here sincerely... I love Colombia a lot, but in Colombia there is no justice. I don't believe that there are people that yes, are very transparent, who are very honest (Marcela, 24).

Several participants raised questions about the fairness and impartiality of the justice system in Colombia as an obstacle to seeking punishment for the guilty. For many people in this group it was more important that the guilty ask for forgiveness than that they receive punishment from society. For them, God was responsible for punishment and they were responsible for trying to move forward and living peaceably.

Overall, the existence of divergent views on the role of punishment within my interview pool shows that there were different concepts of justice amongst victims of the conflict in Chocó. While the majority of people believe that the guilty should be punished by prison time, there were a significant number of people that did not believe in the justice system and on the merits of prison as a punishment for the guilty.

9.2 Truth

Another important issue related to transitional justice is the role of truth, often in the form of a truth commission. Truth commissions are typically public in nature (sometimes with community based processes open for people to attend, and sometimes related proceedings are televised) and therefore they hold people accountable through exposure and condemnation of certain acts. Truth commission also often produce a report that can act as an official record of the harms caused and events that took place.

During the interviews I conducted, participants discussed their perspectives on the importance of truth in the Colombian context. With few exceptions, truth was seen as an important part of justice and reconciliation. One participant speaking about the Peace Negotiations with FARC said: “If in those agreements that are being made there is no truth, there is no justice” (Isabel, 64). Likewise, another participant said:

...if there is no truth and there is no justice, there is nothing. Because when you commit a crime and you do not say why you committed that crime, who sent you to commit that crime, and after you committed that crime you yourself [don't] ask for forgiveness from the people who you committed that crime against; nothing happens. You have to start by doing those things (Gladis, 44).

Accordingly, truth was fundamental for justice in the eyes of many of the participant in this study. Truth allowed people to move forward and work towards reconciliation, as one participant put it:

I believe that [the truth] is a fundamental part of reconciliation. For forgiveness I believe that yes, it is fundamental to say what happened, how it happened, and that gives a path or steps towards being forgiven and for them [the guilty] to reconcile in order to live in peace (Ruth, 19).

Meanwhile, there were different reasons that people wanted to know the truth. One specific reason was because they wanted to know what happened to loved ones. Some people were still living in mystery as to what happened to friends or family that had disappeared. One participant when asked if it was important to know the truth about what

happened in the communities, for instance, said:

Super important... Because my stepfather, for example, they killed him, I do not know where he was buried. Like many friends I saw [him] killed and put on a boat and they carried them down the river and I do not know where they were thrown, where they were left. So yes, if there was someone, and that's what I would call a delinquent... and they say... in such and such a place are the remains. Then a person could have a little peace. Though, the other thing is that many friends that they say have been killed... you imagine that maybe they are alive; maybe they went to another village. So yes, what happens? Then you do not see them anymore, so you think they are dead; but where did they die? Where are they buried? All those things. The truth would be good, that those who committed crimes said the truth; that would be good (Ever, 36).

Like this participant, many others wanted to know what happened to loved ones. For many victims the loss of someone close to them was a very hard reality they lived through and an emotional burden they continued to bear. When people spoke about the need for truth it was almost always connected to knowing what happened to someone who died or disappeared. Knowing the truth about what happened to their loved ones could help them gain some closure. It would help people to be able to move forward knowing with more certainty if their loved ones were alive or not, and what had happened to them. In this way, truth was a part of the grieving process and knowledge was also a form of justice.

Similarly, people also wanted to know what motivated people to kill, who was responsible, and what the circumstances were that surrounded murders. One participant put it this way:

So this man that came and took my brother's life, he has a boss who sent him, and that boss had another boss. That is the true truth that we victims need, to clarify, to tell us—if you killed, why did you do it? Who sent you? Who gave you the order and why? What was the real reason? Although you know that it's about [control

over the] territory; that it's because of the richness of the territory. But aha, it shouldn't be for you to just suspect it, but that they tell you the truth (Leila, 56).

Those who wanted to know these kinds of details tended to talk about it as a right they had as victims; that they had a right to know why certain things had happened because of the pain and suffering it had caused them. One participant put it this way:

So that's justice, that people really believe that the institution that is applying justice actually applies it. The truth is [about] why they killed that person, what was the reason for it? People have a right to know. People have a right to know where a person was thrown, where the body is, because there are bodies that have never appeared... because when a person disappears it is not known whether they are alive or dead; and if they are still alive, what are the conditions they are living under. If they are dead, where are they? There are many questions that people still have not cleared up (Isabel, 64).

Though most wanted truth, a few participants were concerned it was not ascertainable. They were concerned that the truth could not or would not be told because of corruption of a lack of will. One participant put it this way:

The truth? I do not think they're going to say it. Well that they recognize that there are victims; everyone knows that, since the victims' law came out. But yes I do believe that if they appoint a truth commission, like they are asking for, that the truth may be different in the country (Nadia, 30).

There were some outliers for whom truth was not a priority. One person said that knowing the truth simply was not an issue that impacted them (Hector, 74). Another person said they did not want to know details such as who did what in the conflict:

I believe, for me I would not like to know [the truth]. I would like the facts to be seen and that peace be achieved in reality. So that if there is peace I would not care what happened in the past or what happened later; as long as there was peace, and you can work, and you can get your things (Caesar, 22).

Nevertheless, for the majority of participants in this study some form of truth was important to achieving justice and reconciliation. For those participants, healing the scars of conflict involved knowing the truth, especially related to what happened to their friends or family who had disappeared or been killed. In this way people expressed a desire, not usually for a general national level truth about motives and operations, but a specific truth about what happened in circumstances that impacted them and the people that they cared about.

9.3 Forgiveness

As people grappled with coming to terms with the violence and trauma they had experienced in Colombia's conflict their understandings of forgiveness varied significantly. This is an important issue because of the role it can play in the reconciliation process. One participant, for example, said:

If we are going to talk about peace then we have to talk about putting down weapons. Let's stop everything while deciding or we make an agreement about how things are going to work. I think that forgiveness is very important in this because as human beings we are umm, we have to forgive, no; and we must forgive in one way or another the people who hurt us, who do it sometimes with and sometimes without intention. We should forgive... I believe that those people in the peace talks, if they are the ones in charge that they should send an order to stop the conflict, because as they are talking other people are dying (Ruth, 19).

In this section, I examine the three categories into which people who participated in this research fell in terms of forgiveness of the people who had caused them harm through the armed conflict: most people believed that forgiveness was conditional; some had already forgiven; and others did not want to forgive.

The majority of the displaced in this study believed that forgiveness was possible, though they had not yet been able to forgive those that had caused them harm when they were interviewed. For this group of people, forgiveness was conditional and might take a long time. Forgiveness involves overcoming resentment, it is a process not an event, and it can

take a lot of time (Govier 2002). Speaking on the difficulty of forgiving, one participant said:

Well since now so much time has gone by, so many bad memories, so many things; every time something overwhelming happens to me if I think and I say ‘they do not deserve to even be alive, no. Because, why kill someone like that in cold blood?’... Well to say ‘I forgive them’ at this moment I would need to have a lot of clarity on many things for me to say [that I had] forgiven them, or for them to deserve pardon. Like to look them in the face and they tell me ‘I did this thing, because of this and this. Forgive me’ then I would think about it (Ever, 36).

Forgiveness for many was conditional on the guilty telling the truth, asking to be forgiven, or at the very least stopping their harmful acts. One participant described how she wanted the guilty to come to her and tell her what they had done to her family. She wanted to know the truth and the reasons behind their actions, but she said forgiveness was possible if they did this:

Because maybe they did it to me suddenly and I still have not been able to come to terms with it, and I know that they like to cause harm; and how will I forgive under these circumstances? With all the suffering that I still have. For me to calm down and be able to forgive, there is a lot to work on, a lot, a lot of work... It is possible, but it is a lot to get that forgiveness; yes I forgave you and aha. It’s like the old saying goes: ‘The one who receives the blow is the one who hurts every day, not the one who gives it’ (Leila, 56).

Similarly another participant said:

Well I don’t know, we could heal that sadness that we have in the heart by knowing that a person is telling you the truth of why he killed your relative, where he is, and where you can find him. To know that a person is telling you the truth... but you know that the person told the truth and that he asks for forgiveness publicly and that in fact he is repentant; and [then] you look to see if you can forgive or if you cannot forgive (Gladis, 44).

Many participants expressed how an admission of what they had done and repentance of the guilty was a condition for them granting forgiveness.

In contrast, around a fourth of participants who discussed forgiveness said they had already forgiven those that had caused them so much pain. Some attributed their ability to forgive to God. For instance one participant said: “Yes because we have to forgive because God forgives so we have to forgive as well. God forgave us to teach us” (Paola, 44). Other people said they had forgiven because they didn’t want a “dirty heart” (Caesar, 22) or to have a “heart to hold grudges” (Nadia, 30). For participants in this group, forgiveness was something that allowed them to have inner peace regardless of whether or not the guilty felt remorse, confessed, or changed their ways.

People who thought forgiveness was conditional and those who had already forgiven shared one point of clarification on the nature of forgiveness: forgiveness did not mean forgetting. The horrors of what they had experienced was not something that would leave their minds. One participant put it this way: “Although you may forgive, but it always stays with you... with one fella who displaced me or did something to so-and-so or killed someone, but I never forget it” (Manuela, 46).

In contrast there were a couple of people that said they had not and would not forgive those that had caused them pain. These people claimed that the offenses done to them and their families were too significant and they could not or would not forgive. One participant put it this way when asked if she wanted to forgive those who had caused her so much pain: “I do not forgive [because it caused] too much pain, too much pain. Never, never forgive” (Nelida, 48). Although there were only a couple of people that held this understanding of forgiveness within my interview group, it was a view that was held by some and likely other displaced people.

Overall, the decision to forgive or not was an important concern for my study population. Given their experiences of displacement and the traumatic memories many had, forgiveness was an issue that all had reflected on to some extent. The importance of forgiveness was evident in the fact that there were no participants that said forgiveness

was not relevant. Even those that said they did not want to forgive were acknowledging that they had the prerogative to withhold forgiveness from the guilty.

9.4 Symbolic Power and Reconciliation

The issue that is in question in the above discussions is whether or not symbolic inequalities are addressed through transitional justice processes related to punishment, truth, and forgiveness. Each of these approaches to transitional justice is about redefining social relations, legitimacy, and moral authority. For victims of conflict the symbolic value in each can be quite significant. They are significant because they represent such a drastic change from the neglect their concerns and sufferings have had in public policy and action.

Transitional justice mechanisms such as trials and truth commissions are forms of justice that attempt to address inequalities in symbolic power. Trials address symbolic power by subordinating the perpetrators of crimes to the legal system. Associated punishments are a way of removing people from positions of power and of delegitimizing their leadership and authority. They also possibly prevent future crimes by removing the guilty from society for a period of time and hopefully acting as a deterrent. Punishment also provides recognition of the suffering of the victims, by giving attention and consequences to acts committed against them. This is an important aspect of trials and punishments as the crimes committed during times of armed conflict often occur with little to no accountability. Trials provide a way of legitimizing the experiences of the victims of the conflict and diminishing the symbolic power of the guilty through the imposition of judgment and punishment.

Truth-seeking is also a form of symbolic power because it erodes claims of the legitimate authority made by people that are implicated in crimes. It does this by exposing and condemning certain actions or events publicly. Truth telling and the reports commissions often produce can also enable people to gain a sense of closure, whereby the experiences they went through are acknowledged and their perspectives heard. This is a form of symbolic power because it is a way through which people can contribute to redefining the rules of the social field and understandings of difficult histories. Furthermore, people

might also have the opportunity to find out more information about what happened to loved ones and why. Having their voices heard and gaining more information can be empowering. Truth commissions act as a way to acknowledge the suffering of various groups in the conflict and can reaffirm the value and legitimacy of rights of marginalized groups within society, thereby providing a symbolic means of partially levelling the social field.

Finally, forgiveness itself is an act of symbolic power, as it gives the person or community offering or withholding forgiveness moral authority and power. Although forgiveness can be a deeply personal prerogative, the communication and acknowledgement of people's or community's acts of forgiveness or decisions to withhold forgiveness can be publically facilitated. Forgiveness may be associated with truth processes, but they are not necessarily tied to them. Additionally, opportunities for forgiveness (or withholding it) can be accomplished through official ceremonies, such as memorial services, or in ideas expressed in media (such as newspaper articles, books, documentaries, etc.). Accordingly, trials, truth processes and opportunities related to forgiveness all help to facilitate a redistribution of symbolic power in one way or another.

Symbolic power, in turn, is related to the concept of reconciliation. Reconciliation necessarily implies that there exist groups that have struggled against one another. Reconciliation, if understood as rendering people no longer opposed, means that social relationships are redefined. Therefore, a certain amount of levelling of the symbolic playing field needs to take place in order for reconciliation to take place, for positive relationships between previously opposing groups to be possible. In Colombia, violence has revolved around the struggle for political legitimacy, the right to impose a certain vision on the social world, defining the rules of the distribution of capital, and accountability. Armed groups of all stripes have systematically deprived rural communities of the ability to live in freedom, to have peace, and to decide how resources in the land they are supposed to own should be managed. The government for its part has neglected or been unable to fulfill its responsibility to protect victims from exploitation and terror. The state has even participated directly in harming victims.

I argue that a restorative justice approach is most likely to foster reconciliation in Chocó, and thereby contribute to levelling the distribution of symbolic capital. This approach is best in the context of Chocó despite feelings of resentment and differing views on the role of punishment that participants sometimes expressed which clashed with the principles of restorative justice. There are three main reasons why a restorative justice approach is best: first, there was more agreement around issues of truth than around those of punishment; second, truth offers a better path to forgiveness, which is a key part of reconciliation; and third, questions of feasibility also point to the superiority of a restorative justice approach.

Firstly, while disagreement around issues of punishment and truth is tolerable and even a part of the nature of creating a political space where people can freely participate and exchange ideas, the lack of consensus could pose challenges for reconciliation. The issue of punishment was particularly controversial amongst participants. Some people wanted to see the guilty serve time in prison and some wanted even harsher punishments such as the death penalty. Others did not think that punishment was appropriate or that trials could be conducted in a fair manner. In contrast, truth-seeking was not a controversial form of justice amongst participants. While a few people had differing views on the personal importance of truth or the ability to attain it, nobody expressed that it would be bad to attempt to seek truth. While the relative agreement on issues of truth versus punishment is not a sufficient ground to discount the value of trials and associated punishment, it indicates that truth-seeking processes, such as truth commissions, would likely enjoy more support as a way to pursue symbolic justice in Chocó.

Secondly, truth seeking offers a clearer path to forgiveness, which is a key part of reconciliation. Forgiveness is a crucial part of reconciliation because it allows groups to move forward together with a shared future that is not burdened with bitterness and vengefulness. Forgiveness was a deeply personal experience on which participants had widely different views. It was possible that by knowing the truth about what happened to loved ones and potentially having apologies it might be easier for some people to forgive those that caused them harm, as indicated by some of the respondents. In contrast, no one claimed that if the guilty were punished they would be more likely to forgive. Therefore,

according to this research, truth is more likely to promote forgiveness that leads to reconciliation than trials or associated punishments.

Thirdly, there are issues of feasibility that are important to consider in terms of which approach is best in a particular context. Despite the popularity of the idea of giving prison sentences to the guilty, it was not feasible in the context of Chocó. The capacity of the prison system would be unlikely to handle a large influx of people. While I was conducting my research in Quibdó, I had arranged to go visit the main prison in town. A person that worked with the prison there told me that it was overcrowded, with very poor sanitary conditions. The day before my scheduled visit there was a riot at the prison. The prisoners took over the facilities and the guards had lost control. I was told that this was not a rare occurrence, and as a result I was unable to make my visit. This was an indication to me that in Chocó, and probably other parts of the country, the prison system was unlikely to be able to handle an influx of large numbers of ex-combatants, given the fact that it could not manage the inmates it already had.

Punishment was a key issue of contention in the referendum on the Peace Agreement between FARC and the Colombian government. Those who campaigned to vote against the agreement wanted to see the guilty serve time in prison, rather than the vague ‘effective restriction of liberty’ that the first agreement described for those who fully confessed their crimes and were convicted (WOLA 2016). In the second agreement prison time was still excluded, but there was a specific area wherein the restriction of liberty applied for those found guilty of crimes (WOLA 2016). Part of the justification for this approach was related to feasibility issues.

Overall, truth seeking under a restorative justice approach is most likely to foster reconciliation and thereby lead to symbolic justice. Truth commissions are also a good option for attaining greater symbolic justice because victims are central to how they operate; but in accordance with the principles of restorative justice they allow all parties to participate and have their perspectives heard. Trials, in contrast, do not allow for adequate attention to victims or for their full participation. This means that despite the marginalization of certain populations in the history of Colombia’s conflict, truth

commissions and the reports they sometimes produce can provide an opportunity for unheard voices, whether they been victims, perpetrators, or bystanders, to be heard.

9.5 Conclusion

Various forms of symbolic justice are necessary in the context of Chocó in order to address structural inequalities in the distribution of symbolic capital that have persisted in the region for years. It is particularly important to victims whose suffering and experiences have gone unacknowledged for many years. In this research I investigated three ways of working towards symbolic justice, trials, truth commissions, and forgiveness. Punishment means that the guilty no longer enjoy impunity. Truth processes can provide a nationally recognized platform for the voices of victims. Opportunities for forgiveness mean that those who have been victimized gain a kind of moral legitimacy and power. In these ways, each approach contributes to participants' senses of symbolic justice.

When trials and truth commissions are compared one to another, truth commissions are the most likely to foster reconciliation. This is because truth seeking was generally seen in a positive light, it was more likely to lead to forgiveness, and it was more feasible in the context of Chocó. This is not to say that trials have no place in the process of symbolic justice in Chocó, but rather to show that they may not be the best approach to levelling the social field and promoting reconciliation. This finding is similar to what Aiken (2013) concludes in his book when he writes that “retributive mechanisms, if utilized as the sole societal response to past human rights violations, may themselves be unable to foster the various kinds of social learning ultimately needed to achieve intergroup reconciliation in deeply divided societies” (220).

Forgiveness is another transitional justice approach that relates to symbolic justice. By making provisions in various mechanisms (such as at truth commissions, in memory projects, in ceremonies, etc.) for forgiveness to be granted or withheld, victims of atrocities and conflict can be empowered with moral authority. The act of forgiving or not is itself a symbolic act, whereby a person is stating that they have a legitimate

authority to do so. It also puts them in a symbolic position of power over those who might need forgiveness.

While punishments, truth seeking, and forgiveness-related processes can act as forms of symbolic justice, they are only capable of partially levelling the social field in Chocó. Firstly, this is because these forms of symbolic justice do not directly address political representation and do not necessarily provide assurances that the rights of these groups will be established or protected in the future. Secondly, symbolic measures of achieving justice are not sufficient, as they do not fully address the material aspects of the conflict, as I discuss in the next chapter.

Chapter 10

10 Material Forms of Justice

For people that have been displaced by conflict living in Chocó, the material forms of justice were crucial. The material bases of justice for participants was grounded in their experiences of victimization, which were largely defined in terms of economic and cultural deprivation and insecurity. This deprivation and insecurity meant that many of the displaced were living in conditions that did not reflect their dignity as people.

Accordingly, for justice to be possible, living conditions that respect the dignity of the displaced need to be established. One participant put it this way: “Justice is to respect the life and dignity of the whole world” (Erika, 60). To the participants in this study having their dignity respected meant having their material needs met through education, employment or income generating opportunities, access to adequate housing, and adequate health services. In other words, in the eyes of participants the state had a responsibility to address the material social conditions that were exacerbated by the conflict, in addition to the symbolic issues surrounding the conflict itself.

Participants themselves identified their priorities in response to questions such as: What is justice? What are the related priorities? What are the most important ways that your dignity can be respected? In this chapter, I outline each of the main types of material needs that participants connected to contributing to a sense of justice given their victimization. Afterwards, I discuss how these priority areas are linked to the need of material forms of justice.

10.1 Education

A justice-related priority area for people displaced by conflict living in Quibdó was education for both children and adults. The need for education stemmed largely from the fact that it was seen as essential for improving standards of living in the urban environment. Whereas in the rural setting a formal education and literacy skills were not crucial, in the urban environment these skills were needed to get a decent-paying job. Since the displaced had been unjustly forced to leave their homes and abandon their ways

of living that did not usually require formal education, it was seen an essential component of justice that education be provided to them so that they could have the cultural capital needed to compete economically in the urban environment.

In terms of children, good education was seen as one of the ways to work towards justice, as one participant put it:

Well, Colombia is now in the peace process that we all yearn for. That's why I was telling you, for us to contribute to the peace process, and that there be a real peace, we have to start with this first step that I told you; education for children. Because if we do not educate them, there will be no peace. The other part that would make constructive contributions to this process, so that there is a peace, is social justice with equality of conditions (Leila, 56).

Consistent with this statement, several participants discussed how they had hopes and dreams of their children leading a better life than they had. One mother put it this way when speaking about her son: “I love him, you want to do more and that he doesn’t suffer, that he doesn’t have to go through the same things [I did]. So I would like, starting with education, to give him everything that I lack” (Marcela, 24). Many people in this study believed that educational opportunities were a means for their children to have a better quality of life.

According to a law passed in 2004, displaced children of school age should receive free tuition, materials, and uniforms (Duenas 2012). It was the responsibility of local municipalities to ensure this happened and to make educational provisions for displaced children (Duenas 2012). Even though there were basic provisions in place for the education of displaced children, it could be very difficult for them to actually complete schooling. In the first place, despite the fact that tuition, materials, and uniforms were supposed to be free, in practice this did not always happen. One participant explained the situation saying why education was a priority:

Education for the children, because although many schools say they are free, they give displaced victim children many problems because... you have to pay their

tuition in several schools when they are studying, and supposedly there are programs where displaced children are given uniforms and everything. And no, here with some that does not happen; you hear about those programs but they do not really reach the victims (Gladis, 31).

In addition to the financial barriers to education for displaced children, there were a number of social barriers that made school attendance difficult for many of these children in Quibdó. In the first place, parents often worked long hours and were not always available, nor did they have the knowledge, to help with homework or to support children who were struggling. A lack of parental supervision might mean that children were not doing their homework or that children were not even attending school. In the second place, children from displaced families could face severe bullying, social isolation, and violence. This could lead to discouragement and children dropping out of school. One participant described the security situation at one school in this way:

There is even a school near my neighbourhood and the boys of a gang went to that school and held the girls hostage. The ones in the room, they did not let anyone out, they bullied them and threatened and they kept the students inside the room until they felt like letting them go... many parents have had to withdraw their children. They have done a lot of security a lot of control to avoid that; nevertheless sometimes they [the gangs] still come in (Marcela, 24).

Similarly according to participant, some students dropped out of high school because they had been recruited to a gang and others dropped out because they had become young parents and needed to work to provide for their own family. A 36-year-old man named Ever, for example, told me how he had been forced to drop out of school because he needed to earn a living for himself and his family when he was still young.

With so many obstacles in front of them, it was indeed an achievement for a displaced child to finish high school. A high school education alone, however, would not allow these young people to have a significantly better quality of life than their parents. A quality elementary and high school education were seen as important foundations for higher studies. For the rural populations the importance of education largely emerged as

they were displaced and became one of the only means to significantly improve quality of life in the urban environment. One woman who worked with the displaced, when asked if education was seen as especially important today, answered:

Of course, because... it is very clear that without studying children cannot progress. So if there have been times when it did not seem so important, nowadays it is seen as important for children to study. But the job offers for young people are so few; that's why they do not have many opportunities. So the boys who finish high school, as they do not have the means to go to university, they also have few possibilities... people see that those who do not study do not do anything. Those who do not study much can load things in the port. But more and more studying [is required]. Before when you had a high school degree, you had something; and now you must have a university education, and education costs a lot of money (Emilia, 58).

This is why many displaced young people who had completed high school wanted a post-secondary education. At the time of interviews, there was a generation of youth that had been displaced as small children and were now the age to enter university. Some of them saw education as their only way to improve their lives and escape poverty. One such young person said that higher education was a priority because “with a high school degree you do not get work” (Emilse, 22). This same young person was hoping to get a very competitive bursary from a national organization to be able to study at university. Without it, she would not be able to attend university, as transportation, tuition, and materials were far too expensive for most young people from displaced families to even come close to affording. Another interviewee said she was able to pay for university by borrowing money from friends and family. At the time of the interview, those debts still needed to be paid back. The high costs related to studying at university acted as a barrier for even some of the most ambitious young people from displaced families.

Another aspect of education that was discussed by several participants was adult education. Several participants including Iva (aged 38), Maria (aged 47), and Imelda (aged 46) talked about how they could not read or write and that this was an obstacle for

them in terms of improving their lives. It prevented them from understanding what government and humanitarian aid was available to them. It was also an obstacle in terms of navigating the job market in Quibdó, as they could not read job ads or make a resume. In the rural communities there was less of a need for those types of skills because people worked largely off the land or in manual labour, but in the cities there were different expectations and competitions.

In addition to basic literacy for adults some participants discussed the desire for capacity or skill-building programs for the displaced. The agricultural skills the displaced had used in rural areas did not translate well to finding employment in the city. Some participants desired training that could help them develop skills they could use for income generating activities. Ever, for example, had been able to take a training course in construction and he was hoping sometime in the future to be able to further his education, despite having dropped out of high school.

The provision of education and skills trainings was a justice priority for people displaced by conflict living in Chocó. Their need for improvement in the areas of education and skill development stemmed from the fact that this could help them adapt to the urban environment they had been forced to move into. Their need for education and skills training would not have been so pressing had they remained in their original communities. The cultural capital that they possessed in the rural setting was devalued through the process of displacement, as discussed in Chapter 6. By receiving education they hoped to be able to improve their quality of life and have a better future with more possibilities. Education and skill development provides a way to increase the cultural capital of the displaced in order for them to, in turn, improve their economic status by securing better employment.

10.2 Employment and Income

Another aspect of the material basis of justice for the displaced was access to job opportunities or ways to provide for themselves and their families. The issue of employment and income was directly connected to the conflict. As discussed in Chapter 6, Chocó is rich in natural resources, and people were often driven off their land so that

others could gain control of these resources. As a result, however, people lost their livelihoods. One participant, for instance, stated, “Justice has to begin by people having subsistence, having work, food, education, clothes... if the government is seeking peace and doesn’t seek a way to solve the [need for] work, a way to sustain families, nothing happens. The same people go back to the bush and, yes, they do worse” (Erika, 60).

In their communities of origin, many of the displaced had been able to live off the land or by working in fishing, mining, or forestry. Most people had worked independently, gaining money by trading goods on the river or in small towns. They usually had a sufficient income to provide for the sustenance of their families and supplemented it by growing or collecting some of their own food from the fertile surroundings. Life may have been simple by modern Western standards, but they were not lacking the basic necessities of life.

The reality in Quibdó was very different, as there was a severe lack of work opportunities. The competition for work, especially in the informal sector, drove down wages. The seriousness of this problem was partially captured in one participant’s response during an interview where she said, “The lack of employment is one of those [obstacles to peace], lack of employment [and] lack of business offered to people. Look at my son—he has gone a long time without being able to get a job. Here, yes, we lack companies that can generate employment” (Cristal, 54). Despite this situation, or maybe because of it, the people I spoke with had a strong desire to work. With the exception of some disabled and elderly participants, all seemed to have had a significant motivation to find work or a source of income. With such limited possibilities, however, most of the displaced were not able to earn a steady income that would cover the costs of even the most basic needs of their family.

The problem of limited work opportunities was compounded by the fact that the displaced faced more barriers than others to getting work. The first barrier related to discrimination whereby people prefer not to employ the displaced because of a bad reputation sometimes associated with them. One participant expressed his frustration with this reality as follows:

Yes, we were talking about the situation... of [the displaced] not having a job that enables them to support themselves... Discrimination and stigmatization is what you get based only on the fact that you are displaced, we receive several types of accusations: One is that you are a guerrilla; two is that we are the worst of society. [That] we are the ones that form gangs, like drug addiction, prostitution, all that and that we involuntarily supported that. [These] are very aggressive and harmful accusations that cause a lot of harm in society when they identify you as something you are not. So that is one of the obstacles to living in healthy coexistence and tranquility (Moises, 62).

Accordingly, discrimination and stigmatization are major obstacles for many in finding a source of income in an environment where there are not many opportunities to go around.

A second barrier to gaining employment was that many of the participants lacked some of the skills needed to thrive in the urban environment. For example, many of the participants did not have literacy skills because they had not needed them in their former communities. This lack of literacy put them at a disadvantage in the city. One participant, for example, stated, “[For] a person who has not studied, it is difficult to get work” (Emilse, 22). Another participant put it this way: “What I’m doing, as I say, is to find a way to set up a small business for myself, to change my way of life. Work there is, but it is for people who know, who have studied, things that one [from the rural areas] does not know. I hardly know how to sign my name” (Iva, 38). For many of the displaced their lack of skills related to urban life and education were obstacles to finding decent work.

Many of the displaced ideally wanted to work independently, rather than for a company or for other people. This reflected not only a reaction to discrimination, maltreatment, and lack of opportunity, but it was also an expression of the independent lives many of the displaced had led in their rural communities. In the rural communities, many of the participants in this study were largely self-sufficient. Many grew their own food and relied for survival on trading or selling products derived from the natural resources around them. They often expressed their desire to try to replicate that independence in some form in their new urban environment.

There were a few participants in this study that had been able to work independently, but they by no means had an easy life. For example, in the central market there were a number of little restaurants that sat only a couple of people at a time. Many of the women that ran these mini-restaurants were displaced. I had the opportunity to interview several of them. From what they told me, they had been able to start their restaurants thanks to a small grant given to them by the local government several years earlier. The restaurants gave them only a modest income. Speaking about how much her daily income was one of these women said, “Ehh barely, like to buy for the next day. Sometimes I take twenty [thousand pesos], sometimes I have fifteen [thousand pesos] and so I do not have a thing to keep. One day I get more, another day I get less. There are days I do not sell anything” (Paola, 44). Meanwhile, the women at these restaurants worked long hours and lived far away from their work location. Overall, though the women were able to work independently, it was a struggle for them to earn money.

Picture 4: Artisanal items made by a displaced person



Other participants in this study were involved in artisanal activities such as sewing, knitting, or making small crafts. Some were able to earn a living doing these activities, but only those who had the support of an organization. For instance, the Catholic Church had a shop set up in downtown Quibdó where they sold dolls and knitted items made by a

group of women displaced by conflict. The church also organized to sell the dolls at other shops around the country. By being connected to this network, the women that participated in that particular group were able to earn a relatively decent income to contribute to the household needs of their families. This was not the case for all artisanal workers. One young woman that I interviewed was trying to make artisanal articles with a friend to sell, such as key chains and hair clips. They had not been very successful, a reality that they attributed in part to the lack of network through which to sell their items and a lack of capital to buy materials. Artisanal activities can be profitable under the right circumstances, but not everyone had the aptitude, resources, or networks needed for that type of work.

Picture 5: Boat filled with plantains heading to the market



In actuality, most of the participants in this study had precarious jobs that did not usually generate much income. Many of the displaced, including several participants in this study, went door-to-door offering to do construction, cleaning, or general labour for households or businesses. For instance, a 60-year-old man named Jorge would go down to the central market and wait for boats loaded with plantains or other goods to pull in and try to earn a bit of money unloading them. He would earn about 20,000 to 30,000

pesos on the days he found work. This work was by no means guaranteed, and often he, like many participants in this study would not find anyone in need of his services and willing to pay. Similarly, some women would try to sell food in the streets to gain an income. Depending on the day they sold more or less food. Accordingly, these types of work did not provide a steady or significant income. The vast majority of interviewees had very low salaries, or no jobs at all. The majority of displaced interviewed in this study made well below the monthly minimum wage of 616,000 pesos (Martínez 2015).¹³ One participant summarized the reality of the majority of displaced saying, “But a lot of people I have talked to say that their monthly income is like 200,000 or 300,000 [pesos], with that it is very difficult for them. But this minimum wage, there are almost no people that get the minimum wage” (Isabel, 64). Sixty-eight percent of the displaced earned 400,000 pesos or less a month, and seventeen percent were not working at all. There were a few special cases, three to be precise, of participants that had relatively well paid jobs. Two of them worked as teachers, and one had become a politically active human rights worker for a variety of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). They were the exceptions, as most participants struggled to survive off their monthly income.

For many people the lack of work opportunities and the precarious nature of the work that was available meant that people were sometimes unable to meet even their most basic needs such as food, which was often a daily struggle. One participant (Sheyla, 18) told me that there were days her husband, two daughters and herself went without food because she was not able to work. Similarly, another participant said: “So because those who do not have, like me... income from work, it takes us a lot of work to get food. One has to beg, begging for my basic nutritional needs” (Hector, 74). Many participants described how they had to rely on friends, family or neighbours to supply their basic needs. One woman, for example, who had been displaced for two years described how her family of five children and her partner survived without any income, saying “Sometimes my neighbours give me something... they give me two small pounds of rice, those who are over there sitting...” (Sofía, 30). Another participant who worked with a

¹³ The conversion rate for 2014 was \$1 U.S. purchasing power parity = 1,184.53 Colombian Pesos.

local organization and was displaced herself spoke about the situation more generally, saying:

The biggest obstacle [to improving life for the displaced] is unemployment, unemployment and the situation is that they haven't sought... how to generate employment for victims nor given them a productive project to survive. The reality is that victims are having to endure hunger; living a very bad reality because of the lack of food. Malnourished children, they have been malnourished for many years here (Gloria, 31).

In these ways, the lack of work opportunities or sources of income means that many people are not able to satisfy even their most basic needs, such as food, shelter, and clothing. It was a daily battle for many of the displaced to find a way to feed their families and pay the bills. This is why employment or reliable sources of income were a priority for the displaced interviewed in this study.

For the displaced, employment or a source of income is a key material need. The existence of this need is a direct result of their displacement. It is a result in that they lost their sources of income and ways of living through the displacement. Furthermore, their marginalized social positions are such that they face added obstacles to employment such as discrimination and lack of education. The combination of their initial displacement and the difficulties securing employment to meet their basic needs, let alone reach the same standards they had before displacement, leads to the conclusion that employment or a source of income is a key part of material justice for the displaced.

10.3 Housing

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* both acknowledge the right to adequate housing as a basic human right. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states that, "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing ..." (United Nations 1948: Article 25). Similarly, *the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* states

that, “The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.” (United Nations 1966: Article 11). In short, access to decent housing is an internationally recognized human right, one that the Colombian government itself has acknowledged by ratifying the agreements (United Nations Human Rights 2014).

Access to adequate housing, however, was not a right enjoyed by many of the displaced living in Quibdó. This should not be a surprise, as one of the main controversies in Colombia’s conflict is related to control over land and resources. The displaced by definition had been forced to leave their communities and in most cases abandon their homes. While many of the displaced described their homes and land before displacement as abundantly able to provide for the needs of their families, the housing situation when they settled in Quibdó was far from adequate. Accordingly, access to decent housing was a top priority for most participants in this research.

Before displacement, most people lived in very small isolated communities along one of the branches of the Atrato River or near one of the larger towns such as Rio Sucio. They usually lived with other family members and in close proximity to extended family or community members who were like family. They tended to have access to the river and space to move around, work, and play. Being driven off their land and out of their homes, the displaced were often left with nowhere to live, no food, and no sources of income. A fortunate few had the economic or social capital to be able to establish themselves in a new community, but they were the exception. Most found themselves destitute and with few tools to rebuild their lives in an urban environment they knew little about.

Participants argued that given what they had lost, the displaced should at the very least have access to decent housing. This was a fundamental aspect of what it meant to have justice and live in dignity. One participant described it this way “In order to live honourably, I think it is necessary that we have a decent home with all its services” (Karina, 24). Similarly, another participant when asked about how they could improve their quality of life said, “Well like, I would like to study, to grow personally, to have

greater knowledge, to have a decent place to live with my family, to feel comfortable... to live in a place without problems... to live in a healthy place where there is no violence, not to be tormented by it any more” (Caesar, 22).

Picture 6: A residential neighbourhood in Quibdó



When I walked through different neighbourhoods in Quibdó, I could see the gap between those with decent housing and others without it. Some homes were made of cement with a solid roof and a big blue or black water tank on top. Other homes, where many of the displaced lived, were made of wooden planks that I could see through, tin roofs with visible holes, dirt floors, and had no indoor plumbing.

One of the worst areas in terms of housing that I visited was an indigenous community of displaced people that had settled on the outskirts of Quibdó. There were only two toilets for the entire community of over 200 inhabitants, so people used the bushes to relieve themselves and a nearby stream to bathe. Furthermore, the houses were all made of

wood. Some of the houses were fully built and others had no walls. I visited one house that had only some planks of wood that kept the inhabitants off the ground and some planks overhead. Instead of four walls there was one small tarp on the side of the house blowing in the wind with big rips and holes in it. Keeping in mind that it rained almost every day in Quibdó, I had a hard time imagining how they kept themselves dry. For a stove there was a mound of dirt piled in one section of the floor. This was not the only “house” in the community that was in this state of bare existence that provided almost no protection from the elements. It was no wonder there were obviously children sick with malaria and other illnesses when I visited. The majority of displaced people I interviewed in Chocó did not live in houses with no walls, though most had spent nights out in the rain and wind while trying to transition to better accommodations.

Most of the homes where the displaced lived were made out of wood because it was the cheapest material available. Quibdó is one of the most humid places on the planet, with rain almost every day, so wood does not hold up very well. One participant described the situation saying: “We need to change the house so that when it rains we do not get wet, because [now] like the walls are wood and the water comes in. Well, yes, change that” (Ruth, 19). Other participants such as Sheyla (18) and Sofia (30), for instance, also complained that when it rained hard the water would get inside their wooden homes. This was a common problem for the many people living in wooden homes.

Another problem with the housing of many of the displaced in Quibdó was the lack of indoor plumbing and no aqueduct access. Many people relied on barrels or buckets that collected rainwater for their daily water needs. This was in marked contrast to the abundance of water most of them had had in their former communities living along the rivers. In Quibdó when two or three days went by without rain, which happens from time to time, the lack of water could become a crisis situation for many families. Furthermore, lack of proper indoor plumbing or latrines led to sanitation concerns. Diseases spread faster when there is insufficient access to water and when waste cannot be properly disposed of. This situation can be humiliating, as one participant described:

When my mom displaced us... we had to go to a house that was very small. For

example, if one of us was going to move from the kitchen to the living room we had to go one by one because we did not fit two people in the same room, and we slept on the floor. We did not have a way to throw away the feces, and that stage for me was very traumatic because during all that... we received constant humiliation from our family [we were staying with], because they kicked us out of that house where we lived... We could not turn on the light because we had a single bulb, we couldn't use water either, and to throw away the feces was also very difficult. When cooking we used to cook on a wood stove but we could not cook, [because] they gave us a lot of trouble because they argued that the smoke hurt them (Karina, 24).

The poor construction of homes and the lack of services for the displaced was a major obstacle to living in dignity. While the displaced were not the only ones that had to deal with poor housing in Quibdó, they were disproportionately more likely to experience severe housing problems, for the obvious reason that, having been uprooted from their homes, they arrived in the city with nothing and had to start to build or find a place to live with very little to no resources.

Participants claimed that the government had not been completely unresponsive to this reality, but that housing related projects for the displaced had been inadequate at best. For instance, there were one-time housing projects such as this one described by a participant:

Here, in this IPC [community centre], where we were sitting in the front [participant pointed]... it was for a time a shelter for the displaced and finally five families stayed, who had nowhere to go. They had no relatives. They had no one. They had nowhere to go. And I talked to the mayor of the municipality at the time, I talked to the mayor of Quibdó, and they got each family five million pesos in materials, and those families looked for a little place here in Quibdó (Erika, 60).

Accordingly, houses were built for those particular families but they were not well constructed. Erika described how they were made of “bad wood” and how they did not provide adequate protection or basic comfort for families.

A larger-scale program was enacted by the national government in response to housing problems faced by the displaced in Decree 915 in 2001. This decree provided subsidies for qualifying victims to buy or repair homes for themselves (Consuelo Carrillo 2009). The decree also specified the key role of the territorial institutions in implementing programs for the displaced (The Brookings Institution 2008). In 2004 a fund was set up to support the housing program (The Brookings Institution 2008). According to several participants, the homes had to meet certain requirements in order to qualify for the subsidy. One participant described the situation in this way,

There are many limitations with the laws and programs of the government, they should be made more flexible for the displaced population... the requirements [for the housing funding] are, that the house is not in a high risk area, that the house has three rooms, bathroom, kitchen, living room, that is made of cement, that it has a public deed, that it is up to date. Money with this type of specifications is extremely difficult [to use]... (Nadia, 30).

The amount of money provided, usually 14,000,000 pesos, was not sufficient to build a home that met the requirements. As a result the vast majority of people were unable to claim the money allotted for housing. One participant speaking of her experience with the subsidy program said,

For example, that housing subsidy, they give a cheque. I have that cheque since 2004, and I have not been able to get housing, because the first time the cheque came out it was for 8,000,950 [pesos]. According to the state, this had to cover a house that was made of cement, with services, that was in good condition, [and] which was not in a dangerous zone. Imagine with that money, who can get that? Later they raised the subsidies, to 14,000,000 [pesos], almost 15,000,000 [pesos], and still you cannot buy houses here like what they want [for that amount]. And they don't accept that it is made of wood, it has to be cement, with services, with everything (Cristal, 54).

Unfortunately several participants discussed how they were unable to use the subsidies because they were insufficient to buy or build what was required. Cristal went on to

describe how she tried to build a house and even gave a deposit of 1,000,000 pesos to someone to do it, but that person never actually built her a house. She never got her money back and she never was able to use the subsidy. Stories such as this one demonstrate the vulnerability of many of the displaced and how government policies are not addressing their needs.

In reality, the vast majority of participants and those they spoke of from their communities had to pay rent for their homes, which were poorly constructed and often lacked basic services. Most of the study population were not used to having to pay rent as they or their families had owned their home and often land back in their communities before displacement. Furthermore, on the very limited income that people had it was difficult to pay rent, services, as well as having enough money to meet basic nutritional and clothing needs. Given this reality it was difficult for the displaced in Quibdó to improve their housing situation.

The displaced in Quibdó faced many housing challenges including inadequate shelter and services as well as insufficient government support. Their housing situations were caused by their displacement and their overall social positions in Colombian society that prevented them from improving their conditions on their own. Accordingly, housing was a key aspect of justice for participants, one that would allow them to live in such a way that their dignity was respected.

10.4 Physical and Emotional Health

Physical and emotional health care was a priority area for people displaced by conflict. Almost every participant mentioned health care as an important issue that somehow impacted him or her personally. The participants in this study wanted what some called holistic health (“*salud integral*”), meaning provisions for good-quality health care services for both physical and mental health. Health was very important, because without good health it was difficult or impossible to have a good quality of life. One participant commenting on why health care was a priority for them said: “Improve health, let's say, live healthy, for me that is an important thing, because if you do not have good health you do not live” (Edgar, 72). Similarly, another participant said: “Well, first of all it is to

have good health, because having good health allows you to try to seek support and other alternatives, because [if] I am sick I cannot work” (Manuela, 46). Health touches every facet of life; without it is hard to get educated, have a job, to manage a household, and to enjoy relationships.

The provision for health care services that met the needs of the displaced was seen as a key part of justice for two main reasons. Firstly, health care was central to justice because the experience of displacement itself for many was very traumatic both physically and mentally. Secondly, it was the marginalized material positions of rural populations that in large part made them vulnerable to being displaced and that vulnerability was exacerbated through displacement, leaving people financially unable to meet their own health care needs.

In the first place, displacement was physically traumatic for some who sustained injuries or diseases or whose health declined as a result of poor living conditions. Many of the displaced faced barriers to accessing proper hygiene and nutrition, increasing the likelihood of them becoming ill. One particular violence-related health problem that was discussed by several participants was the consequences of rape. Many participants talked about people they knew who had been raped. One participant discussed the inadequacies of the health services to address this issue and others that women face in Quibdó saying:

The difficulties are that health centers do not have the capacity to solve all the problems that women face; for example, the issue of cervical cancer [and] the issue of HIV/AIDS that is related to sexual violence. There is no place where a woman can go and resolve all her issues, where they have all those services together. And sometimes, it takes a lot of time between the application and actually getting a medical appointment... it is a dream of the municipal administration to build a woman’s center with specialized services here... (Carolina, 51).

Displacement and violence was also mentally traumatic for many who witnessed atrocities and the death, kidnapping, or disappearances of loved ones. The health care services in Quibdó were not adequate to address these problems. Some participants had benefitted from psychological services and activities available through programs run by

the Catholic Church. Though these programs had helped some participants in this research, many others had no such support. There was a severe lack of services to help victims deal with the mental and emotional trauma that they had experienced as a direct result of the armed conflict. One participant for instance said: “Also, here in Chocó there is no place where you can go and develop workshops; for example recreational activities where they teach you to help you overcome the trauma you experienced because of *la violencia*. There are no schools like that to rehabilitate the spirit from that violence” (Marcela, 24). Another participant also recognized this need for psychological support saying:

I am going to study psychology because there are people that face these difficulties and they do not have the support of a person with more experience, they need the help of a specialist in emotional support. I like psychology, because from that area I can help the people of my community emotionally... well especially with people that have gone through trauma, have been abused, raped, with people whose rights have been violated especially (Emilse, 22).

In these ways many displaced faced greater physical and psychological health challenges as a result of their experiences being displaced and living through violence.

In the second place, the provision for health care services was needed because of the economically deprived situation in which many of the displaced lived, which prevented them from being able to secure good quality physical and emotional health care services on their own. This meant that the regular health care concerns that people can face could not be properly addressed. Many participants I interviewed had health problems such as diabetes, vision problems, blood issues, psychological trauma, malaria, and ulcers, amongst others. Some health problems participants had were debilitating, while others may have been relatively minor; yet they all experienced difficulty getting proper medical attention and buying the needed medications. For instance, when asked if health care services were good, a group of women answered, “no, they are bad” and one person elaborated saying:

When you have to get up early at three or four in the morning to get a medical

appointment, and it doesn't matter because you do not have [money to buy] the medicine. It's the same to go to the doctor, when no, the doctor says, but you do not have anything with which to buy the prescription, well until now it is the same... people have no money (Group Interview #2, Female Participant).

Accordingly, one major problem that participants complained about was how it was difficult to get coverage for needed medicine or procedures. One participant I interviewed was concerned that her young child had malaria and that they would not be able to buy the needed medication. Another participant commented that: "Health for victims is the worst. You get sick and go to the doctor and they give you a prescription, and you have to see what you do with that, and how to manage" (Gladis, 31). Accordingly, getting coverage for medication or specific treatments that might be needed was difficult or sometimes impossible for the displaced because of their lack of material means.

Another problem with health care that participants discussed was related to the quality of the health care services themselves. Some of the participants I interviewed complained that the treatments they were getting for their illnesses were inadequate and that they could see no real improvement in their health. One participant said that: "There are health [services] but they are very negligible because they give you a drug in the EPS that is not according to the disease a person has... Here there is much suffering; for example there are diseases; for example, pressure, pressure, blood sugar [problems], malaria" (Hector, 74). I myself had a similar experience while I was in Quibdó. I had to go to the clinic for an illness. I went to the most highly recommended clinic in town, one that my participants would not likely have been able to afford. I left with a prescription, but something about the experience made me uneasy. Upon contacting medical professionals I trusted, I discovered that the prescription they gave me did not match my symptoms, or even what the doctor at the clinic had diagnosed me with. The medicine I was prescribed would not have helped cure my illness and may even have caused other problems. This showed me very clearly, that the quality of health care services available at even the best clinic in Quibdó were far inferior to health care services available in some other parts of Colombia.

The lack of expertise and good quality physical and emotional health services in Quibdó was a major problem for everyone living there, including the displaced. It was more of a problem for my study population, however, insofar as they needed extra care because of displacement-related traumas, and their inferior material positions made access to services and treatments an even greater challenge. As a result, the vast majority of people interviewed for this study identified health services as a priority area that needed improvement. To participants having good health and access to holistic health care services that addressed both physical and mental health issues was a key aspect of justice because it would allow them to meet some basic standards of a decent life that had been lost through displacement.

10.5 Economic and Cultural Forms of Justice

The conflict in Chocó has exacerbated the vulnerable economic and cultural positions of many of the rural populations in the social field of Colombia. The displaced in particular have sustained significant economic and cultural losses. Justice, therefore, must include attention to material needs such as education, employment, housing, and the provision for health care services. It is not a question of humanitarian concern alone, but more that the victims of the conflict have a right to material attention that can help them to recover from their displacement to the point that their individual dignity and social value is reflected in their standards of living. This requires, at minimum, a comprehensive reparations program that can address the multidimensional nature of the harms victims have suffered. Specifically, in addition to monetary reparations, attention to education, employment, housing, and provisions for health care services are needed. One participant articulated this saying:

Well I say that reparations have many components. But like many people say, it is that people sometimes believe that money is everything; and money isn't everything. There are other things that are also important. For example, for me, when I came from... a small town... I had a house; I had a way to support my family. So they give me housing, education that my children need, health, a productive project, or give me work that I can work. Then I feel good and I'm fine, well at least that's one of the things... (Gladis, 31).

The material grievances of the displaced were a direct result of the conflict. They needed education because they had been displaced from communities from which they had the needed education and skills, into new environments where formal education and skills were required. They needed employment and housing because they had been forced to abandon their livelihoods and homes to flee violence. They needed health care services because of traumas experienced through displacement and their marginalized social positions. These needs were interconnected, as education helps to attain better employment, better employment allows people to secure better housing, better housing protects people from the elements and therefore diseases, and employment allows people to access health care services with their own resources. With these needs met, people would be able to live in such a way that their dignity was respected.

In the aftermath of violence, monetary reparations are an important way in which governments attempt to deal with various forms of material depravity. There are provisions for reparations in Colombia's Victims Law, which entitles certain people that the law narrowly defines as victims of the conflict to monetary (if their victimization took place from 1985 onwards), and in some cases land reparations (for those forcibly displaced from 1991 onwards) (Amnesty International 2012). The participants in this study discussed the provision for monetary reparations.

Some of the participants, but not all, had received money from the government as reparations. One participant reflected on that reality saying: "Some [victims] have already received economic reparations... So with what they have been paid they have been able to build a house and improve their housing a little. And there are others that no, they still do not have that [reparations]" (Elena, 35). Though I did not explore the reasons why this was the case, it seems that perhaps some had more knowledge on how to navigate the system than others.

Even in cases where people have received monetary reparations, the money was always described as insufficient. On the one hand it was insufficient in the sense that you cannot repay people for such great losses. Isabel put it this way:

So that's why I say, at the same time the money they give them it's symbolic. It's

not paying for the dead because life is priceless, that's why it's symbolic. The state will never have the money to say this person was worth millions and millions of pesos, give them three million, four million; That's not worth a person, it is something symbolic (Isabel, 64).

On the other hand, monetary reparations were also seen as insufficient in the sense that they did not allow people to have a decent quality of life. For instance, one participant said there was a need for:

“A productive sustainable project... because here they usually give a small amount of \$1,500,000 pesos [in reparations] and that does not serve for anything. Because when the family is big, everyone will eat from there and when it [the money] ceases any business [the family has] disappears, that is [the case] even for a project of ten million pesos” (Sergio, 67).

Some participants claimed that they could, and some had, received monetary reparations by family units. This was problematic because a single amount for the family does not account for the composition of the family. For instance, there may be older children that are close to moving out on their own and they require more money to be able to do that, as was the case with several participants in this research.

Accordingly, monetary reparations are not sufficient for addressing material grievances. They are not sufficient because they do not address the ongoing structural inequalities experienced by the displaced. A one-time monetary reparation cannot bring the victims back to the quality of life they had before, and it cannot make up for the harms they experienced or the material loss they endured.

A starting point for providing material justice for the displaced, beyond monetary reparations, is education and skills building. Firstly, this means establishing programs to help address some of the barriers children face completing elementary and high school. Some of the barriers are related to security concerns, others to financial capacity, and others to parental support and employment. Secondly, attention to education also requires making funds available for displaced youth who have the desire and aptitude to complete

higher education. Thirdly, it means initiating capacity building, literary, and skills training programs for displaced adults that can help lead to gainful employment.

The ultimate goal of building the cultural capital of the displaced through education and skills training is to increase the possibilities of material gain, thereby addressing the material injustices that victims experienced through the conflict. By changing the distribution of cultural capital and thereby hopefully increasing economic capital, this population would not be as vulnerable to being exploited by armed groups in the future.

Other areas where reparations are needed include employment, housing, and health care services. There are two distinct strategies that need to be put in place; one for those who do not want to return to their territories and another for those that do want to return. There were many displaced participants in this research that did not want to return to their territories because of the trauma they had experienced, the fear that real peace would not exist, or simply because they did not want to have to uproot their lives again.

For the people who did not want to return, a component of material justice would include first the creation of employment or income-generating activities that could help the displaced enjoy a decent quality of life in Quibdó or wherever they settled. These efforts would need to be focussed in the urban environment and hopefully allow the displaced to work independently. This could perhaps come in the form of sustainable projects, or funding that gave companies an incentive to prioritize the employment of the displaced. Second, housing projects that actually met the needs of the displaced also need to be implemented. The money that is made available to build homes for the displaced needs to be sufficient to meet minimum standards, or housing needs to be built specifically for the displaced. Third, in terms of physical and emotional health care services, there is a need for better funding, infrastructure, and the recruitment of health care professionals in Quibdó.

Another strategy would need to be adopted for those displaced who desired to return to their territories and wanted to attempt to re-establish life in their communities if real peace was secured. Here, then, is where we return to the larger themes of the Colombian conflict: namely the control of land and resources. For this group the main questions

would be about protection of human and territorial rights. They would need to be able to return to their territories and use the resources in the ways that they themselves decided. Laws that protected their rights over the use of territory would need to be enforced, the threat of illegal armed groups removed, and the encroachment of outside companies mitigated. This would address questions of employment, as people would be able to return to former livelihoods or develop new businesses using the natural resources around them.

Additionally, people would likely need housing assistance as their former homes may be run down or taken over by new occupants. Funding for traveling health clinics and emotional recovery programs would also help improve standards of living for rural populations. These clinics could complement the development of better quality health care services in Quibdó, which would be more accessible to rural communities in cases of more complex health situations.

The aim of these types of reparation initiatives for those who did, and did not, want to return to their communities of origin would be to change the distribution of cultural, economic, and symbolic capital in such a way that there was no longer a population hyper-vulnerable to exploitation from armed groups. These measures would be forms of material justice as they could allow the displaced to reclaim and surpass social positions they had before conflict.

10.6 Conclusion

Justice for the displaced in Chocó necessarily requires attention to material needs. It was the marginalized social positions of the rural populations that made them vulnerable to displacement and violence in the first place; and these positions were only exacerbated through displacement. Justice therefore has a key material component, without which all other forms of justice are weak at best. Material justice requires comprehensive reparations that help the displaced, and rural communities in general improve their social positions. Reparations need to focus on issues related to education, skills development, employment or income generating initiatives, housing projects, and health care concerns.

The specific content of reparations would need to be elaborated in collaboration with local populations, in order to ensure their needs were being met and the problems properly addressed. Solutions that might work in one part of the country will not necessarily work well in other parts. The responsibility for coordinating related initiatives lies in large part in the hands of the Colombian government, who in the eyes of many participants bears the ultimate responsibility for the conflict and for the protection of vulnerable populations. It would, therefore, be up to the government to organize the ways in which other stakeholders (such as armed groups, civil society, international governments and institutions, transnational corporations) were involved in reparation-type programs.

Chapter 11

11 Analysis and Discussion

The resilience of the human condition can be most clearly seen in the trials of the most vulnerable populations, such as the displaced in Chocó, as they struggle to survive, finding solutions to get by day-to-day. In my research I have sought to shed light on the lived realities of some of the most marginalized people in Colombia and how inequalities have shaped their experiences of victimization. I have investigated their possibilities and boundaries of improving quality of life as well as concepts of justice. In this chapter I summarize the main conclusions of my research and its broader implications.

I start by summarizing the experiences and perspectives of the people displaced by conflict living in Chocó as related to victimization and gendered vulnerabilities. Secondly, I argue that both symbolic and material forms of justice are necessary to redress harms caused by conflict and to improve standards of living. Thirdly, I look at some of the consequences of the conflict on my study population and provide a brief overview of some of the transitional justice mechanisms that have been put in place in Colombia since my fieldwork. Fourthly, I consider some of the broader implications of my work related to the intersection of transitional justice and development discourse and practice.

11.1 Conflict and Displacement in Colombia and Chocó

The history of Colombia, and especially its rural regions, has been shaped by its dynamic armed conflict. The various stakeholders and their roles have changed over time, but the ways in which the conflict is structured and has structured society have remained mostly invariant. In terms of armed actors, the most important stakeholders have been various guerrillas, paramilitary, criminal bands (including drug-traffickers and cartels), and the Colombian military. On the one hand, guerrilla groups have attempted to represent the material and political interests of rural communities, peasant farmers, and impoverished segments of Colombian society. On the other hand, the other armed groups mentioned have represented to varying degrees the interests of political and economic elites,

transnational corporations, central state institutions, and foreign governments or institutions.

The conflict has been structured by, and contributed to, vast inequalities in terms of the distribution of symbolic, economic, and cultural capital within the Colombian social field. The richness of natural resources in Colombia as well as the inequalities that exist, especially in terms of symbolic and economic capital, have at the very least fuelled the conflict over time. The conflict has also structured society by exacerbating those inequalities through the intentional concentration of land and resources into fewer and fewer hands. This has served the interests of economic and political elites in Colombia as well as national and international businesses operating in the sectors involved in resource extraction or large-scale agriculture. Meanwhile, it has been rural communities and the displaced populations that emerge from them that have carried the weight of the devastating consequences of such realities.

The people displaced by conflict living in Quibdó represent some of the most marginalized people not just in Colombia, but also in the world. Since colonial times, many of Chocó's rural communities have lived on the fringes of modern forms of social organization. Initially this served as a way to protect communities, as outside contact was difficult, but as history unfolded and the conflict in Colombia endured, the intricate jungles of Chocó became a convenient haven for armed groups to operate within. It was convenient because the natural landscape made tracking groups difficult, and also because it was abundant in resources and fertility that could be used to gain profits and fund operations.

Chocó's rural communities and the displaced have been victimized and experienced gendered vulnerabilities throughout the civil war, and by the violence and insecurity in urban areas where they often settle. Rural populations in Chocó were often caught in fighting between armed groups (especially guerrillas and paramilitaries) and were forced to flee their communities. As a result they were victimized and experience gendered vulnerabilities. Males faced a higher likelihood of being threatened, killed, and recruited to armed groups, while females faced greater threats of sexual violence. Victimization

and gendered vulnerabilities continued when they settle in Quibdó. In Quibdó, the displaced were faced with gang-related violence and criminal activities because of the neighbourhoods where they were forced to settle and their economic deprivation. The composition of the family was disrupted, as men were more frequently absent for a variety of reasons and women were forced to work more outside of the home to sustain the family.

The persistence of experiences of victimization and gendered vulnerabilities in both rural and urban environments results from and signals the low social positions that the displaced occupy in Colombian society, revealing the relations of power that subordinate their lives to armed groups.

11.2 Symbolic and Material Justice

The priority areas in terms of justice for the displaced in Quibdó reflect their shared social positions which are marked by low volumes of symbolic, economic, and cultural capital. Taking steps to change the distribution of capital in these areas can contribute to meeting victims' desires for legitimacy, participation, accountability, and justice. For one, this would require the implementation of forms of symbolic justice to address how the social world is defined. Additionally, efforts to address material forms of justice are needed in order for there to be any significant positive and meaningful change in the quality of life of victims of conflict and those most vulnerable to becoming victims.

Symbolic justice is any form of justice that addresses whose voices are heard, acknowledged, and acted upon. They help to redefine the social world by altering what is considered right and wrong, whose lives are valuable, and whose interests are important. Furthermore, symbolic justice serves to acknowledge the sufferings of the victims of conflict in terms of unquantifiable victimization such as the loss of life of loved ones, threats to dignity, and traumas experienced. This can be very important for victims of conflict or atrocities because their suffering and acknowledged value have often been publicly neglected for long periods of time. Symbolic justice changes the rules of social life by bringing consequences for actions of the guilty or by providing some type of compensation or acknowledgement for victims. Many of the common transitional justice

mechanisms (trials, truth commissions, purges, apologies, amnesties, memory projects, and reparations to a certain extent) address issues of symbolic justice. In my research, I focussed on the symbolic roles of trials (and associated punishments), truth-related processes (such as truth commissions), and forgiveness.

The vast majority of participants in this research thought that having trials and jail time would be appropriate in the context of Colombia's conflict. Trials provide a way that those found guilty of crimes, violence, and atrocities can be acknowledged publically and held accountable through the imposition of punishment. Trials and punishment have the function of changing the distribution of symbolic capital in a number of ways. Firstly, they subordinate the guilty to the legal system. This is especially important after conflict because armed actors who are guilty of crimes may be in leadership positions where they enjoy authority and influence. Secondly, they can give victims of crimes a more socially recognized moral authority. Trials and punishment do not undo the consequences of crimes, but they provide a way of validating the grievances of victims and potentially act as a deterrent.

Truth processes provide another avenue for implementing symbolic justice. In this research I found that the majority of participants desired truth and the implementation of related processes, especially those who wanted to know what had happened to loved ones that had been killed or who had disappeared. Furthermore, I found that truth processes were more likely to lead to reconciliation than trials because of the ability of truth and communication to create an atmosphere in which people are more willing to forgive. Truth processes provide ways the suffering of victims can be acknowledged and officially responded to. The experiences and moral worth of victims can be recognised and legitimized through these processes. They can provide a forum through which marginalized populations have their concerns, experiences, and perspectives heard. Additionally, the reports that they sometimes produce can have direct impacts on how social history is understood.

Providing opportunities for forgiveness is another way in which symbolic inequalities can be addressed. In my research people held various positions in terms of whether or not

forgiveness was desirable, plausible, and possible. Yet, all recognized that it was the moral prerogative of victims as to whether or not they granted forgiveness to those that had caused them harm; whether that harm was through intentional acts of members of armed groups or by the neglect of people in positions of responsibility. Providing opportunities for forgiveness or the withholding of forgiveness gives victims the symbolic power to redefine what is seen as important, good or bad, and legitimate. This is an important symbolic priority as participants in this research and a public acknowledgement of those voices would reinforce their validity and social value.

Overall, trials, truth processes, and providing opportunities for victims to publically make forgiveness related decisions can act as forms of symbolic justice. These mechanisms do not necessarily directly address the symbolic inequalities in Colombia in terms of political participation, but they do provide a way of better integrating marginalized populations into public discourse and private acknowledgment, which in turn can lead to greater social and political participation.

Symbolic justice is important *but not sufficient* because it does not address the material realities that have impacted the lives of victims of armed conflict. Often, those who suffer the most in conflict situations are the poorest populations, and therefore their need for material provisions in the aftermath of violence can be very urgent. On the one hand, it is the poorest people within a society that tend to be strongly tied to location and have less capacity to move their lives before conflict hits. They have very little of what Bauman (2000) would call fluid capital to take with them. The uncertainty and insecurity (both physical and economic) of leaving their communities sometimes keeps vulnerable populations in dangerous circumstances longer. Members of society with more economic capital, on the other hand, tend to be able to leave potentially dangerous circumstances sooner, and re-establish life in a new location more easily. Conflict exacerbates, and creates new, material inequalities and deficiencies; infrastructure gets destroyed, communities get torn apart, and people lose their homes, land, and ways of life. The participants in this study, therefore, saw provision for their material needs as a key part of justice.

The transitional justice mechanism that comes closest to addressing material forms of justice is reparations. Reparations relate to a legal entitlement and the need to repair harm that was inflicted (Roht-Arriaza & Orlovsky 2009). Reparations tend to come in the form of financial assistance or social programs (Balasco 2017). As I discussed in Chapter 10, of the participants who had received monetary reparations, all described them as insufficient. They were insufficient not only because money does not bring back life or undo harm (as would be the case of any type of reparation), but also because the money was not enough to make a significant impact on people's standards of living. In order to really have an impact on standards of living, participants highlighted several priority areas in terms of material justice: education, employment/income, housing, and health care. Reparations programs could potentially focus on these priority areas in order to create the possibilities for victims of conflict to have a quality of life similar to what they had before they were displaced.

Each of these priority areas has the potential of providing for some type of cultural or economic need victims had. Firstly, the most important cultural capital need expressed by participants was related to education: elementary, high school, university, and capacity building or training. This was seen by participants as a way to compensate for the loss of their rural ways of life, the devaluation of their cultural capital, and the resulting downward social movements they experienced. Secondly, employment or income generation opportunities would provide both cultural and economic capital. Employment provides cultural capital, for example, because certain jobs provide prestige or are looked upon more favourably (such as teachers or office position), while other jobs (such as being a maid or working unloading boats at the market) and the people that occupy them are looked down upon. The income generated from employment or livelihood projects provides economic capital in the form of finances. Thirdly, housing provides economic capital in the form of a hard asset. Having a decent house directly improves standards of living and in many cases helps to restore people to their pre-displacement home-owning status. Finally, provisions for services and infrastructure related to physical and mental health would have the benefit of alleviating the financial burden of health care costs, and give vulnerable populations access to needed services. Reparation programs that targeted these key areas could significantly impact the standards of living of the displaced and

partially restore them to the social positions and quality of life they had prior to displacement. The impacts of the distribution and use of symbolic, economic, and cultural capital are interconnected. According to Bourdieu's field theory, they are interconnected insofar as they all impact people's social positions, the rules of social fields, and understandings of the world. The distribution of one type of capital will, therefore, necessarily influence others. Firstly, depending on the rules of the social field, one type of capital can be converted into another. This is, for example, the case with education-related cultural capital, which can sometimes be translated into economic capital through employment income. Secondly, symbolic capital and economic capital are particularly important for maintaining power for dominant groups. It is through the accumulation of these types of capital that dominant groups are able to define the rules of the social world and maintain superior social positions. Symbolic and economic capital, therefore, tend to reinforce one another. For example, through leadership roles in national politics, the elites in Colombia have been able to create neoliberal economic policies, which favour their interests. Similarly, transnational corporations and international governments like the U.S. have been able to exert political influence on the Colombian government in large part because of their economic power.

The symbolic and material priority areas mentioned here reflect in large part the issues that participants themselves highlighted as important for justice. These issues, however, are only small pieces of the multidimensional puzzle of justice. The full picture would incorporate more equality of overall social positions or at least the establishment of some minimum standards, which are determined by the distributions of social, symbolic, cultural, and economic capital. The priorities elaborated in this research are the pieces that participants could most clearly see and which had the most direct bearing on their everyday lives. The approaches to symbolic and material forms of justice that participants identified as priority areas should not be understood as all encompassing. They provide small measures of justice, where justice is understood as redressing harms and having the basic conditions met through which individuals can live a life where their dignity is respected.

11.3 Consequences of Conflict and Transitional Justice in Colombia Today

The violence and displacement in Colombia has had two distinct social impacts in terms of settlement of rural populations. On the one hand, there were many groups of people who wanted to return to their land, as well as several communities and coordinated initiatives that were actively resisting displacement or the occupation of armed groups. In my experience, the Indigenous, particularly those living in displaced communities consisting only of other Indigenous people, had the strongest desires to return to their former communities. There were a few Afro-Colombian participants that expressed a desire to return to their former communities, particularly amongst those who were actively involved in human rights organizations.¹⁴ On the other hand, most of the participants in this research did not want to live in their former communities permanently even if peace were established. Had these people not been violently displaced from their land and homes, they may have been content to stay in their isolated communities engaging in subsistence activities and small-scale resource exploitation. For many of the displaced, returning to their communities was no longer a viable option, because of the trauma they had experienced or their unwillingness to uproot their lives once again. Many have adapted to the conveniences of city life (such as internet and infrastructure) and had new expectations of what they wanted in terms of standards of living.

In this particular aspect, the desire to return to their original communities or not, it is unclear whether the views held by my participants reflects those of displaced communities in Chocó more generally. It is possible that the people who were displaced to Quibdó differed from those in other areas of the department. Perhaps people displaced to Quibdó were able to settle better, or had weaker ongoing connections with their former community members, compared to displaced people living in other areas. It is difficult to

¹⁴ For more discussion on land reclaiming and social movements resisting displacement in Colombia see: Velasco, Marcela. 2011. "Contested Territoriality: Ethnic Challenges to Colombia's Territorial Regimes." *Bulletin of Latin American Research*. 30(2): 213-228.; Vélez-Torres, Irene. 2014. "Between the Paternalistic and the Neoliberal State: Dispossession and Resistance in Afro-descendant Communities of the Upper Cauca, Colombia." *Latin American Perspectives*. 41(6): 9-26.; and, Hristov, Jasmine. 2014. *Paramilitarism & Neoliberalism: violent Systems of Capital Accumulation in Colombia and Beyond*. PlutoPress: London.

draw any strong conclusions in this regard, however, since I did not conduct interviews with displaced populations living in other parts of the department. One important consideration on this topic, however, is that while the majority of participants did not desire to return to their former communities, most acknowledged that the displaced should have the right to do so if they did want to return.¹⁵

The findings from my research focus more on the social implications of the populations that do not want to return, since they made up the vast majority of my participants. The priority areas expressed by my participants in terms of the material forms of justice reveal one significant consequence of the conflict: the integration of large groups of rural communities into the modern neoliberal economy. This is apparent particularly in the emphasis participants placed on education. The participants in this research wanted the kind of social recognition that came with having more formal education and the possibility of more esteemed jobs and the upward social mobility they could entail. Many participants also wanted housing and health care provisions in Quibdó itself, as they planned on staying there even if there was peace in rural areas. Measures related to these priority areas would in effect integrate the displaced further into the modern economy and the rules thereof. Similarly, some of the people that wanted to return to their former communities had some new ideas about what life in the rural areas should look like after peace was established. Several participants discussed the need for greater provisions for infrastructure, services, and education in rural areas.

To a certain extent, this desire for greater integration into economic and cultural modernity represents misrecognition of the consequences of levelling some inequalities. Participants' perspectives were embedded in their limited world-view, a desire to have their immediate needs met, and their need to have harms they experienced redressed.

¹⁵ For a more in-depth discussion of land-reclaiming initiatives in Colombia and some of the obstacles to people returning to their territories please see: Frances, Thomson. 2017. "Land Restitution in Colombia: why so few applicants?" *Forced Migration Review*. 56:35-36; Sliwa, Marcin. 2016. "Should I stay or should I go: The role of Colombian free urban housing projects in IDP return to the countryside." *Habitat International*. 56:11-19; and, Amnesty International. 2014. *A Land Title is not Enough: Ensuring Sustainable Land Restitution in Colombia*. Amnesty International: London UK. Available from: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr23/0031/2014/en/>

Participants may have failed to realize that by desiring certain priorities they were actually buying into the dominant social order. This serves the interests of economic and political elites, as it leaves land and resources free for exploitation and profit, leaving little room to consider how to create the social conditions whereby more equality was established on a larger scale. Their compliance with the new rules of the social field they encountered post-displacement in urban settings create conditions whereby large-scale business projects that rely on resources from rural areas face less obstacles to pursuing profits. This is accomplished through the habitus and is what Bourdieu would refer to as symbolic violence, whereby people internalize and become complicit in the very structures that shape and limit their lives. Accordingly, the measures for symbolic and material forms of justice proposed above only provide justice in a very limited sense, where justice is understood as facilitating truth, redressing the causes of harms, and creating fair opportunities and standards of living for all members of a society.

In order to redress harms and ensure peace many participants in this research asserted that the Colombian government needed to promise the country that conditions for the non-repetition of conflict would be met. Symbolic and material forms of justice are, therefore, both needed in the context of Chocó. Throughout the history of Colombia's conflict there has been a struggle between dominant political and economic elites, and the poor marginalized rural populations over political participation, the use of resources, and land ownership. The abundance of resources and the fertility of the land in places like Chocó, combined with the state's failure to enforce laws, purposeful neglect of the rights of the rural poor, and at times direct participation in violence, created the conditions in which armed groups and conflict could flourish. Accordingly, unless the underlying structures—the actual distribution of capital and the rules by which capital is distributed—of Colombian society are changed, the nature of social relations may shift in terms of methods, actors, particular stakeholder interests, and location, but the most vulnerable populations will continue to be victimized and exploited.

Since I conducted my fieldwork in 2014 there have been a number of developments in terms of transitional justice. In the wake of the peace negotiations between the Colombian Government and FARC, both a Transitional Justice Tribunal and a Truth

Commission were established in Colombia in 2017. People that directly participated in the armed conflict can be tried in the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. If they cooperate, those convicted of human rights violations will have to pay victims some type of reparations, do volunteer work, and be confined to certain community areas, rather than serving jail time (Ballesteros 2017). A truth commission, called the ‘Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition,’ was also established with the mandate to investigate the victimization of civilians throughout Colombia’s conflict (Ballesteros 2017). A special Search Unit was also set up in order to investigate the over 60,000 reported cases of disappearances (Ballesteros 2017). Hopefully these efforts will contribute to getting some answers and closure for victims of the conflict, including potentially some of the participants in this research. The national scope of the truth commission makes it unlikely that all the particulars of victims’ grievances on the local level in Chocó will be addressed; however, it will hopefully help to create a national atmosphere that is more receptive to the narratives of displacement and victimization.

The transitional mechanisms put in place in Colombia will likely impact the distribution of symbolic capital by empowering the voices of victims and human rights organizations in the country as well as by creating various accountability mechanisms that serve to legitimize the claims of victims for the need to redress harms. Will they go far enough and create the conditions for open, free, and genuine political and social participation of marginalized populations? That remains to be seen.

11.4 Broader Implications for Transitional Justice and Development

When I was in Quibdó doing my research, I met a woman who worked cleaning offices and as a maid in someone’s home. She was not displaced; in fact, her family had lived in Quibdó for as long as she could remember. We became friends, and I had the opportunity to visit her home in Quibdó’s notorious *Zona Norte*. She lived with several extended family members in a cement house with a tin roof, but only the most basic furnishings inside. Her son, who was around nineteen years old, had recently been in an accident in the river and injured his spinal cord. He was paralyzed from the neck down, except for a bit of movement in one of his hands. He had several huge seeping bedsores from lack of

movement, and had a look of deep despair in his eyes. His mother was trying her best to work hard to provide for him but he was not getting the medical attention he needed. The medical expertise he needed just did not exist in Quibdó, and they could not afford to send him elsewhere. Furthermore, his mother did not have the time or knowledge to give him the proper care he needed. His mother had to endure verbal abuse, long hours, and difficult physical work to earn a very basic salary that her entire family had to live on.

Of all the homes I visited and all the stories I heard, the hopelessness of this young man and the circumstances in which the family had to live was the most heartbreaking I experienced. It pointed towards a greater socio-economic injustice that so many people had to endure in Colombia. There were thousands of people in similarly impoverished and marginalized social positions living in Quibdó that were not themselves displaced, and millions more in other parts of Colombia. When I visited the Municipal Office for Attention to Victims, I was told that many people had claimed to be displaced when they were not in order to get humanitarian aid because they were so poor. It was hard to prove who was displaced and who was not, so I was told that often these people would receive the humanitarian aid meant for victims of the conflict.

This research has focussed primarily on people displaced by conflict living in Chocó, and at times Colombia's rural populations and conflict victims more generally, but it has larger implications for the estimated fourteen million people (twenty-nine percent of the population) in Colombia who live below the national poverty line (World Bank 2017), and for those who occupy similar social positions in other countries around the world. There is a need for symbolic and material forms of justice at a higher level that truly address the structural inequalities in Colombia. The processes and mechanisms identified in this research related to the priority areas of the displaced in Chocó are only part of the story. They are necessary, yes, in at least paying a minimal service to the injustices that have caused and perpetuated victimization. There is a need to go further though, to truly address the underlying causes of the vulnerability of certain populations and to stop victimization and prevent it in the future.

This is where the concept of human development comes in, where it is defined as expanding people's choices and improving standards of living. Human development thus conceived is about trying to help improve the quality of life for the entire society. There are fundamental links between transitional justice and development. There is a type of reciprocal relationship that exists between the two, whereby a lack of development can contribute to human rights abuses, and a lack of redressing harms caused by conflict and atrocities can have negative impacts on development (Duthie 2009). The distinct role of these areas in the aftermath of conflict can be understood by looking at transitional justice as redressing harms, and development as about creating the conditions whereby it is possible for transitional justice mechanisms to be effectively implemented (Balasco 2017).

Without provisions for improving overall human development, there are two reasons that transitional justice mechanisms are not very meaningful in a place like Colombia where large groups of people struggle to meet their most basic needs. Firstly, because mechanisms put in place would not be able to substantially address the material conditions of victims, the conditions that shape their every day lives and their experiences of victimization. This is in fact what has happened in Colombia where some victims of the conflict have received monetary reparations or attempted to benefit from housing programs, for example, yet their overall quality of life has not improved. Secondly, and most importantly, if overall human development is not improved there will continue to be marginalized groups that are vulnerable to exploitation. This can mean at worst that victimization does not significantly diminish after the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms and therefore no real transition takes place.

This research has highlighted the importance of both symbolic and material forms of justice in the aftermath of conflict or atrocities. It has also shown that people often internalize the very structures that limit their lives by envisioning types of justice that fit within tight boundaries of the rules of the social field within which they exist. What is needed for a more meaningful kind of justice in these areas is a transformation of social relations related to the distribution of the various forms of capital, a distribution whereby a group of hyper-marginalized and vulnerable people no longer exist to be exploited.

Achieving this type of redistribution of capital and redefinition of the rules by which such capital is distributed lies largely outside of the specialization of transitional justice and more properly in the domain of development. Accordingly, development can be about creating the conditions for a more meaningful justice to be possible.

There is a need for distributive justice in the form of a change of rules by which symbolic, economic, and cultural capital are distributed. This includes particular attention to political participation, economic restructuring, cultural acknowledgement, and agrarian reform. Without a fundamental redefining of the rules of the social field in Colombia, it is impossible for there to be real accountability for the passive or active roles various stakeholders have played in perpetuating victimization in Colombia, one that would see national and international elites no longer be able to benefit (economically, culturally, socially, or symbolically) from the displacement and exploitation of vulnerable populations in Colombia.

In the context of Colombia these types of changes are likely to be very difficult to accomplish given the strength of neo-liberal practices that favour large scale business, rather than small-scale farming and other subsistence activities that rural populations often engage in. There is not a clear path on how to change the rules of the social field and create a Colombia with fewer major inequalities in terms of the distribution of capital. It remains a reality and future danger that various stakeholders adopt policies, laws, and initiatives that only appear (be a misrecognized form of the imposition of symbolic power) to support real social change, but that leave the underlying structures of economic, symbolic, and cultural social relations in tact (either because the changes put in place do not address the structures or that the changes are not implemented).

Given the current state of relations of power in the country, it may be overly optimistic to hope that meaningful changes to the rules of the social field and the distribution of capital will take place in the near future. The social, political, cultural, and economic bases of the neo-liberal agenda are at present too deeply ingrained in the rules of the Colombian social field for real change to happen easily. The path to change is unclear; perhaps some type of external shock could lead to the type of change needed to eliminate the kind of

systematic victimization that has existed in Colombia for decades. In the meantime, scholars and policy makers should continue to try to find ways to address the symbolic and material needs not only of victims of the conflict, but also for those segments of the population whose dignity is not respected by their living conditions and are most vulnerable to becoming victims; this is at present the only path I can see towards some measure of greater overall justice in Colombia.

11.5 Conclusion

In the last ten years there has been a keen awareness of the interconnections between the fields of transitional justice and development by experts from both fields (Duthie 2009). My research adds to this discussion and builds upon the literature in transitional justice that argues for the importance of development and attention to socioeconomic issues as one of the most meaningful forms of justice in the aftermath of conflict and atrocities (see Boraine 2000b, Mani 2002, Miller 2008, Duthie 2009, and Kent 2012). *I argue that both symbolic and material forms of justice are necessary to redress harms after conflict and to prevent future victimization by reducing vulnerabilities.* Transitional justice cannot be a set of pre-prescribed mechanisms that focus solely, or even primarily on symbolic forms of justice. While these types of mechanisms are important for redefining to the social world (in terms of whose voices are heard, acknowledged, and seen as legitimate) and how histories are understood, they cannot address some of the material causes and impacts of victimization.

My first set of contributions to the literature is substantive. I have provided a context-based explanation of some of the impacts of inequalities on victimization. I have also shown the differentiated vulnerabilities related to gender. My research highlights some of the practical ways that the dignity of victims can be respected through the provision for material needs. Finally, I have shown what constitutes peace and justice from the perspectives of victims of conflict in Chocó, Colombia.

The results of this research shed light on some of the priorities of the most marginalized victims that transitional justice processes sometimes fail to take into account. By bringing to light these priorities, it is my hope that future work in transitional justice and

development will be sensitive to the needs to the most vulnerable by recognising the links between these two fields and the limits of each. It would be helpful if future research focussed on the specific contributions of symbolic and material forms of justice. There are other mechanism and processes that can be explored; and the extent to which they truly address the priorities of the most marginalized victims better understood.

My second set of contributions to the literature is theoretical in nature. I place issues of justice in an overall theoretical framework that clearly identifies the social positions of victims and their associated vulnerabilities. By drawing upon Bourdieu's concepts of capital, fields, and symbolic violence, I am able to conceptualise the relations of power that shape the lives of my participants, and likely the lives of others in different conflict areas who hold similar social positions. I show how people's social positions impact their experiences of victimization in rural and urban settings, and the ways in which they define gendered vulnerabilities. Furthermore, I highlight the internal diversity and interconnected nature of symbolic and material forms of justice.

My research shows that there are some real limits for the kinds of symbolic and material justice that are possible, limits that are defined by the rules of the social field. Participants in this study had through the experiences of displacement internalized the dominant relations of power manifested in the rules by which economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital are distributed. I uncovered a misrecognition on the part of victims, and sometimes key informants, of the significance of various forms of justice and potential policy changes; by 'significance' I mean the actual impact various transitional justice or development measures are likely to have on values that are individually important to participants as well as overall standards of living.

Justice is only ever partial. An awareness of possible misrecognitions and the dynamics of power relations in the social field in question can help academics and practitioners communicate more realistic expectations of interventions. It could also serve to potentially find creative ways of optimizing the forms of justice that are possible within the boundaries of the social field in which they exist.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Letter of Information English

Project Title: Women, Empowerment and Justice in Chocó, Colombia

Investigator: Allison Cordoba, Sociology Doctorate student at the University of Western Ontario.

Information Letter

1. Invitation to participate:

Information Letter

You have been invited to participate in this study about empowerment and justice in Chocó because you have been displaced by conflict or you work with people displaced by conflict.

2. Purpose of this study:

This investigation will study empowerment and justice for displaced people from Chocó and how different structural factors limit and provide opportunities for them. It will also seek to understand the key factors that act as obstacles to exercising agency, as well as those factors that help facilitate it.

3. Study procedures:

If you agree to participate you will be asked to partake in a free-flowing interview with Ms. Cordoba. This interview will involve questions regarding your experiences as a displaced person or working with displaced persons. You have the right to decide not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable. With your consent, you may be audio recorded.

4. Possible benefits:

You may not directly benefit from participating in this study, but the results may help other people to understand the challenges faced by displaced people and the structural changes that need to take place for better standards of living to be attainable. Information gathered from this study may aid in the reduction of stereotypes.

5. Voluntary participation:

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative ramifications. You have the right to all important information concerning your participation in this research. Your interview will last approximately one or two hours.

6. Possible risks and harms:

Participation will likely touch on some very personal and emotional experiences. You may feel some emotional disturbances as a result. You will be given a list of local resources where you can find support and assistance. You may wish to have this interview take place in a private location in order to ensure that no undue attention is drawn to you. Interviews may take place in your home, at a partner organization office, or in a restaurant based on your preference and security.

7. Confidentiality:

The nature of this kind of research project is that some information ensuring that I have completed this research must be provided. Therefore, I cannot guarantee you confidentiality. However, you will remain anonymous in the study, with a false name or initials being the only identification of you personally, unless you specifically state that I can identify you by name.

8. Contact information:

If you need more information about this study or your participation in this study you may contact:

Allison Cordoba Investigator
Sociology Doctorate Student
University of Western Ontario

Dr. Scott Schaffer
Associate Professor
Department of Sociology
University of Western Ontario

For further support and resources available to displaced people please contact:
Mujer y Vida (Women and Life)

OR

Red Departamental de Mujeres Chocoanas (Departmental Network of Women from Chocó)

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study you may contact:
The Office of Research Ethics University of Western Ontario

9. Publication:

If the results of the study are published, your name will not be used. If you would like to receive a copy of any potential study results, please contact:
Allison Cordoba

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Appendix B: Letter of Information Spanish

Título del Proyecto: Mujeres, emprendimiento y concepto de Justicia en Chocó, Colombia

Nombre del Investigadora: Sra. Allison Cordoba, estudiante de Doctorado en Sociología de la Universidad de Western Ontario, en London, Canada.

Carta de Información

1. Invitación a participar

Usted ha sido invitado (a) a participar en este estudio sobre Emprendimiento y Justicia en Chocó porque fue desplazado (a) por el conflicto o porque trabaja con personas desplazadas por el conflicto.

2. Propósito de esta investigación

Esta investigación estudiará los conceptos de Emprendimiento y la Justicia en personas desplazadas del Chocó y como diferentes factores limitan o potencializan estos conceptos. También busca entender los factores mas importantes que obstaculizan la habilidad de los desplazados para cambiar las circunstancias de sus vidas y los factores que facilitan este cambio.

3. Procedimientos de la Investigación:

Si usted acepta participar, se le pedirá participar en una entrevista libre con la Señora Cordoba. Esta entrevista incluirá preguntas relacionadas con sus experiencias como desplazado (a) o como persona que trabaja con desplazados. Usted tiene el derecho de decidir si responde o no a cualquier pregunta con la cual no se sienta cómodo (a). *Si usted esta de acuerdo, su entrevista sera grabada en audio.*

4. Posibles beneficios:

Tal vez usted no se beneficie directamente de la participación de este estudio, pero los resultados pueden ayudar a otras personas a entender los desafíos que enfrentan las personas desplazadas y los cambios estructurales que se deben dar para lograr mejores niveles de vida. La información recogida en este estudio puede ayudar a la reducción de estereotipos.

5. Participación voluntaria

La participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Usted puede rehusarse a participar o responder cualquier pregunta o retirarse de esta investigación a cualquier momento sin ninguna consecuencia negativa. Usted tiene el derecho a acceder a toda información importante relacionada con su participación en este estudio. Su entrevista durará entre una y dos horas.

6. Posibles riesgos y daños ocasionados

Su participación posiblemente tocará algunos experiencias muy personales y emocionales. Como resultado es posible que se sienta emocionalmente incómodo. Se le dará una lista de recursos locales donde usted puede encontrar apoyo. Usted puede decidir tener esta entrevista en un lugar privado para asegurarse que nada lo distraiga. Las entrevistas se pueden realizar en su hogar, en la oficina de una organización, o en un lugar publico de acuerdo a su elección.

7. Confidencialidad

La naturaleza de este tipo de proyecto de investigación requiere que se obtenga alguna información de participante para asegurar la veracidad de esta investigación. Por lo tanto, no puedo garantizarle su confidencialidad. Sin embargo, usted permanecerá anónimo en este estudio, con un nombre falso o con las iniciales de su nombre como única identificación personal, a menos que usted indique que puede ser identificado por su nombre.

8. Información de contacto:

Si usted necesita más información sobre este estudio o su participación en este estudio puede contactar a:

Allison Cordoba
Candidata a Doctorado en Sociología
University of Western Ontario

Dr. Scott Schaffer
Profesor Asociado
Departamento de Sociología
University of Western Ontario

Para obtener mayor apoyo y recursos sobre los derechos de las mujeres desplazadas por favor contacte la siguiente institución:

Red Departamental de Mujeres Chocoanas

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre sus derechos como participante de esta investigación o la manera como este estudio se ha desarrollado puede dirigirla a la siguiente dirección:

The Office of Research Ethics
Universidad de Western Ontario

9. Detalles sobre la publicación de esta investigación

Si los resultados de este estudio son publicados su nombre no será usado. Si quisiera recibir una copia de los resultados puede contactar a:

Allison Cordoba

Esta carta es para que usted la conserve

Appendix C: Interview Guide English

Project Title: Women, Empowerment and Justice in Chocó, Colombia

Investigator: Allison Cordoba, Sociology Doctorate student at the University of Western Ontario.

Interview Guide

PART 1: Basic Information

Give, and/or read, the *Letter of Information* to potential participant, and receive verbal consent to continue with the interview. Ask for permission to record the interview and if participant has any questions.

Ask the participant to answer survey questions and then the following questions:

1. What do you do during a typical day?
2. Are you employed? What type of work do you do?
3. What are your sources of income?

PART 2: Displacement

1. What was daily life like in your former community?
2. What were some of the main occupations?
 - a. What are the occupations of the other people that lived in your home?
3. Were there any mines or large agricultural projects near your community?
4. Why were you displaced?
5. Why did some people choose to leave your community and others decided to stay?
6. What was it like when you first arrived in Quibdó?
 - a. What did you have with you?
 - b. Did you have contacts in Quibdó?
7. What has it been like living as a displaced person now?

PART 3: Priorities & Obstacles

1. Tell me about the neighborhood you live in:
 - a. What are some of its benefits?
 - b. What are some of its problems?
2. What are the major obstacles you face in day-to-day life? And what can you do to improve your standards of living?
3. What things do you wish would change about your daily living situation? What things are most important to you?
4. Is there a difference between what is most important for men and what is most important for women? Please describe.
5. Colombia is now in peace negotiations, what do you hope will come out of those negotiations?
 - a. What would you like to see happen?
 - b. How would this impact your daily life?

PART 4: Affiliations, Opportunities and Responsibilities

1. What is the role and responsibilities of the international community in terms of making life more peaceful and equitable in Chocó?
 - a. Foreign governments

- b. International aid organizations
 - c. Transnational companies (mining, pharmaceutical, timber, agricultural)
2. What is the role and responsibilities of the Colombia government? (health, education, job creation?, etc.)
 - a. National government
 - b. Local government
 3. Do you belong to any organization, association or religious groups?
 - a. What role do you have?
 - b. How long have you been involved?
 - c. Why did you become involved?
 - d. What are the benefits of being involved?
 - e. Are there any economic benefits to being involved?
 - f. What types of activities do you do?
 4. What are your personal responsibilities for improving your living situation? What helps you improve standards of living?
 5. Is there a difference between standards of living within your neighborhood? If so what makes the difference?

PART 5: Conclusion

6. Is there anything else you would like to add or change?
7. Would you be interested in receiving a summary of the findings of this study?
8. Provide participant with my contact information and ask her to pass it on to anyone they know that might like to participate in this study.

Appendix D: Interview Guide Non Displaced Persons

Project Title: Women, Empowerment and Justice in Chocó, Colombia

Investigator: Allison Cordoba, Sociology Doctorate student at the University of Western Ontario.

Interview Guide

PART 1: Basic Information

Give, and/or read, the *Letter of Information* to potential participant, and receive verbal consent to continue with the interview. Ask for permission to record the interview and if participant has any questions.

Ask the participant to answer survey questions and then the following questions:

4. How long have you worked with displaced people in Chocó? In what capacity?
5. What organization do you work for?
6. What does your organization do?
7. What are your responsibilities that relate to displaced persons?
 - a. What are some of the main obstacles to helping displaced persons?

PART 2: Displacement

8. What are the main challenges that displaced people face when they first arrive to Quibdó?
9. What are the long-term challenges for displaced people?
10. What are the main causes of displacement? Are the causes today different than the causes 10 years ago?
11. What roles do mining companies or large agricultural projects play in displacement in Chocó?

PART 3: Priorities & Obstacles

6. Are there neighborhoods in Quibdó with high concentrations of displaced persons? Which ones?
 - a. What are these neighbourhoods like?
 - b. What are some of their benefits?
 - c. What are some of their problems?
7. How can displaced persons' themselves improve their standards of living?
8. What are the top priorities of displaced persons?
9. Is there a difference between what is most important for men and what is most important for women? Please describe.
10. Colombia is now in peace negotiations, what do you hope will come out of those negotiations?
 - a. How would this impact the daily lives of displaced people in Quibdó?

PART 4: Affiliations, Opportunities and Responsibilities

9. What is the role and responsibilities of the international community in terms of making life more peaceful and equitable in Chocó?
 - a. Foreign governments
 - b. International aid organizations
 - c. Transnational companies (mining, pharmaceutical, timber, agricultural)
10. What is the role and responsibilities of the Colombia government? (health, education, job creation?, etc.)

- a. National government
 - b. Local government
11. What are the roles of local organizations, association or religious groups in improving the standards of living for displaced people in Quibdó?

PART 5: Conclusion

12. Is there anything else you would like to add or change?
13. Would you be interested in receiving a summary of the findings of this study?
14. Provide participant with my contact information and ask her to pass it on to anyone they know that might like to participate in this study.

Appendix E: Interview Guide Spanish

Título del proyecto: Mujeres, Empoderamiento y Justicia en Chocó, Colombia.

Investigador: Allison Cordoba, Estudiante de Doctorado de Sociología, UWO

Guia de Entrevista: Displaced Persons

Parte 1: Información Básica

De, y/o lea, la Carta de información al participante, y reciba un consentimiento verbal. Pida autorización para grabar la entrevista y pregunte si el tiene alguna pregunta. Fill out basic info form.

1. Que actividades realiza usted en un dia normal?
2. Esta empleado (a)? Tenias empleado(a) antes?
 - a. Que tipo de actividad realiza en esta empleo?
 - b. Desde cuando tienes este empleo?
3. Cual es la fuente de sus ingresos?
 - a. Recibes alguna ayuda de familiares o amigos o del gobierno?

Parte 2: Desplazamiento

1. Como era su vida diaria en la comunidad donde vivia antes de ser desplazado (a)?
2. Cuales eran las ocupaciones principales de las personas de su comunidad antes de ser desplazado?
3. Trabajaban en la comunidad minería?
 - a. Como la trabajaban?
 - b. Tu trabajabas en minería?
4. En la comunidad cortaban o transportaban la madera para vender?
 - a. Cortaban o transportaban para un empresa especial?
 - b. Tu trabajabas cortando o transportando (llevando) madera?
5. Trabajaban en la comunidad agricultura?
 - a. Como la trabajaban?
 - b. Algunos de la comunidad trabajaban como empleado la agricultura?
 - c. Tu trabajabas en agricultura?
6. Porque fue desplazado (a)?
 - a. Recibiste amenazas? De que tipo?
 - i. Algun familiar cercano tuyo fue amenazado?
 - ii. Algunas personas de la comunidad fueron amenazadas?
 - b. Algun miembro de tu familia, o comunidad, tuvo muerte violenta durante ese tiempo?
7. Cuando usted se vino de su pueblo, allá quedaron otras personas?
 - a. Porque algunos personas se quedaron en el pueblo?
 - b. Porque algunos otras se fueron?
8. Con quien te toco salir de tu pueblo?
9. Como te sentías cuando llegaste a Quibdó por primera vez?
10. Que alcanzaste a traer de tu casa? Dinero?
11. Conocías personas aquí en Quibdó? Quienes?
 - a. Como te ayudaron?
12. Recibiste ayuda del gobierno?
 - a. Como lograron recibir ayuda del gobierno?

- b. Alguna otra organización te colaboro?
13. Hasta ahora como ha sido tu vida?

Parte 3: Prioridades y obstaculos

1. Cuales son las cosas positivas del barrio donde vive?
 - a. Cuales son los problemas del barrio donde vive?
2. Hay en tu barrio personas con mejores condiciones de vida que otras? Si es así, porque pasa eso?
3. Cuales son los mayores dificultades que tiene que enfrentar diariamente?
4. Que cosas quiere cambiar de tus condiciones de vida actuales?
 - a. Cuales son las cosas mas importantes que quiere cambiar?
5. Hay alguna diferencia entre lo que es mas importante para los hombres y lo que es mas importante para las mujeres? Por favor explique.
6. Que puedes hacer tu para mejorar la situación de tu vida actual?

Parte 4: La proceso de Paz

7. Colombia esta ahora buscando la paz, que te gustaría que se logre con la proceso de paz?
 - a. Si ay paz en el conflicto armada en Colombia que cosas positivas podrán pasar?
8. Crees que se pueda conseguir la paz en Colombia? Porque?
9. Como cree que la paz afectara su vida diaria?
10. Si se logra la paz, quieres volver a tu comunidad?
11. Quienes son los culpables de esta guerra para ti?
12. Crees que los culpables de la guerra tendrán algún castigo?
 - a. Que tipo?
13. Quienes son las victimas de esta guerra para ti?
14. Como crees que se deben ayudar a las victimas de la guerra?
 - a. Quien tiene la responsabilidad de ayudar a las victimas?
 - b. Con que ayudas te sentirías satisfecha?
15. Actualmente ya haz logrado perdonar a quienes te causado tanto dolor?
 - a. Es posible que algún día puedes perdonar?

Parte 5: Afiliaciones, oportunidades y responsabilidades

1. Actualmente conoces alguna organización de otros países que estén ayudando para que haya paz y que los personas vivan mejor?
 - a. Que crees que deberían hacer estas organizaciones?
2. Las empresas de minaría o madera tienen algunas relación con el conflicto armada?
 - a. Que deberían hacer las empresas que existen en las comunidades donde hubo desplazamiento para mejorar las condiciones de vida?
3. Que crees que el gobierno tiene que hacer para el bienestar de las personas de tu comunidad?
 - a. (Salud, educación, generación de empleo, etc.)
 - b. Gobierno nacional vs Gobierno departamental y municipal
4. Pertenece usted a alguna organización, asociación o grupo religioso?

- a. Que haces allí? (Como participas?)
 - b. Por cuanto tiempo has estado asistiendo a esta asociación/organización/grupo religioso?
 - c. Como ingresó a dicha asociación, organización o grupo religioso?
 - d. Cuales son los beneficios de pertenecer a dicha asociación/organización/grupo religioso?
 - e. Ha recibido algún beneficio económico por participar en dicha asociación/organización/grupo religioso?
5. Que estas haciendo para mejorar tus condiciones de vida?

Parte 6. Conclusión

1. Hay algo mas que quieras decir me?
2. Tu conoces a otras personas que pueden participar en esta investigación?

Appendix F: Survey of Basic Information Spanish

Título del Proyecto: Mujeres, emprendimiento y concepto de Justicia en Chocó, Colombia

Nombre del Investigadora: Sra. Allison Cordoba, estudiante de Doctorado en Sociología de la Universidad de Western Ontario, en London, Canada.

QUESTIONARIO DE INFORMACION BASICA	
Fecha y Hora	
Nombre e Inicial del Apellido	
Edad	
Genero	
Etnicidad (Etnia)	
Estado Civil	<input type="checkbox"/> Soltero(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Casado (a) <input type="checkbox"/> Separado(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Divorciado (a) <input type="checkbox"/> Viudo (a) <input type="checkbox"/> Union Libre
Barrio	
Religion	
Ocupacion	
Asociaciones de las cuales es parte	
Cuantos de hijos tienes?	
Con quien vive?	
En que año fue desplazado (a)?	
Comunidad de la que fue desplazado (a):	
Ingresos mensuales	
Gastos mensuales	

NOTAS:

Le gustaría obtener una copia de los resultados de esta investigación? Si No

Quiere que use su nombre real? Si No

Il no desea que use su nombre verdaderso que nombre quiere que use?

Si desea obtener una copia por favor indique su informacion de contacto:

Appendix G: Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality Agreement in English

NON-DISCLOSURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I, (name of translator/transcriber), hereby agree not to use, reveal, or publish any information or data obtained from the research project of Allison Cordoba, “Women, Empowerment, and Justice in Chocó” and/or field research conducted for this project.

I further agree not to reveal the identities of any and all interviewees and contacts.

I further agree that the data obtained, and any references thereto, remain the intellectual property of Allison Cordoba.

The undersigned concur with the terms of this Agreement.

(Name of translator/transcriber)

Date

Allison Cordoba

Date

(Witness)

Date

Appendix H: Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality Agreement in Spanish

ACUERDO DE CONFIDENCIALIDAD Y PROTECCION DE INFORMACION

Yo, (Nombre del traductor/transcriptor), por medio de la presente garantizo no usar, revelar o publicar cualquier informacion o datos obtenidos del proyecto de investigacion de Allison Cordoba, Mujeres, empoderamiento y justicia en el Chocó: y/o tema de investigacion de este proyecto.

Ademas declare no revelar las identidades de ninguna de las personas entrevistadas y sus contactos.

Ademas declaro que los datos obtenidos, y cualquiera de las referencias incluidas en el proyecto, son propiedad intelectual de Allison Cordoba.

Los suscritos en estas firmas concuerdan con los terminos de este acuerdo

(Nombre del traductor(a) o transcriptor(a))

Fecha

Allison Cordoba

Fecha

(Testigo)

Fecha

Appendix I: Ethics Approval Notice



**Western
Research**

Research Ethics

Western University Health Science Research Ethics Board NMREB Full Board Initial Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Prof. Scott Schaffer
Department & Institution: Social Science\Sociology, Western University

NMREB File Number: 105598
Study Title: Women, Empowerment and Justice in Chocó, Colombia
Sponsor:

NMREB Initial Approval Date: September 26, 2014
NMREB Expiry Date: December 31, 2016

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Western University Protocol		2014/08/27
Instruments	Received for information: Interview Guide - Translated into Spanish	2014/08/28
Instruments	Interview Guide	2014/08/28
Letter of Information & Consent		2014/09/19

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the HSREB Initial Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of HSREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.

Curriculum Vitae

ALLISON CORDOBA

EDUCATION:

Doctorate of Philosophy, 2018

Department of Sociology, Western University, Ontario

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Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree 2006

Major: International Development, University of Guelph, Ontario

PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

Cordoba, Allison. Forthcoming, June 2015. "Empowerment and International Development"[Conference Presentation]. *Canadian Sociological Association Annual Conference*. Canadian Sociological Association: Ottawa, Ontario.

Cordoba, Allison. February 2015. "Women, Justice and Empowerment in Chocó, Colombia." [Conference Presentation]. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*. International Studies Association: New Orleans, USA.

Cordoba, Allison. March 2013. "The Responsibility to Protect and Global Society." [Conference Presentation]. *Annual Graduate Conference*. University of Western Ontario, Department of Sociology: Ontario.

¹⁶Bryan, Allison. April 2012. "Gendered Responsibility in Genocide" [Conference Presentation]. *Gender & Transitional Justice Conference*. University of Western Ontario: Ontario.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Lecturer, Women and Third World Development (September-December 2015)
The University of Western Ontario (London, Ontario)

Teaching Assistant, Social Theory & Quantitative Methods (September 2012-2015)
Department of Sociology, The University of Western Ontario (London, Ontario)

Development Aid Consultant (November 2011-June 2012)
Adventist Development and Relief Agency (Oshawa, Ontario)

Junior Professional Fellow (August 2009-January 2010)
United Nations University (New York, New York)

¹⁶ Family name at birth.